

New Hampshire BIRD RECORDS



Warblers of Winter, Take 2

There were a remarkable number of lingering warblers in the Winter of 2021-22, similar to Winter 2020-21. Read more in the Winter Season summary and the Warbler Weekend Bonanza article by Steve Mirick in this issue.



Second winter record of a Prairie Warbler, by Steve Mirick, 12-26-21, Hampton WTP, NH.



Palm Warbler by Steve Mirick, 12-1-21, Hampton WTP, NH.



Orange-crowned Warbler by Steve Mirick, 1-8-22, Hampton WTP, NH.



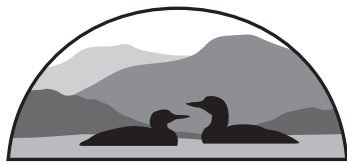
Third winter record Wilson's Warbler, by Steve Mirick, 12-5-21, Newmarket, NH.



Second winter record of a Black-throated Green Warbler, by Steve Mirick, 12-7-21, Hampton WTP, NH.



Second winter record of a Northern Parula, by Steve Mirick, 12-12-21, Hampton, NH.



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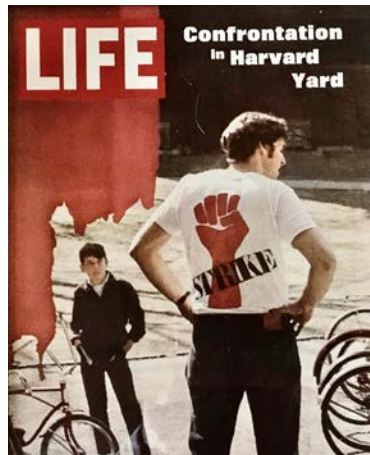
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IN MEMORY OF

Ray Allen Frieden

This issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* with its color cover is sponsored by Roger Frieden in loving memory of his older brother Ray Allen Frieden, who died in April, 2021. Even though Ray was ten years older, he took the time to teach his little brother many things, including how to fish. While Ray was a student at Harvard in the 1960s, he joined a student protest for workers' rights, and his photograph famously was on the cover of *Life* magazine. He is remembered for his kindness, his love of family, and his attention to doing the right thing.

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Cover Photos: White-winged Dove by Jim Sparrell, 2-6-22, Witch Island, Hampton, NH (top); Townsend's Warbler by Steve Mirick, 12-4-21, Rye, NH (left); and the first winter record of a Blackpoll Warbler, by Steve Mirick, 12-5-21, Rye, NH (right).

From the Editor

WINTER 2021-22

by Rebecca Suomala

Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who supports *New Hampshire Bird Records*! See the next page for our annual list of donors.

Where to Bird Articles

Do you have a favorite birding spot you'd like to let people know about, or an eBird HotSpot that you know well? We are always looking for articles on good birding spots in the state. Articles don't have to be long, they can be write-ups about just one spot, describing how to get there, where to go, and what you might see. If you are interested in writing an article about one location or several in an area, please contact me via email: r-suomala@nhaudubon.org.

Photo Quiz Ideas?

Do you have an interesting idea for a Photo Quiz format? We're looking for someone to take over this feature and are interested in new ideas. Please contact me if you are interested.



Becky Suomala chumming on the Isles of Shoals CBC, 12-29-21. Photo by Steve Bennett.

TIME TO RENEW!

This is the last issue of this subscription year and your renewal notice is enclosed with this issue. (If your subscription is up to date you will have a different notice stating that you do not need to renew.) All subscriptions renew at the same time and encompass the four issues of a given year (i.e. Spring 2022, Summer 2022, Fall 2022, Winter 2022-23). Thank you for your subscription and support of *New Hampshire Bird Records*.

Birds and Ukraine

New Hampshire Bird Records *traditionally encompasses just one state, New Hampshire, but the following email is a reminder that a love of birds unites us across the globe. This message was written by Brendan Keegan, an Arnold Arboretum Horticulturist and avid birder who lived in Ukraine for several years. It was posted to MASSBIRD courtesy of Bob Mayer. –Ed.*

Imagine that most of you have heard about the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine. As birders, I thought many of you might appreciate the strong symbolism of birds in Ukraine's emblems and traditions. For example, Ukraine's national symbol, the trident, is actually derived from the likeness of a diving Gyrfalcon. Ukraine's national bird, the White Stork, is a beloved Ukrainian symbol of spring and good luck.

The US Christmas standard, "Carol of the Bells," is rooted in Ukraine and its birds as well. It is directly copied from the Ukrainian folk song, "Shedryk." This song was traditionally

sung as a new year's carol; however, pre-Christian Ukrainians celebrated the new year in March and April, near the spring equinox. Spring is of course the time of new life and also the season of migrating birds. In the song, a returning swallow brings tidings of happiness and coming wealth for a lucky farmer. Singing this shedryk is intended to bring good fortune to others in your life.

I have fond memories of watching storks fly over my town's ancient monastery. I have fond memories of the passion Ukrainians had for their natural heritage as a whole. I have talked, emailed, and texted with my Ukrainian friends over the days following Russia's invasion. I wish more than anything that life for them could return to the way it was before. All of them would be happier waiting for the swallows and storks to return to their towns than waiting for the next steps in this war.

When our migrating birds return this spring, I hope you hear them singing shedryk, bringing good fortune for your families and friends.

– Brendan

Thank You to Donors

We are very grateful to everyone who has donated to *New Hampshire Bird Records*, sponsored an issue, or supported the “Twitchers in the Rye” during the Superbowl of Birding. Subscription revenue does not cover the full costs of *New Hampshire Bird Records*, including our eBird quality control work. Your contributions help make it possible for NH Audubon to bring you this publication and maintain the quality of the records. We are especially grateful to those who have contributed to the New Hampshire Bird Records Endowment Fund. This fund is building a secure base of long-term support for the collection, organization, publication, preservation and storage of New Hampshire bird sighting information.

The following list acknowledges donations received from October 22, 2021 through July 30, 2022. We apologize if we inadvertently omitted you or mis-spelled your name – please let us know.

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Peregrine Falcon by Kyle Wilmarth.

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WINTER SEASON

December 1, 2021 through February 28, 2022

by Katherine Towler and Jim Sparrell



Recent New Hampshire winters have been marked by warmer than average temperatures, below average snowfall, and periods of extreme temperature fluctuations. The winter of 2021-22 fits this pattern, with some notable exceptions. December

was mild overall, with many days in the forties in Concord and temperatures remaining above freezing at night. Birders conducting the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) in Pittsburg on December 14 found little snow cover and completely open water on the First Connecticut Lake. These conditions meant that inland ducks were widely dispersed early in the season, found on bodies of water that would later freeze.

The first major snowstorm of the season did not hit until January 17. At the end of the month, New Hampshire's first official blizzard since 2018 caused a one-week postponement of the Superbowl of Birding.

Five straight days of temperatures in the forties and fifties in mid-February likely contributed to an influx of early spring arrivals, including a number of **Killdeer**. The remainder of the month saw extreme temperature swings from one day to the next and another major snowstorm on February 25. Snow cover in the north during January and February, despite the up-and-down temperatures, was good for winter sports and North Country tourism, especially after the economic losses of last winter under COVID-19 restrictions.



Wilson's Warbler
by Ed Norton, 12-5-21, Maple St.,
Newmarket, NH.

Warblers once again made birding news this winter, as they did last winter. The number of species seen in early December on the Seacoast was unprecedented (see the article by Steve Mirick in this issue). Warbler reports continued to come in during January and February, including a few sightings in the north. A number of record late dates were set. A **Blackpoll Warbler** in Rye was the first winter record for this species. Another first winter record for the state was a **Blue-headed Vireo** found on the Keene Christmas Bird Count.

Reports of half-hardy species were widespread in the south, with significant sightings in the north. **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** and **Red-bellied Woodpecker** were reported in good numbers. **Carolina Wren** reports, particularly on CBCs, were numerous and widespread.

After the excitement of last winter (2020-21), when we saw the largest irruption of winter finches in a couple of decades, there were only scattered reports of crossbills, **Common Redpolls**, **Pine Siskins**, and **Pine Grosbeaks**, almost all in the north. **Bohemian Waxwing** sightings were also contained primarily in the northern half of the state. **Red-breasted Nuthatch**, ubiquitous throughout the state last winter, did not come south in substantial numbers.



White-winged Dove by Holly Bauer, 2-13-22, Witch Island, Hampton, NH.

Although there are no first state record sightings to report as there were last year, this winter season brought some interesting birds to New Hampshire. Among these were a **White-winged Dove** found in Hampton, **Golden Eagles** reported from Keene and Great Bay and a **Varied Thrush** seen at a private location in Fitzwilliam.

Our summary does not follow taxonomic sequence, but loosely groups birds in a way that made sense to us in thinking about the winter season. All references to records are based on *The Birds of New Hampshire* by Allan Keith and

Robert Fox (2013) or eBird data.

We offer a brief haiku recap of the season at the end of the summary for those who prefer a less wordy approach.

Waterfowl and Loons

The warm temperatures in December allowed many waterfowl to remain on inland lakes and ponds that stayed open. A prolonged period of cold at the end of December and into January caused most lakes and ponds to freeze. By mid-January, Great Bay was almost completely frozen. Waterfowl were limited to locations where open water has historically been found. The fluctuating temperatures in February brought the return of open water to some areas in the southern third of the state, with waterfowl on the move once again.



Cackling Goose (also shown with a Canada Goose) by Steve Mirick, 12-24-21, Rt 1A, North Hampton, NH.

A **Cackling Goose** found by Steve Mirick on December 24 in Hampton was a nice Christmas surprise for birders who traveled from across the Seacoast to get close views of this difficult to identify species. Although smaller size is not a reliable indicator to differentiate the Cackling Goose from

the Canada Goose, the identifying marks of stubby bill, short neck, and angular head, along with the smaller size overall, were easily seen on this individual. The Cackling Goose stayed at Runnymede Farm, often at close distance from the road with a flock of Canadas, into the first days of January, offering a great opportunity for photographs and a comparative study.

The season's first **Snow Geese** were found by Eric Masterson on December 5 over Great Bay in Greenland and by Steve Mirick on December 24 at Stuart Farm in Stratham. A single Snow Goose was found again at the end of January, visible from Chapman's Landing. This individual, an adult, was subsequently joined by a juvenile. Both were reported off and on through February 17, seen a number of times among large flocks of Canada Geese in farm fields in Stratham.



Isles of Shoals CBC on Star Island, 12-29-21, Rebecca Suomala.

This year, for the first time in several years, birders were able to make the trip to Star Island on December 29 for the Isles of Shoals CBC, led by Ben Griffith. The group was rewarded with views of a female **King Eider** and thirteen **Harlequin Ducks** off the island's east side. Both species are infrequent sightings in New Hampshire and exciting finds.

Among the season's interesting inland sightings was a **Northern Pintail** found on Nutt Pond in Manchester on December 4 by Kevin Murphy. Most commonly found in a few isolated spots on the Seacoast in the winter, Northern Pintails were also seen inland in all three months of winter in Swanzey and Salem. An inland **White-winged Scoter** was seen on Squam Lake by Ken Klapper on December 15. Iain MacLeod had an early returning **Ring-necked Duck** from Meredith on Lake Winnepesaukee on February 6.

Barrow's Goldeneye were found in their usual winter spot on the Merrimack River from Stark's Landing in Manchester

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from December through February. A female Barrow's was reported from Eel Pond in Rye on January 3 by Susan Wisley and Steve Bennett and seen there over the next week. Several other reports of this species came in from locations on the Seacoast and elsewhere in the state, making this a good year to find this less common duck.



Northern Shoveler by Steve Bennett, 2-26-22, Exeter WTP, NH.

The Exeter Wastewater Treatment Plant (WTP), a favorite spot for seeing winter waterfowl in the past, has undergone a renovation that limited the number of ducks there this winter versus past years (see the article in the Winter 2020-21 issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records*). The main ponds remain, but with the aerators no longer operating, large areas of the ponds froze in January, limiting waterfowl access. With the ponds opening up again in mid-February, two **Northern Shovelers** arrived on February 27, first reported by Christopher McPherson.

In some years, a few **Redheads** are regularly seen on Great Bay, but this winter sightings were scarce. One was reported on Peverly Pond at Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge on December 18 by Kyle Wilmarth, another on Great Bay on January 4 by Steve Mirick, and Robbie Prieto had one that was visible from Great Bay Discovery Center on January 14.

High numbers of waterfowl at a single location are also worth noting. Most significant this winter were reports of 340 **Common Mergansers** from Center Harbor on Lake Winnepesaukee on December 12 and 500 from Meredith on December 23, both by Iain MacLeod.

In January, ten **Common Loons** were discovered by Nordic skaters on Lake Winnepesaukee. This situation was monitored until it was determined that they could not escape. Read the story of their dramatic rescue in the Field Notes.

Shorebirds

Birders who traveled to Star Island for the Isles of Shoals CBC were treated to a surprise sighting of a **Ruddy Turnstone**, seen on Lunging Island on December 29. This

joins nine previous winter records for this species. Another uncommon species for winter is the **Wilson's Snipe**. One was seen in Hollis on December 31 by Chris McPherson and Greg Tillman and another at the Hampton Wastewater Treatment Plant on January 2 by Steve Mirick.



Black-bellied Plover by Cathy Wennerth, 2-12-22, Plaice Cove, Hampton, NH.

Purple Sandpipers were present on the Seacoast in good numbers, often found in flocks at Rye Harbor State Park, Rye Ledges, and on the jetty at Hampton Beach State Park. **Sanderlings** were also present in good numbers in December and January, with a notable high count of at least 207 on Seabrook Beach reported by Steve Mirick on January 23.

Three **Black-bellied Plovers** were seen throughout the season in Hampton, often at Plaice Cove. As less common overwintering birds, they delighted birders who searched for them in all kinds of weather. The first report of **Killdeer** (George Gavutis, Jr.) was on February 8 in Kensington, an early arrival date for this species. Scattered reports of Killdeer in the south over the following days coincided with a period of warm weather and thawing conditions. Most arrival reports for this species in recent years, according to eBird data, have come in during the last week in February.

The **Semipalmated Plover** that overwintered in Rye Harbor for two consecutive years was not seen this winter.

