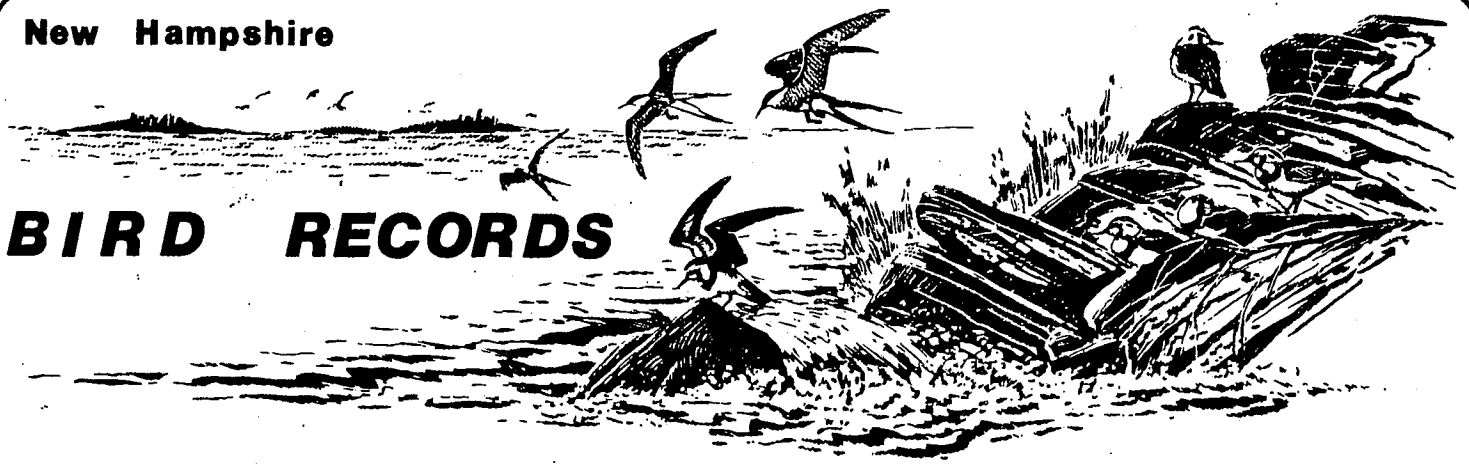


New Hampshire

BIRD RECORDS



Audubon Society of N.H.

EDITORIAL

There is always an interesting bird out "there" to be seen. The more often observers get out and the more observers there are, the more impressive the list will be - especially over time.

For most birders this is fairly obvious, but let's think about two widely separate examples of these thoughts. Some astute observer has predicted that eventually all species of North American birds will be recorded within the State of California. This is highly possible due to its size, diversity and the number and intensity of its birders.

Let us go to a local example where amazing concentrations and diversity of species have been tallied. The Turkey Pond area of Concord has been arguably the most studied area in the entire state. In the early days of this century, F. B. White spent years studying the birdlife around Turkey Pond. Tudor Richards and dozens of others have maintained this tradition. The results have been truly impressive. The total species list exceeds 200 species, of which at least 66 species are waterbirds. Naturally, some of the records are quite exciting. (Kind Eider, Baird's Sandpiper, 16 Red-necked Grebes and 53 Horned Grebes on the same day . . .). Some border on the unbelievable (17 Black-legged Kittiwakes and a Forster's Tern on a beautifully clear and mild May day in 1972).

As time passes and more records are added to this impressive list, the value of it increases. Not only is there an increase in historical value, but the more fun it becomes to look back upon some memorable hours in the field. Let's get on this track.

Bob Quinn, Editor
February, 1988

NESTING SEASON

June 1 - July 31, 1985

The dry spring of 1985 was followed by an extremely dry summer of 1985. However, a week long spell of cold, rainy weather in June came at the most critical period for insectivorous species. This inclement weather caused many birds to abandon their nests and may have been the reason some of the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) routes recorded below normal numbers for swifts, flycatchers, swallows and some warblers. Overall, water levels in lakes and ponds were low, but not to the point noticeably affecting waterbird reproduction.

In fact, because of the exhortations to atlasers to survey marshes and swamps for overlooked species, wetland dwellers were very well reported this season. Atlasers also confirmed breeding for several species, wetland dwellers were very well reported this season. Atlasers also confirmed breeding for several species which had not yet been confirmed for the atlas -- Willet, Sora, Black Guillemot, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Seaside Sparrow, Orchard Oriole, and Red Crossbill. The Willets, Black Guillemots and Seaside Sparrows were new additions to the state list of breeding species as well. This report includes data from the Breeding Bird Atlas, some of which falls outside the limits of observation dates for the Nesting Season report.

Twenty-two Breeding Bird Survey routes were completed, the full compliment for New Hampshire. The BBS data for most species are given in this report and compared to the 20-year averages, with the exception of some

common species which appeared in normal numbers and uncommon species which appear only sporadically on BBS routes.

Other observations of note include the 5 Peregrines fledged this summer from natural nests, a pair of Piping Plovers doing a distraction display, the first breeding season record of Long-eared Owl in at least 5 years, a Red-headed Woodpecker, a Sedge Wren, a White-eyed Vireo, and 3 Worm-eating Warblers may have been seen at 2 sites and may well be up to something interesting in the state -- determining exactly what they are up to, not to mention providing proof or even complete details of their existence, will have to be left to future observers. Good birding!

Lynn C. Harper



LOONS TO CORMORANTS

The Loon Preservation Committee reports that "the 1985 total of 415 Common Loons in New Hampshire continues an annual increase in numbers which began in 1981." Considering the low water levels, it was encouraging that the "numbers of chicks hatching (94) and surviving (77) were both second highest recorded, and chick survival was 82% . . . Number of chicks surviving per nesting pair was extremely higher at 0.93%".

The NH Breeding Bird Atlas (BBA) strongly encouraged its volunteers to canvass wetland species this year, and the results for many species are exciting, to say the least. The status of Pied-billed Grebe was one of those affected--Atlasers reported grebes at 6 sites, including the usual spot at Cascade Marsh in Sutton June 16 (RCV); and 2 in Lyman July 3 (SM). There are 3 confirmations of nesting.

Pelagic species were well-reported this season, at least by 1 observer (EWP): 9, 34 and 4 Greater Shearwaters on Jeffries Ledge on June 22, 23, and 30, respectively; 6 Sooty Shearwaters at New Scantum, west of Jeffries Ledge on July 14; 1 Manx Shearwater at Old Scantum, west of Jeffries Ledge, on June 23; and one Leach's Storm-Petrel in the outer parts of Portsmouth Harbor on July 19. Wilson's Storm-Petrel deserves special mention for the large numbers seen, all at Jeffries Ledge on 4 trips between June 15 and July 14: 62, 137, 175+ and 472+ (EWP). Elisabeth Phinney comments, "I've not seen this many petrels since we had the East German fishing fleet of the coast in the late 60's. My estimate is low, if anything." Coastal watchers were not left out, as many of the Seacoast Chapter members saw several Wilson's Storm-

Petrels off Odiorne Point State Park on July 10 just before their monthly meeting (SM). Observers on 3 trips, June 15, 22 and 30 saw Northern Gannets in small numbers (1-3) at Jeffries Ledge (EWP).

Single Double-crested Cormorants were reported from 5 inland sites: near the dam on the Adroscoggin River in Errol on June 15 (CVM, VHH) and June 27 (DME); on Pleasant Lake in New London on July 21 (AHV, RCV); and from 3 Atlas blocks. Two coastal Atlas blocks also reported single cormorants and the Dover-Exeter BBS route yielded 5.

BITTERNS, HERONS & EGRETS



The only reports of Least Bittern were 1 heard at Eel Pond, Rye, June 2 (EWP) and 1 at Cascade marsh, Sutton, May 26 (BBA). This species has yet to be confirmed as nesting in the State during the Atlas project, and sightings are rare, if made at all. Maybe next year. On the other hand, American Bitterns were very well-reported, perhaps as a result of those Atlas volunteers out there sloshing through the marshes. A magnificent total of at least 31 individuals was reported from at least 17 sites, including 2 confirmed nestings. The BBS route volunteers found only 4 bitterns on 3 routes, (average = 9), while other observers reported 34 birds at 19 sites. Although there is some overlap between atlas data, BBS data, and reports of other observers, the numbers indicate more bitterns out there than are usually suspected.

Great Blue Herons showed up on 49 Atlas blocks this summer, with evidence of nesting in 24 of those blocks. Eleven BBS routes reported at least 1 Great Blue each. Betty Swift's survey of Great Blue Heron



WATERFOWL

nesting colonies yielded a total of 76 active or presumed active heronries. In those heronries actually surveyed in 1985, there were at least 662 occupied nests.

Bob Bradley found a total of 18 Snowy Egrets along with NH coast July 27, while 1 at Pontook Reservoir in Dummer June 16 (DME, SM, MJ) is out of the usual viewing area. Atlasers found Snowies at 3 sites along the coast, including a fledgling on July 18, presumably from the colony on Appledoor Island, Maine, at the Isles of Shoals. (The rookery survey on the Shoals is run only in even-numbered years, thus there are no notes of nesting herons at the Shoals in this report).

Four sightings of Little Blue Herons along the coast include 1 in Rye in June (SM), an immature on the Blackwater River in Seabrook July 18 (GWG), 2 immatures in Hampton Falls July 24 (RB), and 1 adult in Rye July 27-28 (RB). There were no reports of Great Egrets, Cattle Egrets, or Tri-colored Herons.

Twenty Atlas blocks reported Green-backed Herons, including 3 blocks with fledglings or nests with young. Green-backed Herons were seen on 5 BBS routes, more than usual, and 5 other sightings were reported.

Black-crowned Night-Herons may be nesting in the state as suggested by George Gavutis' sighting of an adult followed by 2 juveniles described as "unsteady on wing and afraid of being left by adult" on July 23 in Hampton. Atlasers also saw single Black-crowneds in 4 other locations, 2 along the coast and 2 inland. One Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (age not specified) was reported at Meadow Pond, Hampton, June 14 (DBK, MJM).

Small numbers of Glossy Ibis continue to occur on the coast; 7 were reported from Rye July 27 (RB).

Atlasers found 1 pair of nesting Mute Swans on Great Bay in Newmarket. Canada Goose sightings totalled at least 130 birds from 20 locations, including 12 confirmed nestings. All were from areas south of the White Mountains, except for 13-14 seen at Pontook Reservoir, Dummer, June 15 (VHH, CVM). These numbers indicate the magnitude of the continuing increase in resident and nesting geese in the state.

Wood Ducks seem to be doing well--15 family groups were found in various locations (BBA, RB, VHH, TR). Green-winged Teal were found in 4 Atlas blocks.

Fourteen Mallards were found on BBS routes, (average = 10). Only 2 American Black Ducks were reported by BBS observers (average = 10). Atlasers, however, found a minimum of 60 Black Ducks in 33 blocks. As the amount of effort spent atlasing varies considerably from year to year, while that spent on BBS routes does not vary nearly as much, perhaps these data indicate a real decline in nesting Black Ducks in the state. This would correspond to the record lows in duck populations, especially Black Ducks, estimated for this summer by the US Fish & Wildlife Service and the Canadian Wildlife Service.

Atlasers reported Blue-winged Teal in 6 scattered locations throughout the state. Two broods of Ring-necked Ducks were reported from the Umbagog/Androscoggin River area (BBA). Three juvenile Common Goldeneye were seen on the Magalloway River in Errol July 18 (TR).

Four families of Hooded Mergansers were found: broods of 10 at Cascade Marsh, Sutton, June 7

(RCV); of 7 at Pontook Reservoir, Dummer, June 15 (CVM, VHH); of 8 in New Hampton prior to June 22 (DE); and another of 10 in Whitefield June 22 (RB). In addition, atlasers found broods at 7 other sites. Common Mergansers again nested on Squam Lake (TR), at Glidden Cove on Lake Winnepesaukee (EGL), and at Lake Umbagog (BBA).

HAWKS



Observers reported Turkey Vultures from 16 Atlas blocks and several other locations, including a nest with 2 young on July 3 in Warner!

Ospreys made a slight improvement this year, with 11 known pairs producing 8 fledglings, up from 7 fledglings in 1984 Endangered Species Program (ESP). Wanderers (or scouts, depending on your optimism) were seen in Pittsfield, June 29 (AER, GCR), in Monroe in July (EAE), and at East Inlet, Pittsburg (a pair) June 23 (TR).

