

New Hampshire BIRD RECORDS

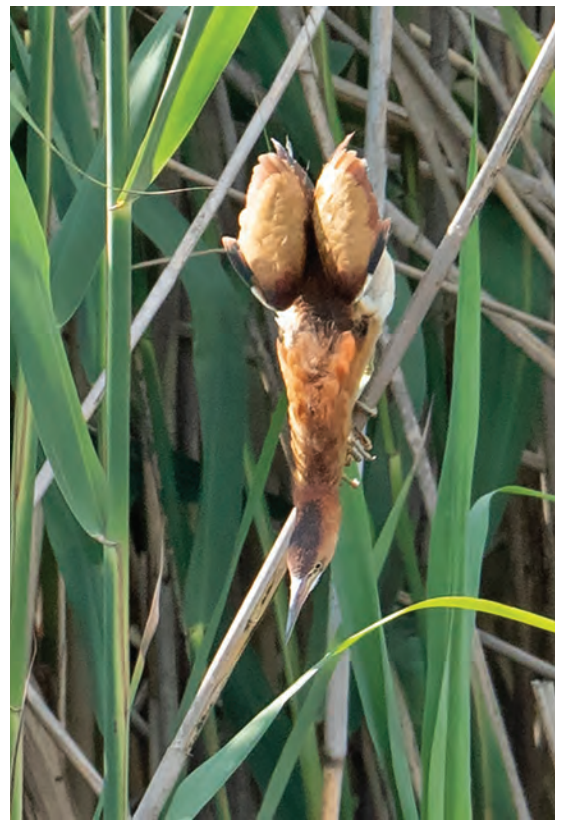


New Hampshire's Herons of Summer

The Little Egret was a phenomenal sighting. Here are the species we are more likely to see.



Great Egret (above) by Kyle Wilmarth, 7-27-19, Salem, NH. Green Heron (below) by Debra Powers, 7-7-19, Newmarket, NH.

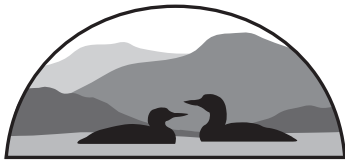


Least Bittern (above) by Cynthia Crawford, 7-14-19, Lebanon, NH. It's found reliably at only a couple of locations in the state. Snowy Egret by Warren Trested, 6-14-19, Rye, NH.



Alan Murray photo documented a remarkable gathering of Great and Snowy Egrets along with one immature Little Blue Heron (second from the right, on the bank above two Snowys) on 7-26-19 at the Rochester WTP! For more on how to tell immature Little Blue Herons from immature Snowy Egret, see the Summer 2016 Photo Quiz (Vol. 35 #2).

IN MEMORY OF
DENNIS J. ABBOTT, III



NH AUDUBON

Protecting our environment since 1914

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This issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* with its color cover is sponsored by the friends of Denny Abbott, in appreciation of all he gave to the birding community. For more on Denny see the article on page 3.



Denny Abbott on two of his many birding boat trips circa 1985 (left) and 2001 (right). Photos by Steve Mirick.

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Answer to the Photo Quiz in the next issue

From the Editor

SUMMER 2019

by Rebecca Suomala

Volunteer News

Thank You Pam! We are very grateful to Pam Hunt for stepping in at the last minute to be the guest Summer Editor for 2019. Due to unexpected family circumstances, Chad Witko was unable to write up the season, which all happened right before the summer deadline. Pam agreed to take on the challenge and has done a terrific job. She's had some practice as Spring Editor and then Winter Editor for many years, but this was her first time with the summer season. A big thank you to Pam for taking on this challenge!

Thank You Chad! After transitioning to a new job, Chad has reluctantly relinquished the reins of the Summer Editor position. He did a great job as Editor, keeping up with eBird review during the season and writing up the season summary. We wish him well in his new venture and hope he will still write a few articles for the publication.

Welcome Greg Tillman! I'll introduce our new Summer Editor more fully in his first issue.

Thank You Elizabeth Levy! We are sorry to bid goodbye to Elizabeth who was one of the volunteers "behind the scenes" at *New Hampshire Bird Records* since 2011. She tackled numerous tasks including sending complimentary copies to those non-subscribers who contributed to the issue. We miss her quiet, cheerful presence in the office.

Where's the Answer to the Photo Quiz?

It will be in the next issue! That's how we used to do it and we're returning to that model temporarily as we change authors. In the Fall 2001 issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records*, David Donsker wrote his first Photo Quiz and he's been writing one for every issue since then! That is an amazing record of longevity and it is thanks to David that the Photo Quiz became a regular feature. He has finally decided it's time to retire and turn to new endeavors. We have all benefitted from his talent and his shoes will be hard to fill. Thank You David Donsker!



Becky Suomala birding at the southern tip of South America. Photo by Zeke Cornell.

COVID-19

As I pull together this issue, COVID-19 is creating chaos for most of us. It has already caused a delay in this issue and I am uncertain how it will impact the timing of the Fall 2019 issue. We appreciate your patience as we deal with the impacts on both staff and volunteers of working from home, shifts in work priorities and responsibilities, and frustrating technology that doesn't always work. I am personally grateful for all the volunteers who continue to do work from home under their own motivation. Thank you!

Honoring Denny Abbott

We are delighted to sponsor this issue in memory of Denny Abbott. Thank you to those whose contributions made this possible.

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Robbie Prieto
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Remembering Denny Abbott – New Hampshire’s, and New England’s, Consummate Birder

by Mike Resch

I first met Denny Abbott in 2000. I know that was the year because I overheard him talking about having just a few more months to reach his goal of 2,000 “total ticks” in the six New England states by 2000. Doing the math, that meant that he would have to average 333 birds on his life lists in each of these New England states. Wow – what an amazing goal! It is one that requires excellent birding skills, a strong birding network throughout the region, and perhaps most importantly, a tremendous level of perseverance. But everyone who knew him, knew that those traits personified Denny and his commitment to the birds, and birders, of New Hampshire and the rest of New England.

Denny grew up in Portsmouth, NH and began birding in earnest in the 1960s. His first recorded New England tick was a Green Heron on September 1, 1966 in New Hampshire. He spent the rest of his life birding throughout New Hampshire, New England and beyond. He kept detailed records of all his sightings, complete with annual logbooks detailing his searches for each new state tick. He



Denny Abbott (left) receiving NH Audubon's 2004 Goodhue-Elkins Award for his contributions to the study of New Hampshire birds, pictured with Steve Mirick (center) and David Donsker (right). Photo by Terry Abbott, 6-27-04.

would eventually reach #2,000 35 years later, on November 2, 2001. Number 2,000 was a Lark Sparrow at the University of Connecticut campus in Storrs, CT, just barely missing his goal of 2,000 by the year 2000. Connecticut birder Mark Szantyr was with him that day and actually made a painting of the bird for Denny. Mark would later say, “I was really honored to be there for #2,000.” Of course, much of Denny’s conquest was done before emails, listserves, and texts. Instead, over the years, Denny had developed his own

extensive network of hundreds of birding friends throughout the region. Mark was just one of many who were quick to pass along to Denny the details of the latest rarity.

Soon after I met Denny, I too took on the goal of reaching 2,000 across New England, an act that intertwined our lives over the next two decades. I was one of many birders who Denny took under his wing, and he was a great help to me on my early searches for birds that would be new for my lists, even though Denny had already added them to his own state lists long ago. One common theme of these searches was his impeccable knowledge of the highways and back roads throughout New England. Invariably, even though we would be heading off to some far-flung location in the region, he would know exactly how to get there. Who needed a smartphone app and GPS when you had Denny along?

As both of our totals grew, our searches increasingly shifted to extreme rarities across the six New England states. Denny would call me the instant he got the news of a rarity. When I heard his standard greeting of “Hello Mike”, I knew a chase would be in our future. Some of our most memorable were Mew Gull in Connecticut, Painted Bunting in Rhode Island, Black-backed Woodpecker in Massachusetts, Western Meadowlark in Vermont, and Bell’s Vireo in Maine.



The only confirmed nesting of a Barn Owl ever in New Hampshire. Photograph by Dennis Abbott, 9-3-77, Hollis.

Then there were our speculative searches hoping that a rarity might show up, often after a storm event. I'll always remember our trip to the Rhode Island coast in 2011 after a close brush by Hurricane Irene, when we spotted a Brown Pelican and a Sooty Tern passing by.

You may ask why no joint New Hampshire searches? You see, there was no need to carpool for those closer chases. Denny would almost always already be on site looking for those rarities, well before I had arrived. That was another common theme of Denny's chases. He would always be on site at "dawn's early light" as he would put it, leaving home as early as needed to be at the site of the rarity as soon as conditions permitted. Perhaps the ultimate chase, when birding was more important than sleep, was for a rare Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at Bomoseen State Park in Vermont in 2015. Soon after it was reported, we tried together for this mostly nocturnal bird, unfortunately missing it by minutes as we arrived just after dawn, and again missing it that evening as it reappeared minutes after we left in nearly complete darkness. Denny was back a couple of days later, leaving home at 9:00 pm and arriving on-site at midnight. Within minutes, he spotted the bird illuminated by the overhead lights at the park. Three hours later, he was back home. Later that morning, he called me to recount his overnight saga, simply saying he was pretty tired but happy.



The Variegated Flycatcher that Denny Abbott and Davis Finch identified in Biddeford, ME in 1977. Photograph by Davis Finch.

But it wasn't just about listing and the numbers to Denny. As David Donsker so aptly put it, Denny "had an encyclopedic knowledge of New England's birds, its birders, and its literature." He used his excellent birding skills to find many rarities on his own, as well as providing his

expertise on those difficult-to-identify birds. For instance, I remember Denny providing all the finer identification points to correctly identify that distant dowitcher we found in Vermont in 2011 as a rare Long-billed. But perhaps the most notable was the story of the Variegated Flycatcher in Biddeford, ME in November 1977. First identified by others as an exceptionally rare Sulphur-Bellied Flycatcher, Denny and Davis Finch spent four days searching for it before they re-found the bird (did I mention his perseverance?). Denny and Davis thought the initial identification wasn't quite right, and eventually realized it was a Variegated Flycatcher – the first US record.

Even as his health began to falter, he continued to add new birds to his lists. With the support of Steve Mirick, his last additions were the Wood Stork at Pickering Ponds (Rochester, NH) in August 2018, and American White Pelican in New Castle, NH and Great Black Hawk in Portland, ME in December 2018. I visited Denny at the rehabilitation center shortly after he saw the stork and there was Denny walking through the halls recounting the sighting to the staff, who were actually quite interested in his story.



Denny Abbott (left) with Steve Mirick after seeing the Great Black-Hawk in Portland, ME, 12-19-18. They were celebrating at the famous donut shop "The Holy Donut." Photo courtesy of Steve Mirick.

Denny amassed about 2,251 for his New England lists, with these estimated totals in each state:

- New Hampshire – 391
- Maine – 402
- Connecticut – 348
- Rhode Island – 354
- Massachusetts – 442
- Vermont – 314

I say "about" because Denny was a very humble man and he didn't publicize his outstanding accomplishments. Despite

these amazing totals, and a very justifiable opportunity to boast about one's successes, Denny still wouldn't publish his numbers, although privately, he would admit that he was most proud of his totals in New Hampshire and Maine. And why not? His New Hampshire list included such extreme rarities as Band-tailed Pigeon (1972), Burrowing Owl (1978), Black-browed Albatross (1993), Gull-billed Tern (1998), and Anhinga (2001). His Maine list included species such as Red-necked Stint (1977), Lesser Goldfinch (1992), Bridled Tern (2006), Virginia's Warbler (2006), Fieldfare (2017), and of course the Variegated Flycatcher (1977). (I still need all of these species for *my* New Hampshire and Maine lists!)



American Avocet photographed by Denny Abbott, 5-30-90, Rye Harbor NH.

As a postscript to my memories with Denny, allow me to recount our efforts together to search for Mississippi Kite in Rhode Island. Many of us likely remember when kites were first detected breeding in New Hampshire in 2008. That same year, breeding was detected in Connecticut. Many birders were able to study them at these known nesting sites, with no apparent impact to these rare breeders. Soon thereafter came a report of a breeding pair in Rhode Island, but unlike the New Hampshire and Connecticut birds, that location was not publicized, supposedly to protect the birds. All we could find out was that they were nesting in the town of East Greenwich. The rumor was that only one birder knew of their location and he was sworn to secrecy. Undeterred, Denny and I spent an entire day driving nearly every mile of roads in that town, hoping to just run into them. Not too surprisingly, our search was not successful. For years, Denny would continue to question why the location of the Rhode

Island nest was not reported.

Then, fast forward to May 2019, and once again multiple Mississippi Kites were being seen in that same town of East Greenwich, RI. Still needing that species for my Rhode Island list, I made an early morning chase for this target. As I waited for the birds to appear, I couldn't help but think that Denny was there with me, once again searching for Mississippi Kite together in East Greenwich. As it turned out, one of the other birders there looking for the kites was that sole person who knew about their nesting location a decade earlier. I could only imagine what Denny would have said to him about keeping that location private. When the kites finally arrived that morning, flying low over the treetops, I was confident that Denny was very happy looking down with much better views than mine.

Mike Resch formerly birded throughout New England, including hundreds of trips with Denny Abbott. He moved to the mountains of western North Carolina in 2019 and is enjoying studying the birds of his new area.

2019 Goodhue-Elkins Award

Presented by Chris Martin at the New Hampshire Audubon Annual Meeting, September 21, 2019.

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.

The 2019 award is presented to Iain MacLeod. From the time that Iain MacLeod travelled across the pond from Scotland and settled in the Granite State in the late 1980s, he has been involved in New Hampshire birding and especially with raptors, one of his life's great passions.

Shortly after starting as a NH Audubon staff member in 1988, Iain and several others joined NH Audubon Biologist Diane Evans, on a trip to Lake Umbagog, where they trekked through a bog near the Androscoggin River to build New Hampshire's first artificial Bald Eagle nest in a giant white pine on an island in the Sweat Meadow wetland. Incidentally, the following spring, New Hampshire's first nesting eagle pair in 40 years chose to lay their eggs in a different nest that the eagles built themselves, *not* in the pine tree that Diane and Iain's crew had selected. Eventually, however, the team's tree choice was vindicated, when 16 years later another Bald Eagle pair selected that same Sweat Meadow tree for their nest.

When he came to the US, Iain evidently packed an ample infatuation with Ospreys in his suitcase! Around 1995, when there were *no* documented Osprey pairs nesting in New Hampshire's Merrimack River watershed, he recruited part-time arborist Dan Geiger to help build an experimental Osprey nest at Turkey Pond. A bit later, he led the charge to build another artificial nest on Massabesic Lake, again with Dan Geiger's assistance. This second effort succeeded, when two young Ospreys were banded and fledged from the Massabesic nest in 1999.

During the 18 years that he worked for NH Audubon, Iain's contributions to the study of New Hampshire birds extended far beyond his staff responsibilities. His general enthusiasm for raptors led in 2004 to the establishment of the Pack Monadnock Raptor Migration Observatory at Miller State Park in Peterborough, in partnership with NH Parks. He pursued initial grant funding that led to construction of an observation area on the mountain's summit and cultivated a community of dedicated volunteer observers. Now an official Hawk Watch site, it has been in continuous autumn operation for 15 years. Iain remains an Observatory volunteer to this day, and is a fixture atop the mountain on Mondays as the official hawk counter. He's known for his incredible bird-finding abilities, excellence at identification, and enthusiasm for sharing his knowledge of raptors with visitors. Iain represented New Hampshire well while serving as the Hawk Migration Association of North America's Board Chairperson from 2007 through 2009, and he has also been a leader with the Northeast Hawk Watch.

In 2006, when Iain moved to the Lakes Region to become Executive Director at the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center in Holderness, he increased his volunteering as an Osprey nest observer. His talent for patiently tracking an Osprey as it plunged into a lake, caught, decapitated, and delivered a fish to a previously undiscovered nest made all the difference as NH Audubon tried to keep pace with a growing Osprey population in the state's Lakes Region, particularly after the species was delisted by New Hampshire Fish & Game in Fall 2008.

Eventually, Iain took on a lead role as a regional Osprey volunteer coordinator, organizing other local Audubon

volunteers, and tallying Osprey nest statistics for the entire Lakes Region. He identified sites that could benefit from installing a nest platform, then worked to make that happen by soliciting support to turn concept into reality. At least eight Osprey platforms/nests in New Hampshire owe their existence directly to Iain's dedicated work.

In 2010, he reached out to North American Osprey expert Dr. Rob Bierregaard and spearheaded efforts that ultimately led in 2011 to several New Hampshire Osprey nests being included in Bierregaard's wide-ranging satellite tracking research on Osprey migration. Over the next several years, Rob and Iain fitted transmitters on Ospreys from the

North Country, Lakes Region, and Seacoast, following many on their 8,000-mile round-trip journeys to the Amazon rainforest and back. At the Science Center, he implemented Project OspreyTrack, an educational initiative that followed New Hampshire Ospreys and revealed to people their amazing long-distance travels.