Gulls, Seabirds, and Alcids

We also noted the absence of "Glockenspiel," the **Glaucous Gull** that ruled over the restrooms and parking lot by Hampton Harbor since the winter of 2008-09. See the article in this issue for more on this famous gull. Fortunately for birders, an immature Glaucous Gull frequented the same location over the winter. On December 11, Leo McKillop reported both a first winter and second winter Glaucous

Gull, but that is the only report of two birds at this location. Up to three Glaucous Gulls were seen in the vicinity of the Rochester WTP, and Nora Hanke photographed one in the Nashua River on January 20. Regular in small numbers along the coast, up to seven **Iceland Gulls** were counted at the Rochester WTP several times during the winter season. An immature bird was photographed by Chris McPherson on January 23 in the Nashua River. Mostly individual **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** were seen along the seacoast and around the Exeter WTP and Rochester WTP. None were seen from the Nashua River.



Glaucous Gull by Ken Faucher, 1-10-22, Seabrook, NH.

This winter there were four boat trips out of Eastman's Docks with birders aboard to photograph and document seabirds and the boat for the Isles of Shoals CBC made a total of five pelagic trips with at least some time documented in New Hampshire waters. Eastman's stopped running trips from early January to late March this winter.



Dovekie by Steve Mirick, 1-1-22, Rye Harbor SP, NH.

Compared to previous seasons, **Dovekie** numbers were down. The Eastman's trip on January 13 netted a total of 170 birds in New Hampshire waters combining morning and afternoon sightings out on Jeffrey's Ledge. One of the more exciting Dovekie encounters from shore was on January

1 when Jason Lambert spotted two through the fog at Rye Harbor State Park and one of them kept approaching a group of observers until it was "inches from shore," according to Steve Mirick's eBird report (1-1-22). Tiffany Kersten, who in 2021 did a Lower-48 Big Year to promote women's safety in the outdoors (and now has that record with 726 species), found her ten Dovekies on the December 13 Eastman's fishing trip.

A high of 82 **Common Murre** were reported on a fishing trip on December 30. Up to eight **Atlantic Puffins** were seen near Jeffrey's Ledge on the January 13 trip. In the winter of 2020-2021, Atlantic Puffins were reported from pelagic trips in *every* season. **Thick-billed Murre** numbers were low with mostly individual birds spotted from shore. **Razorbills** were seen regularly from shore and in decent numbers on the pelagic trips. A smattering of **Black Guillemots** were reported on most of the trips, typically around the Isles of Shoals or just offshore.

Most of the fishing trips recorded one or two **Pomarine Jaegers** and small numbers of **Northern Fulmar**. The January 13 trip counted a whopping 335 **Black-legged Kittiwake** in the morning and another 315 on the afternoon leg of their trip. There was an unexpected off-season **Double-crested Cormorant** hanging around the docks in New Castle that continued into January and Steve Mirick photographed two in Hampton Harbor on January 20.

Herons, Raptors, and Owls

An **American Bittern** reported by Holly Bauer at Meadow Pond in Hampton on December 22 is an unusual sighting for the winter season. The bittern continued to be reported on January 2 and 6 and again at the end of February, leading to speculation that it could be the same overwintering bird. Five **Sandhill Cranes** seen by Jason Lambert on December 4 in Dover and two reported flying over the Portsmouth Country Club on December 14 by Steve Bennett join scattered records of this species in winter, often late migrants seen in flight.



Sandhill Cranes by Steve Bennett, 12-14-21, Portsmouth, NH.

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Black Vultures that were reported from two locations in February – Penacook on February 10 by Pam Hunt and Chesterfield on February 18 by Jim Moulton – may have moved north in the period of warmer weather. **Turkey Vultures** were seen in numerous locations in the southeastern portion of the state throughout the winter, with a notable high count of 80 reported from Exeter on December 9 and again on December 17 by Paul Lacourse. **Golden Eagles** are scarce in New Hampshire, but this winter a number of sightings excited birders lucky enough to spot these magnificent birds. One was reported from Keene on the CBC on December 19 by Steve Lamonde and Kimberly Snyder, a first record for that count. On January 26, Steve Mirick found an immature Golden Eagle on Great Bay. The bird was reported again from various spots around Great Bay off and on through February 18.



Rough-legged Hawk by Steve Mirick, 2-6-22, Dover, NH.

Rough-legged Hawk is another species that is not always reliable in New Hampshire, but this winter provided opportunities to see them in multiple locations. One was spotted in Berlin from December 5-8 (multiple observers). Other locations with multiple reports for the winter season included the Hollis area, Westmoreland, Great Bay and surrounding area, and Swanzey. The Swanzey individual was seen off and on through the first week of February at the Dillant-Hopkins Airport. On February 1, a Rough-legged Hawk was reported from Pickering Road in Rochester by Sonja Ahlberg. A dark and a light morph were eventually seen at this location and remained in the Holley Fields through February 23, providing great viewing opportunities and a chance to see both morphs side by side.

This winter was a good year for seeing **Short-eared Owls** as well. One in Swanzey, first reported on December 27 by

Alex Lamoreaux and Lauren diBiccari, continued at this location through mid-February. Ed Norton spotted a Short-eared Owl in Greenland on December 3, and Pam Hunt found one in Seabrook on December 4. A single Short-eared first spotted by Susan Wrisley and Steve Bennett on February 16 in the Seabrook back dunes was joined by two others and they put on spectacular shows for birders and photographers at sunset through the third week in February.



Short-eared Owl by Susan Wrisley, 2-16-22, NH coast.

Snowy Owls, seen sporadically the past couple of winters, were regularly reported from several locations in the southern half of the state. One of the first sightings came in from the airport in Swanzey on December 6, reported by Will Stollsteimer. Another was spotted on the roof of Staples in Newington by Jim Sparrell on December 17, which he pointed out to some surprised families and store employees that came out to see it. Three to four individuals were seen regularly throughout the season on the Seacoast in their typical spots in the area around Rye Harbor, in Seabrook, and at Hampton Beach State Park. In Concord, a Snowy Owl took up residence at the Fort Eddy Plaza and was seen from January 16 (first seen and photographed by Eric Alvarez) through the third week of February, where it delighted birders and shoppers by perching on the roofs of various retail outlets (see the Field Notes for more on this owl).

Doves, Woodpeckers, Swallows, Shrike and Thrushes

A **White-winged Dove** spotted by Holly Bauer in her yard in Hampton on February 3 is the fifth state record and likely first winter season record for this species. The bird frequented the area beneath her feeder through February 20. Holly graciously hosted a number of birders who came to see this unusual bird for New Hampshire. Although we think

of doves as sedentary, some doves that do migrate include northern populations of Mourning Doves from North America, which have been found in Greenland and Europe in both spring and fall. White-winged Doves are partial migrants and have shown up as far north as Alaska, Hudson Bay, and Labrador (Lees and Gilroy, 2021). There are even winter records as far north as Newfoundland, Quebec City and near Algonquin Provincial Park in Ontario (eBird data).



White-winged Dove by Susan Wrisley, 2-3-22, Witch Island, Hampton, NH.

Once again, there were a good number of reports of **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** throughout southern New Hampshire this winter. This species continues to spread its winter range north and to have more of a presence in New Hampshire through the winter season. The northernmost report came from Ed Boyle in Jackson on January 12.

Red-bellied Woodpecker is another species whose range continues to expand. This winter season saw widespread reports with high numbers on CBC counts in southern and central portions of the state. Individuals were seen as far north as Shelburne, Gorham, and Jackson. Although they are present year-round, **Black-backed Woodpeckers** often go unreported in the winter due to the inaccessibility of their locations and fewer birders in the North Country. This year a single individual was seen in Errol on December 15 by Christine Howe and Dennis Repasz and on the Crawford Notch CBC on December 18 by the same pair of birders. On January 24, Roger Simmons spotted one while hiking Mt. Starr King in Jefferson. Lori Charron enjoyed a visit from one in her yard in Errol on February 7.

The only report of an **Eastern Phoebe** this winter came from Dan Nickerson in Portsmouth on January 6. An intrepid **Barn Swallow**, reported by Steve Mirick, remained in North Hampton into December, setting a new late record for this species. It was last seen on December 9 by Joanne

O'Shaughnessy.

There were a good number of sightings of **Northern Shrike** in southern locations this year. On December 1, Sam Jaffe reported one from Swanzezy that continued to the end of February. A Northern Shrike was found in Newington at Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge on December 18 by Kyle Wilmarth. This individual, presumed to be the same bird, was seen again in the fields on Arboretum Drive across from Short Street on January 14 and regularly found there and at the refuge in the old weapons storage area, for the next month. Elsewhere around the state Northern Shrikes were reported from nine of the ten counties during the winter season (c'mon Merrimack, we're rooting for you!)



Northern Shrike by Jim Sparrell, 1-23-22, Newington, NH.

A **Brown Thrasher** found by Miklos Oyler in Conway on January 23 is the northernmost winter record in eBird. The bird continued to be seen coming to a feeder through February 6. Another Brown Thrasher was found in Keene by Nora Hanke on January 27, where she also had a **Rusty Blackbird**. There were widely scattered reports of **Hermit Thrush** in the southern and central portions of the state all three months of the winter. The northernmost sighting came from Ken Klapper in Sandwich on December 29. A **Varied Thrush** seen in Fitzwilliam on January 17 was at a private location not accessible to birders. In recent years, one or two individuals of this species, always an exciting find, have been reported, generally coming to feeders.

Pipits, Buntings, Longspurs and Larks

American Pipits are uncommon in winter, and more so inland. This winter four inland reports came from Milford (Nora Hanke, 12-8-21), Canterbury (Mark Suomala, 12-13-21), Hollis (Susan Wrisley, 12-16-21), and Concord (Pam Hunt, 2-11-22). Peak numbers at the coast included five at Odiorne Point State Park in Rye on December 12 (Roger Stephenson), and a flock of five at Bicentennial Park in Hampton on December 14, reported by Steve Mirick.

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A group numbering up to nine seen in the final days of February feeding in the wrack at Great Boar's Head in Hampton continued into the spring season.



Lapland Longspur by Kyle Wilmarth, 12-27-21, Hampton, NH.

A **Lapland Longspur** was first seen at Hampton Beach State Park in the fall and up to three individuals continued to be reported off and on through February. Single Lapland Longspurs were also reported on December 31 in Hollis by Chris McPherson, and in early January from Keene (Wendy Ward 1-8) and Swanzey (Kimberly Snyder, 1-9). Lauren diBiccari and Alex Lamoreaux had three together in Walpole on January 22. **Snow Buntings** and **Horned Larks** were found in the usual locations, at Hampton Beach State Park and other spots on the Seacoast and in Walpole, Westmoreland, Swanzey, and Hollis. Both species were seen in good numbers, with flocks of Snow Buntings up to 80 and flocks of Horned Larks up to 130 in Hampton.

Winter Finches and Waxwings

Scattered sightings of crossbills, **Evening Grosbeaks**, and **Common Redpolls** were reported this winter, mostly from the northern half of the state. After the impressive southward irruption of winter finches last winter, the number of sightings was down dramatically. Notable reports of **White-winged Crossbills** include a flock of 50 reported from Jefferson on December 16 by Judy Dearborn and a flock of 20 by Stuart Varney on Trudeau Road in Bethlehem on February 13. A few reports of single or small groups of **Red Crossbills** came in from around the northern and western parts of the state.

Purple Finch was one finch species that *did* show up in good numbers this year at feeders in the North Country. At the time of the warm-up in February, large flocks of Purple Finch were reported at feeders in Littleton, Franconia, Lancaster, Jefferson and other spots in the north. Dick

Boulanger of Littleton wrote in his eBird report (2-20-22):

Feeders have been mobbed by Purple Finch all winter. About one out of ten is a bright male... Gussed at 200 because they often fill seven feeders and bird bath as well as surrounding trees. Going to buy my third 50 lb. bag of black oil sunflower seeds!

Although we think of Purple Finches as local breeders in the north, they are prone to considerable movement. Herb Wilson (2015) studied banding data and writes:

A Purple Finch banded in Maine in 1966 was subsequently captured two years later in Texas, a distance of 1,792 miles. (Retrieved on 06-06-2022: web.colby.edu/mainebirds/2015/05/31/purplefinch-winter-movments (sic)).



Purple Finch by Iain MacLeod, 2-20-22, Sandwich, NH.

There were a good number of reports of **Pine Siskin** in the northern and western parts of the state as well, including a few reports of green morph individuals. (See the Field Notes for more about green morph siskins.)

Bohemian Waxwings did not move south in notable numbers as they have some years, and northern reports were sparse until February. A flock of six was seen in Milford on January 23, reported by Marie Nickerson. Other reports were of single birds or small flocks. Starting in mid-February, reports came in of flocks in Shelburne, Plymouth, North Sandwich, and Gorham. Numbers did not reach the large flocks of 400-500 reported last winter.

Sparrows, Orioles and Blackbirds

Notable sightings of sparrows include a **Clay-colored Sparrow** found by Stuart Varney on December 14 at the

South Street Cemetery in Portsmouth. Presumably the same individual was seen at a feeder in a neighborhood adjacent to the cemetery on January 20 by Steve Mirick. This fairly cooperative bird continued to be seen through the end of the month. Two Clay-colored Sparrows were also reported from Concord in January, one in Penacook (Pam Hunt, first seen 1-2-22) and the other coming to Becky Suomala's feeder. This was the second winter in a row she hosted a Clay-colored, leading to speculation that it could be the same individual. This year, however, the sparrow only appeared sporadically, usually with a snowfall (see Becky's article in this issue).



Clay-colored Sparrow by Pam Hunt, 2-20-22, Penacook survey route, NH.

Two **Field Sparrows** were found in Litchfield and two in Hudson on December 15 and 16, reported by Nora Hanke and Ethan Lai respectively. On February 3, Matt Tarr reported one from Short Street in Newington. **White-crowned Sparrow** reports were mostly limited to sporadic

sightings at Great Bay Farm in Greenland from the end of December to early February, with a high count of nine by Steve Mirick on December 18. Chickering Farm in Westmoreland also had one, found by Taj Schottland on December 18. A **Vesper Sparrow** was reported by Nora Hanke from Woodmont Orchard in Hollis on December 27, an unusual and exciting find for winter. Presumably the same individual, continued to be seen here through January 22. Woodmont Orchard also hosted the season's only **Lincoln's Sparrow**, found by Nick Landers on December 23.

A few **Dickcissel** sightings were reported in various locations in the southern third of the state. One continuing from November at a feeder in Rochester was last reported on December 28. Another Dickcissel was seen by Jane Hills at her feeder in Manchester off and on in December, including during the Manchester CBC (12-18-21), and again on January 19. One spotted in East Kingston by Davis Finch on December 10 was viewed by many through February 16. Dan Prima had a one-day visit from a Dickcissel in Raymond.



Vesper Sparrow by Nora E. Hanke, 12-27-21, Woodmont Orchard, Hollis, NH.



Baltimore Oriole by Steve Mirick, 1-22-22, Stratham, NH.