There were 6 sightings of immature Bald Eagles. George Gavutis saw one in Seabrook on July 18 and Marie Martin reported 1 at Massabesic Lake in Manchester June 11 and 22. Three other sightings in 2 locations were reported to the Atlas. ESP personnel noted that "several Bald Eagles summered on the upper Connecticut River, a few frequented Umbagog, and others occurred at a number of additional locations, but there is still no evidence of a nesting pair in New Hampshire."

Northern Harriers did very well this year, with 10 pairs successfully raising young, including a few fledged from 2 nests in Merrimack County, "the first successful nestings documents south of the White Mountains for several decades" (ESP). In addition, a male was seen in Manchester July 13 (MTM).

Nine Atlas blocks reported Sharp-shinned Hawks, with nesting confirmed in 3 of those blocks. Single Cooper's Hawks were seen in 3 Atlas blocks, all in the northern half of the state. Northern Goshawks were reported from 11 Atlas blocks and confirmed in 5 of those.

Red-shouldered Hawks showed up in 19 Atlas blocks, 4 with confirmed nesting. Broad-winged Hawks were certainly not in short supply this summer with sightings in 43 Atlas blocks and confirmed nesting in 16 of those. Atlasers also found Red-tailed Hawks in 39 blocks, confirming nesting in 10 of those. Only 1 BBS route reported a single Red-tail.

The Atlas project confirmed American Kestrel in 20 locations this summer (and observed them in many more) -- a healthy number, considering the small portion of the state sampled by the Atlas in any 1 year.

Three pairs of Peregrine Falcons nested in NH this summer, raising a total of 5 young, the first young produced in the state since 1981. This is exceptionally good news, as I need not tell you, but could not resist anyway. Five additional young were hatched and released this season.

GROUSE - RAILS

Five Spruce Grouse reports were received. Dawn and Arthur Stavros saw a male on N. Twin Mtn. June 2. David Rheault found 2 males along the Willey Range Trail in Bethlehem June 15 and was lucky enough to get a photo of one. Atlasers reported broods at 2 other sites and a territorial bird in another. Ruffed Grouse paraded their

families at atlasers in 24 blocks, and a nest with 8 eggs was found in Hampton June 15 (JB & GWG, fide DBK). However, for the first time, none were seen on BBS routes.

Those slightly damp Atlas workers and others did it again -- 55 Virginia Rails from 29 sites, including a nest with used eggshells on July 15 in Nottingham (MJM). Chicks were seen in several places -- Fremont on July 19 (THA, LCH, RAQ), Jefferson on July 4 (RBO, Pondicherry July 13 (BBA), Farmington on May 26 (BBA), Milton on July 11 (BBA), Deerfield on July 9 (BBA) and Nottingham July 19 (MJM).

Despite their reputation for being rare in the state, Soras responded almost as well to the presence of determined atlasers. The first confirmed nesting for the Atlas was on July 20, when Mary Jo Murray led 3 others (THA, LCH, MLL) to a soaking rendezvous in Nottingham with an adult Sora and 1 very small chick. Nine other locations reported Soras (8 from the Atlas, 1 from SM). In this observer's opinion, there are even more Soras than these out there and only mosquitoes, leeches and leaky waders stand in the way of vast numbers (maybe 30?) being found next summer.

The marsh on Rt. 152 in Nottingham produced a family of 1 adult and 8 juvenile Common Moorhens July 14 (MJM). Four more juveniles were seen in Concord July 21 (VH), probably the result of the pair observed June 1 driving away an American Coot -- a rather late coot at that. Two other Atlas blocks reported moorhens.

SHOREBIRDS



Flouting taxonomic order, resident shorebirds will be covered first in

this report, followed by migrants, both coming and going.

Thirty-six Killdeer were seen on the BBS routes -- about average. Atlasers confirmed them in 24 blocks.

A pair of Piping Plovers appeared on the dunes by the Seabrook-Hampton estuary May 12 (DJA, SDA, DWF fide BBA). Even more exciting, they were performing a distraction display. Unfortunately, no nest or chicks were seen and the plovers were not found by subsequent observers.

Willetts were finally added to the state list of breeding species and the NH Breeding Bird Atlas list of confirmed nesters by that indefatigable wader himself, George Gavutis. On July 18 on the Blackwater River in Seabrook, he found a young chick about a week old with 2 very agitated adults nearby. On July 23, he saw 2 flying juveniles on the Hampton River in Hampton. A single bird was seen in Seabrook Harbor July 13 (EWP) and 2 were watched working the mussel beds there July 27 (RB).

Spotted Sandpipers were found in average numbers on the BBS. The only report of Upland Sandpiper was 1 in June on Great Bay just south of Pease Air Force Base (SM). Despite the dry season, Common Snipe were reported in the near-record numbers on the BBS routes -- 29, compared to an average of 16 and an all-time high of 30. Atlasers confirmed them in Errol and Whiteface Intervale in Sandwich, both in June. American Woodcock were also above average for the BBS -- 4, compared to an average of 1.5. However, this is probably not a significant difference.

As for the migrants, a single

Semipalmated Plover was noted in North Haverhill July 22, while 40 were in Hampton Falls July 26, and 90+ all along the NH coast July 27 (RB). Bob Bradley also had 19 Black-bellied Plovers in Rye on July 28; a scattering of 1-7 Ruddy Turnstones along with coast July 26-27; and 5-12 Whimbrels in Seabrook July 24-28.

Six Solitary Sandpipers were found in 5 locations from July 12 to 31-- 2 in Sandown (RAQ) and 1 each at Umbagog (THA, LCH), Success (GWG), New Hampton (VHH), and Stoddard (BJ). Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs were present on the coast in small numbers July 18 and 23 (GWG, RB), while 1 Greater was seen flying over Whitefield July 8 (an early date) and 1 Lesser over N. Haverhill July 22 (RB). An undisclosed number of Pectoral Sandpipers were on the Hampton River in Hampton July 23 (GWG) and 8 Least Sandpipers put in an appearance in Hampton Falls July 27 (RB).

Bob Bradley and George Gavutis continued their sweep of the shorebird watch with an unspecified dowitcher on the Blackwater River, Seabrook, July 18 (GWG) and 60 Short-billed Dowitchers in Hampton Falls July 24 and 26 (RB). That same trip to the coast by RB produced an estimated 750+ Semipalmated Sandpipers in Hampton Falls July 24 and 900+ for the entire coast July 27. Finally, RB saw up to 85 Sanderling along the coast July 27, with 37 in Seabrook July 24, and 54 in Rye July 25. Obviously, not all fall shorebird migration takes place in August and September.

GULLS AND TERNS



Bonaparte's Gulls made a substantial showing on the coast this summer, with 4 in Seabrook July 18 (GWG); 33

adults, 8 in breeding plumage, in Rye July 23 (RB); and 145 adults, only 2 of which were in breeding plumage, in North Hampton July 24-25 (RB).

The first Ring-billed Gull on a BBS route showed up on the Dover survey, while 4 Atlas blocks also reported Ring-bills, all at inland sites. Only 19 Herring Gulls appeared for the BBS, well below the average of 160 -- this only reflects the influence of occasional large flocks on past counts. The Atlas confirmed Herring Gulls nesting in 3 locations, 2 along the coast and 1 in Manchester.

Common Terns went unreported except at their known nesting sites in New Castle, Hampton and Little Bay. The terns did not do well at those sites this year as the 65-75 pairs fledged only 13-15 young. Problems included flooding, human disturbance, and predation by Great Horned Owls, crows and ants.

What presumably were visitors from the Least Tern colony at Plum Island, Mass., showed up on Seabrook July 18 (GWG) and Hampton Falls July 24 (RB). A single adult Black Tern in full breeding plumage was watched for over an hour as it fed over Leonard's Marsh in Lake Umbagog June 9 (DME) -- a regrettably rare sighting.

Lib Ring and several others (fide Art Borrer) reported a Black Guillemot repeatedly entering a hole in the rocks of Star Island on the Isles of Shoals in July. Black Guillemots have nested almost annually since at least 1968 in small numbers on Smuttynose Island in Maine, but this is the first confirmation of nesting guillemots for New Hampshire.

CUCKOOS - GOATSUCKERS

Blackbilled Cuckoos were noted in 4 towns: Dummer on July 15, Dixville on July 16 (both CVM, VHH), Stoddard on July 14 (BJ), and New Hampton on July 21 (VHH). No Yellow-billed Cuckoos were reported.

Six Atlas blocks reported E. Screech Owls, all in the southern third of the state. Great Horned Owls were found nesting in 6 Atlas blocks, all in the southern half of the state, and were observed in many other blocks, including a few in the north country. Barred Owls were found in many locations by atlasers, but confirmed in only 5 blocks.

An exceptional event was a Long-Eared Owls heard calling on June 25 in Coleman St. Park, Stewartstown, by George Robbins. This is extraordinary in that it is the only breeding season report of Long-eared Owl in the state since the beginning of the Atlas. Two Saw-whet Owl reports were received, 1 adult found dead on Route 28 in Ossipee June 23 (LCH) and the other a juvenile at 4000' on Mt. Jefferson July 5 (MD). In addition, atlasers found Saw-whets in 18 blocks.

Over 96 Common Nighthawks were found on the annual survey -- 49 reports from 35 towns. Eight pairs resided in Manchester, nesting was attempted in at least 4 towns, and "a record 5 nest sites were discovered" (ASNH Newsletter). The total number of Whip-poor-wills reported on the survey went up this year, but that probably reflects the larger number of reports -- from 57 towns -- sent in this year.

SWIFTS - WOODPECKERS

A total of only 125 Chimney Swifts were tallied on BBS routes, only a little higher than the lowest ever

recorded, 120. Both Ruby-throated Hummingbird and Belted Kingfisher were seen in average numbers by the BBS observers. Sandy Mallett saw 8 Ruby-throats "at sapsucker wells" in Lyman July 10.

Common Flickers, Hairy Woodpeckers, and Pileated Woodpeckers were observed in average numbers by BBS volunteers, while Downy Woodpeckers were present in higher numbers (48; average = 38) and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers in lower numbers (21; average = 36) than normal.

Tom Bickel found a Red-headed Woodpecker May 23 in an Atlas block near the Hanover/Canaan border (fide BBA). Black-backed Woodpeckers were seen in the north country, as usual, and a nest with young at Church Pond Bog in the White Mountains July 2 was reported to the Atlas. No Three-toed Woodpeckers were reported.



FLYCATCHERS - SWALLOWS

Olive-sided Flycatchers and Eastern Wood-Pewees were present in about average numbers for the BBS. Atlasers and other observers found Olive-sided Flycatchers in all parts of the state, belying their reputation as solely northern birds. Atlasers found Yellow-bellied Flycatchers in 12 blocks, confirming them near the Milan/Success border and in Easton. These were the first confirmations of Yellow-bellied Flycatcher for the Atlas. Others were found in Stewartstown June 2 (VHH, CVM), Pittsburg June 3 (VHH), on Mt. Cardigan June 7 (BDR, TR), at 5000' on Mt. Madison June 11 (BJ), and at 2 places in Easton June 17 and July 2 (BJ, AJ).

BBS routes documented changes in the relative populations of Alder and Willow Flycatchers. Forty-nine



JAYS - CREEPER

Alders were found, down from the average 62, while a total of 5 Willows were seen, equalling the previous high. Fourteen Atlas blocks reported Willows, as far north as Conway. Alders showed up in Atlas blocks from the north to the south ends of the state.

Least Flycatchers hit a new low for the BBS - only 105 were heard, against an average of 173 and a previous low of 107. Eastern Phoebes were also low, although not as drastically -- 126 this year, compared to an average of 155.

Great Crested Flycatchers and Eastern Kingbirds were close to their BBS averages. Except for the Willow Flycatcher (and those are numbers too small to be very useful), all of the flycatchers either just approached their averages or were down considerably. Presumably this is mainly a result of the cold, rainy weather during the time when most of the BBS routes were run.

The Horned Larks which usually nest at the Manchester Airport tried and failed this year, perhaps because of ill-timed mowing (MTM). More fortunate were the pair at Hampton State Park, seen June 14 with a fledgling (DBK, MJM).

Purple Martins appeared in average numbers on the BBS routes. Three Atlas blocks reported martins and a colony of 6-8 pairs was seen in Barnstead July 2 (AER, GCR).

Except for Northern Rough-winged Swallows, which were up slightly, all the remaining swallows did poorly this year. Even with the 19 found on the Dixville Notch route, Cliff Swallows managed only about half their usual number. Bob Bradley commented that the cold, rainy June brought down the Cliff Swallow nests at Whitefield Airport.