Iain has also assisted annually with Bald Eagle monitoring at about nine Lakes Region nests, finding several new ones himself. He has helped NH Audubon with eagle nest site management, communicating with landowners and promoting predator guard

placement on local nest trees. He has participated annually in the state's Mid-winter Eagle Survey in the Lakes Region over the past decade.

Iain's contributions also include running the Milan Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) route since 2002, serving on the *New Hampshire Bird Records* Editorial Team and writing numerous articles for the publication. Throughout his years in New Hampshire, he has also led field trips, shared his knowledge and inspired others. In the words of Iva Roger de Coverley on her award nomination form, Iain has been "spreading an appreciation for our birds and teaching the benefits of preserving these beautiful creatures."

For over 30 years, Iain MacLeod has been advancing our understanding and appreciation of New Hampshire birds, and especially our knowledge of birds of prey. For these actions, and many others I have not mentioned today, Iain is without question a well-deserving recipient of NH Audubon's 2019 Goodhue-Elkins Award.



Iain MacLeod (left) receiving NH Audubon's 2019 Goodhue-Elkins Award from Chris Martin. Photo by Dyanna Smith.

June 1, 2019 through July 31, 2019

by Pam Hunt



Introduction

While there were no significant weather events during the summer of 2019, the recent trend of cool and wet springs followed by warm and dry summers appears to have continued. Following a pattern set in May, June was cooler and wetter

both in New Hampshire and across the Northeast. In contrast, July was the eighth warmest on record in New Hampshire and localized drought conditions were reported from some regions. Any effects on birds from this otherwise uneventful summer were probably minor, with the most likely influences having been felt during the preceding spring.

Thus, it seems appropriate to start this overview of the summer of 2019 with a quick call-out to the tail end of spring migration. Several groups typically migrate late and show up during the first week in June, including Common Nighthawk, a handful of flycatchers and warblers, and of course shorebirds. At the same time, there are usually a few wintering species that haven't quite left yet, thus affording the lucky birder the chance for some interesting juxtapositions (Parasitic Jaeger and Mourning Warbler, for example!). There were a few highlights in all these groups, so read on for their stories.

The core of this report is traditionally the breeding season, a time of year less prone to wandering or unusual birds, but noteworthy finds always manage to turn up, a testament to the increasing numbers of birders and their dispersion throughout the state. At one point, Mississippi Kite would have fallen into this category, but now they've been reliable for over a decade. Perhaps, the next southern "raptor" to colonize the state will be Black Vulture, or maybe Golden Eagle will surprise us all and sneak in from the north. Both of these made news this season in opposite corners of the state. Less of a surprise is the ongoing increase in the "budworm warblers," all of which are responding to an outbreak of spruce budworm in southern Quebec (Cape May, Bay-breasted, and Tennessee Warblers). This season also saw intriguing records of Horned Lark and White-crowned Sparrow on Mount Washington. Neither species breeds in any alpine areas in eastern North America. Among breeding species whose populations are closely tracked, Piping

Plover and Bald Eagle had record seasons, while loons, terns, Peregrine Falcons, and Purple Martins held their own. On the flip side, Common Nighthawks continue to decline, Cerulean Warblers remain exceeding rare, and Northern Harriers seem to be absent from many historical breeding territories.



Little Egret by Jason Lambert, 6-8-19, Rye, NH.

Summer closes as it begins, with migration. Most of this is by shorebirds, many of which have only spent a few weeks on their arctic breeding grounds. A related phenomenon is the post-breeding dispersal of herons and egrets, which results in records far inland. This season seemed to be above average in this regard. And of course, there were the rarities. It's hard to say which is better, a July **Tufted Duck** or New Hampshire's first **Little Egret** in 20 years. Certainly, the most famous was the continuing **Trumpeter Swan** in Candia or maybe, although no birders saw it, the winner was New Hampshire's second-ever **Brown Booby** that rode a lobster boat from Massachusetts to Maine. There really isn't a "winner" here in any event, and the "bird of the season" can be whatever brought you the most enjoyment!

Note that I've taken occasional liberties with the taxonomic order in the summaries that follow. For example, loons are dealt with up front with waterfowl and grebes, even though they're no longer considered closely related. This is because ecologically they respond to the same factors and thus, it makes sense to highlight lingering Red-throated Loons in the same space as lingering Red-necked Grebes. Similarly, I've discussed Eastern Meadowlark in the sparrow section, rather than having it with the ecologically dissimilar blackbirds. These birds all share a habitat, and that habitat is rare in New Hampshire. What affects one species in a habitat type likely affects them all and, in this way, we can start seeing a pattern of where these increasingly rare birds occur in the state.

Waterfowl through Grebes (plus Loons)

While it is not uncommon to find lingering Brant from the spring along our coast in the early days of June in singles or doubles, it is much more unexpected to find sizeable

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flocks. On June 5, a summer season state-record flock of 26 Brant were photographed and observed by several birders as the flock appeared to move north over the course of the day. They were off Wallis Sands State Beach at 10:00 am (Jim Sparrell), had moved up to Pulpit Rocks by 3:00 pm (Holly Bauer, Steve Bennett), and closed the day at 6:45 pm in New Castle (Robbie Prieto). This flock was twice as large as the prior state-record for this period of the year.

The **Trumpeter Swan** first reported in April at NH Audubon's Abe

Emerson Marsh Sanctuary in Candia continued throughout the summer and well into the fall. As previously summarized in the Spring issue, this bird was the first New Hampshire record since the 1700s. After it finally departed in November, speculation began as to whether it will return in 2020. After all, other long-lived species such as Sandhill Crane have shown a similar pattern during their early colonization of the state. Perhaps, with some persistence and luck, a second swan (of appropriate gender!) will also find Abe Emerson Marsh and we'll have the species nesting here within the decade.

Lingering dabbling ducks along the coast included single Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal in Hampton. The latter was present at Meadow Pond in late July, while the former was most untypically seen and photographed on the ocean with Common Eiders on June 22. Inland, a group of four Gadwall (apparently two pairs) were extremely unusual in Hanover on July 11. Although Gadwall breeds as close as Plum Island in Massachusetts, even summer records in New Hampshire are fairly rare, and one along the Connecticut River, especially of four birds, may be unprecedented. Is it possible that they were failed breeders from farther south that happened to wander north (or perhaps south), just as many herons do? Also unusual in the Connecticut River Valley was a Ring-necked Duck that spent most of July at Bedell Bridge State Park in Haverhill. This individual was presumably

either injured or otherwise not inclined to migrate, since the location is far from the species' breeding grounds in northern Coos County.



Trumpeter Swan by Steve Mirick, 6-27-19, Candia, NH.



Tufted Duck by Leo McKillop, 7-27-19, Exeter WTP, NH.

While the Trumpeter Swan was cooperative and seen by many, such was not the case for the season's other waterfowl rarity. The young male **Tufted Duck** at the Exeter Wastewater Treatment Plant on July 27-28 was probably the same bird reported there on two weekends in January and on Great Bay in March. Assuming the same bird was *somewhere* in the state during the intervening period, it not only represents the second (or third, if it wasn't the same bird) record for New Hampshire, but also the first summer record for anywhere in New England.



Common Eider chick by Leo McKillop, 6-2-19, Seal Rocks, Rye, NH.

On June 22, Steve Mirick completed his annual survey of Common Eider along the Seacoast. This relatively complete yet unofficial survey of the coast yielded some 606 adults/subadults and 147 chicks. Note that we still haven't figured out where on the mainland eiders are nesting, but we suspect that tiny eider ducklings aren't braving the seven mile crossing from the Isles of Shoals. A handful of Surf and White-winged Scoters were scattered along the coast in

June and July, but far more unusual were the relatively large numbers of Black Scoters. After high counts of 80 or more in early June, numbers dropped to the 40s by mid-month and 20s near the end. There were still over 20 reported from scattered locations on July 8, but by the end of the month the high count was down to four.

Red-necked Grebes occasionally linger into June along the coast, and this year was no exception. Single birds at both Little and Great Boars Heads early in the month were still being reported into mid-July, by which point they started associating with each other and moved north to areas near the Rye/North Hampton town line. Similarly, Red-throated Loons were in Rye and Hampton on June 2 and 4, respectively, but were not reported any later into the season.

State-threatened Pied-billed Grebes were only reported from four potential breeding sites in 2019, spread north-to-south from Pittsburg to Dixville to Tuftonboro to Brentwood. A bird at Pickering Ponds in Rochester on July 30 was at a historic breeding site, but given the coverage this area receives, it was probably not present earlier in the summer and was likely a post-breeding disperser from elsewhere. The number of territorial pairs of Common Loons increased slightly to 313 in 2019, according to the Loon Preservation Committee; 221 pairs actually laid eggs, which ultimately produced 148 surviving chicks. Overall productivity of 0.47 chicks per territorial pair was slightly lower than the long-term average.

Cuckoos through Sandhill Crane



Black-billed Cuckoo by Kyle Wilmarth, 6-17-19, Salem, NH.

As is usually the case, Black-billed Cuckoos greatly outnumbered their Yellow-billed cousins. The former were recorded up through the White Mountains, while there were only three records of Yellow-billed Cuckoos north of Concord, all in July. Aerial insectivores (nighthawks, swifts, swallows,

flycatchers) are among the birds most likely to be affected by cool and wet springs, since such conditions suppress flying insect activity. Although late migrant Common Nighthawks are regularly reported in early June, flocks of 14 in Amherst and Holderness on June 5 are larger than expected for the date and might have been a result of delayed migration farther south along their route. It's much harder to explain a well-described nighthawk over Rt. 95 in Hampton on the very late (or early?) date of July 7. There have been no nesting nighthawks near the coast for over a decade, so this bird was most likely a wandering non-breeding individual. According to NH Audubon's Project Nighthawk, nesting nighthawks were suspected or confirmed at four traditional areas: Black Cap Mt. (Conway), Ossipee pine barrens (and adjacent towns), Concord, and Keene. A single bird near a traditional nesting area in Lempster on June 7 could have been either a migrant or breeder, but no more were reported from this location for the rest of the summer.



The only Sora report outside Salem was at a marsh in Portsmouth by Kyle Wilmarth, 7-7-19, Salem, NH.

Salem may be one of the few remaining reliable locations for Sora in the state. This summer multiple individuals were reported from both Geremonty Lane marsh and World End Pond, and juveniles at the latter strongly suggest breeding. The only Sora report outside Salem was at a marsh in Portsmouth on June 3, which may have been a late migrant. Virginia Rails, on the other hand, are far more widespread, although even these are underreported. Observers are hereby challenged to find this species at their local marsh, since they can occupy amazingly small and isolated wetlands without people even realizing it. **Common Gallinule** is even rarer than Sora in New Hampshire these days and it may have been decades since it last bred in the state. In light of this, a bird heard vocalizing in Swanzey on June 9 was the first summer record since one in Durham in 2006. Even more

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intriguing is the fact that a gallinule had been present at the same Swanzey location in late April and early May, but apparently went undetected in a heavily birded area for over a month. It was not detected again and presumably went off in search of other gallinules where the species is more common.

This season's only **Sandhill Crane** activity was concentrated in the vicinity of Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge and the Androscoggin River during the month of June, where two individuals were repeatedly seen. Presumably, these same birds were photographed at the Errol airport on July 23 (Lori Charron, Dick Dionne). None were reported from the long-term site in Monroe until just after the season ended, but one presumes they are still resident in that area. There was also a rumor of a pair in Nottingham in the same area where one was reported last year, but no record was ever entered in eBird.

Shorebirds through Terns

American Oystercatchers are increasingly suspected of breeding somewhere at the Isles of Shoals. This season, a pair was observed flying over Star and Lunging Islands on June 1 and again on Seavey Island June 25. If they nest at the Shoals, the most likely candidates are Duck Island (ME) and Lunging Island (NH) and, if confirmed at the latter, it would be the first breeding record for New Hampshire. Away from the Isles of Shoals, a single oystercatcher was observed flying south at Rye Harbor on June 13 and a pair was in this same area July 6.



Piping Plover and chick by Debra Powers, 6-9-19, Seabrook Beach, NH.

It was a record year for the state-endangered (federally threatened) Piping Plover in 2019, with 12 pairs and 20 young. Five pairs and ten young were in Hampton and the remainder in Seabrook. Sharing Hampton and Seabrook

Beaches with the plovers were a handful of nesting Least Terns for only the fifth summer in a row. Biologists at NH Fish & Game estimated at least seven pairs, of which two in Hampton fledged four chicks. The five or more nests on Seabrook Beach all failed due to predation, which also made it difficult to obtain an accurate number of pairs at this site. When not on the beaches, Least Terns were regularly seen in Hampton Harbor or over Meadow Pond. The state's other endangered nesting shorebird, the Upland Sandpiper, was reported throughout the summer at Pease International Tradeport, where 6-10 pairs typically nest. Chris McPherson found a flock of Killdeer, a widespread breeding species that doesn't normally get much attention in the summer, at Woodmont Orchard in Hollis which peaked at a remarkable 55 individuals on July 14.



Dunlin in breeding plumage by Jeanne-Marie Maher, 6-3-19, NH coast.

For most other shorebirds, summer in New Hampshire is part of their migration season. A few northbound birds can still be found in early June and this year the highlights were a handful of Ruddy Turnstones in Rye, a beautiful breeding-plumaged Dunlin on June 3, and the last of the overwintering (or northbound) Purple Sandpipers. These were all eclipsed by a record June high count of ten **Red Knots** in Hampton Harbor June 7. Note that Red Knot is also state-threatened, in following with its threatened designation at the federal level. Most knots pass north through Delaware Bay in their northbound migration, resulting in relatively few turning up in the Granite State.

Less than two months later, the earliest *southbound* shorebirds appeared in New Hampshire. This year the first was likely the Greater Yellowlegs observed at Lake Umbagog on July 1, although it is also possible that this bird had lingered from spring in the vastness of the Umbagog wetlands. If a southbound migrant, it might have been a failed breeder that left its boreal breeding grounds ahead of schedule. The main push of southbound shorebirds began the

final week in July, with the arrival of a Pectoral Sandpiper in Hampton and 60 Least Sandpipers at the Rochester WTP. By the end of the month, the floodgates had opened, with hundreds of Semipalmated Sandpipers on the coast. At low water, numbers of this species at Meadow Pond in Hampton regularly surpassed 1,000 at the very end of July, even reaching 2,000 on two occasions. Among the rarer species, several Stilt Sandpipers were reported in Rye and North Hampton. Many shorebirds are still building in numbers at the end of July, as evidenced by a season high count of 75 Semipalmated Plovers on July 22, compared to the hundreds to follow in August and September.

In something of a prelude to the fall to come, there were two Parasitic Jaeger records to bracket the season. The first was an unusual sighting from shore at Ragged Neck on June 2 and the second was an immature harassing terns offshore on July 28. Also seen on June 2 was a northbound Caspian Tern at Odiorne Point State Park and also two were seen heading south in Seabrook on July 29. More noteworthy due to its inland location was a flock of seven at Lake Umbagog June 26. The nearest nesting colonies for this species are along the St. Lawrence River in Quebec and one presumes the Umbagog birds were either late arrivals or early departures from Canada. The summer's only Lesser Black-backed Gull barely squeaked into the season at Rochester's Pickering Ponds June 1.



Parasitic Jaeger by Steve Mirick, 6-2-19, Rye, NH.



Arctic Tern in first summer plumage by Kyle Wilmarth, 6-29-19, Hampton Harbor, NH.

The tern colony at White and Seavey Islands at the Isles of Shoals had a pretty typical year, with an estimated 2,900 pairs of Commons, 80 Roseates, and one Arctic according to the tern project biologists. Although a few Roseate Terns are regularly observed along the New Hampshire coast away from the breeding colony, this is not generally the case for the much rarer Arctic Tern. Thus, it was noteworthy to have several records in June, including one roosting at Pulpit Rocks in Rye on June 2 and June 5 and one in Hampton Harbor June 29. The latter was a first summer bird, a plumage often called "Portlandica", an age class that typically spends the summer in more tropical latitudes of the Atlantic.

Shearwaters through Ibis

It was a slow season for shearwaters and storm-petrels in New Hampshire waters. Most whale activity, and thus whalewatching, was farther south in Massachusetts. So that's where the boats went and we only managed a handful of records of all four shearwater species, mostly in late July. Observers on a July 28 whalewatch tallied only 11 shearwaters, but that included all four species. Wilson's Storm-Petrels were a little more common, with scattered records from shore during favorable (offshore) winds.

A few Northern Gannets, either immatures or non-breeding adults, can be found offshore during the summer, but numbers this season seemed higher than normal. High counts included 40 along the coast following a stormy and foggy morning on June 29 and 60 seen from Pulpit Rocks July 25. Single young Great Cormorants, rare along the coast before September, were at North Hampton State Beach June 22 and White Island July 16.