A **Baltimore Oriole** was an exciting find for the birders participating in the Keene CBC on December 19. Other Baltimore Orioles were seen coming to feeders in Franklin, Stratham, Northwood, and Greenland. The bird in Greenland continued until early February.

The first flocks of **Common Grackles** and **Red-winged Blackbirds** arrived with the period of above average temperatures that began on February 10. Although this is not an especially early return date, the birds were likely brought north by the unseasonal weather.

Warblers and Vireos

During the previous winter of 2020-2021, ten species of warblers were reported in New Hampshire. A review of records from *The Birds of New Hampshire* and eBird indicated that this was a record high number of warbler species for the winter season. In the previous eight years, totals ranged from two to seven, with four or five species seen most commonly for the entire season.

In the winter of 2021-2022, however, 11 species of warblers were found in the state! Not only was this a new high number, but warblers were seen in all three winter months, with a number of species establishing late records.

The warbler bonanza began the first week in December, when Steve and Jane Mirick reported ten warbler species over two days from locations on the Seacoast (see related article in this issue). On December 4, they found **Black-throated**

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Green, Northern Parula, Palm, Pine, Prairie, Townsend's, and Yellow-rumped Warbler in Hampton and Rye. On the same day, Angie Norton located a **Wilson's Warbler** in Newmarket, to bring the day's remarkable total to eight species. On December 5, the Miricks added to the weekend's total with sightings of **Orange-crowned and Blackpoll Warblers** in Hampton and Rye.

The Prairie Warbler continued to be seen at the Hampton Wastewater Treatment Plant, along with a Yellow-rumped Warbler, into January. They were joined by an Orange-crowned Warbler on January 2, a species also seen at this location four weeks earlier. These birds were last reported on January 16, prior to a number of very cold nights.



Prairie Warbler by Steve Mirick, 1-8-22, Hampton WTP, NH.

Elsewhere in the state, an **Ovenbird** was found in Londonderry on December 12 by Paul Dionne and another was found in Goffstown on December 23 by Kristin Atkins (see the Field Notes for more about this bird). A Yellow-rumped Warbler was reported by Karen Mitchell coming to a feeder in Mont Vernon from December to the end of February. Another Yellow-rumped was recorded in Colebrook on February 11 by Aubrie Giroux. Although there have been scattered reports of this species from the North Country in the past few winters, it is rare to have a Yellow-rumped appear in February this far north.

Pine Warblers were present in a few locations all three months of the winter. Single birds were reported from Odiorne Point State Park in Rye through the first week in January, at a feeder in Brookline (Barry Doyle) from January 15 through the end of the month, and in Portsmouth in late February (Jean Mullen 2-25). Rounding out the record-breaking year, an Orange-crowned Warbler seen throughout February at a private feeder in Rye, was last reported by Steve Mirick on February 26.

Of the warblers found this winter, Blackpoll Warbler was a first New Hampshire winter record. The Prairie Warbler that persisted until January 10 set a record late date for New

Hampshire, the fourth January record for New England and the first January record north of Massachusetts, according to eBird. The Black-throated Green and Northern Parula reported in December were the second latest records for these species. The Wilson's Warbler was the third latest record.



Orange-crowned Warbler by Steve Mirick, 2-26-22, Rye, NH.

One last notable sighting and record to report is the **Blue-headed Vireo** found on the Keene CBC in Westmoreland by Phil Brown on December 19, a first winter record for the state. It was seen one last time at the same location on December 31 by Adam Burnett.

References

- Keith, A. and R. Fox. 2013. *The Birds of New Hampshire*. Nuttall Ornithological Club.
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Winter Season Haiku Format

by Jim Sparrell

No Redhead in sight
duck shadows in late day light
Greater Scaup in rafts.

Gentle White-winged Dove
do not regret your visit
dodge the wild falcon.

Massive raptor shape
golden nape Golden Eagle
you too are stellar.

Concord Snowy Owl
visiting the outlet malls
enjoying fast food.

Killdeer from the south
Purple Finches from the north
birders are outflanked.

Regional Report, Winter 2021-22

Sullivan County and Lake Sunapee

by Dylan Jackson



Leucistic Red-tailed Hawk by Ken Cox, 1-23-21, Cornish, NH.

As with much of 2021, the winter left us with little to be excited about and a lot to be desired. The most notable take away from the winter of 2021-22 was how much it contrasted with the previous winter. Finches are usually what we anticipate the most in this area during the gloom of winter, but unfortunately this winter paled in comparison to the winter before. The winter of 2020-2021 brought us somewhat of a finch eruption in the area. Small numbers of Red Crossbills were around, Evening Grosbeaks turned up in several areas and Pine Grosbeaks and Common Redpolls were plentiful. The winter of 2021-2022 was very different. Personally, I had no winter finches except for Pine Siskins, which were around but in very small numbers. Only a handful of Red Crossbills, Evening Grosbeaks and Common Redpolls were reported throughout the county and Jack Swatt came up with the only White-winged Crossbill, an immature at his home in Lempster on February 14.

Other sought-after winter species were also quite lacking throughout the area. Bohemian Waxwings were quasi reliable as far south as Plymouth, but only one was seen in Sullivan County by Susan Hardy in Plainfield. Susan also found a Northern Shrike in the same area and the legendary Stan McCumber had one in Charlestown. These two records were the only records for shrike in Sullivan County/Lake Sunapee for the entire winter. Regular species like Snow Bunting and Horned Lark were completely absent for much of the winter and despite the many inland records for Snowy Owl throughout New Hampshire and Vermont, our neck of the woods wasn't so fortunate.

One interesting bird that returned to the area for the winter was a leucistic Red-tailed Hawk that frequented

the Cornish/Windsor bridge on the Connecticut River in Cornish both last winter and again this winter. This bird is almost completely white with a few normally pigmented feathers. It's been seen there for two consecutive winters now and may have been around for much longer. In 2016, a Gyrfalcon was reported at Lebanon airport, but was later identified as an almost pure white Red-tailed Hawk. The bird from Cornish resembles the airport bird and could possibly be the same individual.

Here's to hoping for a much more productive 2022.

Steller's Sea-Eagle – The Rarity of the Century?

by Rebecca Suomala



Steller's Sea-Eagle by Roger Frieden, 1-13-22, Boothbay, ME

No summary of the Winter 2021-22 season would be complete without a mention of *the* Steller's Sea-Eagle. The amazing sighting of a Steller's Sea-Eagle had the birding world abuzz no matter where you lived, but especially in the Northeast. After being photographed in Texas (!) on 3-7-21, a Steller's Sea-Eagle spent time in Canada from 6-29-21 to 11-3-21 (mostly while the US-Canada border was closed due to COVID). For New Hampshire birders, excitement skyrocketed when the bird was reported on the Taunton River in Massachusetts. It was seen there on 12-12-21 but word didn't get out until 12-19-21. People descended in droves the next day! This was a once-in-a-lifetime chance to see a bird that normally requires a trip to Siberia or Japan.

Steve Mirick was one of many birders who saw the sea-eagle in Dighton, MA on 12-20-21. He posted the following to NHBirds the next day.

Steller's Sea-Eagle – by the Numbers!

- Weight of large female – 19.8 lbs (roughly tied for the largest eagle by weight in the world with the Harpy Eagle)
- Wingspan of large female – 8 feet 2 inches

- Size of bill – 4.6 inches
- Number of records for species in the lower 48 states – 1 (there are several records from Alaska and an accepted report in Texas may be this same bird!?)
- Number of eBird reports submitted for the bird seen yesterday (12-20-21) in Massachusetts – 200!
- Number of birders I hadn't seen in the last couple of years (some in over 10 years!) – Countless
- Number of text messages that Jane and I sent out yesterday - 54 (mostly Jane while I sped around from spot to spot trying to find bird!)
- Number of phone calls made or received – 24
- Number of people I texted with – 12 (plus 74 in Text group)
- Number of times I swore yesterday – Countless

This author and editor of *New Hampshire Bird Records* arrived 15 minutes too late to see the sea-eagle (don't even ask me about it!) and it wasn't reported again in Massachusetts, but it turned out that all was not lost. The eagle was sighted in Maine on 12-31-21 and the year 2022 started out on a high note for many of us on a misty January 1 at the Georgetown, ME town wharf. There it was, on top of an evergreen on a nearby island giving great views to a very large crowd – a bird I thought I would never see in my lifetime! Hallelujah! There was so much traffic from birders that the Google Maps app showed red on the local roads because of traffic delays! Jeanne-Marie Maher reported that on January 1, she made a New Year's resolution to “stop chasing birds” and enjoy them. On January 2, it was “off to Maine coast to get the Steller's Sea-Eagle (successfully).”

New Hampshire should be able to add the Steller's Sea-Eagle to its state list, since the bird flew over not once but twice – on its way from Canada to Massachusetts and from Massachusetts to Maine, but unfortunately rules require that someone sees it!

You can watch a Maine Audubon webinar called *The Amazing Saga of the Steller's Sea-Eagle* on YouTube at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2LMmhbyM_Ho

For those wondering who the Steller's Sea-Eagle is named after, Dana Duxbury-Fox posted the following to NHBirds on 1-6-22.

There is a delightful book called “Whose Bird?” by Bo Beolens and Michael Watkins which tells you the story about the people that a bird's name commemorates. So who was Steller? He was clearly stellar – I quote:

“Georg Wilhelm Steller (1709-1746) was a German naturalist and explorer in Russian service. He studied medicine at Halle, between 1731 and 1734, and was a physician in the

Russian army in 1734. He became an assistant at the Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg in 1737 and accompanied Vitus Bering on his second expedition (1738-1742) to Alaska and Kamchatka. Between 1742 and 1744 he worked in Petropavlovsk but died on the return trip to St. Petersburg. John Latham, the English naturalist, first described the Steller's Jay in 1781 based on Steller's detailed journals and on a skin from Vancouver Island collected by Cook's expedition. Steller published a Journal of a Voyage with Bering 1741-1743. Johann Gmelin (1748-1804) named the jay in his honour in his description. Steller himself discovered the eagle and eider.”

Warbler Weekend Bonanza in December!

by Stephen R. Mirick



Pine Warbler by Stephen R. Mirick, 12-5-21, Rye, NH. For other warbler photos from his December weekend, see the front cover (inside and out).

As winter approaches, the diversity of landbirds quickly decreases in New Hampshire. By December, the extremely short day lengths and colder temperatures have usually driven all the warblers south to their normal wintering grounds. Only a few species are cold tolerant and can find food and withstand the winters of the southeastern United States. A few can even overwinter in New Hampshire if they're lucky enough to find a reliable food resource, which is often a bird feeder with suet. The rest are generally referred to as “neotropical migrants” and they continue south to warmer climates of the Caribbean islands, Mexico, Central or South America.

Past issues of *New Hampshire Bird Records* have highlighted the increasing numbers of lingering warblers reported in New Hampshire during the winter season

from 1951 through 2021 (Kras & Griffith 2012; Towler & Sparrell 2020). Most of these reports are brief sightings from December and likely reflect lingering or late vagrant warblers. Some of these birds may continue south, but most likely don't survive. In their winter season summary, Katie Towler and Jim Sparrell reported that a total of 10 species of warblers were reported during the 2020-2021 winter season which set a new record for New Hampshire. During the winter of 2021-2022, my wife and I alone were able to match that record in the first weekend of the season!

On Saturday, December 4, Jane and I scoured the New Hampshire coast looking for lingering warblers and vagrants of any sort. We were excited to see that five of the very late warblers continued at the Hampton wastewater treatment plant. Six species had been hanging around through November in a very small area near the administrative offices. Birders had no special permission to bird there, but plant personnel were friendly and "tolerant" of the birders. The lingering warblers could be hard to find, but kept returning to a small group of arborvitae trees where they found shelter from predators and cold northwest winds. The sheltered trees were also close to an open treatment pond which provided insects for the birds. We ended up with an incredible seven species of warblers along the coast for that Saturday including a very rare vagrant, a Townsend's Warbler which appeared out of nowhere on Church Road in Rye!

The next day on December 5, we returned with others to Church Road to try to relocate the Townsend's Warbler, but frustratingly couldn't find it. Amazingly, instead we found a Pine Warbler and the rarest warbler of the weekend, a Blackpoll Warbler, which was the first winter record ever in New Hampshire for this long-distance migrant! We went back down to Hampton and found all six of the rarities at the treatment plant and, thanks to a phone call from Ed Norton, we were able to finish the day by chasing down a

Wilson's Warbler in Newmarket! We finished with a "mind-blowing" nine species of warblers in that one day and 10 species for the weekend, none of which were associated with bird feeders! The 10 species we saw that weekend are listed in Table 1.

Most of these warblers disappeared by mid-December, hopefully flying south to more hospitable wintering habitat, but a couple of birds lingered into January including the Prairie Warbler, which survived until January 10 (record late) and the Orange-crowned Warbler which lingered until January 16. It's likely that these birds perished with the increasingly cold and wintry weather. The addition of Blackpoll Warbler brings the total number of winter warbler records in



Yellow-rumped Warbler by Stephen R. Mirick, 12-9-21, Rye, NH.

New Hampshire to 22 species according to my estimates!

The fact that we are seeing more warblers in winter over the last 60 years is not a big surprise. Global warming continues without any signs of abatement and higher latitude areas like New England are warming faster than other areas of the world. Compounding matters is the fact that the warming temperatures are actually more pronounced in the winter months in New England as compared to other seasons (Young & Young). This trend is expected to continue and will have a significant impact on the wintering birds and ecosystems of the region. Wayward warblers are surviving

longer into warmer Decembers. A dramatic increase in the number of birders and bird feeders over the last 25 years as well as access to the internet and eBird has also contributed to the increased number of reports. It is expected that the number of winter sightings of lingering warblers will continue to grow in the future.

Data Sources & References

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Table 1. The ten species of warbler seen by Steve and Jane Mirick in New Hampshire on the weekend of December 4-5, 2021.

Species	Winter Status in New Hampshire
Orange-crowned Warbler	Rare, but increasingly regular in early winter
Northern Parula	Second winter record for NH
Blackpoll Warbler	First winter record for NH
Palm Warbler	Rare, but sometimes recorded in early winter
Pine Warbler	Uncommon to rare in early winter
Yellow-rumped Warbler	Irregular on coast in winter
Prairie Warbler	Second winter record for NH
Townsend's Warbler	A western vagrant and fifth winter record for NH
Black-throated Green Warbler	Second winter record for NH
Wilson's Warbler	Third winter record for NH

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Winter 2021-22 Field Notes

Kathryn Frieden, Editor

Spectacular Loon Rescue on Lake Winnepesaukee

This is a summary of a story posted 1-28-22 on the Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) Facebook page.