Gray Jays were seen in 7 Atlas blocks and fledglings were discovered in Clarksville. Other reports of Gray Jays included 2 on the summit of Mt. Field in Bethlehem June 15 (DR) and 3 on Magalloway Mt. in Pittsburg in mid-June (FS, fide RAQ). Blue Jays made a poor showing for the BBS, with only 324 reported, compared to an average of 404 and a low of 307.

American Crows were slightly above average on the BBS, but Northern Raven hit a new high of 38, almost doubling the previous high of 21. Bob Bradley saw an astounding 94 ravens going to roost in Bethlehem just before sunset July 30. Nests or recently-fledged young were found in such southern locales as: Pittsfield (AER, GCR), Sanbornton (BBA), Walpole/Westmoreland (BBA), Webster (CFS), and Wilton (BBA). No Fish Crows were reported.

Black-capped Chickadees were up from the average of 290 to a total of 335 for the BBS; however, no Boreal Chickadees made themselves known on BBS routes. Observers discovered Boreals in 12 Atlas blocks, with fledglings in 4 of those. Twenty-seven Tufted Titmice appeared for BBS observers, close to the high of 31. The most northerly report was of a territorial bird in Freedom.

Both nuthatches did very well on the BBS this year. Red-breasted Nuthatches totalled 42, well above the average of 24, but not that close to the high of 51. White-breasted Nuthatches established a new high of 88, more than doubling the average of 43 and eclipsing their previous high of 78. The elusive Brown Creepers numbered 13 this year, more than usual.

WRENS - THRUSHES

Numbers of House Wrens were about average on the BBS routes. Winter Wrens, which are variable due to losses during hard winters, totalled only 27, down from the average of 42, but well above the low of 16.

One of the most exciting finds of the summer was a single male Sedge Wren at Moody Point on Great Bay in Newmarket (LCH). Discovered June 22 and seen through July 1, this extraordinarily tame bird sang his heart out and built at least one nest within 5'-50' of many observers. His chosen habitat consisted of a large, dry, unmowed, old hayfield turned new front lawn, with many herbs mixed with tall grasses. Unfortunately, no female ever appeared. Let us hope he had better luck elsewhere that year.

Atlasers out scouring the wetlands produced more reports of Marsh Wrens than usual. Six blocks reported Marsh Wrens and an adult carrying food was seen July 3 in Pittsfield. One Marsh Wren appeared on the Merrimack BBS route.

Average numbers of Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets were seen on the BBS routes. Six Atlas blocks reported Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, the northern most in the Alexandria/Bristol area. Atlas volunteers observed nest-building May 28 in Alton and fledglings June 29 in Surry (BBA). In addition, a pair was nest-building June 10 in the Bradford Bog (TR).

Twelve Eastern Bluebirds, a few more than the average 9.5, were observed by the BBS volunteers. Twenty-five Atlas blocks confirmed breeding Bluebirds, and numerous other reports were received including a note about a pair of Bluebirds that abandoned a nest full of young during the rains in June. Veery

numbers were somewhat low -- only 314 compared to an average of 354 -- but well above their previous low of 213. Only 1 Gray-cheeked Thrush was seen on a BBS route, which is not surprising. Atlasers found them in 6 blocks, confirming them in 2 of those. Two were observed June 20 on Cannon Mt. (PS).

Swainson's Thrushes were just a little below their average, but Hermit Thrushes made a strong comeback from last year's all-time low of 14 to total 50 this year, well above their average of 37. Both Wood Thrushes and American Robins were fewer than normal this year -- 372 Wood Thrushes (average 469, lowest 332) and 847 American Robins (average 1020, lowest 466).



MIMIDS - VIREOS

Gray Catbirds and Northern Mockingbirds both achieved well more than their average for the BBS, while Brown Thrashers continued their decline. Sixteen thrashers were found this year, more than last year's all-time low of 11, but considerably lower than the average of 51.

A White-eyed Vireo was discovered May 20 in Rye and remained through May 30 (Mark Turner, fide BBA). BBS routes yielded average numbers of Solitary Vireos. The Strafford BBS route produced 2 Yellow-throated Vireos. Fifteen Atlas blocks had Yellow-throated Vireos and other observers reported 9 more. The BBS reported lower than normal numbers of Warbling and Red-eyed Philadelphia Vireos, 3 by Atlasers and 1 on Scott's Bog Rd., Pittsburg, June 2 (VHH).

WARBLERS

This editor is going to separate warblers into 2 groups: common and uncommon. For the common warblers, only trends evident in the BBS records will be reported.

First, the good news on the common warblers: Nashville Warblers, Northern Parulas, Yellow-rumped Warblers, and Pine Warblers were all above their averages, although none hit a new high. Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Ovenbird, and Mourning Warblers were all about normal. Now for the bad news: Yellow, Blackburnian, and Black-and-White Warblers and Northern Waterthrushes were fewer than normal. Magnolia and Canada Warblers were close to their previous all-time lows. And Chestnut-sided Warbler, American Redstart and Common Yellowthroat all established new lows for the surveys in New Hampshire. Here are the numbers seen, with the previous low in parentheses: Chestnut-sided Warbler 158 (179); American Redstart - 154 (162); Common Yellowthroat - 378 (386).

As for the uncommon warblers, the only reports of Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers came from Atlasers and the BBS. Eight blocks reported Blue-wings and 2 reported Golden-wings. One Blue-wing was seen on the Brentwood BBS route. An adult Blue-wing carrying food was seen in Dover on July 10, the only confirmation of either species reported this year.

A Tennessee Warbler in Errol June 2 may have been a late migrant (VHH). George Robbins also spotted a Tennessee, on the Dixville Notch BBS route.

Cape May Warblers were confirmed in the Success and Shelburne Atlas

blocks. Two BBS routes also noted Cape Mays. Prairie Warblers were seen in 13 Atlas blocks and 1 was reported from the Hopkinton BBS route. The most northerly report was 1 in the Alexandria/Bristol area July 6. A Palm Warbler was seen in Hampton June 22 (DBK), somewhat misplaced in space or time. Ten Atlas blocks, all in the northern half of the state, reported Bay-breasted Warblers. One was seen July 31 in Plymouth ("migrant" - SAG) and 1 in Cricenti's Bog (New London) June 20, but not thereafter (RCV).

Blackpoll Warblers appeared in 11 Atlas blocks. The Atlas generated 3 reports of Worm-Eating Warblers; 1 near Massabesic Lake, Manchester, June 4 (MTM) and 2 different birds in South Hampton June 1 and 22 (GWG, JB) -- a virtual invasion. Fifteen Atlas blocks boated Louisiana Waterthrushes, the most northerly in the Ossipee Mountains.

One Connecticut Warbler (no accompanying details) was seen July 7 in Thornton by Peter Yawkey (fide SAG). In addition, George Gavutis reported seeing several and hearing many (5+) singing from the topes of trees July 6 in swampy spruce and alder woods in an Atlas block in Success (details on file) (fide Sally Sutcliffe). George visited 3 other areas in that block during the summer and never saw or heard any other Connecticut. The original site was not revisited. Sally Sutcliffe added that Atlas workers have confirmed Connecticut Warblers as breeding in Quebec which may add credence to the possibility of Connecticut breeding here, so far out of their previously known range. To add to the mystery, in 1984 Sally Sutcliffe, Scott Sutcliffe and Jody Longnecker atlased the same Success block and saw a single bird they identified as a Connecticut. The

apparent impossibility of this caused them to retract the sighting upon return to civilization. George Gavutis was not told of this sighting before he went into the block, and yet he found what may well be Connecticut in the same spot. This editor remains about 75% convinced that there really are Connecticut Warblers in New Hampshire in their breeding season. Stay tuned.

Single Wilson's Warblers were seen in late July in 2 north country Atlas blocks. Additional reports include: Stewartstown June 2 (VHH), Pittsburg June 3 (VHH), Wentworth Location June 15 (VHH, CVM), and Scott's Bog Road, Pittsburg, June 23 (TR).



TANAGER - JUNCO

Average numbers of Scarlet Tanagers were observed on the BBS routes. Northern Cardinals continued their welcome invasion of the state; the BBS recorded a new high of 23. The Atlas reported a pair June 15 in Gorham (BBA) - the most northerly report this summer. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and Indigo Buntings hit their averages for the BBS. Rufous-sided Towhees managed only 67, continuing their downward trend. The previous low for towhees was 74. Field Sparrows are also affected by loss of old-field habitat -- only 19 were found on the BBS routes, close to the all-time low of 12 and well below the average of 56.

One Vesper Sparrow was seen on the Clarksville BBS route, only the second Vesper for the BBS in the last 5 years. Ten Atlas blocks reported Vespers. Savannah Sparrows, also thought to be suffering from loss of habitat, achieved average numbers for the BBS. Atlasers were instructed to seek these out specially, and

responded with sightings in 27 blocks. No Grasshopper or Henslow's Sparrows were reported.

Sharp-tailed Sparrows were confirmed in 3 blocks along the coast, the only sightings reported, while George Gavutis made the first ever confirmation of Seaside Sparrow for the state, finding 6-8 pairs and several recently-fledged young in Hampton July 23.

Average numbers of Song, Lincoln's and White-throated Sparrows were seen on the BBS routes, while Swamp Sparrows and Dark-eyed Juncos were below average.



BOBOLINK - FINCHES

Bobolinks were present in approximately average numbers as gauged by the BBS, but only 21 Eastern Meadowlarks showed up, less than half the average of 48. Atlasers found Bobolinks and E. Meadowlarks in 35 and 31 blocks and confirmed them in 19 and 14 blocks, respectively.

Only 440 Red-winged Blackbirds were counted on surveys, compared to an average 634. Andrea Robbins noted that a roost of up to 1000 starlings, grackles and Red-winged Blackbirds forming along the Suncook River in Pittsfield in early July was "obliterated by a twister on July 10th!" The birds did not return.

Five blocks found Rusty Blackbirds, including 1 in Croydon July 23. Rusties were also reported from Scott's Bog Road, Pittsburg, June 3 (VHH) and Fish Pond, Columbia, July 12 (DB).

A nest with young Orchard Orioles was found at Odiorne Point State Park June 22 (Roger Stephenson). Other Orchard Orioles were seen in

southeast Manchester in May and June (MTM, et al.), on Bay Road in Newmarket May 20 (LCH, THA) and June 22 (Steve Mirick, fide LCH), and at the Portsmouth Country Club in Greenland July 1 (DM). Northern Orioles were low on the BBS -- only 107 were seen, compared to the average of 142.

Purple Finches were only a little below average, but House Finches exploded to hit a total of 96--almost tripling the previous high of 33. Even the North Country did not emerge unscathed -- Vera Hebert reported 1 singing in Errol June 15.

As reported in previous seasonal summaries, Red Crossbills were found breeding in Hancock and Dublin in January and February, not everyone's choice of breeding season. Additional BBA data noted that others were reported in Milton in February and March, in Peterborough March 22, and New Ipswich April 13. White-winged Crossbills also showed up on the winter and spring -- at Pondicherry February 26, in the Hillsborough/Washington area March 7, near Pack Monadnock March 16, and in Pittsburg Mary 25 (all BBA). Some of these sightings probably represent migrants.

Large number of Pine Siskins lingered in several places this summer. Seventy-eight graced the Dixville Notch BBS route, about 100 stayed in Hopkinton until at least June 21 (Mary Anne Stockwell, fide RAQ), another flock of 100 rewarded climbers on Mt. Madison June 11 (BDR, TR), and 175 were found in Stewartstown June 16 (VHH, CVM). Ten Atlas blocks reported nesting siskins, from Milan to Peterborough, including nestbuilding in Milton March 2. This editor admits that Pine Siskins have always seemed enigmatic in their life history "pattern", and these data do nothing to clear things up.

Atlasers saw Evening Grosbeaks in 20 blocks, including a pair June 7 in Deerfield, and confirmed nesting in 6 of those blocks. Other observers reported Evening Grosbeaks from 10 towns. David Rheault saw a pair at a bird feeder July 9 in New Ipswich on the NH/MA border -- perhaps staking an early claim for the coming winter?

House Sparrows were surveyed in slightly above average numbers, to the relief of all those concerned with the plight of this species, formerly so depended on the fast-disappearing and virtually unmentionable natural resource.