To see the Summer 2019 Wilson's Storm-Petrel Records

- (from your computer)
- Open eBird (www.ebird.org/nh)
- Click on the Explore tab at the top
- Select Species Maps (on the lower left)
- Start to type the species name
- Select the correct name from the list that appears
- After the map appears, click the arrow by the Date tab
- Select "June-July," and "2019" to "2019"
- Click "Set Date Range"
- In the Location box type "New Hampshire" and select it from the list that appears (or Zoom in)
- You will see purple squares on the coast
- Zoom in (click on the + in the top left) until you see blue pins
- or check off "Show Points Sooner"
- The blue pins show the locations of sightings
- Note that both Maine and Massachusetts points appear
- Click on any pin to see the sighting details

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Although not seen by any birders, Mike Parenteau photographed an adult **Brown Booby** on a lobster boat offshore on July 26 – a remarkable find! The bird apparently landed on the boat near Wilkinson Basin, probably in Massachusetts waters, and travelled with it all the way back to Perkins Cove, Maine. In the process, it clearly passed through New Hampshire territory by default. This is part of a pattern of increasing summer records of this tropical species in the Northeast and the second state record. The first was a long-staying bird in Windham in June of 2018.



Least Bittern by Amanda Wilmarth, 6-12-19, World End Pond, Salem, NH.

Least Bittern was regularly reported from two locations this summer and presumably bred at both. At World End Pond in Salem, a high of four was reported on June 8 which, given the early date, suggests two pairs were present. Meanwhile, at the improbable location of a man-made pond behind the West Lebanon Walmart, another pair took up residence for the third year in a row. They were seen regularly from mid-June into August and breeding was confirmed when two juveniles were observed July 12.



Black-crowned Night-Heron by Kyle Wilmarth, 6-4-19, Newton, NH.

Although Great Egrets are expected inland in late summer, June records are much rarer. This season there were three: the first at Reeds Marsh Wildlife Management Area in Orford on June 1; one at Horseshoe Pond, Merrimack June 20; and an even more wayward individual over the Balsams (Dixville Notch) June 14. A concentration of 12 at Pickering Ponds was noteworthy for Rochester July 26, where they were joined by a remarkable seven Snowy Egrets and one Little Blue Heron (all photo documented by Alan Murray, see inside Front Cover), both of which are far less common inland at any season. Even more unexpected was an adult Little Blue reported from **Hancock** on July 24. Meanwhile, at least one adult (July 21) and immature (July 28-29) were reported from coastal locations. Black-crowned Night-Herons also have a habit of showing up inland as post-breeding birds in late summer, but repeated sightings of young birds in Nashua suggest the possibility of local breeding somewhere in the Merrimack Valley. This year, there was a juvenile on June 17 and another with two adults on July 31. Repeated sightings of an adult at a swamp in Newton also suggest possible breeding. Another non-coastal bird was heard overhead in the fog near the Charlestown WTP on July 26 (Pam Hunt).



Little Egret by Judd Nathan, 6-14-19, Rye, NH.

All these wayward herons, however, pale in comparison to the Little Egret found by Steve Mirick west of Wallis Sands State Beach in Rye on June 8, where it continued through June 17 before a final sighting at the Rye/North Hampton line June 19. There are only two previous records of **Little Egret** in the state, plus a presumed hybrid with Snowy Egret from April 1990. The first, on August 2, 1992 in Hampton Falls, was only seen by two people, but the second spent *six weeks* in Newmarket starting on June 30, 1998. Then, despite a generally increasing number of sightings in the Northeast (the species now breeds in the eastern Caribbean),

New Hampshire had to wait over 20 years before getting another. The 2019 bird was notable for still being in breeding plumage, with two long head plumes in contrast to the Snowy's shaggy crest. The bird in Rye was likely one of the two seen earlier in the year in coastal Maine. The lesson from this story is to always take a little extra time to check out Snowy Egrets, since you never know when another European vagrant may be among them!

Glossy Ibis used to be far more regular along the New Hampshire coast when there was still a nesting colony on the Isles of Shoals. When that site was abandoned in 2003, sightings became much less frequent and limited to migration periods. This year between three and six birds were reported at various coastal locations beginning in mid-July with a high count of 10 on July 28.

Vultures through Falcons

Black Vultures are clearly becoming more regular in occurrence in New Hampshire, a trend that follows on the heels of recent colonization and breeding in southern New England. The species is perhaps most reliable in spring and summer along the Connecticut River, which probably serves as a dispersal corridor for Massachusetts and Connecticut birds. The hotspot for the species in 2019 was North Walpole, where a possible pair persisted from the spring until at least June 16. Given extensive rocky ledge at nearby Fall Mountain, it's even possible the species is contemplating breeding here if it hasn't already. Another Black Vulture was in Exeter on June 6.

Equally intriguing in the category of "possibly breeding" were two adult **Golden Eagles** over Tuckerman's Ravine on Mount Washington June 10. Although this species historically bred on cliffs in the northern part of the state, there have been only three summer records since the last known nesting in 1956. Bald Eagles, on the other hand, have made a significant comeback and a record 71 territorial pairs produced 81 young fledged in 2019 according to Chris Martin of NH Audubon.

New Hampshire's tiny and isolated population of **Mississippi Kites** continues to grow ever so slowly. This year there were three confirmed nests for the third year in a row: in Durham, Newmarket, and Stratham. The Stratham nest failed sometime in late June, but the other two each produced a single chick, which seems typical for New Hampshire birds here at the extreme northeastern edge of the species' range. The nest in Durham was popular with birders because of relatively easy access, so much so that girls started selling lemonade and snow cones from the sidewalk in front of the house. At times, there was also a third adult at this nest, which was presumably either a helper or bird wandering

in from an unknown territory nearby (see the Field Notes). Similarly, two adults over downtown Newmarket July 13 could represent an additional pair, since they were not associated with the adult circling over the known nest site. For more details see Steve Mirick's article on nesting kites elsewhere in this issue.



Mississippi Kite by Debra Powers, 7-28-19, Durham, NH.

New Hampshire Audubon has just started a multi-year project which aims to update our knowledge of the state's small and threatened Northern Harrier population. Reports from the species' Coos County stronghold came from Stewartstown, Colebrook, Lake Umbagog, and Pondicherry National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), with breeding confirmed in August at Pondicherry. Much farther south, a pair of harriers at George Pond in Enfield on June 2 is especially intriguing, since there was suspicion of harriers nesting at this same location way back in the 1980s during the Breeding Bird Atlas period.

Although falcons are no longer considered close relatives of hawks, it makes some sense to summarize them here. Chris Martin reports that 24 pairs of Peregrine Falcons nested in the state this season, one short of the record set last summer. They had a relatively poor breeding season, however, with only 28 young fledged. Roughly 35 summer reports of Merlin



Merlin 7-26-19 Lori Charron Errol Airport NH.

came from all counties except Strafford, a clear indication of this species' rapid southward colonization of the state in the last two decades. Just five years ago in 2014, there were only 20 locations reported to eBird in June and July. American Kestrels, on the other hand, aren't faring so well. The same comparison yields 35 and 30 summer locations in

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2019 and 2014, respectively. While this is an increase, it's a much smaller one, especially considering the rise in eBird use in the state in those five years. This decline is part of a broad trend across much of the continent and remains poorly understood. You can help by reporting kestrels during the breeding season and especially by trying to see where the birds you see are nesting.

While Red-bellied Woodpecker has been recorded north of the White Mountains on several occasions, it's still rare there. This season the farthest north birds were in Chatham and Benton. A **Red-headed Woodpecker** was an unexpected find at a feeder in Surry July 9 and was only seen the one day. Black-backed Woodpeckers were seen in traditional locations such as Pittsburg, Lake Umbagog, Pondicherry NWR, and Trudeau Road in Bethlehem, as well as a few scattered higher elevation sites in the White Mountains, where they tend to be less reliable and/or occur in lower densities. To see where Black-backed Woodpeckers were seen follow the instructions above for viewing Wilson's Storm-Petrel reports.

Flycatchers through Pipit

As is typical for both species, the last migrant Olive-sided and Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were still moving through southern New Hampshire, where neither species nests, during the first week of June. **Acadian Flycatcher** is now almost annual in the state, but remains pretty unpredictable as to where and when it shows up. Most records occur from mid-May to mid-June, with some birds staying for a week or more. This year, after no records for May at all, Acadians appeared in scattered locations in southeastern New Hampshire in the first week of June. Single birds at UNH in Durham on June 4 and the Popple Island Wildlife Sanctuary (Epsom) June 6, were one-day wonders. Two at Pawtuckaway State Park on June 1 were in a more traditional location, but efforts to relocate them over the next week were unsuccessful until a single bird was heard on June 8, and that was it. Presumably, these are unmated males that find themselves north of their usual range (as close as central and eastern MA) and, after a few days of unsuccessfully finding a mate, they wander elsewhere.

A record of Horned Lark from Mount Washington July 29 is intriguing. Although there were no details associated with this report, Horned Larks are a common breeding species in alpine areas of the west and, since American Pipits are known to nest here, it's certainly possible that a wayward lark might be tempted to check out "The Rockpile" as well. Otherwise, Horned Larks are exclusively found at airports in New Hampshire, with as many as seven known sites in the early 2000s. Now we only know of two: Concord and Pease. They were not reported this summer at the latter, but this is

probably more a result of access than absence.

Ongoing efforts to increase New Hampshire's threatened population of Purple Martins had reasonable success in 2019. Although there were only two colonies, there was no repeat of the early season mortality seen in 2018, when cold wet weather caused both nest abandonment and adult mortality. The lack of mortality in 2019 can be partially attributed to the efforts of volunteer martin "landlords," who provided mealworms as a supplemental food source during the colder spells in late May. The two active colonies at Seabrook and Rye contained 11 and eight pairs respectively and, by the end of the season, had fledged 50 and 38 young. Martins showed early interest in sites in Greenland and Hampton, but did not stay to nest, and a bird in Nashua June 5 was suspected of visiting from a small colony just over the border in Pepperell, MA.



Cliff Swallow with chick by Jim Sparrell, 7-17-19, New Castle, NH.

New Hampshire's other threatened swallow species is the Cliff Swallow. Surveys by Pam Hunt over the last three summers indicate that there are 20-25 colonies remaining in the state, which collectively support between 120 and 150 pairs. The majority of birds and roughly half the colonies are in Coos County, with a smaller concentration in Tamworth. The four largest colonies, each with at least 15 pairs are located in Danbury (18), Tamworth (38), Milan (20), and Pittsburg (20).

Carolina Wrens are less cold-tolerant than Red-bellied Woodpeckers and, as a result, have not penetrated as far north. The range edge is generally from Hanover through the Lakes Region, so a pair of birds in Conway in early June were somewhat noteworthy. Birders seeking "easy" access (e.g., minimal hiking!) to find Bicknell's Thrush continue to have success at both Cannon Mountain and the Mount

Washington Auto Road, and increasingly along the access roads to the wind turbines south of Dixville Notch. Well away from the breeding range of either species was a thrush at Willard Pond July 1 that was either a Bicknell's or Gray-cheeked. Telling these two apart by sight, and without a photo, is often impossible and the bird in question also never vocalized. Swainson's Thrush was again found in the area north of Long Pond in Lempster in July, making this the southernmost breeding site in New England east of the Connecticut River. This species historically nested on Mount Monadnock in Dublin and is still found in small numbers in the Berkshires of Massachusetts.



American Pipit by David Govatski, 6-9-19, Mt. Washington, NH.

American Pipit has long maintained its southern breeding outpost east of the Rockies on Mount Washington, but occasionally there are reports from other alpine areas in the Presidential Range and elsewhere. This year there were reports from Mount Lafayette (July 29) and somewhere along the Caps Ridge Trail on Mount Jefferson (July 4).

Finches through Blackbirds

After a much better-than-usual winter for the species, Evening Grosbeaks were surprisingly rare in New Hampshire this summer, with reports from only seven locations. Most noteworthy were birds fairly far south in Farmington in mid-July and Stratham in early June. With another good cone crop, both Red and White-winged Crossbills began to appear by early July. Most were in the White Mountains and farther north, but scattered Reds occurred as far south as Lempster in Sullivan County.

As the second most forested state (after Maine), New Hampshire is far from a mecca for grassland birds and most species are of conservation concern. Grasshopper Sparrows are state-threatened and available data indicate that they are reliable at six sites in the state (although not always detectable or accessible!). These are the Concord, Keene, and Pease Airports, Cemetery Fields in Amherst, the old

Manchester landfill, and the old greyhound racetrack in Hinsdale. Together, these sites are estimated to support 30-35 pairs each year. This year, one or two pairs also took up residence in a weedy section of Woodmont Orchard in Hollis and here's hoping this site also becomes a regular nesting site for this threatened species. Vesper Sparrow may be in even worse shape and most records from the last few summers have been concentrated in the Ossipee Pine Barrens and the Merrimack Valley near Concord. There have been no summer records from Pease or Keene for several years. A bird inside the capped Manchester landfill June 20 (Pam Hunt) was thus something



Grasshopper Sparrow by Kyle Wilmarth, 5-11-19, Hinsdale Raceway, NH.

of a surprise, but was not located on a second visit in August. Eastern Meadowlarks are still more widespread than the preceding two sparrow species, but also declining and recently listed as "threatened" in the state. They are by far most common at the Pease airport, but small numbers are still found elsewhere in the Seacoast, Merrimack Valley, and Connecticut Valley.

Fox Sparrows are now regularly reported from near tree line in the White Mountains, as well as along the access roads for the Dixville Notch wind turbines. Although there are scattered recent records for the Pittsburg and Umbagog regions, none were reported from either area in the summer of 2019. Locations with Fox Sparrow reports:

- Turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville
- Mt. Garfield Trail, WMNF
- Zeacliff Pond to West Bond, WMNF
- Kinsman Ridge Trail, WMNF
- Cannon Mt., Franconia
- Carter Dome Trail, WMNF
- Mt. Pierce to Mt. Eisenhower trail, WMNF
- Glen Boulder Trail, WMNF
- Crawford Path at 4,000 ft., WMNF

A supposed juvenile **White-crowned Sparrow** was unprecedented on Mount Washington July 23 (Jonathan Mays). Although the observer wondered if it was an early disperser from nesting areas to the north, this would still mean a journey of over 400 miles, since the southern edge of the breeding range is near tree line in central Quebec.

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The fact that birds don't typically leave breeding areas until August or September makes this record even more enigmatic.

An adult male Orchard Oriole was far from its expected range at Bedell Bridge State Park in Haverhill July 6. Normally this southern species is rare in summer *anywhere* along the Connecticut River north of Massachusetts, although in the eastern part of the state, it is local as far north as Concord and Rochester. Another entry in the "intriguing and in need of further detail" category was a report of a pair of Rusty Blackbirds from Abe Emerson Marsh July 21. This location is on the coastal plain and far from any recent or historic nesting location for this species (southernmost regular breeding in the state is in Sandwich), which is also declining and retracting its range north. But in a world where Mississippi Kites jump hundreds of miles to the northeast and climate change is disrupting all manner of natural processes, who's to say that a wayward pair of Rusty Blackbirds could not have found Abe Emerson to their liking (the habitat is certainly acceptable). We'll never know for sure and that's probably one of the reasons we keep being intrigued by birds.

Warblers through Cardinal



Blue-winged Warbler by Wayne Scott, 6-18-19, Orford Rd., Lyme, NH.

A pair of Blue-winged Warblers in Lyme June 18-19 was notable for two reasons. Firstly, they were quite far from this species' core range in the state, which is generally south and east of Concord. Secondly, they were confirmed breeding via food carrying. The last nesting of Blue-winged Warblers in the Upper Valley was over 20 years ago, when both this species and the closely-related Golden-winged Warbler nested in Hanover. Another presumed Blue-winged was heard-only in Claremont on June 1. Although this is the expected species in most of New Hampshire, Golden-winged get more common to the north and west (e.g., the Champlain Valley). So, not only could a wayward Golden-winged find itself in the Connecticut Valley, but both species regularly sing the other's songs. There's even increasing evidence that they might not even be separate species.



Mourning Warbler by Steve Mirick, 6-2-19, Ragged Neck, Rye, NH.

Not having much experience as Summer Editor, I'm not sure how unusual northern warblers are in early June in southern New Hampshire. Classic late migrants like Blackpoll and Mourning are to be expected, but this season it seems that all manner of lingering birds were reported, including Northern Parula and Magnolia Warbler near the coast. Particularly noteworthy was a male Mourning Warbler photographed at Ragged Neck in Rye on June 2 (Steve Mirick), the same date and place as a Parasitic Jaeger! That's not a combo anyone would ever have expected!