On January 15, Nordic skiers discovered a group of ten Common Loons remaining in a pocket of open water on Lake Winnepesaukee. At the time, the opening in the water was possibly large enough for the loons to take flight and was too large for a successful rescue. The situation was monitored and on the morning of January 22, the open water had shrunk to about ten feet in diameter and a team of LPC biologists headed out across the ice. Using a combination of landing nets and gill nets, they were able to capture the loons one by one over a period of about four hours. Upon capture, it was discovered that most of the loons had already molted their primary feathers, leaving them flightless. This process is normal, but usually occurs when the loons are on the ocean and have no need to fly.

The rescued loons were banded, x-rayed, and tested for lead. Although thin, none had injuries and only one had mildly elevated lead levels. All ten loons were then transferred to Maria Colby at the Wings of the Dawn Wildlife Rehabilitation Center in Henniker where they spent

the next 24 hours. While there, they ate a combined total of 30 pounds of fish! In addition, the loon with the elevated lead level was treated with chelation to remove the lead. On January 24, the well-rested and well-fed loons were taken to Odiorne Point State Park in Rye where they were successfully released into the ocean.

Congratulations and many thanks to the hardworking LPC staff who spent long, cold hours on the ice to save these loons!

Update: As Common Loons began arriving on New Hampshire's lakes in spring 2022, the LPC staff was excited to confirm the return of one of the "Winnepesaukee Ten." A photograph taken by Jane Beardsley at Purity Lake in Eaton on April 25 showed the band on the loon's leg that was placed at the time of the rescue. Hopefully there will be nine more returnees!



Jane Beardsley was the first to find one of the rescued loons in the spring. She took this photo showing the banded leg on 4-25-22 on Purity Lake in Eaton, NH.



LPC staff evaluate the situation of ten Common Loons on Lake Winnepesaukee on 1-21-22. Photo by Harry Vogel.

“Zebra” Plumage of Leucistic Red-tailed Hawk

Posted to the NHBirds email list 12-3-21 by Steve Bennett.



Susan Wrisley took this photo of an exotic-looking partially-leucistic Red-tailed Hawk in January 2021. See the back cover for a color version of this photo. Does this make you think of that old medical school adage, “When you hear hoofbeats outside your window, don’t look out and expect to see a zebra.”? Or in this case, “When you see a large bird with a red tail perched high in a tree, do you expect to see a “Zebra Hawk”?

In January of 2021, Susan Wrisley sent me some pictures of a strangely patterned Red-tailed Hawk that she had seen along Route 101 in Auburn between Exits 1 and 2. It was highly leucistic, featuring an all-white head, a white breast and belly, and mostly white upper wings with a few black flight feathers mixed in, giving it a “zebra” effect. Jenna Pettipas also reported seeing it shortly after Susan’s sighting. I had been searching for this bird for 11 months and today I finally got lucky. At about 3:00 pm, I spotted what appeared to be a large raptor in a tree along Route 101. It was indeed our “Zebra” Red-tailed Hawk! It was skittish and immediately took off. As it soared above the trees, I followed it for about five minutes, a harrowing experience as I was parked precariously in the Route 101 breakdown lane with heavy traffic. It is a very cool and dramatic bird. Keep your eyes open!

Editor’s Note: A leucistic Red-tailed Hawk also returned for a second winter in Cornish, NH but its plumage was very different. See the Regional Report for Sullivan County and Lake Sunapee.

American Goldfinch/Pine Siskin Hybrid

by Iain MacLeod

Photos taken by Iain MacLeod on 2-4-22 in Sandwich, NH.

A snowstorm on February 4, 2022, brought a good crowd of birds to my feeders in Center Sandwich. Amongst the recently arrived 24 American Goldfinches and seven Pine Siskins was an oddity that caught my eye. The bird showed plumage characteristics of both finch species and was assumed by me to be a hybrid. It had a general goldfinch shape and upper wing pattern, streaking like a siskin, the bill shape of a siskin and the underwing pattern of a goldfinch. The bird was present for two days, but then not seen again in the ever-increasing numbers of finches that swarmed my feeders for the remainder of the winter. I had a similar bird several years ago at my former home in Ashland.

Ed. Note: This hybrid has been reported only six other times in eBird, and this is only the second American eBird record. One was seen in upstate New York in 2018, all the other records are from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and northeastern Quebec, except for one sighting on Vancouver Island, British Columbia in 2019.



Note the goldfinch-like shape and wing pattern but siskin-like streaking and bill shape.



This photo shows the contrast between the streaking on the breast of the hybrid bird below and the goldfinch above.

Arctic Tundra Visitor in Concord

by Mark Suomala

A Snowy Owl, a large and beautiful mostly white raptor with bright yellow eyes, paid a visit to Concord this past winter. It was first reported to NH Audubon on January 16 and was seen on at least eight days by several observers. It was last reported on February 17. Early on during its month-long visit it was seen at the Fort Eddy Plaza, perched on the roofs of L.L. Bean and Uno Pizzeria, appearing just after sunset in the waning light. Then, in February, it started perching on light-posts and a flagpole on Stickney Avenue. While there was still enough light to watch the owl's activities, it was sometimes seen flying down to the ground to catch a rodent with its talons, and then flying up to perch on a pole, sign, or building to swallow the rodent whole. (The fur, bones, and teeth of the consumed rodent are expelled from the owl's mouth later as a pellet.) When Snowy Owls are seen in New Hampshire, it is usually on the coast, and inland sightings tend to be transient birds that don't stay around, so it was a real treat to have one in Concord for a month! Interestingly, when Snowy Owls have been seen in Concord in the past, they were often in the Stickney Avenue area, and one was even photographed on the State House several blocks away.



Ovenbird in Winter

by Kathryn Frieden

On December 23, 2021, Cynthia Tonseth was contacted by her friend Kristen Atkins in Goffstown asking for help with a bird she had found in front of her garage door that was unable to fly. Cynthia drove all the way from Hudson to Goffstown, picked up the bird, and promptly drove it to

Wings of the Dawn Wildlife Rehabilitation Center in Henniker. It turned out to be an Ovenbird, which despite Cynthia's quick response and good efforts, sadly did not survive. Ovenbirds spend winters primarily in the Caribbean and Middle America and are usually gone from New Hampshire by the first week of October. There are a few records of Ovenbirds here in December and even January over the years, but unlike this bird, the fate of the lingering warbler is usually unknown.



Kristen Atkins found this Ovenbird in her driveway and photographed it on 12-23-21 in Goffstown, NH.



Snowy Owl atop weathervane on Uno's Pizzeria in Concord, NH. "Waiting for a vole pizza?" Photos by Mark Suomala. 1-23-22.

Identifying an Individual Barn Swallow



A very late Barn Swallow was seen in December in both Rye and North Hampton. Steve Mirick made this comparison of photos on 12-7-21 and determined it was the same bird from the missing primary in its left wing. In a post to NHBirds on 12-7-21 he noted that the Barn Swallow:

...seems to be alternating between North Hampton State Beach and the neighborhood (and beach) off Old Beach Road in Rye, 2.7 miles north of North Hampton State Beach!! It should be noted that (according to eBird) there are only two other New England records for December. One from Hampton, NH on 12-1-05 (O'Shaughnessy) and another from 12-7-12 from Joppa Flats in Newburyport (Sullivan). So this ties the eBird late date for all of New England!

"Green Morph" Siskin

by Alex Lamoreaux

Among the hordes of Pine Siskins that may descend upon your feeders each winter, there is an opportunity to search for mysterious "green morph" individuals. There is already quite a bit of normal plumage variation in this small, feisty finch, from immature females being entirely black-and-brown streaked to adult males being boldly streaked with bright yellow. Closer examination of Pine Siskins has also made it clear there is an entirely separate, but rare "green morph" which shows unique plumage details in all age classes. Generally, all ages and sexes of these morphs show an extreme amount of yellow in their wings, undertail coverts, and tail, in addition to thinner dark streaking over a muted green body coloration. They may have very limited to almost no streaking on their undersides, compared to the heavy blackish streaking shown by typical siskins. "Green morph" Pine Siskins also tend to be a bit larger than "normal" Pine Siskins when seen side-by-side.

At this time, it seems that "green morph" siskins can show up anywhere "normal" siskins are found. Even among a group of just ten siskins at our Marlborough feeders in February 2022, we were able to pick out one "green morph." Further study is needed to determine the true distribution of this form and exactly what it means. Is this a true morph, aberrant plumage, or just the normal variation within this already complex species? Whatever the case may be, careful study of the siskins at your feeders could be the key to unlocking this mystery. If you find your own "green morph," please try to upload photos to eBird using the entry option "Pine Siskin (green morph)" so that we can continue to keep tabs on these interesting birds.

For more information on the green morph of the Pine Siskin, check these links:

eBird - <https://ebird.org/species/pinsis3>

Sibley Blog - <https://www.sibleyguides.com/2021/02/variation-in-pine-siskins-and-the-so-called-green-morph/>

Finch Research Network blog - <https://finchnetwork.org/all-about-green-morph-pine-siskins>

Photos by Alex Lamoreaux in early February at his home in Marlborough, NH. See the back cover for a topside view of the green morph Pine Siskin.



"Green morph" Pine Siskin frontal view shows minimal greenish streaking over the off-white body color and pale head (2-7-22).



The "green morph" Pine Siskin on the right contrasts with a typical Pine Siskin and American Goldfinch size (2-4-22). Note the larger size and the overall greenish color with bold yellow wing-stripes and blurred streaking.

New Osprey Platform at Pondicherry NWR

On 2-22-22, Dave Govatski posted the following to the NH Birds email list:



The Osprey's head is just visible above the nest on the new platform. Photo by Dave Govatski, 5-12-22, Pondicherry NWR.

Eversource recently constructed a new 80-foot tall weathered-steel Osprey platform at the Pondicherry National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) in Coos County. The line crew carefully removed the old Osprey nest from the cross arm of the live power line and placed it on the new pole platform which has a design life of 90 years. Staff from the Silvio Conte NWR coordinated with Eversource to complete the project as part of a line improvement project. Kudos to Eversource for their willingness to protect the Osprey as well as ensure a reliable power supply.

Ed Note: Osprey did return to the Pondicherry area in mid-April, right on schedule, and on 5-12-22 Dave was able to confirm one incubating in the nest on the new pole. Success! A big thank you to Eversource, Chris Martin, NH Fish and Game's Nongame Program, and the Silvio Conte NWR for working together on this project.

"Backpacking" Peregrine Falcon Winter Update

The Summer 2021 *New Hampshire Bird Records* issue included a Field Note about a Peregrine Falcon, made recognizable by the "backpack" transmitter it was wearing. It had been seen in Boscawen at Crete's Farm several times in the previous two years. According to Chris Martin this Peregrine appears to have "well-defined breeding, wintering, and post-

breeding layover areas that she utilizes year after year."

During the winter, Chris received word from Pennsylvania on the further adventures of this Peregrine Falcon, (affectionately known as A/G due to her band code). In the NH Audubon eNews on 2-23-2022 he reported that A/G had been admitted to the Pocono Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center in Stroudsburg, PA on January 19, 2022.

The Center's Director Katherine Uhler said the bird had been found grounded early that morning in nearby Northampton County. Since being admitted for rehab last month, A/G has been eating well; her weight increased from 760 grams to over 900 grams in just the first two weeks of care. She has been on medications to fight bacterial infection and improve her liver function. We are hopeful that her next blood test will show a decreased white blood cell count, and that she will be healthy enough for release in time to make her usual early March journey back to the Granite State for the 2022 breeding season.

Her transmitter was either too worn or damaged, so it was removed by cutting the soft ribbon harness that held it in place. To read the full eNews story:

<https://www.nhaidubon.org/tracking-a-new-hampshire-peregrines-nearly-8-year-journey/>

Synchronized Carolina Wrens

by Jim Sparrell

In early January, we were hit with a steady snowstorm big enough that the schools were closed on a Friday, which set up a nice long weekend. I had recently figured out how to shoot slow-motion video with my camera and was itching for some interesting birds to try it out on. It turned out that House Sparrows in slow motion are no more interesting than House Sparrows at full speed. I put out some fresh "Meaties," suet nuggets, and dried mealworms and kept an eye on the feeder. We have had Carolina Wrens off and on most winters and there were two regulars this winter, although they were rarely seen together. Suddenly, I saw that they had both come in to check out the fresh spread at the feeder and then it looked like some of their moves were in synchrony. I grabbed my camera and started shooting slow-motion video and got a few minutes of them feeding together. When I looked at the video later, I laughed because at times they did appear to be moving together with a sort of planned elegance. After a little simple editing, I remembered that the winter Olympics were coming up, so I posted it on Flickr and sent out an email to the NH birding listserv:

In preparation for the Winter Olympics, we have been working with the Carolina Wrens to ready

them for the synchronized feeding competition in Beijing in February. We still have a way to go to bring home the Gold, but you can see we are making progress: <https://flic.kr/p/2mVY6hN>.

One birder commented, “But they look kind of bronze already, so they are close!” and another viewer wrote with tongue-in-cheek and a bit of truth, “It’s the stirring, heart-felt finish that really sells the performance.”



Do you think these Carolina Wrens will win the gold? Photos by Jim Sparrell at his yard in Portsmouth, NH, 1-7-22.

Clay-colored Sparrow Reappears for a Second Winter

by Rebecca Suomala

Clay-colored Sparrows breed in the northern prairies well to the west of New Hampshire, but a few are usually reported each fall. They are rare in winter, but I was lucky enough to have one at my feeder in Concord, NH during the winter of 2020-21. I saw it off and on from 11-30-20 through 2-27-21. It was skittish, staying very briefly for maybe two minutes at a time, mostly during snowstorms. A group of us in Concord spent a morning spread out around my neighborhood trying unsuccessfully to find where it was hanging out when it wasn't at my feeder in the snow. Finally,

there was one week (2-14 through 2-19) when it came reliably in decent weather and other birders got to see it.

Fast forward to Christmas Day in 2021. In the freezing rain, what should I see at my feeder but a Clay-colored Sparrow. It was back! I suppose it could have been a different bird, but they are so rare in winter and this one's behavior pattern was identical to last winter's bird. As before, I only saw it during storms except for three dates in early February (2-7, 2-8, 2-14) and it was so skittish that I only had a moment for documentation photos. I last saw it on a rainy day, 3-19-22. Table 1 lists all the dates the Clay-colored was seen over the past two winters. I was back to working in the office this winter, but worked from home on snowy days, so there may be a little bias in the data. But during the previous winter, I was working at home full time due to COVID-19 and I still didn't see it during good weather. I'm sure it was the same bird and I'll be watching for it next winter.