CONTRIBUTORS: BBA - Breeding Bird Atlas, BBS - Breeding Bird Survey, ESP-Endangered Species Program, LPC - Loon Preservation Committee, Dennis J. Abbott, Steve D. Abbott, Thomas H. Arter, Jim Berry, Robert Bradley, Doris Brainard, Les Corey, Marjorie Doan, Jessie Duston, Edith Anne Emery, L.R. & E.J. Emmons, Kimball C. Elkins, Dave Erler, Diane M. Evans, Davis W. Finch, Nola Frost, George W. Gavutis, Susan A. Gonzalez, Lynn C. Harper, Vin Hayden, Vera H. Hebert, Betsy Janeway, Augustus Janeway, Mary Jones, Deborah B. Kirwan, Mary Lou Lambert, Elizabeth G. Locke, David Mandell, Sandy Mallett, Michael Martin, Marie T. Martin, Roland Martin, Patricia McBride, C.V. McMaster, Mary Jo Murray, Elisabeth W. Phinney, Priscilla Powers, Robert A. Quinn, David Rheault, Barbara D. Richards, Tudor Richards, Andrea E. Robbins, George C. Robbins, Pat Serrentino, Celia B. Smith, Carol R. Foss, Dawn & Arthur Stavros, Fred Steel, Elizabeth F. Swift, Arrolyn H. Vernon, Robert C. Vernon, Jack & Jean Verville, Penny A. Verville.

FALL 1985

Seasonal Summary

Although there were some significant extremes in the weather during the Fall 1985 season the overall climatological conditions were close to normal. The meteorological happening of the season was Hurricane Gloria which blew through on September 27. This storm was remarkable for its damaging winds as well as for the tremendous speed at which it moved through our area. However, it did not produce any reported ornithological fallout. Apparently it subsided so rapidly that any storm-driven vagrants abandoned New Hampshire before being seen. Several observers at the coast on the rather calm day after the storm failed to turn up any tropical finds. (Caspian Terns, while certainly rare in N.H., were seen both before and after the hurricane and were most likely southbound migrants. No sightings during the storm were reported.

Paradoxically, one of the most spectacular highlights of the season occurred during a spell of moderately inclement weather from November 11-13. At that time a large flight of Snow Geese settled on the Connecticut River in North Walpole and a remarkable assemblage (including an absolutely unprecedented 200-300 Red-throated Loons) was noted on Mascoma Lake in Enfield.

Other notable features of the season included - a good pelagic trip in August, a fairly good hawk watching season, a thin waterfowl season (with the above exception), a poorly reported shore bird migration (the Semi-palmated Sandpiper is arguably the most common Fall shorebird in N.H. and only one was reported!), and a rather dull passerine migration.

However, you can temper the down side with these exciting discoveries - Yellow Rail, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Caspian Terns, Bewick's Wren and Violet-green Swallow. For details of these reports, and more, please read on.

Robert A. Quinn
and
Lynn Harper



Loons - Herons

The only report of Red-throated Loon was an extraordinary one with 200-300 on Mascoma Lake in Enfield, November 11-13 (JDT, et al). Presumably, they also appeared on the coast at about this time, but went unreported. Coastal watchers also overlooked Common Loons, of which 6-8 on Mascoma Lake on November 11-13 (JDT) were the last ones reported anywhere.

Single Pied-billed Grebes were seen September 26 in Rye (VH) and on Contoocook Lake in Rindge, October 26 (DR). Two Pied-billeds were reported from Elm Brook, Hopkinton, October 20 (LMP, HWP), along with one Horned Grebe. Other Horned Grebes were found October 24 in Center Harbor (JD) and November 11 in Glidden Cove, Lake Winnepesaukee, in Alton (EGL), on Mascoma Lake November 11-13 (JDT), while 12 showed up on Great Bay, November 10 (SM). Four Red-necked Grebes turned up September 15 on Squam Lake in Sandwich (TR, HC), which is a little earlier than usual for inland birds.

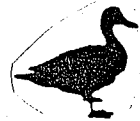
Pelagic birdwatchers had a good trip August 23 - three Cory's Shearwaters skimmed by at Jeffries Ledge (RA, EWP), along with 200-300 Greater Shearwaters (RA, EWP), up to 33 Sooty Shearwaters (RA, EWP), and 1 Manx Shearwater (EWP). Well over 500 Wilson's Storm-Petrels also fluttered by (RA, EWP) and one immature Northern Gannet put in an appearance (RA).

The only Great Cormorant reported was one on a 6-acre beaver pond behind the Country Store in Dunbarton on September 26 and for some time before that (JBG, et al) - not on the normal migration path, to say the least. Double-crested Cormorants were seen in small numbers (1-2) inland in Littleton (RB), Andover (DLS), Franklin (KCE), Deering (BW), Pittsfield (AER), and Berlin (VHH) in August and September. No reports of

either cormorant were received from the coast.

An American Bittern was noted September 12 in Milford (AEA). Eighteen Great Blue Herons were in the Hampton marshes September 2 (RB). Reports of Great Blues came in from several other observers through the end of the period, including one dead in Alton, September 28, noted as "probably a victim of Hurricane Gloria 9-27" (EGL). Single Great Egrets were observed August 19 in Canterbury (EM), September 7 in Dublin (Peg French), and October 2 in Concord (RAQ). September 2 proved a good day for Snowy Egrets along the coastline - Bob Bradley saw a total of 32, along with one adult Little Blue Heron. Green-backed Herons were reported in small numbers in August and September from Manchester (MTM), Concord (VH), and New London (RCV, KCE). An adult Black-crowned Night-Heron was spotted August 25 in a marsh in Canterbury (EM). A possible immature Yellow-crowned Night Heron showed up September 21 in Hampton (DBK). No Glossy Ibis were reported.

Waterfowl



An immature Mute Swan was seen October 7 on Great East Lake, Wakefield (GCR, JR). Snow Geese made a strong showing this fall, starting with 24 in Rye, October 5 (VH). A major flight occurred during November 11-13 in the western part of the state. On the 11th, up to 3500 landed on the Connecticut River near North Walpole and several hundred were still there on the 13th (DB). At Mascoma Lake on the 11th, there were 75-100 Snows, growing to 600-800 the next day, including 40 blue-phase geese.

On the 13th "the entire flock took off at 10:00 a.m." (JDT et al). About 30 Snow Geese were seen flying over Nelson on the 12th (HMC et al), and the same number over Rindge on the 26th (DR).

Reports of Canada Geese seemed to be more of residents than of migrants, except for a "big migration" this fall in Pittsburg (Eva Scott Gadwah, fide VHH) and 60 flying over Newfound Lake October 18 (RAQ). Other reports, which may or may not describe migrants, include 11 on Contoocook Lake in Rindge, August 26 (DR); 35 and 50 in Milford, October 27 (AEA); 76 in East Concord, November 11 (VH); and 18 in Nashua, November 17, which were noted as "can be hand fed" (MTM).

A hen Wood Duck with a brood of 8 young was near the Errol dam August 2 (BR, TR). Seventeen males and two females were on Little Cherry Pond, Jefferson, August 3 (RB). Contoocook Lake in Rindge had five August 23 and nine September 2 (DR), and one to five were seen daily in Lily Cove, Big Squam Lake from September 7 to 15 (BSR). The last reported were seen September 29 on the Suncook River in Pittsfield (AER) and in Squaw Cove, Big Squam Lake (BSR).

Three Green-Winged Teal were in the Black Brook area of Mont Vernon October 6 (MS, BS). American Black Ducks and Mallards were reported throughout the period, with the largest numbers being 25-35 Black Ducks, 25-30 Mallards in Milford in early to mid-September (AEA), and 150 on Mascoma Lake November 11-13 (JDT). The only Northern Pintail was in Sutton at Cascade Marsh August 27 (KCE), a little early for an inland site. Blue-winged Teal were not common this fall, as the only reports were of two in Sutton, August 21 (AV, RCV, KCE); ten in Rye, August 28 (RCV, KCE); and seven on Guinea Pond in Sandwich Notch, also on August 28 (BSR). Northern Shoveler, American

Wigeon, Canvasback and Redhead went unreported.

There were 25 Ring-necked Ducks on Little Cherry Pond, Jefferson, October 12 (TR et al); 12 on Turkey Pond, Concord, November 1 (RAQ); seven there November 13 (EJ); and one female on Eel Pond, Rye, November 28 (EWP). Two scaup sp. were on Long Pond, Henniker, November 12 (TR) - the only scaup reported this fall.

Two Common Eiders were off Odiorne Point September 26 (VH). Seven Oldsquaw off Rye, November 9 (VH) comprised the only coastal report, while one female was on Pearl Lake, Landaff, in mid-November (Gene Twaronite). A male Black Scoter was seen October 20 on Keyser Lake, Henniker (TR). A lone female Surf Scoter showed up in Little Bay, Durham, October 17 (SM), a lone male on Turkey Pond, Concord, October 26 (TR) and seven on Squam Lake November 10 (TR). Four early White-winged Scoters were off Odiorne Point State Park August 25 (SM et al). A male was on Mountainview Lake, Sunapee, October 20, and an unreported number were on Turkey Pond, Concord, October 26 (TR). The absence of many coastal reports on these sea ducks does not mean the seas were devoid of avian life this season, just lacking in reporters.

Small numbers of Common Goldeneyes were reported from Moultonboro and Sandwich in October and November (BSR), from Andover October 31 (KCE), and from Long Pond, Henniker, November 12 (TR). Ten Bufflehead were on Webster Lake in Franklin October 31 (KCE) and 14 in Rye November 9 (VH).

Hooded Mergansers were reported in small numbers from many places - most notably, one to five in various coves on Big Squam Lake from September 1 to December 2, a few days before freeze-up (BSR). Common Mergansers were also well-reported. High numbers include 300, mostly males, on Lake Umbagog, November 23 (JF) and 75-100 on Mascoma Lake in Enfield, November 11 (JDT et al). Perhaps this is the place to summarize the extraordinary sightings on Mascoma Lake, November 11-13. Jeffrey Toffic reported 150 Black Ducks, 6 Hooded Mergansers, 600-800 Snow Geese, 50-75 Ring-billed Gulls, 1 Horned Grebe, 200-300 Red-throated Loons and 6-8 Common Loons, all on the lake for this short time. Jeffrey noted, "I've been living on this lake for 13 years and have never seen so many waterbirds, either numbers or species, within a 3 day period like this." No reports of Red-breasted Mergansers were received, although without doubt, they were on the coast at this season. Three of the uncommon Ruddy Ducks were sighted on Great Bay November 10 (SM).

HAWKS



Peak migration for Turkey Vultures was September 21, with 43 reported. The total number of vultures seen migrating in the fall of 1985 was 234, well up from the 30 seen in fall of 1984. The last sighting reported was one in Concord October 10 (VH).

Ospreys peaked on September 22, with 23 birds seen. About the same number were reported as in 1984, and the last one noted was over Turtletown Pond, Concord, October 23 (EJ). Nine Bald Eagles were reported this fall. An adult was seen flying over North Newport August 2 and 3 (Barbara and Robert Huneven). Hawkwatchers saw two on September 12, 14 and 15 and one on October 20. Jeff Fair saw an adult November 11 on Lake Umbagog in the pine which supported the last known

eagle nest in the state. The Northern Harrier migration peaked on September 22 with 15 birds reported. Hawkwatchers recorded a total of 55 this fall, more than doubling the 26 seen in fall of 1984. The last one was reported from the ASNH Thompson Refuge in North Sandwich October 11 (BSR).

Sharp-shinned Hawks peaked on September 8 (172 birds) and September 22 (122 birds). Hawkwatchers reported more than twice as many Sharpies (632) this fall as in the fall of 1984 (304). Reports of Cooper's Hawks were also up considerably - 41 this fall, compared to 13 in 1984. Some of these increases in hawk numbers are due to increased observer effort and some to increased observer ability (particularly for species such as Cooper's Hawks), but when these factors are at least partially taken into account, by comparing numbers seen per hour of effort, there is still a marked increase in numbers of birds seen. Northern Goshawks, however, were seen only occasionally by hawkwatchers, sixteen were reported on hawkwatches, scattered throughout September and October.

Red-shouldered Hawks are another species which slips past hawkwatchers unnoticed, even though they (unlike Goshawks) are definitely migratory. Hawkwatchers recorded only 32 Red-shoulders, spread evenly through the season. The last two were seen October 20 in New Ipswich (DR). Broad-winged Hawks dropped substantially in numbers compared to fall, 1984. Only 3,428 were reported this fall (11.20 birds/hour), while 5,665 were seen in 1984 (22.39

birds/hour). The peak was September 12 with 1,739 birds. Perhaps there was a real drop in numbers, perhaps there was no one watching on the day they went through. Steve Mirick reported that 1,200 were seen on Mt. Agamenticus in southern Maine on September 11, a slow day for Broadwings in New Hampshire. However, no one was at major hawkwatch points along the New Hampshire coast that day.