Three other warblers of note had scattered early June records south of the White Mountains: Tennessee, Cape May, and Bay-breasted. These species are collectively called the "budworm warblers," because they're known to increase in response to outbreaks of spruce budworm, a moth whose caterpillars feed on spruce and fir. There's currently a budworm outbreak building in Quebec and in the last couple of years there are signs of it spreading south into Maine and New Brunswick. As it grows, so do the populations of these warblers and numbers reported in New Hampshire have shown a decided upsurge starting in 2017. This applies to breeding records as well, although with less coverage of these species' often remote nesting areas, the summer trend is not as obvious as the migration one. Stay tuned for a more in-depth article on these species.

At the opposite end of the state, Cerulean Warbler is an increasingly difficult species to find. While formerly reliable at Pawtuckaway State Park in Nottingham, it has made only fleeting appearances there for the last nine years, suggesting that whatever birds are stopping by are not sticking around. This year's token Pawtuckaway bird barely made it into the season on June 1. The more reliable location, and I use this term generously, is now Mount Wantastiquet in the extreme southwestern corner of the state. After seeing a bird here in late May, I was only able to hear it on a follow-up visit June 28. On July 5, Susan Wrisley spent three hours here before finally getting a look at the bird (see the Field Notes). Visual

confirmation is important for Ceruleans since both American Redstarts and especially Black-throated Blue Warblers can make an extremely similar song. With the species as rare as it now is in New Hampshire, we need to make sure things that sound like Ceruleans are Ceruleans.

Wilson's Warbler is not as rare a breeder as Cerulean, but it can be extremely hard to find during the nesting season. By far, the most reliable area is in northern Pittsburg in the vicinity of Scott Bog and East Inlet, although this summer there was an additional record from Errol. Another from Mount Osceola requires more information, since the species is extremely rare that far south during the breeding season. At the other extreme, a Northern Cardinal along Route 3 in Stratford June 26 was one of only a handful of recent summer records for northern Coos County in the last decade. Cardinals are gradually moving north, but North Country sightings are still on the rare side!

Sighting Details

The following listings provide details for the sightings mentioned above. There are no sightings in the listings that are not mentioned in the summaries.

Date # Location Observer

Brant

6/5/19 26 Little Harbor, New Castle/Rye R. Prieto
 6/5/19 26 Pulpit Rocks, Rye S. Bennett, H. Bauer
 6/5/19 26 Wallis Sands State Beach, Rye J. Sparrell

Trumpeter Swan

6/3/19 1 Abe Emerson Marsh WS, Candia R. Prieto
 7/30/19 1 Abe Emerson Marsh WS, Candia C. Duffy

Blue-winged Teal

6/22/19 1 Hampton Beach H. Wang

Gadwall

7/11/19 4 Mink Brook by River Trail, Hanover J. Norton

Green-winged Teal

7/27/19 1 Meadow Pond, Hampton H. Bauer

Ring-necked Duck

7/6/19 1 Bedell Bridge SP, Haverhill A. Cooley, W. Scott

Tufted Duck

7/27/19 1 Exeter WTP L. McKillop, et al.

Common Eider

6/22/19 753 NH coast S. Mirick

Surf Scoter

6/30/19 6 Bicentennial Park, Hampton R. Suomala, Z. Cornell

White-winged Scoter

6/16/19 14 NH coast S. Mirick

Black Scoter

6/5/19 86 NH coast S. Mirick
 6/22/19 47 NH coast S. Mirick
 6/29/19 24 NH coast S. Mirick

Date # Location Observer
 7/27/19 4 North Beach, Hampton S. Mirick

Pied-billed Grebe

6/5/19 2 Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook L. Charron
 6/6/19 3 Copsps Pond WMA, Tuftonboro A.& G. Robbins
 6/15/19 2 Brentwood Mitigation Area C. Guindon, C. Duffy
 7/28/19 1 East Inlet dam, Pittsburg T. Nauman
 7/30/19 1 Pickering Ponds, Rochester A. Murray

Red-necked Grebe

6/1/19 1 Great Boars Head, Hampton E. Pilote
 6/2/19 1 Little Boars Head, N. Hampton S. Mirick
 6/16/19 2 Rye Ledge S.& J. Mirick, J. Berry
 7/14/19 2 N. Hampton State Beach S. Mirick

Yellow-billed Cuckoo

7/15/19 1 Sanborn Rd., Ashland I. MacLeod
 7/16/19 1 Diamond Ledge Rd., Sandwich T. Vazzano
 7/28/19 1 Long Pond, Lempster J. Swatt

Common Nighthawk

6/5/19 14 Horace Greeley Rd., Amherst S. Spangenberg
 6/5/19 14 wetland by Rt. 93, Holderness T. Hodges,
 D. Weber, J. Negreann, M. Nguyen, P. Bradley
 6/7/19 1 Long Pond, Lempster J. Swatt
 7/7/19 1 Rt. 95, Hampton L. Tkacenko

Sora

6/3/19 1 Portsmouth City Park, Harvard St. J. Maher
 6/9/19 3 Geremonty Dr. marsh, Salem A. Markel
 7/15/19 4 World End Pond, Salem K. Wilmarth

Common Gallinule

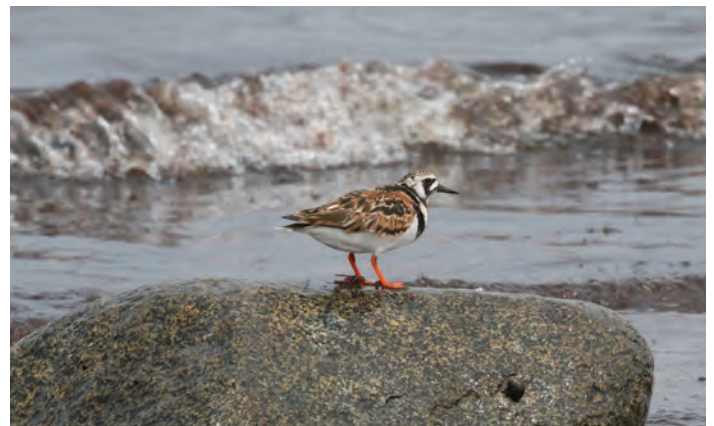
6/9/19 1 Airport Rd., Swanzey S. Spangenberg

Sandhill Crane

6/12/19 2 Leonard Marsh, Umbagog NWR M. Hardy
 6/17/19 2 Sweat Meadow, Umbagog NWR K. Regan
 7/23/19 2 Errol Airport D.& J. Dionne, L. Charron

American Oystercatcher

6/1/19 2 Star Is., Isles of Shoals S.& J. Mirick,
 J. Lambert, J. Sparrell
 6/13/19 1 Rye Harbor SP M. Resch, D. Donsker, S. Mirick
 6/25/19 2 Star Is., Isles of Shoals M. Marchand
 7/6/19 2 Hampton Harbor C. Payne, R. Perruci



Ruddy Turnstone by Jim Sparrell, 6-1-19, Rye Harbor SP, NH.

SUMMER SEASON

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
Semipalmated Plover				Caspian Tern			
7/22/19	75	Hampton Harbor	J. Swatt	6/2/19	1	Odiorne Pt. SP, Rye	S. Mirick
Killdeer				6/26/19	7	Leonard Marsh, Umbagog NWR	M. Hardy
7/14/19	55	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson	6/29/19	2	Hampton Harbor	K. Wilmarth
Upland Sandpiper				Arctic Tern			
7/5/19	4	Portsmouth Int'l. Airport at Pease	A. Robbins, R. Suomala, Z. Cornell	6/2/19	1	Pulpit Rocks, Rye	L. McKillop, et al.
Ruddy Turnstone				6/5/19	1	Pulpit Rocks, Rye	R. Prieto
6/2/19	4	Rye Harbor SP	S. Mirick, J. Lambert, J. Price, H. Bauer	6/29/19	1	Hampton Harbor	K. Wilmarth
Red Knot				Red-throated Loon			
6/7/19	10	Yankee Fisherman's Coop., Seabrook	P. Hunt, et al.	6/2/19	2	Pulpit Rocks, Rye	S. Mirick, et al.
Stilt Sandpiper				6/4/19	1	Meadow Pond, Hampton	H. Bauer
7/27/19	2	saltmarsh off Pollock Dr., Rye	S. Mirick, L. McKillop	Cory's Shearwater			
7/28/19	2	Little River saltmarsh, N. Hampton	J. Sparrell, K. Towler, K. Wilmarth	7/28/19	1	offshore waters	S. Mirick, L. McKillop
Dunlin				Great Shearwater			
6/3/19	1	NH coast	J. Maher	7/28/19	4	offshore waters	S. Mirick, L. McKillop
Purple Sandpiper				Sooty Shearwater			
6/2/19	3	Rye Harbor SP	J. Sparrell, S. Mirick, et al.	7/28/19	4	offshore waters	S. Mirick, L. McKillop
6/3/19	1	Rye Harbor SP	K. Klapper	Manx Shearwater			
Least Sandpiper				7/28/19	2	offshore waters	S. Mirick, L. McKillop
7/23/19	60	Rochester WTP	D. Hubbard	Brown Booby			
Pectoral Sandpiper				7/26/19	1	offshore waters	M. Parenteau
7/22/19	1	Hampton marshes	P. Hunt	Northern Gannet			
Semipalmated Sandpiper				6/29/19	40	NH coast	S. Mirick
7/27/19	2170	NH coast	S. Mirick	7/25/19	60	Pulpit Rocks, Rye	R. Prieto
7/30/19	2000	Meadow Pond, Hampton	H. Bauer	Great Cormorant			
Greater Yellowlegs				6/22/19	1	N. Hampton State Beach	S. Mirick
7/1/19	1	Leonard Marsh, Umbagog NWR	M. Hardy	7/16/19	1	Star Is., Isles of Shoals	M. Marchand
Parasitic Jaeger				Least Bittern			
6/2/19	1	Rye Harbor SP	S. Mirick	6/8/19	4	World End Pond, Salem	K. Wilmarth
7/28/19	1	offshore waters	S. Mirick, L. McKillop	7/12/19	4	Cranberry Pond wetlands, Rt. 12A, W. Lebanon	P. LaBelle
Lesser Black-backed Gull				Great Egret			
6/1/19	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	S. Bennett, S. Wrisley	6/2/19	1	Reed's Marsh WMA, Orford	J. MacQueen, et al.



Arctic Tern by Kyle Wilmarth, 6-2-19, Rye, NH.



Little Egret by Judd Nathan, 6-14-19, Rye, NH.

SUMMER SEASON

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
Snowy Egret				Purple Martin			
7/26/19	7	Rochester WTP	A. Murray	6/5/19	1	Pennichuck Water Works, Nashua	C. Sheridan
Little Blue Heron				Cliff Swallow			
7/21/19	1	Meadow Pond, Hampton	S. Mirick	6/18/19	76	Chinook Trail farm, Tamworth	K. Klapper, P. Brown
7/24/19	1	Hancock	P. Brown	6/19/19	20	Buttrick Rd. farm, Danbury	P. Hunt, U. Dienes
7/26/19	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	A. Murray	6/27/19	29	Tabor Rd., Pittsburg	C. Allen
7/29/19	1	Little River saltmarsh, N. Hampton	J. Maher	7/2/19	11	Bridge St., Milan	D.& J. Dionne
Black-crowned Night-Heron				7/20/19	11	School St., Pittsburg	R. Lessard
6/17/19	1	Nashua Dr., Nashua	C. Sheridan	Carolina Wren			
7/26/19	1	Charlestown WTP	P. Hunt	6/7/19	2	Green Hills Preserve, N. Conway	C. Lamond
7/31/19	3	Nashua R., Nashua	J. Maher	Gray-cheeked/Bicknell's Thrush			
Glossy Ibis				7/4/19	1	Willard Pond, Antrim	J. Barcus
7/28/19	10	Marsh Road Pond, Rye	J. Lambert, M. Ward	Swainson's Thrush			
Black Vulture				7/3/19	1	Long Pond, Lempster	P. Hunt
6/6/19	1	Rt. 27, Exeter	A. Wilmarth	7/24/19	1	Long Pond, Lempster	J. Swatt
6/10/19	2	Fall Mt., Walpole	P. Hunt	American Pipit			
6/16/19	1	railroad bridge, Walpole	E. Synnott	7/4/19	1	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	C. Hanks, E. Santos
Golden Eagle				7/29/19	1	Mt. Lafayette, n. ridge	G. Apte
6/10/19	2	Tuckerman Ravine Trail, WMNF	K. Omland	Evening Grosbeak			
Mississippi Kite				6/1/19	7	Brook Rd., Springfield	C. Flynn
6/1/19	2	Madbury Rd., Durham	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell	6/1/19	2	Barker Ln., Stratham	W. Chandler
6/8/19	1	Newmarket	S. Mirick	6/15/19	1	Meadow View Dr., Pittsburg	S. Thilkey
6/15/19	2	Stratham	S. Mirick	7/17/19	1	Reservoir Rd., Farmington	P. Frisella
7/13/19	3	Newmarket	K. Wilmarth	7/28/19	1	Pinkham Notch area, WMNF	Pinkham's Grant
7/21/19	4	Madbury Rd., Durham	E. Norton	Red Crossbill			
Northern Harrier				7/3/19	2	Long Pond, Lempster	P. Hunt
6/2/19	2	George Pond, Enfield	T. Perkins	Grasshopper Sparrow			
Red-headed Woodpecker				6/1/19	1	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson
7/9/19	1	Rt. 12A, Surry	J. Lundahl	7/25/19	5	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson
Red-bellied Woodpecker				Fox Sparrow			
6/2/19	1	Green Hill Rd., Chatham	B. Crowley	6/2/19	1	Turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville	N. Moreau, K. Fenton, L. Burford
6/6/19	1	Long Pond, Benton	H. Stevens	6/7/19	1	Mt. Garfield Trail, WMNF	B. Hillman
Acadian Flycatcher				6/12/19	1	Turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville	D. Foster
6/1/19	2	Pawtuckaway SP	R. Prieto	6/18/19	5	Zeacliff Pond to West Bond, WMNF	B. Hillman
6/4/19	1	UNH, Durham	R. Prieto	6/19/19	1	Kinsman Ridge Trail, WMNF	B. Hillman
6/6/19	1	Popple Island WS, Epsom	P. Brown, J. Ferrante	6/26/19	1	Cannon Mt., Franconia	P. Hunt
6/8/19	1	Pawtuckaway SP	K. Wilmarth	7/3/19	1	Carter Dome Trail, WMNF	B. Bolnick
Horned Lark				7/3/19	1	Mt. Pierce to Mt. Eisenhower trail, WMNF	M. Cahill
7/29/19	1	Mt. Washington, WMNF	F. King	7/7/19	1	Glen Boulder Trail, WMNF	P. LaBelle
				7/29/19	1	Crawford Path at 4,000 ft., WMNF	D. Allard
				White-crowned Sparrow			
				7/23/19	1	Tuckerman Ravine Trail, WMNF	J. Mays
				Vesper Sparrow			
				6/20/19	1	Manchester landfill	P. Hunt
				Orchard Oriole			
				7/6/19	1	Bedell Bridge SP, Haverhill	D. Gildersleeve, E. Marie, A. Cooley, W. Scott
				Rusty Blackbird			
				6/21/19	2	Abe Emerson Marsh WS, Candia	J.& R. Bushong



Cliff Swallow nest on the Pittsburg School (NH), 6-22-19, by Rebecca Suomala.

SUMMER SEASON

Date # Location Observer

Blue-winged Warbler

6/1/19 1 Moody Park Rd., Claremont W. Ward
6/19/19 2 Rt. 10, Lyme W. Scott, J. MacQueen



Blue-winged Warbler by Wayne Scott, 6-18-19, Orford Rd., Lyme, NH.

Tennessee Warbler

6/1/19 1 Penacook survey route P. Hunt
6/1/19 1 James Way, Hudson E. Lai
6/1/19 1 Pickering Ponds, Rochester S. Stoddard
6/1/19 1 Quincy Bog, Rumney P. Bradley
6/1/19 1 Great Rock Rd., Sandwich K. Klapper

Mourning Warbler

6/2/19 1 Rye Harbor SP S. Mirick

Northern Parula

6/5/19 Great Bay NWR S.& R. Laporte

Cape May Warbler

6/2/19 1 Pisgah SP, Winchester S. Spangenberg

Cerulean Warbler

6/1/19 1 Pawtuckaway SP R. Prieto
6/28/19 1 Wantastiquet Mt. NA, Chesterfield/Hinsdale P. Hunt
7/5/19 1 Wantastiquet Mt. NA, Chesterfield/Hinsdale S. Wisley

Magnolia Warbler

6/2/19 8 NH coast S. Mirick
6/6/19 1 Witch Is., Hampton H. Bauer
6/12/19 1 Federal Hill Rd., Hollis J. Maher
6/12/19 1 Odiorne Pt. SP, Rye J. Parrot-Willis
6/12/19 1 Rt. 103, Warner K. Hiller

Bay-breasted Warbler

6/2/19 1 Meadow Pond, Hampton H. Bauer
6/4/19 1 Contoocook R. Park/Island Shores Estates, Penacook P. Hunt

Wilson's Warbler

6/29/19 1 Mt. Osceola Trail, WMNF J. Anderson
7/16/19 1 Errol L. Charron

Northern Cardinal

6/26/19 1 Rt. 3, N. Stratford L. Burford

Summer 2019 Field Notes

Compiled by Diana Stephens

Pied-billed Grebe Nest Update

by Diana Stephens

This is a follow-up to the original article on Nesting Grebes by Lori Charron that appeared in the Summer 2018 issue of New Hampshire Bird Records (Vol. 37 #2) available online:

https://nhbirdrecords.org/all-articles/MississippiKites-PiedBilledGrebes-NHBR-Vol37_No2-Summer2018.pdf



Pied-billed Grebe parent with one of its chicks at the Panorama Golf Course in Dixville Notch, NH, 7-31-19.