Clay-colored Sparrow in a snowstorm, 2-4-22, by Rebecca Suomala, Concord, NH.

Table 1. Clay-colored Sparrow sightings at Rebecca Suomala's residence on Noyes St. in Concord, NH. Conditions indicate weather events; if it is blank there was no precipitation. All sightings by R. Suomala except those indicated with an asterisk*. Sighting data is from eBird.

Winter 2021-22		Winter 2020-21	
Date	Conditions	Date	Conditions
12-25-21	freezing rain	11-30-20	rain
1-7-22	snowstorm	12-1-20	*(nearby yard)
1-29-22	snowstorm	1-2-21	snowstorm
2-3-22	just before storm	1-5-21	
2-4-22	snowstorm	2-2-21	snowstorm
2-7-22		2-14-21	
2-8-22		2-15-21	
2-14-22		2-16-21	
2-25-22	snowstorm	2-18-21	*
3-12-22	snowstorm	2-19-21	*
3-19-22	rain	2-22-21	snowstorm
		2-27-21	snowstorm

Photo Gallery: Common X Barrow's Goldeneye Hybrids



A Common X Barrow's Goldeneye on the bottom and Barrow's Goldeneye on the top for comparison. Photo by Brett Hillman, 1-4-22, Manchester, NH.

As if it wasn't hard enough to tell Common from Barrow's Goldeneye (see the excellent article on how to identify these species by Susan Wrisley in the Winter 2019-20 issue, now on the website), there are hybrids between the two species that add complication. In the winter of 2021-22, there were two such hybrids in New Hampshire, one at Stark Landing on the Merrimack River in Manchester and the other on Great Bay. Here are photos of the hybrids and the features to note:

- The white spots on the sides of the back have more white than a Barrow's but not as much as a Common.
- The shape of the white patch on the face is not the full crescent of a Barrow's, but not round like Common.
- The head shape is more peaked like the Common as compared to the flatter head of the Barrow's.



The Common X Barrow's Goldeneye by Brett Hillman, 1-4-22, Manchester, NH.



The Common X Barrow's Goldeneye by Tom Graham, 2-22-22, Great Bay, Greenland, NH.



A Common Goldeneye by Susan Wrisley, 1-22-20, Hampton Harbor, NH.

County Birding Challenges Bring out Old Competitive Spirit

by Iain MacLeod



Scoping the Ossipee Range from Leavitt Park Beach, Meredith, NH. Photo by Iain MacLeod.

Many years ago, when I was a much younger man, I joyfully took part in statewide Big Days with my compadres Rob Woodward and George Robbins. Big Days require intense competitiveness, sleep deprivation and stamina. By the time I hit my mid-forties, it took me a week to recover from a 24-hour binge of statewide birding and I knew it was time to give that up.

In 2021 (now at the tail end of my fifties), I rekindled my competitive birding instincts when I realized that circumstances gave me an opportunity to really boost my Belknap County list. I noted that Pam Hunt had the overall eBird record for species in the county (target #1!). Pam had also thrown out a year-long county challenge (target #2!) and Pam's November County Challenge put me over the top. Multiple gauntlets had been thrown down.

Since 2007, I have lived and worked in Grafton County, but quietly accumulated a reasonable list in Belknap. A dig into eBird revealed that there were many glaring holes in my Belknap list and many common species that I must have actually seen or heard in Belknap, but had never added to an eBird list (so they don't count). While building a new house in Sandwich (Carroll County) in 2021, I would be temporarily living in Belknap County for the first time. Here was my chance to add those missed birds.

Winter Wren and Northern Saw-whet Owl were added in January, American Woodcock was added in March. April added Great Horned Owl, Vesper Sparrow and Eastern Meadowlark. May was a bonanza with 11 new species. Most

were common warblers that were easy to get by just listening as I drove around Belknap, but some flyover Brant were a bonus. Of course, all these county lifers were also new for the year and that list kept climbing and climbing with every passing week. By the time November rolled around, I had added 23 species to my county life list, getting me to 197 and tying me with Pam.

The November Challenge really focused the mind. By now, I was living in the new house in Sandwich, but my loyalty was still with Belknap and all three challenges were still active. Despite finding many good birds for the month, I failed to add any new county life birds (none in December either) and ended the year at 197 (two behind Pam).

For November, my old partner in crime, Mr. Woodward (who also lives in Belknap for some of the year) had joined me. Rob was very eager that Belknap make a good showing and he too had been working on his county life and year list. Although we were working towards the same goal, we also had a little rivalry going too. Some days we worked together and some days we tried to cover different areas.

Rob, who is retired and able to go birding every day, was able to clean up on late-lingering birds in the first few days of November, which gave Belknap a fighting chance in the November County Challenge. As the month wore on, new birds got harder and harder, but we kept up the hunt. We knew we needed waterfowl. A Red-necked Grebe from Leavitt Park Beach in Meredith on November 11 helped our cause. A group of Black Scoters on the same day on Lake Waukegan was a great find. On November 14, I found a lovely Red-throated Loon in Meredith Bay, which brought Rob zipping over from Laconia for a new county bird for him. It was also a new county life bird for Pam, so I shot myself in the foot with that find! The next day, I added a Lesser Scaup with some Ring-necked Ducks on Hermit Lake in Sanbornton.

November 20 was a good day. I was back at Leavitt Park Beach, a spot that I was sure gave me a great chance of adding new birds. In addition to a great view of the lake and multiple islands, there is also a spectacular view of the Ossipee Range. I had spent many hours over multiple days gazing through the scope at the distant skyline picking up migrating raptors and geese. On a clear day, I was able to pick out Common Ravens dancing around a repeater tower eight miles away. Red-tailed Hawks often streaked by and I knew there were all sorts of other possibilities, Golden Eagle, Snow Goose, Red-shouldered Hawk. I even toyed with the idea of Sandhill Cranes. November 20 was kind to me and I was thrilled to see a wonderful group of nine Sandhill Cranes making their way south over the ridgeline and over Center Harbor. I called Ken Klapper and he was able to see the group from Carroll County (you're welcome!). Later that

day, a lovely (but very distant) adult Red-shouldered Hawk cruised south too.

On November 28, I added one last great bird, a Golden Eagle cruising over downtown Meredith. I ended the month with 63 species for Belknap County. The cumulative total for all the folks who birded in Belknap County was 90 species (third place in the ranked scores and the award for most improved County; we ranked ninth in 2020).

I didn't quite catch Pam for the county life list (there is always next year!) and we didn't win the November challenge, but I did manage to see the most species in the county for the year (163) and have a lot of fun doing so.

The Semi-Superbowl of Birding 2022

(Or is it the Snowbowl? —no wait, it's the Icebowl!)

by Kathryn Frieden



The Twitchers during our Big Sit at Odiorne Point State Park (left to right) Kathryn Frieden, Becky Suomala, Jenna Pettipas, Susan Wrisley. Photo by fellow competitor, Eric Masterson.

This year the Semi-Superbowl of birding had to be postponed a week due to inclement weather. Weather conditions leading up to the snow-date on February 5 were touch-and-go with another storm of snow, then rain, then sleet the day before. But the next morning the skies gradually cleared, and other than the bitter cold and freezing winds, it was a great day to be out birding!

Our team this year, the “Twitchers’ Reunion Tour,” started out with six potential members, all former “Twitchers,” but on the re-scheduled date, the team consisted of Captain Becky Suomala, Driver Extraordinaire Susan Wrisley, Jenna Pettipas, and Kathryn Frieden. In honor of the “reunion,” we decided to go back to Rye again to compete for the “Townie Award” after several years in Hampton. This year we could

all ride together in one vehicle, unlike during last year’s COVID restrictions, but there was no in-person compilation party (COVID again). On the morning of February 5, we met at the Park-and-Ride in Epping and piled into Susan’s high-clearance jeep, so we were well-equipped to maneuver through the unplowed pull-offs along the roads.

We made it to our first owling spot on Love Lane ready to start hooting and tooting at 5:00 am, but it was not until our fifth owling spot that three of us finally heard a Great Horned Owl at 6:29 am, right after our first bird of the day (a cardinal)! Did I mention that it was snowing again, and very cold while we were owling? Well, the snow stopped right after dawn, and since it was low tide, we headed to the coast to see what was out on the water and the rocks.



The Twitcher’s Snowy Owl at Rye Harbor State Park by Susan Wrisley.

We had a good stop at Seal Rocks, boosting our slow-starting list with many typical winter sea ducks. Then we made a beeline to Rye Harbor State Park to see if the Snowy Owl, a 3-point species, was still in residence. It was important to try for the owl early before it was flushed by too many visitors. Sure enough, there it was, enjoying the early morning out at the point.

At Rye Harbor, we found the Barrow’s Goldeneye we had scouted, another good 3-pointer! You may be surprised to hear that we were also excited about a flock of Rock Pigeons sitting on the bare rocks in Rye Harbor. Who gets excited about pigeons? Well, back in 2018, we had *zero* pigeons, a humiliating situation that we did not want to repeat, so this was an important sighting. As we continued south, we were surprised by two Great Blue Herons in a roadside ditch and a Gray Catbird that Susan spotted, a 4-point bird, and only the second one the Twitchers have ever had!

While exploring the brushy areas of the old airfield, we rescued a robin! Becky noticed it struggling with its tail caught in a bramble, and she was able to safely catch it and

hold it still. Susan untangled the tail feathers and Jenna ran back to the Jeep to get her trusty knife to cut the last strands of the vine. The robin thanked us and then flew off.



Becky holding the robin she rescued from the briar patch as Susan tries to restore its tail and Kathryn stands ready to help. Photo by Jenna Pettipas.

By early afternoon, we were ready for the “Sitting Duck” portion of our day. This category in the competition means counting the number of species seen from one 25-foot area, or from within one building, no time requirement specified. We chose the south side of the Science Center at Odiorne Point State Park where we could scan the water, see the trees in the park, and importantly, be in the lee of the building. That northerly wind was cold! While there, we saw the Thick-billed Murre that had been found by the “Three Masked Boobies,” making three alcids for the day, along with Razorbill and Black Guillemot. We were also lucky enough to have hot drinks brought to us by Steve Bennett! During the fifty minutes as “Sitting Ducks,” we had only eleven species and sixteen points. We clearly have a lot to learn if we’re going to incorporate this competition into our day.

After that, the wind became increasingly gusty, and did I mention that it was also quite cold? A real treat was finding a mixed flock of Sanderlings and Purple Sandpipers at Rye Ledge. Some years the Twitchers have had no shorebirds at all. While walking along Highland Park Ave., we made a big discovery – a Yellow-rumped Warbler – our first and only

warbler of the day! In the photo you can see how puffed out he is from the cold. We made it to Wallis Road at 4:30 to look for the Swamp Sparrow that had been scouted there earlier in the week. It was our second try for it, and the effort paid off because this time we found it, a good 3-point species.



The surprise Yellow-rumped Warbler during the Superbowl of Birding. Photo by Susan Wrisley.

When scouting, Susan had found a Wild Turkey roost (another good 3-point species) just over the border in Portsmouth. By walking back to Rye (and creating a traffic slowdown), we could just make out the turkeys through the scope so the sighting counted. It was now 4:53 and we were now down to the wire. We had a chance at one more stop, where we could scan Little Harbor, and sure enough, a 3-pointer Northern Pintail flew past at 4:58 to close out the afternoon with a last-minute success! We were able to stay out birding until the dot of 5:00, because we didn’t need to head south by 4:30 in order to make it to the compilation in time. We celebrated appropriately with some *Dove* chocolates that Jenna had saved for the occasion, and Susan began the drive back to our cars at the Epping Park-and-Ride.

Our team was excited to learn that we had won the “Townie Award,” and the “Sitting Duck Award”. Usually, teams can win only one award, but since we were the sole “Sitting Ducks,” the Superbowl judges made an exception for us. We ended up with great totals for Rye: 62 species (Rye record is 63) and 106 points (Rye average is 100). There were a few big misses—where were all the Cooper’s Hawks, and where were the owls? Golden-crowned Kinglets are usually around, but perhaps the wind kept them down. Did I mention how cold and windy it was? All in all, our team felt successful and happy despite the frozen fingers and toes!

The Twitchers also raised \$4,454.50 to support *New Hampshire Bird Records* and NHeBird. Thank you to all our donors for this fantastic support. See page 3 for the list of donors.

You can read the full summary and see the species list on the *New Hampshire Bird Records* website: www.nhbirdrecord.org.

The Pro Bowl of Birding

by *Kurk Dorsey*

I was unable to participate in the Superbowl of Birding on the weekend of February 5, so I set out the next weekend for my own version, the Pro Bowl of Birding. For those of you who aren't football fans, the Pro Bowl looks like real football, but with three key differences:

1. it has only half the effort,
2. participants who are supposed to be there fail to show up for mysterious reasons,
3. and no one cares what the actual score is.

With that in mind, I set out on the morning of February 12, 2022 to see what I could find in Rockingham County.

Two stops in Newmarket hoping for Northern Saw-whet Owls turned up nothing and, since I hadn't made it out of bed in a timely fashion, I got to Great Bay Discovery Center a bit too late for the Eastern Screech-Owls (see Caveat 2). But things picked up when I got some chocolate milk and a donut, because good nutrition is essential for an important athletic contest.

The trail off Mastin Drive in Newmarket was the best inland stop of the morning, with a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Pileated Woodpecker, Winter Wren, Cooper's "Krupp" Hawk, and Red-shouldered Hawk. The next productive stop was Chapman's Landing, where two "Superbowl"-Ring-necked Ducks were the highlight, along with a couple of Hooded Mergansers. There was also a very pale dabbler that flew off to Scamman's Farm just before I could get it in the scope, but given Steve Mirick's post, I believe it was one of the Northern Pintails (and I'm counting it as such under Caveat 3 above).

As I drove by Scamman's, the Snow Goose stood out like a bad pass interference no-call, and down River Road, I found a couple of Red-winged Blackbirds who were razzing the refs (in retrospect, I should have been looking for a Zebra Finch).

A few coastal highlights included: more than 20 Turkey Vultures along Rt. 101 near the high school in Hampton; a couple of Purple "People-eater" Sandpipers, three "Deion" Sanderlings, and a "Buffalo" Razorbill at Hampton Beach; an Iceland Gull on a roof in North Hampton; a Fish Crow at the Rt. 27 intersection; and a Northern Harrier at Cross Beach Road. I was bummed to miss Snow Buntings, but then I realized that's the wrong sport altogether. I mean, I also missed the three-point woodpecker but that didn't bother me.