Ninety-three Red-tailed Hawks were reported from hawkwatching sites, with a peak of 20 on September 14. This is almost three times the total number in 1984. The harassment Red-tails endure was noted by Ray Sprague: "(The hawk was) sitting in an ash tree being badgered by a mockingbird and surrounded by an audience of robins. The mockingbird, in addition to circling and scolding, would occasionally sneak up from behind and pull a tail feather; to all of which the hawk displayed a complete and regal disregard."

The only report of a Rough-legged Hawk was from Portsmouth on November 27 (EWP, fide AER). American Kestrels peaked early, on September 8, with 17 birds. A total of 78 were seen, about the same as last year. Eight Merlins sailed by hawkwatch sites, showing no particular preference for dates or wind conditions. Eleven Peregrine Falcons thrilled hawkwatchers, again without any calendar preference, and three other sightings were noted - one in Columbia August 20 (K et al), one in Rye October 5 (VH), and one in Rye November 16 (EWP, fide AER). This is a substantial increase over 1984, when hawkwatchers reported only two.

TURKEY -RAILS

The only report of gallinaceous birds was of a Wild Turkey in New Hampton through September 6 (Grace Jeffers, fide VHH).

A Virginia Rail was heard in Canterbury August 1 (RCV, KCE). Mary Jo Murray was lucky enough to spot "a small rail with white wing patches . . . It had to be a YELLOW RAIL, didn't it?" on September 23 in a marsh in Nottingham. This is one of very few reports ever received for this species in N.H. One American Coot was on Turkey Pond, Concord, November 13 (EJ), while twelve graced Eel Pond in Rye November 28 (EWP, fide AER).

SHOREBIRDS



The lack of reports from coastal watchers skews this section of the report considerably; aside from a few scattered notes, there are no reports of shorebirds from the area of the state where most of these birds concentrate.

One of the few coastal reports was of 132 Black-bellied Plovers in Seabrook September 2 (RB). An adult Lesser Golden Plover was seen there September 9 (SM). Two Golden Plovers were in Canterbury August 29, and five (four adults, one juvenile) were there on the 30th (KCE). Four Semipalmated Plovers were in Littleton August 6 (RB) and one in Rye October 5 (VH). Several large flocks of Killdeer were reported - 34 in Littleton August 6 (RB); 100 in Canterbury August 29 (KCE); 22 in Littleton September 3 (RB); and 23 in Amherst September 15 (MS, BS).

No yellowlegs of either species were reported from the coast; however, a Greater Yellowlegs was heard July 21 in New Hampton (VHH) - early for an inland site; 18 were at Pleasant Lake in New London August 26 (KCE); and 2 in Hillsboro October 16

(RAS). Single Lesser Yellowlegs were on Lake Umbagog August 2 (TR) and in Sutton August 17 (RCV et al), and two were on Pontook Reservoir in Dummer August 21 (TR). Solitary Sandpipers showed up in ones and twos at many inland sites: New Hampton, July 22 (VHH); Barnstead (CGR, AER); Pinkham Notch (TR); Derry (RAQ); Sandwich Notch (BSR); Greenfield (MS, BS); Big Squam Lake (BSR); North Sandwich (BSR); and Concord, October 2 (RAQ).

A flock of ten Willetts flew over Rye August 25 (EWP). At least one Spotted Sandpiper lingered late at Turkey Pond in Concord - one was seen there October 22 (EJ). Whimbrels appeared on their usual mussel beds in Seabrook Harbor - three on August 13 (EWP), one on August 24 (SM et al), and two on August 28 (RCV, KCE). On August 9, an adult Hudsonian Godwit was there as well (SM). Two Red Knots were in Rye August 28 (RCV, KCE).

The only report of Sanderlings was of 180 in Rye September 2 (RB). Semipalmated Sandpipers were unreported on the coast, but one showed up at Pontook Reservoir, Dummer, August 21 (TR). A singleton of the relatively uncommon Western Sandpiper was in Rye August 25 (EWP). Least Sandpipers escaped scrutiny on the coast, but a few were reported inland - three in Littleton August 6 (RB), two at Pontook Reservoir August 21 (TR), and five in Canterbury August 30 (KCE, DLS), with one still there September 10 (KCE). Two White-rumped Sandpipers appeared in Rye August 28 (RCV, KCE).

Canterbury hosted a single Pectoral Sandpiper August 29 and two on September 10 (KCE). Purple Sandpipers went unreported until November 30, when five were on Seal Rocks in Rye (EWP, fide AER). Dunlin eluded the attentions of birdwatchers entirely this season.

Fourteen Stilt Sandpipers were in a

flock with Lesser Yellowlegs and a Western Sandpiper August 25 in Rye (EWP). One was in Rye August 28 (KCE, RCV). A rare BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER was on the sod farms in Canterbury August 29-30 (KCE). Dowitchers of both bill lengths went unreported.

A Common Snipe was heard winnowing September 8 in New Hampton (VHH). One Wilson's Phalarope was in Hampton August 28 (KCE, RCV); one in fresh water at Odiorne Point October 27 was quite late (VHH).

GULLS - ALCIDS



Laughing Gulls, which are expanding their breeding range along the east coast, made a strong showing along our coast in August. Sixteen juveniles were in Seabrook Harbor August 17, four juveniles there August 24, and one adult at Odiorne Point State Park August 25 (SM et al). Little Gulls, which have been regular in small numbers at Seabrook in the past several years, seem to be declining - only one was reported, on September 28 (SM). A Common Black-headed Gull, not so common here, showed up in Seabrook Harbor September 2, (Chuck Littlefield), a little early for a bird considered a rare winter visitor to these parts.

The more usual gulls (Bonaparte's, Ring-billed, Herring, Great Black-backed) appeared in their usual numbers. A first winter Iceland Gull appeared at the Sheraton Tara in Nashua November 17 (MTM et al). No note was made of its room number. Glaucous Gulls went unreported. The first, very

early, and only report of Black-legged Kittiwake was of four adults and two juveniles August 23 on Jeffrey's Ledge (RA).

A CASPIAN TERN, regrettably rare here, was in Seabrook Harbor September 22 (SM) and two were there October 5 (SAG, WWF). Eight Arctic Terns added to the excitement of the August 23 pelagic trip to Jeffrey's Ledge (EWP). Seabrook Harbor had two Forster's Terns August 17 and again September 22 (SM). A trip along the New Hampshire coast August 28 produced a total of four Least Terns (KCE), the only ones reported this season.

An Atlantic Puffin on the return journey of the August 23 pelagic trip was very early for any alcid, except Black Guillemot, along our coast.

CUCKOOS - WOODPECKERS

A Black-billed Cuckoo was calling August 13 on the Guinea Pond Trail in Sandwich Notch (BSR). Yellow-billed Cuckoos appeared in Durham twice - one on October 14 (MD) and one, a little bedraggled and weak, on November 10 (SM), several weeks beyond the usual time for fall stragglers.

An Eastern Screech Owl was found November 17 in Rye (EWP, fide AER). One Great Horned Owl was heard calling August 1 in Alton (Robert and Barbara Hilton, fide (BD), and a pair of Barred Owls were reported in Sugar Hill August 16 (RB). The only other owl reported was an adult Northern Saw-whet Owl November 7 in Beaver Brook, Hollis (RA).

The few reports of migrating Common Nighthawks received included ten observed August 25 in Merrimack (RA) and 71 in Portsmouth September 2 in a half hour period (EWP). In addition, two were seen in Pittsfield August 22 and September 4, three in Freedom August 29 (both GCR, AER), and one in

Nashua September 21 (RA) was extremely late.

Young Chimney Swifts were heard as they were being fed August 1 in Monroe (RB). Several large flocks were noted: 350-400 in Littleton August 15 (Leo Laflamme et al); 215 there August 20 (RB); 50+ in Dover August 31 (EWP); 48 in Littleton September 5 (RB); and 200 in Concord September 6 (RAQ). The last stragglers reported were two in Pittsfield September 15 (AER). Ruby-throated Hummingbirds made themselves obvious at several feeders in August; most observers reported them departing in the first few days of September. The final straggler reported was a female in Pittsfield September 25 (AER).

Occasional Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were seen throughout August, September, and the first half of October. Northern Flickers migrated through the Sandwich Notch area September 22 and 23 (BSR). Several other areas reported migrating flickers through early October. The always-exciting Pileated Woodpecker was reported from seven towns, including a pair in North Conway which "feasted on grapes that grow high up in the trees . . . getting 'tipsy' at times." (Gee? (CRF)).

Flycatchers - Swallow



A family of two adult and three immature Olive-sided Flycatchers were reported from Barnstead August 13 (GCR, AER). Other sightings include: one in Hillsboro August 18 (RAS); two in New Hampton August 28 (VHH); and one in Rindge September 5 (DR). The final Eastern Wood

Pewee was in Pittsfield September 11 (AER). Two migrant Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were in Sandwich Notch August 21, where the last was reported on September 21 (BSR).

August 3 was the date for Alder and Willow Flycatchers, or at least the only date reported. Bob Bradley had seven singing in Jefferson that day, and one Willow was singing in Canterbury (RCV, KCE). The last report of migrant Empidonax was September 24 in Hillsboro (RAS). An Eastern Phoebe hung on a little longer, till October 18 in Pittsfield, which was also the site of the last Great Crested Flycatcher reported, on August 22 (GCR, AER). A Western Kingbird, unfortunately with no details, was reported to RAS as being seen in Deering August 27 by Robert Lorbes, a Massachusetts birder. Two immature Eastern Kingbirds were on Peaked Hill in New Hampton September 6 (VHH).

Flocks of Horned Larks made two of their uncommon inland appearances this fall - fourteen at Whiteface Intervale in Sandwich October 27 (BSR) and thirty on a sod farm in Litchfield November 17 (RAQ). There was also a flock of 26 in Rye November 9 (VH).

Purple Martins were still present in mid-August at two of their known nesting sites, the Sanbornton golf course and Funspot in Weirs Beach (VH). No one reported any large flocks of migrating swallows. The largest, and latest, was a flock of 30-40 Tree Swallows, 1 Barn Swallow and 1 Cliff Swallow just south of Odiorne Point on September 28, the day after Hurricane Gloria (SM). Northern Rough-winged Swallow and Bank Swallow went unreported entirely.

The bird of the season, if accepted, would be the VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW seen on a pelagic trip August 23 (EWP), providing the second record of this species in New Hampshire. As this

species is extremely rare anywhere on the east coast, I will quote her notes in their entirety. No photographs were made. Betty described the bird as "a small chunky swallow, dark above, white below. Medium warm gray on wings and tail. Back had definite greenish tinge. Large white ovals from under the tail up to a gray median stripe down center of tail. The bird circled the boat four times. Cheek not white but mottled light 'dirty' gray. I am familiar with the species from my several western trips and am well aware of its rare appearance on the east coast. (John) Galvin was not familiar with the species, but was positive that it was not a Tree Swallow. The other woman (who would not give her name) said it was not a Tree Swallow".

Jays - Gnatcatcher



Large flocks of migrating Blue Jays were observed in New Hampton from mid-September to mid-October, including a high of 425 on September 22 (VHH, RCH). Over 500 American Crows passed over Nashua October 25 (HOH). Northern Ravens were reported from several southern towns: Concord, New Ipswich, Webster, and Nottingham. There appeared to be no big influx of Red-breasted Nuthatches this fall, as only a few reports of small numbers were received.

A BEWICK'S WREN provided a moment of joy for Betty Phinney in her Portsmouth yard August 30. As she wrote, "I first heard the fussing notes and knew it was a wren and not a 'native' . . . A white eyeline and all white underparts ruled out Carolina Wren. When he landed in the small tree I could easily

see the white edges on the tail. He was about 8 feet from me and I used no binoculars." What is that saying about all things coming to those who wait?

As for the "native" wrens, no House Wrens were reported after September 1. Winter Wrens were noted in four towns, from Pittsburg to Rindge, in September and October and lingered until October 21 in Sandwich (BSR).

Both Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets were seen in good numbers this fall. Of note were late Ruby-crowns November 3 in Sandwich (BSR) and November 7 in Goffstown (HWP). A small bird in the top of a birch gave Vera and Dick Hebert a moment of indecision in New Hampton August 12 before revealing itself as an immature Blue-gray Gnatcatcher.