Lori Charron first discovered the nesting pair of Pied-billed Grebes at The Panorama Golf Course in Dixville Notch in 2017. 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. The Pied-billeds returned in 2018 and, that May, Lori began to observe the nest and the family of six.

Lori describes seeing another brood again in 2019. "This season has been interesting, as I have been able to observe the grebes closer to their nesting area. On July 10, 2019, I heard a lot of soft, cooing noises near the nest. I took a quick peek and one of the grebes was on the nest and cooing to the eggs. I figured there was some hatching going on, so yesterday, I spent a little more time watching and I got my first look at two chicks!" The next day, July 11, Lori spotted more eggs in the nest.

This year she took few photos, as she was keeping her distance with a shrub between them. Like other grebes, the Pied-billeds create an open bowl-shaped nest on a platform of floating vegetation.

Pied-billed Grebes are listed as Threatened in the State of New Hampshire, although they are widespread and fairly common in most of the US and southern Canada. They can live on marshes, lakes and ponds from sea level up to about 8,000 feet. They find their food by diving and their diet can include crabs, shrimp, snails, mussels, beetles, dragonfly nymphs, aquatic insects, and small fish. Their diets can vary depending on where they live.

Tree Swallow Nest in a Cannon!

by Rebecca Suomala



At Memorial Park on Main St. in Pittsburg, NH there is a Civil War cannon on display. Zeke Cornell and I were at the park looking for Cliff Swallow nests when we noticed a bird going in and out of the cannon. It turned out to be a Tree Swallow that had a nest deep in the cannon barrel! The nest was so far back that only a loose feather from the nesting material is visible. Photos taken 6-22-19 by the author.

Three Adult Mississippi Kites Seen in Durham Nest

by Ed Norton

It was July 21, 2019 when I decided to visit the Mississippi Kite nest in Durham. I knew that early light was best for filming that nest location, so I got to the nest at just after 6:00 am. I didn't want to disturb the birds, so I set up my spotting scope on my window mount and stayed in the car. After zeroing in on the nest, I connected my digiscoping camera, started recording, and sat very still. I didn't even notice exactly what happened when all the kites were on the nest at once until I went over my footage later. Before I left,

the mate came back with some food which the adult on the nest fed to the chick.



A still shot from the video (link below) taken by Ed Norton on 7-21-19 showing a Mississippi Kite adult and juvenile at the nest in Durham, NH.

I have two YouTube videos to share. The first shows something I didn't catch when I was there, but only found when reviewing the footage. **Four kites in the nest at once!** One parent was feeding the chick when another flew into the nest with a third adult in hot pursuit! The third adult chased away the second adult as it was obviously not welcome, and the first adult continued to feed the chick.

<https://youtu.be/Nrsq3tAH0K0>

The second video shows several minutes of the chick with and without a parent, just hanging out.

<https://youtu.be/BN0k90kn91c>

There are definitely other kites out there as several people have found and suggested. I just wasn't expecting one to be so close to (and in) the nest!

Cerulean – the Color of Frustration

by Susan Wrisley

Searching for Cerulean Warblers may not be the most frustrating thing I've ever done, but it's high on the list. Each spring, I start my annual Cerulean quest by doing research, going to known locations, watching for alerts and following every lead. My husband said it sounds like stalking. I told him it would only be stalking if I ever managed to find one and, by the way, we prefer to call it "birding," not stalking.

Three trips to Pawtuckaway State Park yielded nothing, so when Pam Hunt reported a Cerulean Warbler at Wantastiquet Mountain Natural Area, that became my next destination. I arrived on a beautiful day and was greeted by a flurry of bird activity that left me feeling positive. I began my search, stopping along the way to talk to hikers who were curious about why I was staring up at the tree tops. They probably didn't really want to know all about Cerulean Warblers, but I enthusiastically told them anyway. I imagine

they now warn their children not to speak to people with binoculars.

After almost three hours of searching, my enthusiasm had waned. I had a bad case of warbler-neck and the only thing I felt positive about was all the birds that were not Cerulean Warblers. I'd had some possibilities, a few split-second glimpses, and songs that may or may not have been Cerulean, but nothing definitive. People, who passed by me on their way up the mountain, were now on their way down. A few politely asked if I'd had any luck yet, sadly, no. Discouragement had officially set in. I decided to give it 15 more minutes, then moved off the trail to get out of the way as a large family of hikers came up the path.

While waiting for the hikers to pass by, I scanned the canopy and considered the fine line between persistence and glutton-for-punishment, suspecting I'd crossed it an hour ago. Then suddenly, I saw it – a flash of sky blue and wing bars! I craned my neck as far as it would go and watched until the little bird hopped out from behind some leaves. A white throat and belly, streaks on its flanks and that necklace! I completely forgot about the hikers and loudly exclaimed, "Yes, yes! That's it! That's it!" Finally, a Cerulean Warbler in New Hampshire! As the bird disappeared into the leaves, I looked around, just in time to see the last of the hikers hurrying past the crazy woman with the binoculars.

One Woman Discovers the First Successful Bald Eagle's Nest in Concord in over 100 Years

by Diana Stephens

All photos taken by Diane Seavey in Concord, NH.

Diane Seavey began watching a pair of Bald Eagles in early October, 2018. They were always hanging around the same area, not too far from her home, which was convenient. She watched them land on the branches of trees, breaking and carrying the sticks in the air to build their nest. She decided to follow and track the eagles as they flew away with the branches in their bills. In January, 2019, Diane was so excited to finally find their massive nest and then, in February, she observed the pair mating. On the last day of May, a little head peeked up over the edge! In the third week of June, she saw a second eagle in the nest.

Little did she know, Diane, a NH Audubon volunteer, had documented the first successful Bald Eagle's nest within the city limits of Concord in almost 120 years. This is actually the first ever documented Bald Eagle nest in Concord, NH, since 1880. Bob Quinn thoroughly checked his references going back to the 1880s. His references only mention a few migrant eagles and zero



In October 2018, Diane photographed two adult Bald Eagles breaking sticks to build their nest, 10-4-18.



One of the Bald Eagle parents sitting above the two juveniles who are "branching" – moving from the nest to a nearby branch before they are ready to fly.



On October 8, 2019 Diane saw both juveniles flying along with one adult. She was able to photograph one of the juveniles sitting near the nest amidst the fall colors. Juveniles in the northern US remain near the nest well into the fall.

nesting birds for Concord. Francis B. White, who authored *Local Notes on the Birds at Concord, New Hampshire* (1937) listed six records of migrants that he was aware of between 1880 and 1937. He states,

An eagle is a rare spectacle here [in Concord] and a fine one, in self-sufficient haughtiness pursuing its undeviating course high above us to some remote region, often 'on the wings of the wind' without a stroke of his own.

The Bald Eagle had formerly bred throughout most of North America, but had ceased nesting in New Hampshire by 1950. Their numbers in the US had long been reduced by persecution by man and the Bald Eagle had stopped breeding in the United States, becoming rare by mid-century. According to the Birds of North America website, the Bald Eagle has undergone dramatic population fluctuations over the past two centuries. The first decline began in the 1800s. As settlers moved west, they cleared land for farming and eagles were shot for feathers and trophies and also because they were seen to be competing with man for fish. Below is an excerpt (Buehler 2000) explaining the history of the Bald Eagle in North America:

Often reported as abundant by early explorers of North America, the species was especially common in areas with large expanses of aquatic habitat, including Florida, Chesapeake Bay, Maine, and the Maritime Provinces of Canada, the Great Lakes and lake regions of Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan, the Pacific Northwest, including Northern California, Oregon, Washington, and Coastal British Columbia and Alaska. It was so abundant in Alaska that a 50 cent bounty was established in 1917, increasing to \$2.00 in 1949 before the bounty was overruled by federal regulation in 1952. Over 128,000 bounties were paid out between 1917 and 1952 (Robards and King 1966).

DDT residues in fish caused a further decline throughout the 1950s and 1960s, which prompted national recovery efforts. The entire Bald Eagle population in the contiguous United States was listed for protection in 1978 under the Endangered Species Act of 1973. The use of DDT was banned and restoration programs in New York and Massachusetts and a growing breeding population in Maine contributed to increased activity in New Hampshire. By the late 1980s, upwards of 50 individuals were tallied in New Hampshire in winter, with 20-25 staying at wintering areas on Great Bay, the Merrimack and Connecticut Rivers, and the Lakes

Region. Bald Eagle activity increased steadily during the 1980s with a substantial wintering population and consistent summer activity at two locations in the state. In 1989, a pair finally nested at Lake Umbagog in Errol in exactly the same tree where the last known eagle nest had been. Recolonization started slowly but in recent years the Bald Eagle population has grown dramatically and it is no longer listed as threatened or endangered in New Hampshire. Protection of remaining undeveloped shorelines on major water bodies will be a key to the species future.

Editor's Note: This nest is located on private land, so should be treated with sensitivity by birders.

References

- Buehler, D. 2000. Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), version 2.0. In *The Birds of North America* (A. F. Poole and F. Gill eds.). Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY. <https://doi.org/10.2173/bna.506>
- Foss, C., ed. 1994. *Atlas of Breeding Birds in New Hampshire*, New Hampshire Audubon Society, Concord, NH.

Mississippi Kites in New Hampshire

by Steve Mirick

In the summer of 2019, New Hampshire had three known nest territories for Mississippi Kites and two chicks successfully fledged. This is at least the 11th consecutive year that kites (between one and three pairs) have nested in New Hampshire in this isolated, rare, nesting “colony.”



The Mississippi Kite pair in Stratham, NH by Steve Mirick, 7-17-19.

Durham

The Madbury Road territory was first noted in 2017 and last year's nest successfully fledged one chick. In 2019, the pair moved down the street a couple of hundred yards and, once again, chose to nest in a white pine tree in someone's back yard. Also once again, the home owners were very gracious and welcoming to birders. This nest was visited by countless birders and apparently there were no major issues other than some minor trespassing. Incubation started roughly June 11 and hatching occurred approximately July 11. The nest successfully fledged a single chick. The chick was still being taken care of by the adults at least as late as August 27 and possibly on September 2.

Newmarket

This is the second year in a row for this pair at this spot and last year they fledged one chick. In 2019, they chose to nest in the same place, high in an oak tree in a front yard along a driveway in a residential neighborhood. This territory has not been publicized in order to discourage lots of visitors. (It's not in a very photogenic location anyway.) Incubation started roughly June 7 and hatching occurred around July 7. The nest successfully fledged a single chick. The chick was still being taken care of by the adults at least as late as September 1, but they may have left the region shortly after that.

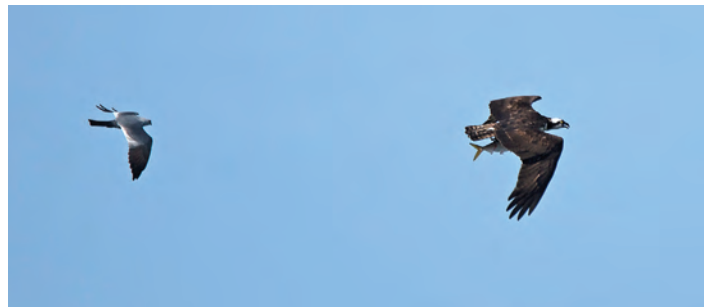
Stratham

This territory was first noted in 2017 and last year's nest successfully fledged one chick. In 2019, the pair moved down the street about a hundred yards from an oak tree to high up in a white pine tree. Again, the pair chose to nest in a yard along the driveway, but the nest was not visible from the road and the location was kept secret. Incubation started on June 15 or perhaps earlier, but the nest failed on or around July 1 when the pair abandoned incubation. The cause of the failure is uncertain, but there were some severe thunderstorms the evening prior to the failure. This nest was in a spindly white pine that swayed severely with strong winds and I suspect the egg was lost due to the wind during the storm.

Other Territories

There were no other confirmed nests, but there were intriguing reports. There were additional adult birds seen at the nest in Durham (especially when Ed Norton videotaped three adults in the nest! *See the Field Notes in this issue*) and another extra at the nest in Newmarket, so it's at least possible that there was a fourth undiscovered nest. The sighting and photo by Deb Powers of a kite chasing an Osprey in Durham about a mile from the nest site on Madbury Road was significant in that it appeared to reflect territorial behavior but was relatively far from the nest itself.

There were some suspicious sightings in Newmarket which indicated a possible second pair somewhere; however, Jane and I did a lot of searching with no luck.



Mississippi Kite chasing an Osprey by Debra Powers, 7-21-19, Durham, NH.

Observations

Here are a few tidbits I've observed over the 11 years the kites have nested in New Hampshire.

100% of the nests found in New Hampshire have been in residential subdivisions with mature trees. Nests are almost always in the yards of homes! The birds are oblivious to anything going on below them, whether it is dogs barking, lawn mowers, kids screaming, or hordes of birders watching them.

Tree types have varied and nests have been found in oak, pine, maple, and hickory, and the nest is always quite high, sometimes in outer branches vulnerable to wind.

Of all of the nests I have heard about in 11 years, I have never seen, nor heard about any more than a single head poking up out of the nest. It would appear that the kites in New Hampshire only lay a single egg! This seems interesting, since they generally lay two eggs in their normal range. Is this a modification in their egg laying behavior to accommodate a shorter breeding season this far north?

Food items I've seen have been mostly dragonflies and cicadas. I made one memorable observation of a kite eating a bat. This year, we saw an adult feed a chick a fledged juvenile Eastern Bluebird, the first bird we've seen being eaten by a kite.

Adult care of the single chick continues right up into early

September (or nearly one month after fledging). It seems like a long process and I wonder if the adults migrate with the chick as they head south.



Mississippi Kite bringing in a juvenile Eastern Bluebird to feed its young. Photo by Steve Mirick, 8-25-19, Newmarket, NH.

Steve Mirick has compiled some of his Mississippi Kite photos from New Hampshire here:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/stevemirick/albums/72157698355238091>

See also the story of the attempted rescue of a kite chick in the Summer 2017 issue of New Hampshire Bird Records.

A North American Big Year Comes To New Hampshire – Part 1

by Rob Woodward

The possibility of attempting a North American Big Year in 2019 occurred to me while spending the summer in New Hampshire's Lakes Region in 2018. I already birded Florida that year and planned to drive to Colorado at the end of the summer. I had seen plenty of birds in Arizona where I live and ended the year with 355 species.

What if I did the same thing next year and added Texas and California with a goal of 500 species? I decided to find out. In May, I birded Arizona, Texas and Florida. I included parts of the south on my way across the country. A long list of new species was also probable in New Hampshire and surrounding states.

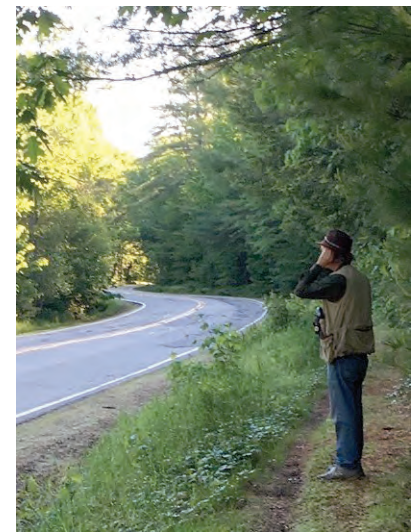
I arrived in Laconia at 4:00 pm on May 31 for another refreshing summer in the beautiful Lakes Region with 403 species tallied to date. I began the New Hampshire portion

of my Big Year searching for American Woodcock and have included highlights from my summer birding adventures.

June 1 – I consult maps and rely on my knowledge of the landscape of the Lakes Region to find an open field that should have woodcocks. I try my luck at the Route 11B fields at Old Lake Shore Road in Gilford. I park and walk the road around the perimeter of the field. It looks like a good spot. Soon after 8:30 pm I hear the familiar “peent” of woodcock (404), my first bird in New Hampshire for the Big Year.