As it was approaching lunch time, I decided to head back to Durham because frankly there was a bunch of ice on the driveway that needed to be cleared (see Caveat 1 above). As with the real Pro Bowl, this one was a great success mainly because no one got injured.

Species Spotlight

American Tree Sparrow

by *Pam Hunt*



American Tree Sparrow by Ken Faucher.

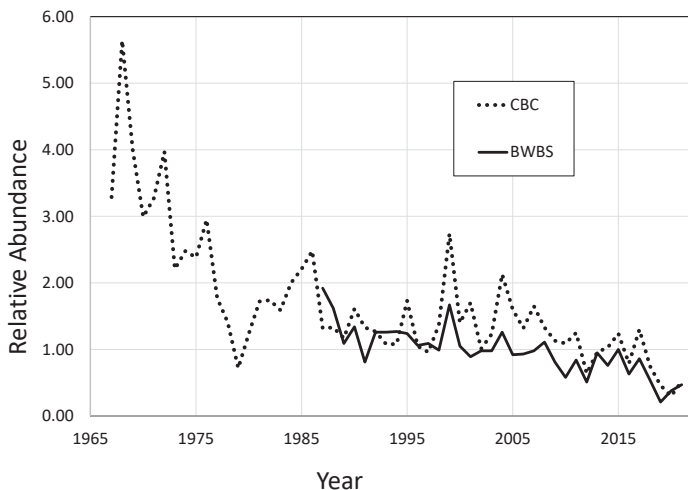
Of the almost 300 species of birds that occur regularly in the Granite State, over 80 don't breed here, and it's time to check in on one that's only here in the winter. The American Tree Sparrow is sometimes called the "winter chippy" because it has a rusty cap like the Chipping Sparrows that nest throughout New Hampshire, and this similarity is sometimes a source of confusion. Chipping Sparrows are not expected in the state between November and April, and barely overlap with their larger relatives. Note also that Chipping Sparrows *lack* their reddish cap in the winter and have a very different face pattern. They have buffy and dark brown stripes above and through their eyes, respectively, while those same areas in American Tree Sparrow are gray and rusty. The tree sparrow also has a dark spot on its breast and a yellow lower bill. The only time you really have a chance of seeing the two species together is in November, when lingering Chippings and early trees may join other sparrows in loose flocks in weedy fields and shrubby edges.

Despite its name, the American Tree Sparrow is a bird of the arctic, where trees are few, far between, and stunted. It nests near the treeline in shrubby areas of alder, willow, birch, and spruce, as well as farther out on the tundra if there are a few taller perches. Because of this remote breeding range, the species' nesting biology is not well understood. In the winter, however, it can be a familiar sight in weedy fields, shrubby edges, and residential yards with feeders, and sometimes travels in large flocks. There has been a fair bit of study of tree sparrows in winter, particularly related to metabolism. One such study found that they can fast for an average of

30 hours. The same study found that juncos could fast even longer, up to 67 hours (almost three days!) with an average of 43, so keep this in mind when poor weather suppresses bird activity at your feeders! Another fun fact: tree sparrows often roost communally under the snow!

Although still abundant, American Tree Sparrows have declined by roughly 50% in the last 50 years (Figure 1). Because their ecology is little studied, we don't have a good explanation for this at present. One hypothesis is that intensified agriculture in the Midwest and Great Plains (where the species reaches its highest winter densities) has eliminated much of the weedy and shrubby habitat needed by wintering birds. Development and forest maturation have probably had a similar effect here in the Northeast. There is also the possibility that climate change could be affecting their nesting habitat or breeding success.

Figure 1. Winter population trends for American Tree Sparrow in New Hampshire. Numbers on the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) are adjusted for hours of survey effort, while those on the Backyard Winter Bird Survey (BWBS) are per observer.



Another interesting pattern shown in Figure 1 is the somewhat synchronous ups and downs in the two data sets. Such variation is not uncommon in many of our wintering birds, and generally reflects variation in food availability. In years where there is more food farther north, fewer individuals migrate as far south, and the whole population shifts slightly in latitude. This is analogous to the periodic “irruptions” shown by winter finches such as crossbills and redpolls, with a key difference being that sparrows and juncos are always around rather than showing a boom/bust cycle.

To help us track New Hampshire's winter bird populations, we encourage you to participate in NH Audubon's annual Backyard Winter Bird Survey each February:

<https://nhbirdrecords.org/backyard-winter-bird-survey/>

The Downy Roost

by Anita Fernandez



Downy Woodpecker by Roger Frieden.

During the late fall and winter, I am pleased to see almost any birds in my yard and am never disappointed to observe a woodpecker among the leafless trees. The Downy Woodpecker is not only the smallest of our New Hampshire woodpecker species, but of all North American woodpeckers. I have been struggling to get an unobstructed view of one that has been particularly elusive in my own yard, and I began to wonder about their winter preferences. Many of us have seen them at backyard bird feeders, helping themselves to some suet, but where are they keeping warm on cold winter evenings?

In the Spring, during nesting season, Downy Woodpeckers create their own cavities, and may even look at several possible sites before settling on “the one.” Once nesting season is over, however, and they need a warm and safe place to spend their nights and conserve energy, they excavate roosting holes. Their own creations are shallower for roosting than nesting, but they are not opposed to moving into someone else's winter home. One Downy was observed taking over a hole, newly and meticulously cleared out by a Brown-headed Nuthatch (a southern species), not long after the nuthatch had completed its hole. They have also been observed making roosting cavities in an artificial “snag” made of polystyrene.

Most exciting for those of us who love to share our winter backyard with a Downy, they have been seen using nest boxes; they do not nest in them usually, but they do roost in them! NestWatch Project Leader Robyn Bailey spent the spring and summer watching a nesting box that she had placed on the side of her garage; nothing nested in it and she

thought it was a “dud.” When October came and the nesting season was over, she finally observed that something was enlarging the hole and spotted a Downy Woodpecker using it each night as a roosting site.

Downy Woodpeckers usually roost by themselves each night in their own cavity, so if you want to attract multiple Downys, try setting up multiple roosting site options. They are also much more particular about selecting a roosting cavity away from harsh winds than when they choose nesting cavities. Male Downy Woodpeckers tend to roost much higher than females, at approximately eight feet above the ground as opposed to five for the female, and neither were observed creating holes lower than three feet above the ground.

There are specific roosting boxes that have fewer ventilation holes to keep warmer, perches for sleeping, and even some with hardware cloth covering a wall, which provides a great “clinging” medium for the woodpeckers. The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology has a web page about roost boxes with links to a variety of plans:

<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/attract-birds-with-roost-boxes>

Plans for a Downy Woodpecker box may also be found here:

https://wdfw.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2019-11/woodpecker_nestbox.pdf

Downy Woodpeckers will fiercely defend their roosting sites, even with physical blows, so chances are good that if you attract a Downy, it will stay awhile. Mating and migration bring diverse and exciting birdwatching opportunities, but do not forget to look for some winter roosting possibilities out there as well.

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Backyard Birder

Bald Eagles Can Swim

by Kathryn Frieden



After swimming across the channel with the Mallard in its talons, a Bald Eagle flies a short distance from one rock to another, where it consumes its prey. Photo taken by Roger Frieden on 12-1-21.

During the “Squirrelnageddon” in the fall of 2018, we learned that squirrels and chipmunks can swim, which was a surprise to many of us in New Hampshire. On December 1, 2021, we had another very surprising lesson about swimming animals, but this time it was the spectacle of a swimming Bald Eagle. We have the privilege of living on the South Channel of Pawtuckaway Lake, and often see an eagle or two soaring over the lake. Early on that December afternoon, a Bald Eagle caught my eye. A pair of Mallards was floating on the water at the western end of the channel and an eagle was circling overhead. While I was watching, a second eagle appeared, circled once, and then flew directly down toward the male Mallard. He dove underwater, but the eagle landed directly above him and due to the disturbance of the surrounding water, it appeared that the eagle had caught the Mallard in its talons. Then, to our complete surprise, the eagle did not fly away with his prey, but began swimming! Its lower body was mostly submerged, and it used its wings in a rowing motion to swim about 50 yards to the rocks at the east shore of the lake. The eagle had a pretty good butterfly stroke! It climbed out onto the first rock, pulling itself up with its wings, and then flew to another larger nearby rock with the Mallard still in its talons. Once there, the eagle began eating the Mallard, spending a leisurely 15 to 20 minutes on its lunch.

Bald Eagles eat a variety of animals, with about 30% of their diet being other birds, 60% fish, and 15% small mammals.

Most prey other than large carrion is taken to a nearby perch for consumption. As far as swimming is concerned, the eagle is “capable of floating on the surface of the water and will use its wings in a rowing motion in water too deep to wade in, or if the individual is too wet to fly off the water surface” (Buehler 2020). This describes what we observed, so clearly this is a known eagle behavior even though it was new to us. It turns out that a Bald Eagle was also seen and recorded swimming in Lake Winnepesaukee back in 2019. Here is a link to WMUR’s report of the event along with the video and input from Chris Martin, NH Audubon’s raptor specialist:

<https://www.wmur.com/article/bald-eagle-captured-on-video-swimming-in-lake-winnepesaukee/27930593#>.

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New Hampshire eBird: Did you know?

by Steven Lamonde

After accessing eBird data for a larger project in February of 2022, I explored the data from a few angles not available on eBird.org. While statewide totals of species (421) and complete checklists (355,639) are readily visible to eBird users, other summary statistics are not. Did you know that, as of January 31, 2022 a grand total of 28.4 million birds (28,418,989 to be exact) have been counted within the Granite State? This total is not exactly a count of individual birds observed, but rather a sum of birds submitted on eBird checklists. What’s the difference? If the same cardinal showing up to a feeder is reported on seven checklists, this bird is then counted seven times. Unfortunately, it is impossible to glean from eBird data how many individual birds have been reported to eBird; however, knowing how many observations have been tallied is still quite impressive!

While counting 28.4 million birds, eBirders spent over 365,000 hours birding across New Hampshire, which included some 276,000 miles of travel. To help put these numbers into perspective,

365,000 hours is about the same as:

- Approximately 47 years
- The amount an average human would sleep in 1.5 lifetimes
- Watching David Attenborough’s *The Life of Birds* TV miniseries 44,000 times

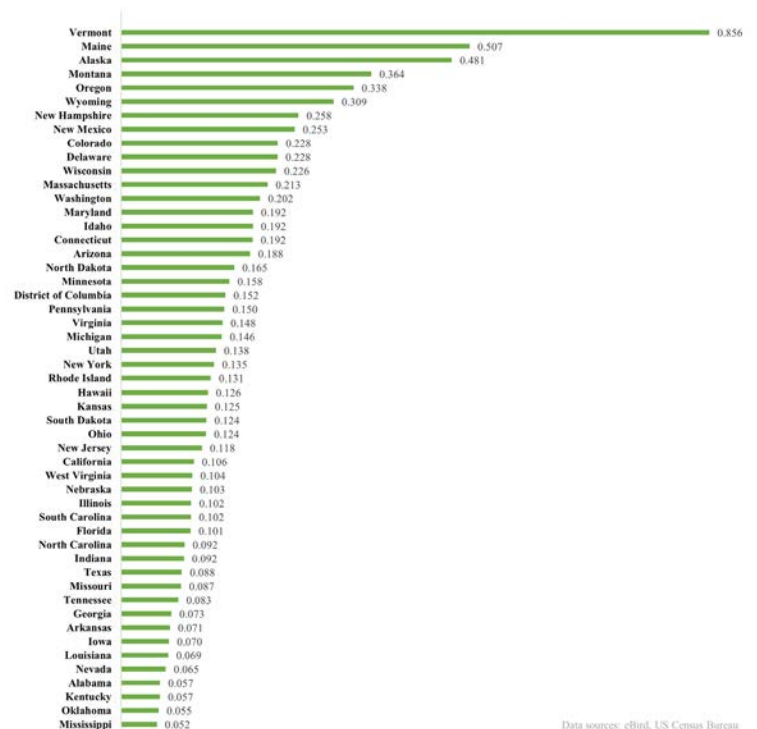
276,000 miles is the same as:

- Circumnavigating Earth along the equator 11 times
- Driving from Concord, NH to San Diego, CA 92 times
- 48 round-trip migrations of a Broad-winged Hawk breeding in Hancock, NH and wintering in Ibagué, Colombia. That’s about four generations of hawks!

Have you ever wondered how New Hampshire stacks up against other US States in terms of its community “eBirdiness”? One way we can quantify each state’s affinity for eBird is to calculate the number of checklists submitted per capita. With a little help from this US Census Bureau’s 2020 population database, this calculation is fairly simple. States in the Northeast and mountain West top the charts with more than 0.2 complete eBird checklists per person (Figure 1). Vermonters, bless their community-science souls, maintain a commanding lead with 0.856 checklists per capita over Maine (0.507) and Alaska (0.481), who round out the second and third positions, respectively. New Hampshire is in the top ten, ranking seventh with 0.258 checklists per capita. While we have plenty of room for improvement, give yourselves a pat on the back for doubling the national mean (0.129).

Note: eBird was launched as a reporting system in 2002. *New Hampshire Bird Records* began using eBird on September 1, 2009. Prior to that, birders reported their sightings directly to NH Audubon.

Figure 1. Complete eBird checklists per capita for all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Total checklists entered into eBird as of February 11, 2022. US Census Bureau data from 2020. It is interesting to note that Vermont was one of the early adoptees of eBird and Vermont eBird was the first state portal.



Data sources: eBird, US Census Bureau

Birding the Joslin Road Gravel Pit, Surry, NH

by Natalie Thomson

All photos were taken by the author at the gravel pit.

eBird Hotspot: Joslin Road Gravel Pit, Surry, Cheshire County, NH <https://ebird.org/nh/hotspot/L3201094>



Eastern Bluebirds foraging on Winterberry, 12-8-21.

This hotspot has 148 different species listed as of June 9, 2022. Every season provides an interesting assortment of birds and it is a lovely place for a walk any time. The Joslin Road Gravel Pit Hotspot is within a larger area that includes several trails in the Surry Mountain Natural Resource Area, as well as a multipurpose hiking/snowmobiling trail area and seasonal hunting grounds which are part of the Surry Mountain Lake trail system built by the US Army Corps of Engineers.