Thrushes - Vireos

Many reports of Eastern Bluebirds came in, including flocks of twelve in Concord October 2 (VH), in Jackson October 5 (Paul and Alice Cormier, fide RAQ), and New Hampton October 6 (VHH), where they were "running in the road like Robins, turning over leaves like Turnstones!" A Gray-cheeked Thrush was found in Strafford August 24 (MJM, MLL). Very late was a Hermit Thrush November 29 in Nashua (BH). Mid-October saw many flocks of migrating American Robins in several towns; as well, there was a flight in Concord November 6, with "50 to 75 in view at one time" (VH).

The last two Gray Catbirds were in Pittsfield October 11 (AER). The only report of Brown Thrasher was one in the marsh at the Thompson Refuge in North Sandwich September 22 (BSR). Water Pipits were reported from four towns: 20+ in Errol September 16 (VHH); 5 in Waterville Valley October 8 (RA); 12-15 in Whiteface Intervale in Sandwich October 11 (BSR); and 18

in Durham October 19 (MJM, MD).

Forty to forty-five Bohemian Waxwings were in Rye November 1 (EWP, fide AER), earlier than usual for these occasional winter visitors. Five Northern Shrikes were seen in early November in five towns—Concord, Columbia, Pittsfield, Plymouth and Sandwich.

Migrating Solitary Vireos were reported through October 10. Single Yellow-throated Vireos were singing in New Hampton August 17 (VHH) and Concord August 23 (VH). Philadelphia Vireos made their way through Nashua, New Hampton, Strafford, Sandwich and Center Harbor in September.



Warblers

A Blue-winged Warbler came to breakfast at Bev Ridgely's home in Sandwich September 4, a little farther north than that species' usual New Hampshire range. Perhaps a wrong-way migrant? No Golden-winged Warblers were reported, but George and Andrea Robbins were lucky enough to find a Brewster's Warbler in Barnstead August 9 and August 13.

A final, and late, Tennessee Warbler was in New Ipswich October 20 (DR), and the last reported Nashville Warbler was in Durham October 19 (SM). Three Northern Parulas were observed in Rindge on September 6 and 22 and October 5 (DR), as well as one in Pittsfield September 9 (GCR, AER). An immature female Magnolia Warbler in Rindge on October 10 (DR) was the last of the species reported in the state. Migrant Cape May Warblers were reported as early



Cardinal - Snow Bunting

as August 18 in New Hampton (VHH) and as late as October 21 in Milford (AEA). Seventy-five Yellow-rumped Warblers were seen migrating September 16 in Errol (VHH); a flock of 45 was in New Hampton October 3 (VHH); and Rindge, on the southern border, ushered them out of the state from October 1 to October 17 (DR). Small numbers of Black-throated Green Warblers were seen in various towns in September, with the last one October 5 in Mont Vernon (BS, MS).

Numbers of Pine Warblers were meager this season - one was in Pittsfield September 7 (GCR) and one in Mont Vernon October 5 (BS). Palm Warblers straggled through from September 17 in Sandwich (BSR) to November 9 in Rye (VH). Eleven Bay-breasted Warblers were on the Guinea Pond Trail in Sandwich Notch September 3 and seven or more were there September 12 (BSR). Elsewhere, four were on the NEFFA tract in Center Harbor September 5 (BSR) and one was in Pittsfield September 18 (GCR, AER).

The first migrant Blackpoll Warbler was in New Hampton August 17 (VHH) and occasional ones and twos were seen there and in Rindge and Pittsfield through early October (VHH, DR, GCR, AER). The only report of Louisiana Waterthrush was from Strafford August 24 (MLL, MJM). Only three migrant Mourning Warblers were noted - two in New Hampton September 1 and one in Nashua September 7 (BH, MH).

A Common Yellowthroat lingered at Pondicherry in Jefferson through October 23 (MS). Pittsfield was the only town reporting Wilson's Warblers, on August 19 and September 7 and 23 (GCR, AER). A Yellow-breasted Chat made one of the species' occasional appearances in this state in Deborah Kirwan's yard in Hampton September 18.

A pair of Northern Cardinals was seen in Lancaster October 24, although the male was found dead later that day. Another male showed up there October 28 (DLS, fide KCE). One Cardinal visited feeders in Columbia November 5 (DK, BK).

Lingering Grosbeaks were seen in Pittsfield October 1 (GCR, AER) and New Hampton October 6 (VHH). A female or immature Blue Grosbeak, very rare here north of its usual range, was reported with sketchy details from Durham September 22 (MD, MJM). Two Dickcissels lent their elegance to flocks of House Sparrows in Tilton October 2 (John Morse, fide RAQ) and Manchester November 17 into December (MTM et al). Rufous-sided Towhees were not seen after one in Goffstown October 7 (HWP).

American Tree Sparrows hit the middle section of the state in mid to late October, with the first ones reported October 14 in Webster (EJ). Extreme southern New Hampshire saw the first Tree Sparrows in November, from November 1 for Salem (KF) to November 21 for Mont Vernon (BS). Their approximate summer counterpart, Chipping Sparrow, made its final good-weather bow in Pittsfield November 9 (GCR, AER). A very late Field Sparrow, noted as a "storm driven bird?", was seen in Nashua November 29 (BH, MH). A few of the increasingly uncommon Vesper Sparrows were seen: one in New Hampton October 16 (VHH), one in a different spot in New Hampton October 20 (VHH), and one in Durham October 20 (MD, MJM). No Savannah, Sharp-tailed, or Seaside Sparrows were

reported. Many migrant Fox Sparrows were reported from mid-October to mid-November, but one singing in Pittsburg September 17 was very early (VHH). Ten Lincoln's Sparrows made their way through Sandwich from the last half of September through the 20th of October (BSR); only four were reported from other parts of the state.

Hundreds of White-throated Sparrows flocked through New Hampton October 13 (VHH), with smaller numbers reported elsewhere. A good migration of White-crowned Sparrows went through this fall, the earliest on September 22 in North Sandwich (BSR) and the latest November 9 in Wolfeboro (DLR, CHR). A Dark-eyed Junco showed up September 17 in Hampton (DBK).

"A few" Lapland Longspurs were in Lebanon the first week in November (WWF). Many flocks of Snow Buntings were observed, the first on October 29 at Swanzey Lake (Byron Beyer), Plymouth (SAG), and Columbia (DK). After that, eight locations reported Snow Buntings, with the largest flock being 100 or so at the Lebanon Airport November 1 (WWF, SAG). None were reported after November 19.

Blackbirds - Finches



Rusty Blackbirds took their leave from Goffstown October 24 (HWP). A female Northern (Bullock's) Oriole was feeding on "apples, peanut butter, sugared water, and cedar berries" in Manchester November 28 through December 10 (MTM, RAQ), and a cautiously-reported Oriole sp. was in Concord November 18 (Florence Harris, *fide* RAQ). Both these orioles were quite late, and the Bullock's form was well out of place.

Two Pine Grosbeaks in Franconia Notch October 26 (RA) presaged a minor flight of this species throughout the state in November. Seventeen locations reported Pine Grosbeaks,

with a high of 20 to 25 in Columbia November 21 and 30 (DK, BK). Fourteen Purple Finches were observed in Rindge October 10 (DR), and small numbers were noted elsewhere throughout the period. Twenty-five to thirty-five House Finches were overwhelming a feeder in Hillsboro September 20 (RAS), where the observer made some appropriate observations: "These finches are rapidly becoming the rural version of the urban English Sparrow, usurping feeder space to the exclusion of other small species by sheer weight of numbers. (My) and my neighbors' feeders have been crowded with and cleaned out by persistent flocks of these finches for the last two months."

Red Crossbills invaded the Lakes Region September 13 and 14. More than a hundred were "feeding on seeds of white pine" at Squam Lake in Sandwich on those dates (RA), while two males and two females were "eating grit with 14 Evening Grosbeaks - a very colorful sight!" in Holderness on the 14th (BSR). One Red Crossbill was on Prospect Hill in Hancock October 4 (Neal Clark, *fide* HMC) and 8-10 flew over the NEFFA tract in Center Harbor November 18 (BSR), for the last report of the season. White-winged Crossbills made a smaller showing. A single bird in Jefferson September 15 (VHH) was the first one noted, followed by small numbers, up to 35, in Lancaster, Hancock, Columbia and Rye, through November.

Common Redpolls began a moderate flight with eleven in North Sandwich October 27 (BSR), and continued in November with reports from six other locations

of flocks ranging from 5 to 75. Pine Siskins reports were sparse - only three reports, including three in Hancock November 7 (HMC), two to three in Rye November 16 (EWP, fide AER), and three in Pittsfield November 19 (AER).

As Evening Grosbeaks continue to expand their nesting in the state, although less dramatically than in years past, it becomes more difficult to decide which fall records indicate straggling resident breeders, or residents moving to and becoming obvious at nearby feeders, or true migrants, whether from in- or out-of-state. Perhaps the Breeding Bird Atlas data, when compiled and published, will clarify their true breeding range in the state. Probable migrants this fall include nine in Rindge, on the Massachusetts border, September 1 (DR) and one in Pittsfield August 9 (GCR), noted as the first for the fall. Records from Wolfeboro (DLR) and Concord (VH) note that birds stayed around all summer. In Concord, an adult male and adult female with two young males and one young female came to Vin and Barb Hayden's feeder together on August 23, after only the adults had been occasionally seen all summer.

Rowell, Dorothy L. Skeels,
Raymond A. Sprague, Becky
Suomala, Mark Suomala, Dawn B.
Stavros, Jeffrey D. Toffic,
Arrolyn Vernon, Robert C.
Vernon, Brad Wood, Peg French,
Eva Scott Gadwah, Barbara and
Robert Huneven, Grace Jeffers,
Chuck Littlefield, Robert and
Barbara Hilton, Paul and Alice
Cormier, John Morse, Byron
Beyer, Florence Harris, Neal
Clark, Gene Twaronite, Leo
Laflamme.

Contributors: Alice E. Ames, Lynn Harper, Ralph Andrews, Robert Bradley, Doris Brainard, H. Meade Cadot, H. Coolidge, Myra Davis, Jessie Duston, Kimball C. Elkins, Jeff Fair, Wavell W. Fogleman, Kenneth Folsom, Susan A. Gonzalez, Jane B. Grant, Bill Harris, May Harris, Vin Hayden, Richard C. Hebert, Vera H. Hebert, Elizabeth Janeway, Barbara Killam, David Killam, Deborah B. Kirwan, Mary Lou Lambert, Elizabeth G. Locke, Marie T. Martin, Steve Mirick, Ed Morrier, Mary Jo Murray, Helen W. Parker, Laurie M. Parker, Elisabeth W. Phinney, Robert A. Quinn, C. Harland Raddin, Dorothea L. Raddin, Barbara Richards, Tudor Richards, Beverly S. Ridgely, Andrea E. Robbins, George C. Robbins, Dave

WINTER SEASON

December 1, 1985 - February 28, 1986

December 1985 was a cold yet sunny month in New Hampshire, with temperatures overall averaging 3 degrees below normal. Sub-zero readings were recorded statewide on the 19th and quite frequently during the rest of the month. Fresh water was mostly frozen by the time of the Christmas Bird Counts (CBC's). Precipitation was below average everywhere in the state during December. In January, however, precipitation was above normal (although snowfall was below normal) making this the wettest January since 1979. The month started with above normal temperatures, and the prolonged warmer weather continued into mid-month. Then, following two days of sub-zero temperatures, a January thaw arrived on the 18th bringing maximum temperatures of near 50 degrees to most of the state.

February's weather was cold and unsettled. Snowfall was light but several ice storms occurred. The pre-spring warm-up expected at the end of the month did not occur, delaying the arrival of the usual early migrants until March.

This season's highlights include Tundra Swan, Golden Eagle, Great Gray Owl, Water Pipit, and "Bullock's" Northern Oriole. Good numbers of Black-headed Gulls, Barred Owls, Northern Shrikes, American Tree Sparrows, and Pine Grosbeaks were evident. However, unusually low numbers were reported for Hooded Mergansers, Snowy Owls (none!), Red-winged Blackbirds (none!), Brown-headed Cowbirds, and Purple Finches.

Results for the two northernmost CBC's (Pittsburg and Errol-Umbagog) were not available at the time this was written.