June 3 – The long trip east diminishes my interest in driving very far so yesterday and today I bird locally, adding four new species yesterday at nearby Ahern State Park in Laconia, including a surprise Olive-sided Flycatcher (408). Today, I bird Cogswell Mountain Conservation Area in Gilmanton, finding six new species, including Purple Finch – the state bird of New Hampshire and #414.

June 12 – Two days earlier I visited Pickering Ponds in Rochester to try for Blue-winged Warbler. I'm kicking myself for not having searched for this species sooner since it stops singing in early June. Sure enough I missed it, so today I return one more time on my way to the coast. Again, I fail to hear the warbler so I try one more place that used to be reliable: Foss Farm in Durham. This is likely my last chance for this species. I am not exactly in the place I want to be and my memory of the area is faded, but I walk the trail I am on anyway. On the way back, not far from my car, I hear one buzzy song of Blue-winged Warbler (422).



Rob Woodward listening for Canada Warbler on Bog Road, Concord, NH. Photo by Lynn Trenholm, 6-8-19.

My next target is a real prize. One of two Little Egrets in the region is being seen daily on the New Hampshire coast. All I have to do is drive up and look at it, but is it ever that easy? I search the salt marsh near Wallis Sands State Beach and a few other areas but come up empty, but not discouraged. Instead, I add a few “common” birds like eider and tern and call it a day.

June 14 – I make my first trip of the year to the North Country in search of Mourning Warbler in particular. Finding nothing on Base Station Road near Crawford Notch, I try Pondicherry National Wildlife Refuge. Since no Mourning Warblers are present there either, I visit

nearby Mud Pond where I am sure I can find Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. I hear what is probably this species along the boardwalk on the way to the pond, but I need more than a single note. I walk back to where I heard the bird earlier and am soon rewarded with its complete song (426). I have now seen all 34 species of the breeding flycatchers of North America.

June 17 – Today is the day for a full sweep of the coast from Plum Island to Maine to round up the coastal birds I need this year. I start at Plum Island at the far south end where Piping Plovers nest and easily find one (427). Next up is Saltmarsh Sparrow (428), also not so hard, but I miss Seaside Sparrow. I then return to the New Hampshire coast. Once again, I am frustrated by the absence of the regularly seen Little Egret, so I will have to chase the one up in Maine. I stop in Scarborough Marsh for Nelson's Sparrow (428). The Little Egret was seen here also, but not today, so I continue up to Maine Audubon's Gilsland Farm just past Portland. A thorough search fails to turn up the egret. I return to my car, eat lunch, and wait. My hope is the bird will return while I sit here. This is too big a check mark on my list to miss. I walk the same trail again, finding first a false alarm Snowy Egret, then I see the egret with the long head plume – Little Egret (430)! I'm thrilled to find this rarity and relieved I don't have to expend more effort in New Hampshire to find it.

June 19 – By now, the road up Jefferson Notch should be open. Thankfully it is, so I drive up and climb the Caps Ridge Trail in search of the most sought-after species in the state: Bicknell's Thrush. I find Boreal Chickadee (431) from the parking lot and hear four Bicknell's Thrushes (432) singing from or near pot hole rocks, but I can't get a Canada Jay to react to the crinkling of a granola bar bag.

June 28 – Time for a whalewatch! Today, I join Zeke Cornell, Becky Suomala, Steve Bennett and Susan Wrisley for a trip with Granite State Whale Watch from Rye Harbor. After a foggy start, the skies clear and we are soon surrounded by Wilson's Storm-Petrels, birds I had seen last

week on a Maine puffin cruise. Then, I add the birds I came to see: Sooty (440) and Great (441) Shearwaters. Cory's Shearwater was a possibility and although we don't see one, we declare the trip a success.

July 3 – By now, I believe I have a good shot at reaching 450 before I leave New Hampshire and set that mark as my next goal. A special bird that I have a good chance of



A photo from the Pondicherry Wildlife Refuge trip, 6-14-19 by Rob Woodward.

finding up north is Philadelphia Vireo in Weeks State Park in Lancaster. I first look around the park for Mourning Warbler, but don't see any. A small bird catches my eye and I follow it. A better look shows that it is a vireo and with an even better look I see a vireo with a faint yellow wash below and dark lores, Philadelphia Vireo (443), the only one I see this year and a bird I haven't seen in years.

From here, it's an easy ride over the state line into Vermont to Moose Bog for Spruce Grouse, Canada Jay, and Black-backed Woodpecker. Despite hours of searching, I find none of those species. All is not lost as I come away with both crossbills (444) (445), two excellent finds. On the way home, I stop at Trudeau Road to look for the woodpecker, but no luck.

July 6 – I need Black-backed Woodpecker, a great specialty of this region, so I return to Trudeau Road in Bethlehem where it is being reported. After almost two hours, I finally get lucky and see one near the trail, it's even close enough to photograph (446). Another one is nearby and a third is seen on the way out. Total success!

July 16 – The prior week, I added Ruffed Grouse in Franklin and Roseate Tern in Wells, Maine. I now only need two more to reach 450. I failed to find Spruce Grouse and Canada Jay on a return visit last week to Moose Bog. Today, I return to the North Country to bag a Canada Jay, the last likely new bird I will see up north. I return to pot hole rocks on the Caps Ridge Trail and again fail to lure a jay. I continue up the trail and down the side trail. I see movement and then hear and see a grouse, a very special grouse, Spruce Grouse (449)! I've never seen one on the Caps Ridge Trail and had no expectation of finding one here today. In fact,

this is the first one I've seen since my first one on the Webster Cliff Trail on May 31, 1999. Throughout the year, I become reacquainted with many species I have not seen in years.



Lesser Yellowlegs, species #450 for Rob Woodward who photographed it at Hampton Marsh, 7-29-19.

July 29 – My last day of birding in New Hampshire this year (supposedly). I need one more! The only place left for me to find anything is on the coast where some shorebirds should be around. Sure enough, in some pools in the Hampton marsh I add Lesser Yellowlegs (450) and Short-billed Dowitcher (451). My summer in New Hampshire is a complete success as I add 48 species, 35 in New Hampshire. I leave the state on July 31 with no plans to return this year.

From New Hampshire I drove across the country and my Big Year plan expanded. Stay tuned for Part 2, in the Winter 2019-20 issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records*, when I return to New Hampshire in December of 2019, drawn by the lure of as many as 10 new species in a final Big Year push.

Rob Woodward retired from New Hampshire state government three years ago and moved to Arizona. He keeps up with the birds of New Hampshire by summering in the Lakes Region.

A Twist on Birding While Gardening

by Marie Nickerson

This story took place in 2018 at the Isles of Shoals on Appledore Island, which is technically in Maine. We include it here because the New Hampshire portion of the Isles of Shoals, including Star Island, is only a short owl flight away. – Ed.

I was working along the fence under the piazza that looks down upon Celia Thaxter's beautiful and historic garden

on Appledore Island (Maine). As gardening goes, this is a quiet, therapeutic task of mostly weeding and training vines to the fence, all while listening to the waves and birds so in keeping with island life. It was June 12, 2018.

I saw what I thought was an old root from an annual flowering plant. I grabbed it and was about to toss it into the compost bin, but once in my hand, I realized it had “bling,” a silver band I would not have expected on a flower stem. In fact, the silver band was on a bird leg, one of two in what I recognized as an owl pellet.

There were several Snowy Owls on Appledore during the winter of 2017-18 and I often saw them on the webcam I watch from home. The garden fence was a favorite roost. I had found many pellets in the garden in the spring, most of them containing the remains of the many muskrats the owls fed on, but this was the first I would find with evidence that the bird ate a bird.



A Snowy Owl pellet with a band still on the leg bone of the owl's prey. Found by Marie Nickerson on Appledore Is., ME, 6-12-18.

The unfortunate meal was a Black Guillemot, banded on Halfway Rock Light House, Maine, on July 15, 2009. I sometimes see them close to Appledore's shores, and they have become one of my favorite birds to observe. Thus my discovery was sad, though it did motivate me to research Halfway Rock Lighthouse, where I learned the conditions are extremely rough. Survival of a tiny guillemot chick in those crashing, tumultuous waters is indeed a great feat and surviving to presumably 2018 deserves a nod of respect.

It was much to think about at the end of the day, back on the porch watching the sun go down. Life is short, and shorter still for some. In the end, Mother Nature is amazing.

Record Productivity for Purple Martins in 2019

Compiled by Diana Stephens

Photos by John Cavanagh at his colony in Awcomin Marsh, Rye, NH.



A view of the gourd arrays on John Cavanagh's "Purple Martin Sanctuary" in Rye, NH.

This summer on the Seacoast, two separate colonies of Purple Martins successfully fledged young in Seabrook and Rye with the help of devoted volunteers. Pamela Hunt, Senior Biologist at NH Audubon, explained that the active colonies in these two towns produced a total of 83 fledgling martins, a record number of young since detailed tracking began in 2014. In Seabrook, there were 11 nests and 50 young and in Rye, eight nests and 33 young. These two sites are presently the only active Purple Martin colonies in New Hampshire. Earlier in the spring, Warren Trested, John Cavanagh and Dennis Skillman also helped install six brand new nesting gourds in Newmarket on land owned by The Nature Conservancy.

This work in Seabrook and Rye is supported by Pam Hunt's NH Audubon Aerial Insectivore Project and by the efforts of long time volunteers, including Dennis Skillman, John Cavanagh and Warren Trested.

Dennis Skillman posted his observations to the NH Birds email list:

June 7, 2019

After another cold and rainy spring, things are looking up at the Seabrook Purple Martin Colony off of Cross Beach Road. Unlike the previous two years, we did not find any dead, wet martins in our gourds. There was one dead adult male found on the road by a neighbor that appeared in good condition. The weather did pose a challenge, however. We did four supplemental feedings by placing freeze-dried meal worms and crickets in the gourds during breaks in cold, stormy periods, all of which had disappeared by the next nest check, so we believe that helped the early arrivals get through some tough weather. Below is my report from yesterday:

June 6, 2019

Warren Trested and I were able to get into **Seabrook** after the rain stopped and before the tide came rushing back into the "moat." We had eggs in nine of the gourds for a total of 34 eggs. One gourd had six eggs, four had five each, one had four, one had two, and two had one. We counted 15 martins leaving the gourds and 18 returning. Only one of the gourds had no nesting activity and four of the eggless nests had green leaves added. So, a big change in the last week! And much more egg-laying to come. No sign yet of the martins harassing the swallows, so I am thinking that last year's fledglings have yet to arrive. When Warren and I went to **Seabrook** yesterday, we saw what appeared to be martins feeding on the ground. This is something we have never seen before. They were continuously going to the ground around the gourds (to hundreds of feet away from the gourd rack and onto the surface of the high marsh). We watched for 5-10 minutes and it never varied. Up and down on a frequency of tens of seconds. None were seen carrying grass and most gourds had complete nests, so I think that can be ruled out. It appeared that the entire group was doing this.

On private land in **Rye**, a martin nest site with 14 gourds has eggs and more martins than ever. We also have reports of martin sightings at the restored nests at the Portsmouth Country Club.

July 16, 2019

Synchrony! Martins fledged today at our NH Audubon sponsored site on Cross Beach Road and also at a private nest site at Awcomin Marsh in **Rye** where at least 12 took to the air. There could be as many as 28 newly emerged birds at **Seabrook** this week. Another group of 20 could fledge late this week to early next week and we have six nests that we haven't checked recently that looked ready for egg laying one and a half weeks ago. Fingers are crossed that the extreme heat forecast for the end of the week doesn't cause any losses.



Three newborn Purple Martins just emerged from their eggs (Day 1), with three more to go. Photo taken on June 19, 2019.



Six hatching Purple Martins looking a little bigger on Day 7 (6-26-19).



On Day 14 (7-3-19) they are beginning to look like birds, with feathers! Nest monitors have to stop doing nest checks when the nestlings are about two weeks old because the young could jump from the nest so it's difficult to get close-ups of later stages.

Bird Watchers of New Hampshire on Facebook

by Charlee Breen



A roosting Common Nighthawk found at Pickering Ponds and shared on Bird Watchers of New Hampshire. Len Medlock took this photo of the bird's huge mouth used to catch insects in flight. Photo taken on 5-27-17, Rochester, NH.

Bird Watchers of New Hampshire (BWoNH) is a Facebook group dedicated to the identification, preservation, and appreciation of the wild birds found in the state of New Hampshire. The group also tries to provide education about these wonderful birds. With over 9,400 members, it has grown significantly into a massive flock of members, but where did its journey begin?

Its birth began with the loss of a loved one. My father was a nature lover, specifically bass fishing, and loved observing the birds and their behavior. Sadly, he passed away in 2012 from a terminal illness. I was very close to him and I used photography to help cope with this massive loss. I quickly found that I was photographing birds but was not able to identify them. My father had always been my personal "field guide" and since he was no longer there to help, I began searching google for my "yellow bird in New Hampshire." I found online searching was overwhelming and time consuming. Sometimes, I was unable to find my answer with certainty, leaving me feeling as if I needed a second opinion on my identification, but I had no one to turn to anymore. I was *really* missing my father's keen ability to identify birds by my description and sometimes, by just the behavior. I reflected back to the end of his life.

He had been bed bound for several months and it was really hard for him to be without nature as this is where he felt most grounded. He thoroughly enjoyed seeing nature photos on my personal Facebook page, especially the birds. This was his only outlet back into the beautiful wilderness of his beloved New Hampshire. His eyes would light up at the glimpses of the local wildlife and while he longed to be out himself, it was the next best thing. I was fortunate to be able

to share these moments with him. How many other elderly, disabled, or terminal folks could benefit from a bit of joy and beauty that so many take for granted? How could I bring that same spark of joy to them, that my own father enjoyed so much?

How could I educate myself in a fun, interactive way where others could join in the journey? There must be others also struggling to identify birds. I felt overwhelmed by the amount of information out there online. I was frustrated that I couldn't find groups with local photos and videos.

After a bit of reflection, Bird Watchers of New Hampshire was hatched in June 2013 and immediately dedicated to my father who had shared his love of the birds with me. In doing this, it allowed me to begin a new passion in life, Birding.

When BWoNH was created, I had hoped for 100 members someday, 200 would have *delighted* me, but I had no idea that the flock would grow so large! In the beginning of 2020 there were over 9,400 members locally and from around the world! Some who visited from abroad have joined to gain an education in biology and/or ornithology, some because they are planning to visit and want to find good birding locations. Locals include beginners to more advanced birders, rescuers/rehabilitators, NH Fish & Game employees and biologists, local animal control officers, artists seeking inspiration, teachers, amateur and professional photographers and more. It's become a platform for questions about behavior and identification, photo sharing, locations, rescues in need of transport, fundraisers, cover photo contests for the members and much more! The group is intended to focus on *local* birds, but we allow birds from around the world on the first Wednesday of each month. We refer to this day as "Around the World Wednesday" or "AWW." The group has even had a few local rare birds come to light that might have otherwise been unknown. This includes a Hudsonian Godwit at Pickering Ponds in Rochester found by Julie Twombly in 2017, and a roosting Common Nighthawk also at Pickering Ponds. The nighthawk roosted in the same spot of the same branch of the same tree for 11 days where many birders were able to take advantage of this unique opportunity to see a hard-to-find species. The photographers on the group are fantastic, from amateur to award winning and a great mix of video clips are provided as well, all zoomed in on our local birds. The members are great about sharing finds or experiences and most feel comfortable asking questions as the other members proceed to help educate.

People who have Facebook accounts can send a request to join here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/bwonh/>

The group is listed as "closed" but this is just a privacy setting. The group is open to anyone of any level of experience.

The Ospreys are Back at the Strafford County Complex!

by Dan Hubbard

In the Winter 2018-19 issue of New Hampshire Bird Records we reported on the installation of a new Osprey nest platform at Strafford County Farm in Dover, NH. Here's the full story with a very satisfying conclusion. – Ed.



Longtime NH Audubon volunteer and author, Dan Hubbard, trying to stay warm at the installation site. Winter can be the best time to erect an Osprey nest platform, long before the birds return to nest. Photo by Sue Bickford, Dover, NH, 2-26-19.

On October 16, 2003, a UNH Thompson School college crew supervised by A.J. Dupere placed an Osprey nest platform 64 feet up in a 20.5 inch diameter live white pine located next to the Cocheco River at the Strafford County Farm property in Dover. A wrap of sheet metal flashing was installed as a predator guard. Those involved were UNH Cooperative Extension forester Don Black, NH Audubon raptor biologist Chris Martin, Forester A.J. Dupere and five forestry students, Public Service of NH Environmental Department employees Dick Dumore and John Libby, and 2003-2004 Strafford County Commissioners George Maglaras, Ronald Chagnon, and Calvin Schroeder. Chris Martin gave the late Don Black full credit for the idea of establishing the Osprey nest platform.