On a recent spring visit, (May 11, 2022 near sunset) I saw and heard over twenty different species in the first hundred yards and then went on to see or hear several more including a Wood Thrush and a Barred Owl. Spring is wonderful, with many warblers, raptors and waterfowl. Summer can sometimes be quiet on hot afternoons, but active in the morning and near sunset and offers a variety of woodland birds, sparrows, and wetland species. Fall brings flocks of birds getting ready to migrate and winter hardy birds such as Dark-eyed Junco and American Tree Sparrow arrive for the season. In early December 2021, while doing a cold temperature foraging field study, I counted 250+ Cedar Waxwings gathered in a small area. Winter remains active as there are fruiting trees and shrubs and other foods for birds to forage. Blue Jays can be seen hunting for stashed acorns and woodland birds prying up bark in search of a tasty morsel. During my field study, it was great fun to watch them busily finding food in unexpected places like under the lichen on a tree limb or pecking open a goldenrod gall to get the hibernating larvae inside. When the sun comes out on

a very cold day, many birds will perch in the sun to warm themselves. Snow Buntings, crossbills, Bald Eagles, and game birds have all been seen.

Notes

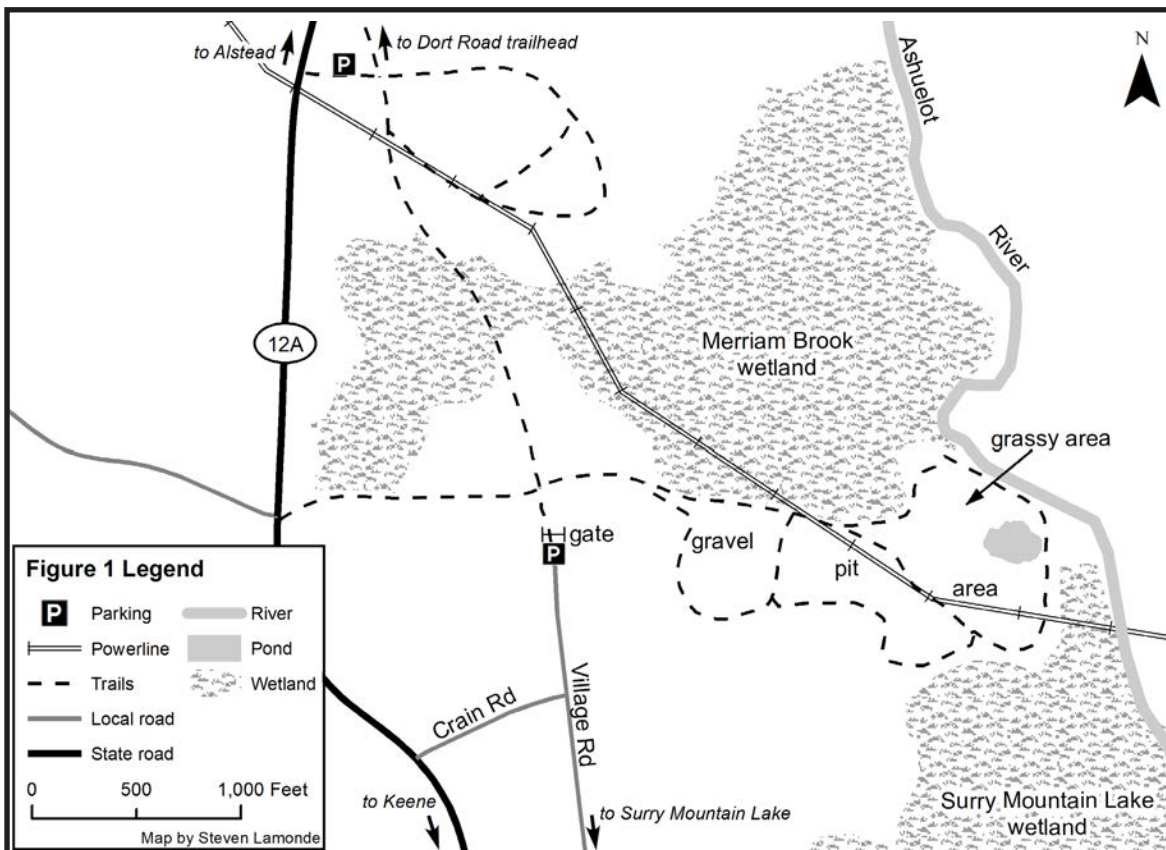
1. The weather can be variable and, in the shadow of Surry Mountain, it can be chilly, so layers are necessary.
2. In the spring, some of the grassy paths can harbor ticks, so it is important to do a tick check. The black flies and mosquitoes are not as bad as some other areas, but I usually have repellent handy.
3. Given that this is a working gravel pit, you may encounter a digger working while you are out there, but it is a large area and the sound is dispersed. Be sure to avoid areas with active extraction in process and vehicular traffic.
4. The straight path is multi-use which includes snowmobiling, skiing and seasonal hunting. I usually wear my bright orange hat as a habit during the fall and winter.
5. If it is icy, the paths will necessitate the use of crampons.
6. There are no restroom facilities.

Where to go

Upon entering through the yellow gate, you may notice painted on the path, “April 7, 1987-over the spillway,” which is an indication of the flood control purpose of this area. The area is mostly managed by the US Army Corps of Engineers, but the gravel pit is privately owned. The owner, Jason, has a “Do Not Trespass” sign posted at the top of the hill, but I spoke with him and he explained that it is just meant to keep kids from messing around with the large equipment and he is happy to host birders anywhere on the property. Please be sure not to interfere with active operations and avoid any active, off-limits area.

The path from the Village Road gate will lead you to a four-way intersection. Turn right to enter the “gravel pit” loop path, which is mostly what I am covering here. A left turn will just take you to Rt. 12A, but the straight path will take you on a nice trail with many possibilities that I will briefly touch on at the end. I prefer it in fall and winter.

The gravel pit path descends past an open area with some trees and shrubs which will have, depending on the season, House Wrens, various sparrows, Dark-eyed Juncos, Gray Catbirds, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, American Robins, Northern Cardinals, Cedar Waxwings, American Goldfinch, Eastern Bluebirds, warblers, and more. Along the left side of the path you will see the Merriam Brook wetland spreading out and covering the valley floor. In springtime, there are abundant Yellow, Chestnut-sided, and Palm Warblers, Swamp, Field and Song Sparrows, Eastern Phoebe, and



Merlin, and a Belted Kingfisher waiting to snatch up a meal. I once stood for an hour watching an American Kestrel and a Merlin hunting dragonflies together (see photo). This path continues along the bank of the river and gives a great view of the other side which is thick with American Sycamores. I regularly hear Barred Owls calling from this area.

The path leads past a pond that will occasionally have

other flycatchers. There can be herons, Canada Geese, mergansers, Mallards and other wetland birds. I have seen Osprey, Bald Eagles, and other raptors including Broad-winged Hawks, American Kestrels and Merlin. The path veers to the left along the edge of the wetland and to the outlet of the brook to the Ashuelot River that flows to Surry Mountain Lake. The path overlooks a flat grassy area with shrubs, so you can hear a choir of sparrows, including the soprano notes of the Field Sparrow. There are a few tall trees where I have seen a Northern Shrike, American Kestrel,



This Merlin was hunting dragonflies on 9-21-21. If you look closely you can see it is grasping its meal of a dragonfly.

mergansers or a family of beavers. Around to the right at the base of a small hill, you may find some excavation equipment where the path ascends back up to a flat grassy area. This part of the path gives excellent views across to Surry Mountain Lake. The area between the path and the lake is a flood plain with trees and shrubs where there can be Gray Catbirds, Northern Cardinals, American Robins, the raptors and warblers. I was excited to spot a Northern Shrike atop a tree halfway between the lake and the path because the sun was reflecting like a spotlight on his white belly. There is also a Bald Eagle nest in a snag that is perfectly visible and often there are good views of a pair occupying the nest which is to the left when looking at the lake from the path. Last July, after a series of big storms, this whole area was submerged.

At this point in the loop, I usually walk around the perimeter of the grassy area and up the path that leads to the big sandpit. It can be rutted and muddy because of the large vehicles, but there are birds to be seen on both sides of the path. There has been a lot of recent extraction activity in this area which will likely result in changes in the habitat. At the top of the hill, you will see the path on which you entered, but stop and take advantage of the elevation to look down at the wetland. More than once I have been surprised by a raptor flushing out of the pines on the hill.

If you are up for more walking and seeing different habitats, take the straight path from the four-way intersection (mentioned above) which will take you along Merriam Brook, under the powerlines, and to a pretty wetland that has

swallows, waterfowl, and warblers. This path is multi-use and has several different options to explore. It leads to the Dort Road trail access (see map). The adjacent forest is part of the Surry Mountain Preserve which has a trail to Lily Pond. The terrain is varied with slopes and valleys and includes the brook, several wetlands and ponds, and several open fields populated with seasonal meadow flora. The forest consists of mixed tree species: Red Oak, Black Oak, White Pine, Paper Birch, maple, hemlock, beech, and American Sycamore.

Getting there

Approximately seven miles north on Rt. 12A from Keene, turn right onto Crain Road, then left onto Village Road. If you put “Surry Town Hall” or “1 Village Road” into a GPS, it will take you to the trail entrance.

If you drive to the other end of Village Road, there is a parking area and entrance for Surry Mountain Lake. It is just a minute up the road, and worth a look.

Parking

There is space to park near the entrance gate adjacent to Surry Town Hall on Village Road. There is also a parking lot off of Rt.12A with a sign posted “Surry Mountain Lake Natural Resource Area.” This parking is for access to other hiking/snowmobile trails and the Dort Road trail. The best parking for the hotspot is the Village Road entrance.

Indoor Cats—Worth the Effort!

by Kathryn Frieden

I have been a cat-owner all my life, but an indoor cat-owner for only the past 25 or so years. I made that change not because of the danger that cats pose to birds, which I did not yet know about, but because so many of my cats died young or just disappeared. I couldn't keep going through the misery of saying goodbye to yet another beloved pet every few years. If a kitten is kept inside from a young age, it is less likely to try to get out of the house and can be quite content indoors. Even an older cat can adjust to life indoors, but cats are clever, so be prepared for the need to outwit your cat! We used to have a cat named Mr. Moneypenny who hid around the corner of the hallway to the back door, so if you checked before opening the door you couldn't see him. Then, when the door was opened, he shot out so fast it was hard to see him go past, but we always managed to corral him back into the house, and he died at the ripe old age (for cats) of 18.

The statistics for cat longevity are stark; an outdoor

cat lives an average of 2-5 years while an indoor cat's life expectancy is over 15 years*. And of course, there are the birds—the estimates of numbers of birds killed by cats every year in this country run close to a billion. The article by Scott R. Loss, et al. in *Nature Communications*, January 2013 focused media attention on this issue. Although there are many who debate the accuracy of the authors' numbers, cat predation is clearly a significant problem. As cats are not native predators to North America, this is not part of the normal “circle of life” for our birds. So let's do the best we can and try to become indoor cat-owners. I highly recommend it!

There is much good advice available for how to not only keep your cats indoors, but how to keep them happy as well. Here is a link to a brochure by the American Bird Conservancy for starters: https://abcbirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/cat_brochure.pdf

* “*Cats: Indoors or Outdoors?*”, University of California at Davis Veterinary Medicine website

<https://healthtopics.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/health-topics/feline/cats-indoors-or-outdoors>

The Adventures of Poe, the Indoor Cat

Photos by the author except for the real Least Bittern and Poe, The Hunter by Roger Frieden.

Poe participates in the NH Audubon Backyard Winter Bird Survey.



Five Dark-eyed Juncos, three Blue Jays, one Tufted Titmouse...make that six juncos.

Working from Home



Okay, now I need to log in to New Hampshire Bird Records. Becky said I could write an article about cats.

Poe Likes Birds



Actually, some of my best friends are birds!

Poe, the Hunter



No birds were harmed during the making of this "Poe, the Indoor Cat" episode.

Poe: the Bird



I am a Least Bittern.



No, I am a Least Bittern.

Christmas Bird Count Summary 2021-2022

by David Deifk

This year's Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) were held between December 14, 2021 and January 2, 2022. There are 19 counts whose center is within New Hampshire borders. The Littleton Count has been suspended and it is uncertain when it may be run again. Therefore, 18 counts were run this year including the Isles of Shoals Count which had been cancelled for the previous six years due to weather factors and the COVID-19 pandemic. It is unfortunate that the count has been completed only four times in the last 12 years. Although centered in Vermont, the Barnet, Saxton's River and Brattleboro counts overlap into New Hampshire as well. The Hanover-Norwich CBC extends into Vermont and the Isles of Shoals CBC extends substantially into Maine. Three other counts have minor overlap into neighboring states as well, those being Errol-Umbagog and North Conway into Maine and a tiny bit of the Nashua-Hollis Count into Massachusetts.



The Isles of Shoals CBC participants masked up for COVID on the Gulf Challenger, 12-29-21, by Rebecca Suomala.

Total species across all counts were 155 this year versus between 133 to 137 over the previous three years. The weather for all counts was generally good with basically seasonal temperatures throughout. Precipitation was relatively minimal with only some light snow on two counts, light rain on one count, and heavy snow on just one count. Total participation was virtually identical to last year at 438.

There were three new species added to the overall state list. Many years, we fail to add even one. First was a **Broad-winged Hawk** seen on the North Conway Count. This is a phenomenally rare bird in the winter both in the state and in the northeast in general. *The Birds of New Hampshire* (Keith

& Fox 2013) references only one winter record from January 23, 1927 at the Manchester dump! There were only two Christmas Count records regionally this year, one from Nova Scotia and one from Pennsylvania. Otherwise, only a total of 12 Broad-winged Hawks were seen elsewhere in the lower 48, mostly from the Florida Keys. Note should be made that there is apparently no photo documentation of this bird and, given the rarity, it will likely be reviewed by the New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee.

Next was a **Blue-headed Vireo** seen on the Keene Count. It too is quite rare in the Northeast in winter. This year, there were only three Blue-headed Vireos seen regionally, one each at Martha's Vineyard, MA, Old Saybrook, CT and Orient Point, NY. It's not until one gets to the Mid-Atlantic states that it is found with some frequency. *The Birds of New Hampshire* references the latest record as December 1 with no other winter records mentioned. Although based on typical range, this would be the most likely species in this complex to occur here, it bears close resemblance to the Cassin's Vireo of the far west. Unfortunately, photographic documentation was not obtained, so there is no opportunity to review the record for possible Cassin's.



The Prairie Warbler recorded by the Coastal NH CBC, photographed the day before the count by Christopher McPherson, 12-17-21, Hampton, NH.

Lastly, a **Prairie Warbler** was seen on the Coastal Count. Again, this is an extremely rare winter species regionally as well. This year in New England there were only two other CBC records, both in Massachusetts. One was on the Quincy Count and the other on the Cape Cod Count. It is widespread in Florida at this time of year though.

There were six new statewide count highs compared to 17 last year which was quite exceptional. There were 13 species new to their respective counts versus 11 last year. Individual count highs totaled 39 is a typical year's showing.