Andrea and George Robbins

LOONS and GREBES

Five Red-throated Loons were observed during the Coastal Christmas Bird Count, Dec. 21 (PC); no others were reported. This represents a slightly lower than average wintering population. Common Loon numbers were on the low side as well; and in contrast to recent years, this species was not observed inland during the winter months. Coastal sightings included: 19 Coastal CBC; 4 Isles of Shoals CBC, Dec. 27 (EWP); 2, a new species, Lee-Durham CBC, Dec. 28 (S. Mirick); and 5 Rye Feb. 24 (AER, GCR).

Observers found 2 Pied-billed Grebes on the Concord CBC, Dec. 22 (VH); no other sightings were reported. Horned Grebe numbers were about average during December; 24 Coastal CBC, 3 Isles of Shoals CBC. (However, the authors failed to locate this species during a coastal trip in late February.) Red-necked Grebes were present in average numbers during December and February: 56 Coastal CBC; 1 Isles of Shoals CBC; and 31 Rye Feb. 24 (AER, GCR). A Red-necked Grebe reportedly in Pittsburg (Back Lake?) during December (Eva Scott Gadwah fide VHH) was a highly unusual inland sighting; however, substantiating details were not supplied.

GANNET through HERON

Northern Gannets went unreported this season; and were noticeably absent on the Isles of Shoals CBC (EWP).

The Coastal CBC recorded a new high of 76 Great Cormorants, and the Isles of Shoals CBC had good numbers as well (98). On the Isles of

Shoals CBC, 3 observers identified a Double-crested Cormorant in Gosport Harbor, Maine. Later in the season, MTM located this species inland along the Merrimack River in Manchester: 2 on Jan. 29, 1 on Feb. 25. No other reports were received.

The Coastal CBC had 8 Great Blue Herons, 5 other counts had one each. The most northerly sighting occurred in Gorham Jan. 13 (DS, MAC).

WATERFOWL

Bill Trembly, who has worked in an aviary with numerous swan species, was the first to locate and identify 2 Tundra Swans in Little Bay, Dover on Dec. 18. During the next few weeks, the swans were seen by several people and became a new species for the Coastal CBC. Mute Swan was a new species for the Lee-Durham CBC; they had 2 in the Lamprey River, Newmarket. A decade high of 6073 Canada Geese was tallied by the Coastal CBC.

A Wood Duck was a new species for the Peterborough CBC, Dec. 21 (MC); and a female was among Mallards Jan. 4 in the Merrimack River, Manchester (MS, BS). American Black Ducks and Mallards wintered in typical numbers. The approximately 1,500 Blacks and 2,000 Mallards reported represent totals very similar to those of the past three years. Other dabbler sightings include a Northern Pintail and 3 Blue-winged Teal (a new species) found by Coastal CBC participants.

A Canvasback was seen in Spofford Lake, Chesterfield Dec. 18 (JC); and a female was with Goldeneyes on the Merrimack River, Hooksett Jan. 18 (MS, BS). The Coastal CBC reported the largest number of Greater Scaup (566), while smaller numbers were seen in Spofford Lake,



TURKEY VULTURE through FALCONS

Chesterfield: 1 Dec. 16 (JC) and on the Laconia CBC-5. A handful of Lesser Scaup were seen: RAQ found 2 females in Massabesic Lake, Auburn Dec. 9; and 3 were in Spofford Lake, Chesterfield Dec. 15 and 18 (JC). Good numbers of Common Eiders wintered off-shore; 302 were seen on the Isles of Shoals CBC, while the Coastal CBC had 32. The Isles of Shoals CBC reported this season's only King Eiders (a new species for the count): an immature pair near Star Island. Unusual inland were 5 Oldsquaw in Spofford Lake, Chesterfield Dec. 11 (JC). Coastal sightings occurred on the Coastal (64) and Isles of Shoals (14) CBC's.

Somewhat late inland was one Black Scoter in Spofford Lake, Chesterfield Dec. 18 (JC), noteworthy considering how few Black Scoters were seen coastally this season: 7 Coastal CBC, 1 Isles of Shoals CBC, and 3 Rye Feb. 24 (RAQ, MAQ). On the other hand, Surf Scoters were more numerous than in recent past winters: 24 was a high for the Coastal CBC, and 11 was a new record high for the Isles of Shoals CBC. The wintering population of White-winged Scoters was below average, with only half the usual numbers reported: 59-low Coastal CBC, 11 Isles of Shoals CBC, and 2 Rye Feb. 24 (AER, GCR).

Common Goldeneyes were present in average numbers. Several Barrow's Goldeneye sightings occurred: 1 Concord CBC, 4-unconfirmed Pittsburg Dec. (Eva Scott Gadwah fide VHH), 1-female Manchester Jan. 22 (MTM), and a pair Great Bay, Newington Feb. 25 (MJM). Average numbers of Buffleheads were reported.

Hooded Merganser numbers were down, with only 40 reported for the season (the Laconia CBC alone often has over 60). However, the Common and Red-breasted Merganser wintering populations were above average.

A Turkey Vulture was seen Dec. 14 in Walpole (DC, RG). Rocking in its distinctive dihedral wing pattern, it glided along a valley where this species is regularly seen in spring, summer, and fall. This was DC's latest record for Turkey Vulture in this area.

As many as 41 Bald Eagles may have visited New Hampshire this winter, a substantial increase over last year's high of 32. Monitored winter residents in the Great Bay (3 ad., 6 imm.), Merrimack River (1 ad., 1 imm.), and Connecticut River (2 ad.) areas accounted for 6 adults and 7 immatures out of the 31 adults and 10 immatures reported from around the state (an increase in adults and decrease in immatures over last year). Other sightings by month were: December - 16 ad., 2 imm.; January - 6 ad.; and February - 3 ad., 1 imm. (CFS, DS, DE). An adult Bald Eagle was a new species for the Hanover-Norwich CBC, Jan. 5 (WGE).

Northern Harrier was a new species for both the Nashua CBC, Dec. 28 (RA), and the Lee-Durham CBC. An immature, hunting the Hampton saltmarshes Jan. 10 (TA, DE), was perhaps one of the 3 harriers seen on the Coastal CBC. Reports totaling 15 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 10 Northern Goshawks, and 5 Cooper's Hawks were received statewide. The Coastal CBC had the only Red-shouldered Hawk reported. At least 62 Red-tailed Hawks were observed in the southern half of the state, with major concentrations in the Connecticut River (8), Merrimack River (20), and Coastal (34) areas. Two dark phase and 2 light phase Rough-legged Hawks frequented the coastal marshes this winter. Long time hawk-watcher, Olive

Rhines (fide MC and ASNH), had the luck of sighting an adult Golden Eagle soaring over Hancock Feb. 7. This bird may have been a transient from Quabbin Reservoir, Mass. (CFS, DS).

Eighteen American Kestrels were reported, half of which were seen on the Coastal CBC, which also reported the only Merlin sighting. A sub-adult Peregrine Falcon, sitting on rocks at Appledore Island, was an exciting new species for the Isles of Shoals CBC. Miserable looking, this young bird appeared wet as though it had been chasing Purple Sandpipers and got caught by a wave (EWP). Another Peregrine Falcon sighting, which reportedly occurred in Walpole Dec. 29 (RER), did not have convincing details.



PHEASANT through ALCIDS

Five southern CBC's had a total of 10 Ring-necked Pheasants, and a female was observed in Walpole throughout the second half of the winter (RER). A high of 16 Ruffed Grouse was tallied on the Peterborough CBC, a count which consistently has the greatest number of this species. Wild Turkeys were observed in Walpole: 6 on Dec. 23, and 1 on Feb. 17 (RER, BS); and during the count weeks: 1 in Keene on Dec. 29 (DH) and 1 Lee-Durham. It is possible that the Northern Bobwhite seen in Concord Jan. 6 (Mrs. Chase fide ASNH) was the same bird observed Jan. 10 in Epsom (fide ASNH).

Five Ruddy Turnstones were found on Boon Island, Maine by Isles of Shoals CBC participants. Birders on the Coastal CBC located 3 Sanderlings, 21 Dunlin, and 89 Purple Sandpipers. The Isles of Shoals CBC had 268 Purple Sandpipers. The Nashua CBC had a single Common Snipe. The only other report of

this species came from Manchester where one was flushed from a marshy area near a storm drain Jan. 20 (DR) -- an unusual mid-winter sighting.

An adult Little Gull, over open water in the outer harbor, was a new species for the Isles of Shoals CBC; no other sightings were reported. An outstanding number of Common Black-headed Gulls wintered along our coast this year. Two were seen in the outer harbor on the Isles of Shoals CBC, and the Coastal CBC discovered one in Rye. The greatest concentration occurred in the Portsmouth area where as many as 5 (1 adult, 4 immatures) spent the winter months near Pierce Island (EWP). In early January in Portsmouth Harbor, S. Mirick saw 4 (1 adult, 3 imm.) -- all in one binocular field!

Bonaparte's Gull reports came from the Isles of Shoals (8), Lee-Durham (4), and Coastal (41) CBC's. Ten years ago the Coastal CBC might be lucky to record 10 Ring-billed Gulls. Over the last three years the wintering population has risen to an average of about 65 individuals. This year marked another increase with 126 sighted. Fifty-six other Ring-bills were reported, 35 of which were in Manchester during December (MTM). About 13,000 Herring Gulls were reported (5,094 from Coastal CBC alone), and Great Black-backed Gull sightings totalled over 2,000 individuals. Numbers for both these species were about average.

Iceland Gull reports include: 2 Nashua CBC; 4 Isles of Shoals CBC; 1-adult Manchester Jan. 29 (MTM); 3 Portsmouth Jan. 30 (DM); 4 (1 ad., 3 imm.) Pierce Island, Portsmouth Dec-Feb (EWP). Glaucous Gull accounts include: 1 Isles of Shoals CBC; 1-adult Manchester Dec. 24 (MTM); 3 Manchester Jan. 29 (MTM); 1 Portsmouth Jan. 30 (DM); 1-adult Portsmouth Dec-Feb (EWP).

Black-legged Kittiwakes were tallied in a new record high number (166) by the Isles of Shoals CBC; 3 were seen just off-shore south of Odiorne Point Jan. 10 (TA, DE); and one adult wintered near Pierce Island, Portsmouth (EWP).

Alcid highlights all came from the Isles of Shoals CBC during which the 6 participants aboard a lobster boat had good looks at Razorbills (19 - a new high), Thick-billed Murres (2), and Black Guillemots (22).

DOVES through WOODPECKERS

The Cardinal-Tufted Titmouse-Mockingbird survey, held Feb. 8-9 this year, had a total of 5565 Mourning Doves reported from around the state -- a total almost identical to last year's results. Rockingham, Hillsborough and Merrimack counties had the largest wintering populations; however, a surprising 111 were observed in Coos County (up from last year's 47).

The Coastal count had a Screech Owl (8th count record), which may have been the same bird EWP discovered Jan. 3 in Rye. A gray phase individual was found in Newington Jan. 7 (S. Mallett, et al). Five Great Horned Owls were seen during 4 Christmas counts; others were heard in Kensington and Bow. For the first time in over TEN years Snowy Owls went unreported during the winter season. On the other hand, it was an outstanding year for Barred Owls, with at least 20 seen or heard -- twice the totals from the 3 previous winters (9, 11, 10).

Two GREAT GRAY OWLS visited the Granite State this winter. Detailed reports came from Rollingsford, where one was seen Dec. 23 and 25 (Jim Argue fide CFS); and from Concord, where Holly

Siff (fide CFS) found one Jan. 3. For an 11th count record, a Short-eared Owl was located by Coastal CBC birders. The Keene CBC had a Northern Saw-whet Owl during their count week, and later in the season this species was heard calling in Hancock: 2 on Feb. 22 (MC), and 1 in Concord Feb. 22 (VH).

Belted Kingfisher sightings occurred all winter and totalled 18. The 2 found on the Baker Valley CBC (NP) were a first for that count.

An apparent but unconfirmed Red-bellied Woodpecker (no details) was in Walpole at a feeder Jan. 3 through Feb. (Ruby Wright fide DWB). A verified sighting occurred here in Dec. 1983. Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers were present in average numbers. Five southern Christmas counts had a total of 17 Northern Flickers (11 on Coastal CBC). Single birds were also seen in Concord Jan. 5 (Martha Custer fide RAQ), and in Derry Feb. 19-29 (RAQ, MAQ). Pileated Woodpeckers were sighted on 8 Christmas counts (26 birds total), of which 7 was a new record high number for the Peterborough CBC. Statewide, 10 others were reported.