The original platform was occupied annually from 2004 until 2015. Data obtained since 2005 was gathered by the author. From 2004-2015, 9 of 12 nesting attempts were successful. A total of 20 young fledged. The 2007, 2014 and 2015 attempts failed during incubation. After the last two failures, in May of 2016, Chris Martin and Dan Hubbard replaced the predator guard that had fallen off the tree. The Osprey, however, did not subsequently use the platform for nesting.

In March of 2018, it was determined that the Osprey



A brand new Osprey platform at the Strafford County Complex in Dover. Here, the new platform is about to be raised onto a new pole. Photo by Sue Bickford, Dover, NH, 2-26-19.



The new platform is attached to the new pole. Photo by Sue Bickford, Dover, NH, 2-26-19.



The platform and pole are finally up! Photo by Sue Bickford, Dover, NH, 2-26-19.

nest platform was in poor condition and would need to be repaired or replaced. After approval from County Administration, the author, with input from County Forester Andrew Fast and Chris Martin, pursued this objective. It was decided that a new nest platform would be most feasible and a new site on the conserved property was chosen. Seacoast Chapter of NH Audubon member Richard Bickford volunteered to build a new platform with funding provided by the Chapter. Richard contacted Eversource, who agreed to donate the installation of a pole to support the nest platform.

The new Osprey nest platform was erected on February 26, 2019 under frigid and blustery conditions. A hardy crew from Eversource subcontractor JCR Construction Company, Inc. of Raymond performed the pole installation. Richard's wife Sue Bickford created a short video of the process that can be viewed at:

<https://spark.adobe.com/video/ggOOIFkHM0Lhd>.

In May, 2019, a pair of Osprey returned from migration and built a nest on the new platform. They hatched three chicks, one of which was a runt that was not observed beyond July 22. In early August, the remaining two were testing their wings and were ready to fledge. Hopefully the Osprey pair will nest and successfully fledge young for many years into the future on a nest platform built to last.

Commissioners George Maglaras, Bob Watson, and Deanna Rollo, at their weekly meeting on May 16, 2019, thanked all those involved in the efforts to build and install the new Osprey nest platform for their hard work to ensure that Osprey return to Strafford County to nest along the Cocheco River. All attendees then reassembled at an overlook of the new platform to observe the accommodating Osprey pair on their nest using scopes provided by Richard and Sue Bickford.

Information on the first nest platform provided by Chris Martin.



After the new pole and platform are installed, two adult Ospreys are seen here mating on the new platform. Photo by Alan Murray, Dover, NH, 4-25-19.

Birding the Mount Washington Valley – Part 2

Areas beyond NH Audubon’s Dahl Wildlife Sanctuary

by Charlie Nims



The 1785 fields, a great birding location in North Conway, by Charlie Nims.

Recently, Phil Brown and I wrote an article for *New Hampshire Bird Records* (Fall 2017, Vol. 37 #3) in which we featured NH Audubon’s Dahl Wildlife Sanctuary, a true birding gem in the Mt. Washington Valley (MWV). Recently there has been a major land management project to restore it to more grassland and shrubland habitat. While the birding still should be exciting, the early successional nature will impact some of the species that normally nest at Dahl WS. There are, however, additional areas worth exploring if you find yourself in “the Valley” as locals call it. So, this article describes several local “patches” that you might enjoy exploring. By and large, they have been under birded although there is lots of potential so who knows what discoveries are out there!

I want to acknowledge Will Broussard and Rick Steber who have made major contributions to this article.

The 1785 Trails & Fields (by Will Broussard)

The “1785 trails & fields” birding location is a loosely connected series of hay fields along the Saco River a mile north of North Conway village, NH. These flat, wide trails are maintained by the Mt. Washington Valley Ski Touring & Snowshoe Foundation and are accessed from a dirt parking lot located at the terminus of a narrow gravel road between the Cabernet Inn and the 1785 Inn at 3582 White Mountain Highway (Rt. 16) in North Conway. Bear left as you turn in between the Inns (a driveway goes straight). For those wanting to take an easy walk for their sightings, the 1785 fields are an excellent year round source of open field,

raptor and wetland species.

Breeding birds include Bobolink, Savannah Sparrow, and Eastern Bluebird. In spring, look for returning Palm Warblers and Eastern Phoebes in the narrow forested sections dividing fields, along with Cedar Waxwings and Red-eyed Vireos. In summertime, keep an eye out for Peregrine Falcon (has nested nearby), American Kestrel, and Bald Eagle which is possible at any time of year. In late summer, migrating Common Nighthawks can be seen in large numbers. During autumn, the fields are used as a NH Fish and Game pheasant stocking site, so be mindful of introduced game birds and hunters – wear some blaze orange! Fall is great for raptor migration as the open fields provide unrestricted views of southbound migrants including Broad-winged Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Merlin, and Northern Harrier.

Continue north on the mowed trails adjacent to the parking lot and along a meandering brook to its intersection with the gravel extension of Hill N Vale Lane to access an old crop field. This field is used as a staging area by migrating sparrows, including Song, Savannah, White-throated, Swamp, White-crowned, Field, Lincoln’s, Fox and, in wintertime, American Tree Sparrow. It is also an ideal location for large flocks of Yellow-rumped Warbler, American Goldfinch, American Robin, Indigo Bunting, Northern Flicker and American Pipit. In wetland areas throughout the 1785 fields & trails, species such as Green Heron, Red-winged Blackbird, Ring-necked, American Black and Wood Ducks, Mallard, American Redstart, and Black-capped Chickadee can be found. On occasion, you might come across Northern River Otter.

Thorne Pond Conservation Area

The Thorne Pond Conservation area, located in Bartlett, is centered around the Attitash Mountain ski area’s small retention pond adjacent to the Saco River with surrounding wetland and mixed shrub/woodland habitat. It is most often used by locals who walk the 0.5 mile loop around the pond. During spring and fall, it can be a very productive birding spot



as 87 species have been recorded with limited birder visitation.

A signed parking area is located directly off of Route 302 opposite the entrance to Attitash Bear Peak (0.75 miles west of the main Attitash Mountain ski area parking). The pond loop starts immediately from the parking lot.

In early spring there can be a reasonable variety of waterfowl species including Wood Duck, Green-winged Teal, Common Merganser, Ring-necked Duck, Hooded Merganser and Bufflehead along with Canada Goose and Common Loon. The mergansers breed in the general area. American Woodcock is a very early arrival. As would be expected, Eastern Phoebe is one of the first songbird arrivals and nests in a small pump house at the edge of the pond. As spring progresses, the expected passerines start appearing led by Blue-headed Vireo, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Pine Warbler and Yellow-rumped Warbler. In May, almost any of the migrating warbler species might be found.

In my experience, the best time for sparrows is the fall when there can be a collection of Chipping, Song, Swamp, Savannah, White-throated, White-crowned, and Lincoln's Sparrows and Dark-eyed Junco. They tend to gather in the shrub and grass along the pond's edge.

My personal approach to birding the area is to do the pond loop counter clockwise and halfway around the pond take a side trip to the Saco River via a ~30 yard spur trail. Hooded and Common Merganser can be around from spring through fall. Frequently, a Great Blue Heron will be present along with Belted Kingfisher and, on rare occasion, Green Heron. Raptors to be seen include Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Broad-winged Hawk and Red-tailed Hawk. If one has time, there are several cross country ski paths leading from the loop trail that can be explored for more of the woodland bird species. Returning, as one approaches the starting point of the loop, there is an old stand of apple trees that are "bird friendly" during migration. Finally, keep an eye out in the pond as Northern River Otter is frequently spotted.

Given that this area is in the Saco River Valley, almost anything can show up during migration. In October 2003, Bob Crowley had a Common Eider in Thorne Pond! Again in October, but in 2016, Rick Steber photographed a Black Scoter. In fall 2017, the Red Crossbill subspecies Western Hemlock Type 3, was recorded on several occasions. In early September 2017, a neat



Tennessee Warbler by Charlie Nims, Thorne Pond, Bartlett, NH.

personal experience was observing three migrating Bay-breasted Warblers close to eye level in a clump of birch while a Tennessee Warbler was also present.

Mountain Pond (by Rick Steber)

Although Mountain Pond is in Chatham, it is actually accessed from Route 16/302 in Intervale. Driving north from North Conway, turn right (east) onto Town Hall Rd., then drive 6.6 miles to a marked parking lot for the pond on the right. About halfway along this road, one passes a gate and while the road turns to gravel, it is drivable by most vehicles.

To enjoy this 100-acre, natural pond, walk from the parking lot trailhead, approximately 0.3 miles to the western end of the pond where a loop trail begins. This three-mile trail circumnavigates Mountain Pond although one can get a good feel for the area and its birds without having to hike the full loop. The terrain is fairly flat but rocky in places. Along this largely wooded path are a variety of habitats consisting of mostly pine and deciduous woods as well as several marshy areas. To the right and through the woods are beaver ponds along the outflow from Mountain Pond.

The Mountain Pond area is typical of northern New Hampshire woods and is home to a variety of species both resident and migratory. Although not heavily birded, to date 94 species have been recorded in eBird's Mountain Pond hotspot.

Mountain Pond features two highlight species. First, Olive-sided Flycatcher which has been seen and heard giving its "quick three beers" call over the past several years although breeding has not yet been confirmed. Second, a Common Loon pair has successfully nested for several years.



Common Loon by Charlie Nims, Thorne Pond, Bartlett NH.

Twenty warbler species including Bay-breasted and Cape May have been recorded, many of which are resident, as well as a half dozen flycatcher species including *Empidonax* flycatchers, Eastern Wood-Pewee, and Great Crested Flycatcher. Typical resident species include Blue Jay, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Black-capped Chickadee, Brown Creeper, and Common Raven, as well as woodland hawks such as Broad-winged and Sharp-shinned.

In addition to the pair of breeding Common Loons, Hooded Mergansers utilize duck boxes installed on trees along the shoreline. Mallard and Wood Duck are also residents. “Occasional” species include Osprey, Spotted Sandpiper and Belted Kingfisher. Northern Waterthrush with its distinctive loud calls and chip notes breeds in the perimeter wetland habitat.

All five of the expected woodpeckers are found: Hairy, Downy, Pileated, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Northern Flicker. Throughout spring and early summer, one constantly hears Blue-headed and Red-eyed Vireos, Winter Wren, Ovenbird, and a nice variety of breeding wood warblers. On occasion, a few boreal species are found at Mountain Pond such as Pine Siskin, Red Crossbill and Purple Finch.

The best time of year to visit Mountain Pond is during spring and early summer. If you are lucky, you might find migrating Bay-breasted Warblers and hear native Barred Owls which also inhabit the forests. Lastly, there are Moose which routinely occupy the woods surrounding Mountain Pond as well as active American Beavers in the wetlands.

Tin Mountain Conservation Center

Although not thought of as a birding destination, the Tin Mountain Conservation Center in Albany is worth a visit, especially for families. Its Nature Learning Center is an attractive facility containing lots of nature resources and hosting many child-friendly as well as adult programs. Its major mission is environmental education both at its center and in outreach classes at local schools. Throughout the Valley, it has several large wood lots which are beyond the scope of this article although one of them has hosted nesting Common Nighthawks.

To do some birding here or just enjoy the woods and a nice pond, there are several trails leaving from the Nature Learning Center (maps available) into its 160 acre Albany property. The 66 species found here tend to be similar to those in the other areas described above. Notably, studies have shown that this property has a very high concentration of Black-throated Blue Warblers. The property also has a large concentration of Mountain Laurel, an absolute delight during its June blooming season.

The Tin Mountain Conservation Center is located at 1245 Bald Hill Rd. in Albany, NH. To reach it from North Conway, head south on Rt. 16. About 0.5 miles south of the Route 16 junction with the Kancamagus Highway, turn right onto Bald Hill Rd., and drive 1.1 miles. The facility and parking lot are signed.

If I may be of any help, please feel free to contact me at charlie.nims@gmail.com. All birding data has been sourced from eBird. Finally, I would like to again thank Rick Steber and Will Broussard for their contributions to this article.

Find Good Birding Spots and Keep Your own Lists in eBird

by Kathryn Frieden

How do you find out where to go birding in an area you don't know? Whether you are traveling to a new part of New Hampshire or another state, exploring Hotspots is a great way to figure out where to bird in an area you are interested in and what birds you can expect to find. In addition, some of the fun features offered by Hotspots can also be extended to your own Yard or Patch. You can track how many species you have seen in your yard or favorite birding place with eBird tools. Here's how.

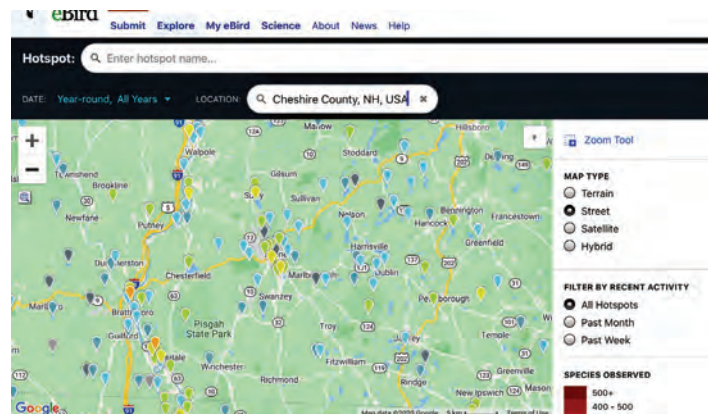


Figure 1. eBird Hotspots in Cheshire County.

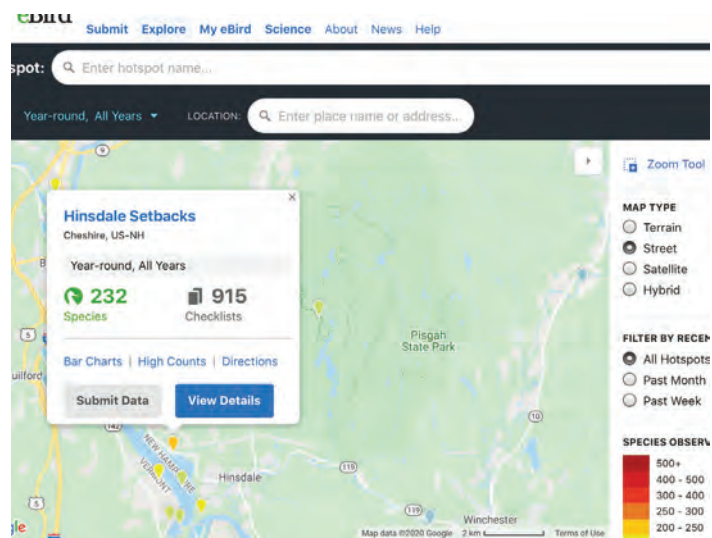


Figure 2. The information box for the Hinsdale Setbacks eBird Hotspot.

Hotspots

How can I find a good birding location?

In the previous issue, I described how to find a particular species by exploring Hotspots in eBird (“Find Birds with eBird”, Vol. 38 #1) and you can use the same technique to find a good birding location when you travel. Let’s say you

are going to be in southwestern New Hampshire. Go to the eBird website (NH portal: <https://ebird.org/NH>), select the Explore tab at the top, and click on the "Explore Hotspots" link. Enter Cheshire County for the location (or zoom in) and you will see the Hotspot location pins, which are color-coded by number of species reported (Figure 1). Look for the pins with the most species; these are usually the best birding spots. Click on the orange pin (200-250 species) near the Connecticut River and you will open an information box for the Hotspot "Hinsdale Setbacks" (Figure 2). Near the bottom of the box click on the blue "View Details" button and you will find all the details for the Hotspot. To get back to your chosen local map, click the "Hotspot" link at the top. Do not use the back button on your browser or it will take you all the way back to the starting place of the world map.



Figure 3. The warbler section of the bar charts for the Hinsdale Setbacks eBird Hotspot.

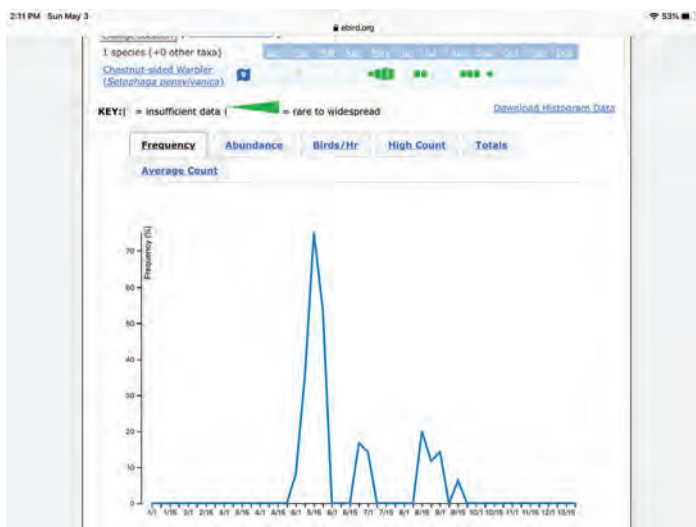


Figure 4. The frequency graph for Chestnut-sided Warbler at the Hinsdale Setbacks eBird Hotspot.

What species can I find there and when is a good time to visit?

Once you are into the "Hinsdale Setbacks" details page you can see the total number of species and checklists at this site in the "Overview" tab. From there, click on "Bar Charts" to see the species list in taxonomic order. The bar chart shows you the time of year each species is seen and the frequency of reporting. This view lets you see what a great place this is for finding warblers during May (Figure 3). Another useful feature allows you to track a specific species over time. Click on the small dark blue graph icon next to the species name. If you are interested in Chestnut-sided Warblers, for example, you can find specific dates, frequencies, and counts for all the reports for this location (Figure 4). You can get directions and print out a checklist for the location.



Species number 101 on the Frieden's yard list: a Nashville Warbler photographed by Roger Frieden, 5-5-20, Nottingham, NH.

Yards

How can I get a bird list for my own yard and bar charts like the Hotspots have?

It's fun to keep bird lists, especially a yard list! For a good review of yard-listing stories in New Hampshire, see the article in the *New Hampshire Bird Records* Spring 2017 issue by Phil Brown titled "Yard Listing: The Fascination, the Anecdotes, and, of course, the Numbers." Just the other day, we were excited to find a Nashville Warbler in our yard, partly because it is a beautiful warbler, but also because it was number 101 on our yard list!

How do I get an eBird "Yard List" and how do I use it?

eBird makes it easy to keep a yard list, as long as you enter all your yard sightings at one location (one pin). Go back to the Explore page and scroll down to find the section titled "Compare Your Totals." Click on the "Yard Totals" button and if you don't already have a designated Yard List in eBird, click on the green "Add a Yard" button, give your yard a name and choose the location from the list that is shown. Don't forget to click "Save Yard" at the bottom of

the page. You will now see a page titled “My Yard List.” I can click on Life “Total” to see our complete yard list. The default setting for the list is to be sorted by date, but this can be rearranged by clicking on the headings of each column, depending on what information you are seeking. Do we have many Black-throated Green Warbler sightings? When I click on “Taxonomic” (or “Alphabetic,” if you prefer) at the top of the species list, the list will rearrange so that the warbler is easily found. When I select “View All” on the far right, I can see all of our reports for this species. It turns out we have seen Black-throated Green Warblers in the yard five times, all during the month of May. Another great feature is the bar chart, which can show you all the same information for your yard that is available in Hotspots. Look for the link on the initial page titled “My Yard Lists.”



The Gile Road Marsh in Lee, NH that the Frieden’s have designated as one of their Patches. Photo by Kathryn Frieden.

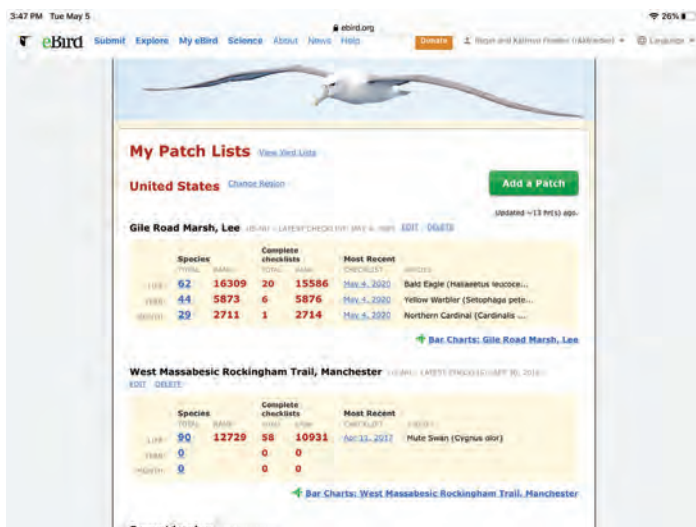


Figure 5. A view of the Frieden’s Patch List and the initial statistics on each location.

Patches

How do I see my bird list for my favorite birding spot?

eBird gives you the same tools for your favorite spot as it does for your yard by creating a “Patch.” A birding Patch is defined as an area where you can enjoy birding regularly, with enough varied habitat to make it interesting, and close enough to home so that you can get to it frequently without using too much energy. You can learn a lot from Patch birding. According to Derek Lovitch in his book *How to Be a Better Birder*, not only is it a thrill to add a new species to a Patch list, but “we can enhance our knowledge of local birds, their habitats, their occurrences, and so on.” Since moving to Nottingham a few years ago, we have enjoyed birding at Gile Road Marsh in Lee, which is within our “five-mile radius.” We have designated it as one of our Patches in eBird using the same process as adding a Yard by scrolling partway down the “Explore” page and clicking on Patch Totals. Once a location is designated as a Patch, you can see the same totals you see on your Yard Lists (Figure 5). While at the marsh a few days ago, we saw two Broad-winged Hawks soaring overhead. I couldn’t remember if we had seen any there before, but I was able to go to my Patch, click on “Life List,” go to “View All” for Broad-winged Hawk, and find that we had seen one there in 2018, almost on the same date. While checking this out, I discovered that we had just added our first Red-tailed Hawk to the list without even realizing it! Gile Road Marsh is also a Hotspot so I can check it to see what everyone else has seen there, but by making it a Patch on our list, we can see just our sightings.

Using the resources of Hotspots, Yards, and Patches in eBird can enhance your birding fun and knowledge. There are many other permutations and combinations of information that can be gleaned from these features that I have not described here. Don’t hesitate to explore the rest of the tabs and buttons to see what else there is to discover.

The Next Ten Species Predictions – How did we do?

by Iain MacLeod

In the Spring 2016 issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* (Vol. 35, No. 1), I wrote an article posing the question: “What will be the next 10 new species of birds added to the New Hampshire Bird Checklist?” I asked members of the New Hampshire Bird Records Editorial Team to weigh in with their opinions on this topic and we narrowed down a list, which ended up being 13 because there were multiple tied votes. So . . . how did we do?

First off, here is our 2016 list.

Brown Booby
Great Skua
South Polar Skua
Crested Caracara
Red-necked Stint
Bar-tailed Godwit
Black-tailed Godwit
Black-chinned Hummingbird
Eurasian Golden Plover
Fieldfare
Magnificent Frigatebird
Tropical Kingbird
Yellow-billed Loon



Brown Booby by Len Medlock, 6-12-17, Windham, NH.

Well right off the bat, the first choice of Brown Booby proved to be very quickly validated. A well-documented bird was seen at Cobbetts Pond in Windham in June 2017. A frigatebird accepted as “Frigatebird species” by the New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee (NHRBC) was seen in September 2018 in Keene following the passage of Hurricane Florence. Also, a South Polar Skua photographed at Jeffreys Ledge on September 4, 2018 was accepted by the NHRBC, but that’s where our wisdom ground to a halt (so far). Interestingly, there have been quite a few new birds added since 2016 which didn’t make our top 13 list (or indeed, the longer list of 43 species suggested by those polled).

- A White Wagtail (of the European “Pied” race) was seen in Rye and Hampton in November 2016.
- A Yellow-nosed Albatross was seen around the Isles of Shoals in July 2017. This species was previously

on the New Hampshire list as hypothetical based on a record at Great Boar’s Head in 2006 that, although accepted, failed to meet the requirement for a first state record.

- A Common Shelduck was seen in Rye in August-September 2017.
- A MacGillivray’s Warbler was found in Rye in September 2017. Like the albatross, this species was on the official New Hampshire list as hypothetical based on a record in Gilford in 2005.
- A Western Wood-Pewee was seen on Star Island in October 2017.
- A Neotropic Cormorant was found in Berlin in August 2018.
- A Ross’s Gull was photographed off Jeffreys Ledge in December 2018.
- A Wood Stork seen in Rochester in August 2018 was the first “modern” record, but was on the official list based on a record from 1922.

Also, there are two potential firsts in 2019 pending acceptance by the NHRBC: a Trumpeter Swan would become the first “modern” record in the state since the 1700s, and two Gull-billed Terns photographed in Rye would move this species from the hypothetical list to the fully accepted list.

So, what will be next? Clearly, almost anything might turn up . . . maybe your next sighting could be something new for the list. We’ll check in again in a few years to see how we’re doing.

New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee Report

Spring 2017 through Winter 2017-18

Hector Galbraith, Chair

Michael Resch, Secretary

This report from the New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee (NHRBC) contains the decisions for records voted on by the Committee for four seasons: Spring 2017, Summer 2017, Fall 2017, and Winter 2017-18.

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

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

These four 2017 seasons included five first New Hampshire state records that were accepted by the Committee:

- Common Shelduck – a long-staying immature seen by many birders from throughout the region and beyond during the period of 8/13 - 9/11/17 as it visited the marshes near Odiorne Point State Park in Rye. These sightings were summarized in the Fall 2017 issue of *NHBR* (Vol. 36, #3).
- Yellow-nosed Albatross – photographed on 7/4/17 at Seavey and Star Islands (previously on the New Hampshire hypothetical list).
- Brown Booby – a most cooperative bird seen 6/10-20/17 at Cobbetts Pond in Windham
- Western Wood-Pewee – both seen and heard (with calls recorded) on 10/1/17 on Star Island.
- MacGillivray’s Warbler – seen during the period 9/4-11/17 at Odiorne Point State Park (previously on the New Hampshire hypothetical list).

A few comments are in order regarding the acceptance of the Common Shelduck record given the obvious concern about provenance of this rarity from Europe. Plus, the acceptance of this record by the NHRBC could have a significant impact to the “life lists” of so many birders who traveled to the New Hampshire coast to see this bird. First of all, there is no question about the identity of this well-photographed bird as an immature Common Shelduck. With regard to provenance, there is no way to prove with 100% surety that this, or any other potential waterfowl vagrant, is of wild origin, although one can conclude that a bird has escaped from captivity through evaluation of:

- Physical features such as being banded or pinioned, having excessive feather wear, or missing hind toes. The Rye bird did not exhibit any of these features.
- Behavior of the bird, including whether its activities were suggestive of extensive human interaction, resulting in tameness. Over the many observations of the New Hampshire shelduck during its nearly month-long stay, it appeared to behave as a wild individual of this species, including feeding normally, having typical reactions to flyover raptors, and being wary of loud noises and other nearby human activities.

So despite the fact that individuals of this species are

regularly contained in waterfowl collections, neither physical features nor behavior indicated that the New Hampshire shelduck was an escapee.

The NHRBC then evaluated the potential for this bird to have arrived on the New Hampshire coast as a wild vagrant. An excellent summary of Common Shelduck occurrence in North America was published in 2010 in *North American Birds* (Vol. 64, # 1), including this statement: “The species is rapidly increasing as a migrant and breeder in Iceland, the country believed to be the source of other regularly occurring European birds” in North America. Since that time, Iceland populations have continued to experience significant growth with multiple 2018 eBird reports of nearly 1,000 birds in the western part of the country.

So although there are now many individuals of this species to our northeast, can they be expected to wander to New Hampshire? Again quoting from the *North American Birds* article: “Common Shelduck is sedentary in some parts of its range but in others undertakes an early migration (usually in July) to favored sites for molting; the birds become flightless for several weeks during this period.” This presents a plausible rationale for a bird to appear for a significant period of time in late summer/early fall in the northeast portion of North America.

A final factor in the NHRBC’s decision was the recent decisions by two records committees to accept Common Shelduck in North America. First the Newfoundland Checklist Committee accepted two shelduck sightings, one occurring on November 17, 2009 and the other on April 3, 2014. Subsequently the American Birding Association (ABA) Checklist Committee accepted this species to the ABA Checklist in September 2017 by an 8–0 vote (*Birding*, Vol. 49, # 6, December 2017).

In summary, with no indication that the New Hampshire bird was an escapee, a logical rationale that it could have arrived naturally from nearby expanding populations, and recent acceptances of sightings by other records committees, the NHRBC has decided to accept the Rye Common Shelduck and add it to the New Hampshire state list.

With these additions to the state list, as of February 2018, the official New Hampshire list totals 418. Note that since the last report from the NHRBC, Thayer’s Gull has been removed from the state list as this former species has now been lumped with Iceland Gull by the ABA.

The Committee has recently reviewed a number of records for which submitted documentation was unfortunately of limited quality. One of the best ways to ensure your sighting is accepted by the NHRBC is to prepare and submit adequate documentation. By far the best way to submit documentation is to use the “New Hampshire Bird Sighting Documentation” form, which prompts you to address all the

salient topics to support the observation. This form can be obtained on-line at:

<https://nhbirdrecords.org/documentation-forms-for-rarities/>

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

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

The members of the Committee voting on these records were: David Donsker, Kurk Dorsey, Jason Lambert, Iain MacLeod, Jeanne-Marie Maher, Eric Masterson, Mike Resch, and Hector Galbraith (Chair). Mike Resch served as the Committee Secretary.

Spring 2017

Records accepted by the Committee

Ruff	4/29-30/17	Hampton
Mew Gull	3/1/17	Salem
Great Gray Owl	3/1/17	Newport
Golden-winged Warbler	5/16/17	Canterbury
Yellow-throated Warbler	5/7/17	Hampton
Hooded Warbler	5/5/17	Claremont
Summer Tanager	5/9/17	Thornton
Painted Bunting	5/13/17	Littleton
Gray-cheeked Thrush	5/28/17	Hampton

Records not accepted by the Committee

Yellow-throated Warbler	4/29/17	Weare
Description of the visual observation and song could not eliminate other more common species.		
Summer Tanager	4/6/17	Chester
Committee members could not eliminate other red species visiting the observer's feeders.		

Summer 2017

Records accepted by the Committee

Yellow-nosed Albatross (first NH record – previously Hypothetical)	7/4/17	Seavey and Star Islands
Brown Booby (first NH record)	6/11/17	Cobbetts Pond, Windham
Brown Pelican	6/24/17	Rye
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	7/8/17	Chatham
Golden-winged Warbler	6/1/17	Odiorne Point State Park

Records not accepted by the Committee

Long-eared Owl	6/23/17	Hillsborough
Descriptions of the calls of this bird did not eliminate		

those of a Barred Owl.

Black-chinned Hummingbird	7/23/17	Milton
Description was not sufficiently detailed to accept this potential first state record.		
Summer Tanager	6/14/17	Jaffrey
The observer's limited view could not conclusively eliminate Scarlet Tanager or Northern Cardinal.		



Common Shelduck by Steve Mirick, 8-14-17, Rye, NH.

Fall 2017

Records accepted by the Committee

Tundra Swan	11/22/17	Hampton Beach
Common Shelduck (first NH record)	8/20, 22/17	Rye
American Avocet	8/23/17	Colebrook
Red-necked Phalarope	8/27/17	Lancaster
Red-necked Phalarope	8/28/17	Dalton
Western Wood-Pewee (first NH record)	10/1/17	Star Island
Cave Swallow	10/26/17	Rye
Cave Swallow	11/4/17	Hampton
Townsend's Solitaire	10/28/17	Pack Monadnock
Bell's Vireo	10/1-2/17	Concord
Yellow-throated Warbler	11/23/17	Rye
MacGillivray's Warbler (first NH record – previously Hypothetical)	9/4/17	Rye
Hooded Warbler	8/23/17	Northwood
Yellow-headed Blackbird	8/2/17	Star Island
Yellow-headed Blackbird	11/11/17	Pack Monadnock

Records not accepted by the Committee

Pacific Loon	11/25/17	Rye
The Committee felt that more common loon species could not be conclusively eliminated, especially for this distant bird.		

Winter 2017-18

Records accepted by the Committee

Common "Northern" Eider	2/3-4/18	Hampton Harbor
Western Tanager	12/19/17	Dover
Dark-eyed "Oregon" Junco	12/29/17	Hollis
Western Meadowlark	12/4/17	Rye

Records not accepted by the Committee

Dark-eyed "Oregon" Junco	1/1/18	Errol
The Committee felt that a female "Slate-Colored" Junco could not be eliminated.		

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

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Abbreviations Used

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

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Baby Birds of Summer 2019



Least Tern chicks by Debra Powers, 7-6-19, Hampton Beach SP, NH.



Killdeer chick by Susan Wrisley, 6-14-19, Rye, NH.



Common Nighthawk chick by Rebecca Suomala, 7-9-19, Concord, NH.



Baltimore Oriole chick by Debra Powers, 7-3-19, Pickering Ponds, Rochester, NH.



Willet chicks by Debra Powers, 7-1-19, Rye, NH.



Sora siblings by Kyle Wilmarth, 7-7-19, Salem, NH.

Summer 2019 Highlights



Tufted Duck by Leo McKillop, 7-27-19, Exeter WTP, NH.



Blue-winged Warbler by Wayne Scott, 6-18-19, Orford Rd., Lyme, NH.

Photo Quiz



Can You Identify These Birds?

Photo by Leo McKillop.
Answer in the next issue.