HORNED LARK through STARLING

Horned Lark sightings include: 20 Nashua CBC; 30 Keene CBC; 150 Coastal CBC; 47 Walpole portion of Saxton's River Vermont CBC, Dec. 21 (DC); and 15 Walpole Feb. 28 (DWB).

An unconfirmed Gray Jay report was received from Milford Feb. 8-9 (Linda Bisson fide RAQ). The Blue Jay wintering population has finally recovered from the unusually low numbers of the 1982-83 winter season, when the combined total from ten inland CBC's was only 1,068. This year nearly 5,000 were recorded during 10 counts. American Crow numbers were up;



several counts had record high totals. Six CBC's had a total of 28 Northern Ravens, and single birds were seen during February in Surry and Roxbury (JHW). The Baker Valley CBC had 1 Boreal Chickadee; 1 visited a feeder in Intervale Dec. 30 - Jan. 4 (Jean Tewksbury fide RAQ); and one was reportedly in Newcastle Dec. 6 (Allen Rowland fide RAQ). Average numbers of Black-capped Chickadees, Tufted Titmice, Red-breasted Nuthatches, and Brown Creepers were reported. However, above average numbers of White-breasted Nuthatches were observed, with record high totals on 3 CBC's -- Baker Valley (40), Peterborough (148), and Coastal (73).

The Baker Valley and Coastal CBC's had the only Ruby-crowned Kinglets reported (2 and 1 respectively). All inland CBC's, except Concord, had Golden-crowned Kinglets -- Peterborough (37) and Coastal (16) had the highest totals. Other sightings occurred in Manchester, Kensington, and Nottingham.

Two male Eastern Bluebirds were seen in Henniker Feb. 1 (Jim Carr fide JW) -- perhaps early migrants. The Concord CBC had the only Hermit Thrush found this winter. Good numbers of American Robins wintered in the Granite State this year, with reports totalling 43 individuals. Yet this was nothing compared to the nearly 170 seen last year. Another year, another Varied Thrush! We've now had at least 1 discovered in our state every winter for the past 9 years. This year's sighting took place in Milford (June Fraize fide RAQ), where a bright male came to a ground feeder during the week of Feb. 2.

The Coastal CBC had the only Gray Catbird reported this season. According to CTTM results, Northern Mockingbirds were slightly more numerous (218) than last year

(177). The bulk of this year's wintering population was in Rockingham County (92). (None were reported for Coos and Carroll counties, and fewer than 5 for Sullivan, Grafton, Belknap and Cheshire counties.) Brown Thrashers were missed, which isn't unusual. A Water Pipit found by Tony and Suzanne Federer for the Lee-Durham CBC was a first record for that count.

Bohemian Waxwing reports include: 1 Hanover-Norwich CBC count week; 160 (high) Laconia CBC, Dec. 28 (JED): 35+ Intervale Dec-Jan (Gertrude Smith); 22 Jackson Dec. 18-Jan. 4 (J. Longnecker); several Sanbornton Jan. 3 (fide ASNH); 12 Peterborough Jan. 22 (MC); 20 Plymouth Feb. 2 (fide SAF); and 2 Northwood Feb. 23 (MJM, MD). Although not as astounding as last year's totals, good numbers of Cedar Waxwings were observed during all 3 winter months: more than 50 in December, 150 in January, and more than 250 during February.

It was an excellent year for Northern Shrikes with no less than 21 reported. The Coastal CBC had a decade high of 21,040 European Starlings.



WARBLERS through SNOW BUNTING

An uneventful year for warblers, only 2 species were identified: a Yellow-rumped Warbler with a Cardinal and Redpoll, the only land birds on Star Island during the Isles of Shoals CBC; and a Common Yellowthroat in the Tidewater-Exeter area during the Coastal CBC.

As suggested by the CTTM survey, the number of Northern Cardinals wintering in the state (1,047) was very similar to last year (903) with the exception of Coos County where only 1 was seen (last year this northern county reported 20).



Coastal CBC participants found a DICKCISSEL in the Tidewater-Exeter area. An immature male Dickcissel was an occasional visitor at a Manchester feeder from Nov. 17 through mid-January (MTM, et al.)

Two female Rufous-sided Towhees were in Manchester Feb. 1 (Pinard fide MTM). American Tree Sparrows were present in excellent numbers as evidenced by the high or record high totals recorded by several CBC's. A Chipping Sparrow appeared to be a new species for the Coastal CBC. Field Sparrows were discovered in: Wolfeboro (1) Dec. 5 (DLR, CHR); Walpole (1) Dec. 29 (RER); and during the Nashua (6), Lee-Durham (1), Keene (1), and Coastal (2) CBC's. The Coastal CBC had the only Savannah Sparrow reported. Fox Sparrow sightings occurred on 3 Christmas counts: 1 in Nashua, 1 in Keene, and 2 Coastal. Song Sparrows were rather scarce inland, with only a handful of sightings reported from central New Hampshire. Average numbers were present in the coastal region. The Lee-Durham CBC had a single Swamp Sparrow, and a high of 18 were located by Coastal CBC participants.

White-throated Sparrows were more numerous coastally than inland this year. A White-crowned Sparrow, in Hollis Dec. 28 - Jan. 1 (DD), was one of the highlights of the Nashua CBC. Last year Northern Juncos seemed to be everywhere and were recorded in record high numbers on at least 8 Christmas counts. This year, no records were broken and only average numbers overwintered. Small flocks of Snow Buntings were noted: 1 on the Peterborough CBC; 6 in Milan Jan. 11 (TR, ASNH); 5 in Jaffrey Feb. 1 (MC); 5 in Jefferson Feb. 27 (CFS, MAC); and on Main Street Concord Feb. 15 (Jan Argue fide RAQ) where 10 were eating fruits from ornamental shrubs planted around McDonalds!

ICTERIDS and CARDUELINE FINCHES

Not one single Red-winged Blackbird was reported this season -- a highly unusual occurrence!! The Coastal CBC had 3 Eastern Meadowlarks. Six Rusty Blackbirds in Chichester Dec. 6 (AER, GCR) were presumed to be late migrants, but a single bird in Hampton Jan. 1 (DBK) is a noteworthy mid-winter sighting. Common Grackle sightings, as usual, were few: 1 in Manchester Dec. 13-25 (MTM); 10 in Nashua, 5 in Peterborough, 2 in Lee-Durham, and 2 Coastal CBC's. However, Brown-headed Cowbirds, which are usually noted in small flocks throughout the winter even as far north as Errol, went unreported during the majority of the season and were discovered on only 3 Christmas counts: 3 Nashua, 2 Coastal, and 20 Hanover-Norwich.

A first year male "Baltimore" Northern Oriole visited a Durham feeding station in the Lee-Durham count circle the day before and the day after count day. Another was discovered in Concord Jan. 6 (Florence Harris fide RAQ). One of the season's highlights, a female "BULLOCKS" Northern Oriole, feeding on peanut butter and apples, remained at a Manchester feeder from Thanksgiving through early January (MTM et al.) Its disappearance Jan. 6 coincided with the discovery of blood on a nearby picnic table and the presence of both a Northern Shrike and a Cooper's Hawk in the area. This western subspecies, with unstreaked gray back and pale gray belly, is an outstanding find in the northeast (typically winters w. Mexico to Costa Rica).

It was an excellent year for Pine Grosbeaks, numerous small flocks were observed statewide and during all inland Christmas counts. For the Hanover-Norwich CBC, the 111

Pine Grosbeaks tallied was the second highest total in the last 16 years. The Peterborough (18) and Coastal (40) CBC's had high counts as well. In fact, more Pine Grosbeaks (over 365) were observed this winter than were reported for the last 3 winters combined (335). In contrast, Purple Finches were virtually non-existent. This is certainly one of the most erratic of our winter species: astounding record high numbers counted 1 year, and only a handful the next. Last year was a boon year with high and record high totals on several CBC's. Yet this year, Purple Finches were missed entirely on half the Christmas counts and were otherwise unreported. Curiously, Peterborough had a high of 37 which was more than all other sightings combined (only 28 others were discovered during 5 CBC's). For the House Finch this was not a winter marked with noteworthy population changes. This species has experience steady population increases during the past few years, with new record highs established by 5 or more Christmas counts each year. Yet this year we actually find several decreases! Only the Hanover-Norwich CBC had a new high (372 -- last year 237).

EWP had the only Red Crossbills reported: 1 Rye Dec. 5 and 5 Rye Jan. 3. Equally few White-winged

Crossbills were found: 1 Rye Dec. 7 (EWP); 2 Coastal CBC; 4 Rye Jan. 1 (EWP); and 8 Rochester Feb. 18 (MJ fide S. Mallett). Better than average numbers of Common Redpolls were noted, with small flocks observed statewide during all winter months. Flock size ranged up to 50 individuals with an average of 22 birds per flock. Most interesting was the single Redpoll found on Star Island by Isles of Shoals CBC participants (a third record and their first since 1971). Pine Siskins were scarce. Four CBC's had a total of 42; only 5 others were reported. American Goldfinch numbers were not outstanding, nor were those for Evening Grosbeaks. Both these species were noticeably lacking at feeders.

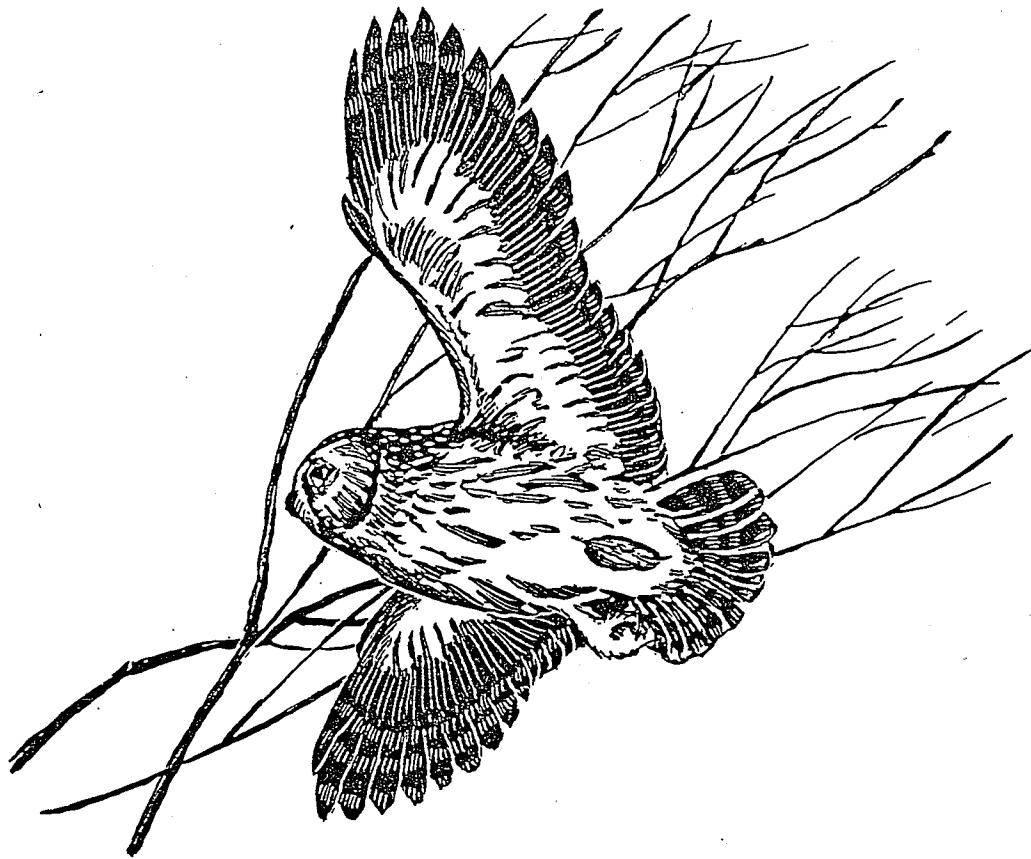
Our report could end with the species which officially holds last place on the current ABA checklist -- the ubiquitous House Sparrow -- but that would definitely be a let down. So instead of ending with a feeder bird, we'd rather make our finale with a feeder mammal. For certainly having a BOBCAT (!) at one's feeder is cause for acclaim. Meade Cadot had the remarkable and lucky experience of seeing one of these elusive predators, chasing squirrels at his Hancock feeder, 4 times in 3 mornings!! (Feb. 21, 23, 26.)

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ASNH = Audubon Society of New Hampshire

CBC = Christmas Bird Count

CTTM = Cardinal/Tufted Titmouse/Mockingbird Survey



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