In terms of species groups, there was no clear-cut trend for all waterfowl. Canada Goose was somewhat lower than last year as was Mallard. American Black Duck, a species of concern, was at its lowest level in three years. Green-winged

Teal set a new state high on the Coastal Count and Ring-necked Duck was substantially increased. The widespread open water produced several interesting inland records including single Common Loons from seven separate inland counts. Notable in that regard was a Red-necked Grebe seen on the Grafton-Bristol count for the first time. Other inland ducks of note were Northern Pintail and Green-winged Teal in Concord, White-winged Scoter in Laconia and Long-tailed Duck in Hanover. Sandwich also had Long-tailed Duck for the first time. A notable first for the Christmas Bird Count was a hybrid Barrow's X Common Goldeneye seen on the Manchester Count (see the Photo Gallery).

Wild Turkey was modestly decreased from last year. It is still at half of the record number on the 2018-2019 count. There were two Golden Eagle records this year. One was seen on the Keene Count for a first count record. This is quite remarkable in that it is the only CBC record ever for the southern part of the state. The second was on the North Conway Count which has had two others in the past. The other past records also come from the North Country on the Errol-Umbagog count which has had a total of three past records. Bald Eagle showed a moderate decrease to 87 statewide, down from the record 119 of last year, which was the first year the total count exceeded 100. As for other raptors, Red-shouldered Hawk set a statewide count high on the Lee-Durham Count and was seen for the first time on the Hanover Count. The total of 12 seen statewide matched last year's overall total. Red-tailed Hawk was down a bit from last year but still substantially above the total of two years ago of 189 birds. American Kestrel was absent on count day last year but one was found on the Keene Count this year. Merlins continue to increase their modest presence with eight birds seen statewide versus three birds last year. This includes a statewide count high of four from the Coastal Count. Peregrine Falcon was present on four counts for a total of nine birds statewide, slightly less than last year.



Merlin on the Concord CBC, 12-19-21, by Rebecca Suomala.

Woodpeckers came off some historically high numbers from last year including lower totals for Red-bellied, Downy,

and Hairy Woodpeckers, and Northern Flicker. Pileated Woodpecker totals were virtually unchanged. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker had another strong year with a total of 16 seen on nine counts statewide. This has been a continuing trend of increase; until five or so years ago, state totals were in the single digits at most.

The results for small passerines returned to more average numbers after some large increases last year. This was the case for Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch and Brown Creeper. Overall, the statewide Red-breasted Nuthatch total was only about one third the total of the massive influx of last year; however, it was still double the total of two years ago. This was due to large numbers present in the North Country. Errol, Pittsburg and AMC-Crawford Notch all set individual count highs.

Statewide totals for Carolina Wren were up to 215, significantly higher than the record statewide total of 193 last year. This includes a new statewide count high of 63 from the Coastal Count. Although no statewide high was tallied for Eastern Bluebird, overall the total was substantially higher than last year's strong showing. There was a total of eight counts that set new individual count highs.

In terms of warblers, as previously mentioned, the finding of a Prairie Warbler on the Coastal Count was one of the outstanding records for the year providing a first for the state CBC records. There were only two other warbler species seen, Yellow-rumped and Pine.

As for sparrows, three counts recorded Fox and Chipping Sparrows. A single Vesper Sparrow was reported from Nashua-Hollis for a count first. Ipswich Sparrow from the Coastal Count and the state's only Dickcissel from Keene were also notable. Interestingly, Field Sparrow went unreported this year, which is quite unusual.

Last year was an historic year for irruptive finches; however, it was not the case this year. There were only 27 Pine Grosbeaks seen versus 754 birds seen last year. Only 15 Red Crossbill were seen on five counts versus 13 counts for a total of 280 birds last year. White-winged Crossbill was also substantially decreased versus last year. Common Redpoll returned to its status of two years ago with only seven birds seen on two counts versus 1580 birds seen on all counts except one last year. Lastly, Evening Grosbeak returned to a very scarce status again with only 33 birds being seen from the Errol-Umbagog Count only. Last year, over 900 individuals were seen on 14 counts. The statewide total of 375 in 2018-2019 was about the best in recent years before then. Otherwise, the total hasn't been over 100 since 2009. Pam Hunt wrote an excellent article about the winter status of Evening Grosbeak. This appears in *New Hampshire Bird Records* Winter 2015-16 issue (Vol. 34, #4, p. 28).

Individual Count Highlights

Terms

- New to State – when a species has not been recorded previously on any New Hampshire Christmas Bird Count.
- New to Count (first count record) – when a species has not been recorded previously on this particular count.
- Individual Count High – when a high count for a particular species exceeds the previous high count on that individual count.
- Statewide Count High – when a single species count exceeds the previous high count among all individual counts.

Nashua-Hollis

- New to Count: Vesper Sparrow
- Individual Count High: Great Blue Heron
Lapland Longspur seen for the third time, Fish Crow for the fourth time.

Peterborough-Hancock

- Individual Count High: Northern Saw-whet Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, European Starling, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird
Belted Kingfisher and Winter Wren tied previous Individual Count Highs. Bufflehead seen for the second time.

Keene

- New to State: Blue-headed Vireo
- New to Count: Turkey Vulture, Golden Eagle, Baltimore Oriole
- Individual Count High: Red-tailed Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Bald Eagle, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Hermit Thrush, Eastern Bluebird
Great Blue Heron tied the Individual Count High. Fourth record for Swamp Sparrow.

Coastal NH

- New to State: Prairie Warbler
- Statewide Count High: Green-winged Teal, Northern Harrier
- Individual Count High: Merlin, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird
Peregrine Falcon tied Statewide Count High. Third record for Fish Crow.

Lee-Durham

- Statewide Count High: Red-shouldered Hawk
- Individual Count High: Common Raven
Gadwall and Winter Wren tied Individual Count High. Northern Harrier had a third occurrence.

Concord

- Individual Count High: Canada Goose, Merlin, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Eastern Bluebird
Peregrine Falcon and Carolina Wren tied Individual Count High. Third record for Green-winged Teal and Red-shouldered Hawk.

Laconia-New Hampton

- Individual Count High: Red-shouldered Hawk, Northern Mockingbird, Hermit Thrush, Eastern Bluebird, Yellow-rumped Warbler
Lesser Scaup and White-winged Scoter tied Individual Count High.

Hanover-Norwich

- New to Count: Red-shouldered Hawk
- Individual Count High: Ring-necked Pheasant, Song Sparrow, Tufted Titmouse, Northern Cardinal
Bald Eagle tied Individual Count High. Second record for Long-tailed Duck.

Baker Valley

- Individual Count High: Red-bellied Woodpecker
Bald Eagle seen for fourth time.

Grafton-Bristol

- New to Count: Red-necked Grebe, Eastern Screech-Owl, Great Horned Owl, Winter Wren
- Individual Count High: Northern Saw-whet Owl (second count record)

Errol-Umbagog

- New to Count: Ring-necked Pheasant
- Individual Count High: Bald Eagle, Pileated Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Brown Creeper, White-breasted Nuthatch, Red-breasted Nuthatch

Pittsburg

- Individual Count High: Mallard, Canada Goose, Brown Creeper, Red-breasted Nuthatch

Conway

Ring-necked Pheasant second count record. Eastern Bluebird tied Individual Count High.

Sunapee

- Count High: Red-bellied Woodpecker, Tufted Titmouse, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Eastern Bluebird

Manchester

- New to Count: Great Cormorant, Dickcissel
Gray Catbird second record. Common Loon fourth record.

Sandwich

- New to Count: Long-tailed Duck, Fox Sparrow
 - Individual Count High: Red-tailed Hawk, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Northern Cardinal
- Second records for Ring-necked Duck, Bald Eagle, and Chipping Sparrow.*



Gray Catbird on the Manchester CBC, 12-18-21, by Rebecca Suomala.

Isles of Shoals

- Statewide Count High: Harlequin Duck, Black Scoter
 - New to Count: Common Raven
 - Individual Count High: Ring-billed Gull, Swamp Sparrow, Carolina Wren
- Second record for King Eider and Sanderling. Third records for Dunlin, Downy Woodpecker, and Dark-eyed Junco.*

AMC-Crawford

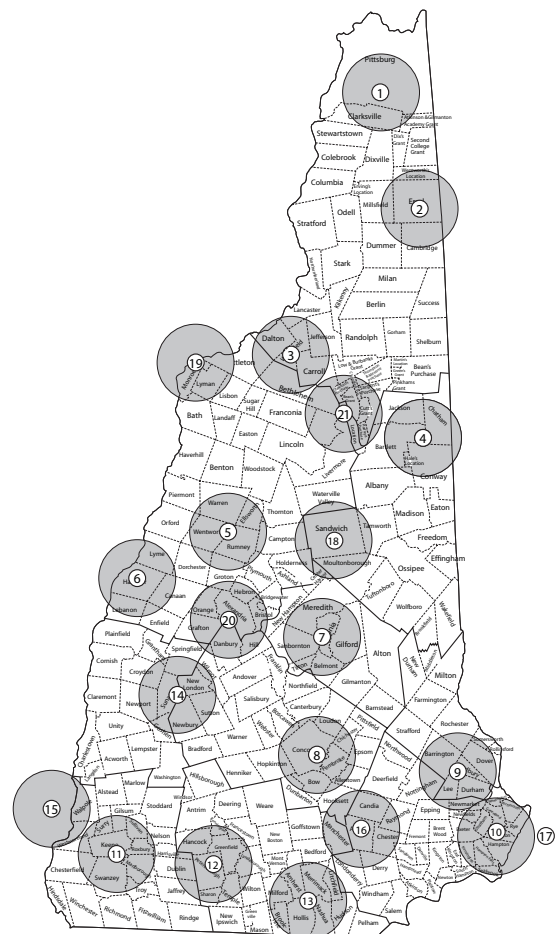
- New to Count: Song Sparrow
 - Individual Count High: Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper
- Black-backed Woodpecker tied Individual Count High. Third record for Red Crossbill.*



Snowy Owl by Benjamin Griffith, 12-29-21, Isles of Shoals CBC, Star Island, NH.

Christmas Bird Count Compilers

1	Pittsburg	Phil Brown
2	Errol-Umbagog	Chris Martin
3	Littleton	(inactive)
4	North Conway	Tin Mtn. Conservation Ctr.
5	Baker Valley	Steve Rounds
6	Hanover-Norwich	Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin
7	Laconia-New Hampton	Pam Hunt
8	Concord	Robert Quinn
9	Lee-Durham	Kurk Dorsey
10	Coastal	Len Medlock
11	Keene	Phil Brown
12	Peterborough-Hancock	John Ranta
13	Nashua-Hollis	Richard Bielawski
14	Lake Sunapee	Dylan Jackson
15	Saxton's River, VT	Donald Clark
16	Manchester	Richard Bielawski
17	Isles of Shoals	Ben Griffith
18	Sandwich	Ken Klapper
19	Barnet, VT	Charlie Browne
20	Grafton-Bristol	Bill Belanger
21	AMC Crawford Notch	Craig Repasz



122nd Christmas Bird Count: Dec. 14, 2021 - Jan. 5, 2022

Species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Lee	Con	Lac	Han	Bak	Grf	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	Man	San	Amc	Isl	Total
Snow Goose	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Canada Goose	616	40	215	1133	1147	995	15	13	-	-	-	6	24	11	123	-	-	16	4354
Mute Swan	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Wood Duck	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Gadwall	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
American Wigeon	-	-	-	127	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	127
American Black Duck	13	8	2	1093	101	22	3	7	-	-	-	3	3	8	2	14	-	14	1293
Mallard	138	33	74	345	148	629	688	400	-	12	-	180	35	289	384	114	-	-	3469
Black X Mallard sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Northern Pintail	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Green-winged Teal	-	-	-	**42	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	44
Ring-necked Duck	-	-	-	7	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	1	-	-	19
Greater Scaup	-	-	-	1610	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1620
Lesser Scaup	-	-	-	27	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31
King Eider	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Common Eider	-	-	-	79	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	507	586
Harlequin Duck	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**13	13
Surf Scoter	-	-	-	180	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26	206
White-winged Scoter	-	-	-	130	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38	170
Black Scoter	-	-	-	52	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**665	717
Long-tailed Duck	-	-	-	148	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	*2	-	221	374
Bufflehead	-	1	CW	170	35	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	214
Common Goldeneye	22	-	1	141	25	27	205	17	-	1	1	-	-	2	99	7	-	2	550
Barrow's Goldeneye	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	5
Common x Barrow's Goldeneye	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Hooded Merganser	2	14	67	53	28	19	150	10	-	2	-	1	3	40	41	14	-	-	444
Common Merganser	18	32	72	-	12	15	157	14	-	16	16	3	-	6	50	230	-	-	641
Red-breasted Merganser	-	-	-	194	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	217
Duck sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Ring-necked Pheasant	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	*5	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	9
Ruffed Grouse	-	3	1	-	-	-	1	1	CW	-	13	22	10	2	-	CW	4	-	57
Wild Turkey	66	142	88	166	63	105	146	108	12	14	30	40	113	101	39	159	12	-	1404
Red-throated Loon	-	-	-	57	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	57
Common Loon	-	-	2	114	1	CW	3	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	31	156
Horned Grebe	-	-	-	24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	24
Red-necked Grebe	-	-	-	24	-	-	-	-	-	*1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	26
Northern Gannet	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	9
Dbl-cr Cormorant	-	-	-	14	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15
Great Cormorant	-	-	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	*1	-	-	33	43

Total Number of Species Across all CBCs: 155

CW = Count Week

Nsh = Nashua-Hollis (12/31/2021)

Pet = Peterborough-Hancock (12/18/2021)

Kee = Keene (12/19/2021)

Cst = Coastal NH (12/18/2021)

Lee = Lee-Durham (12/19/2021)

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Amc = AMC-Crawford Notch (12/18/2021)

Isl = Isles of Shoals (12/29/2021)

+= New Species to New Hampshire

*= New Species to a Count

**= New Statewide Count High

Bold italic=new individual count high

Species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Lee	Con	Lac	Han	Bak	Grf	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	Man	San	Amc	Isl	Total
Great Blue Heron	7	-	2	24	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	39
Turkey Vulture	-	-	*1	22	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27
Golden Eagle	-	-	*1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2
Northern Harrier	1	-	-	**9	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
Sharp-shinned Hawk	-	-	2	5	1	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	CW	1	CW	-	-	14
Cooper's Hawk	4	2	4	13	8	6	1	4	-	-	-	-	1	-	3	1	-	-	47
Accipiter sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Bald Eagle	1	5	17	7	13	3	5	9	1	1	10	7	1	2	-	5	CW	-	87
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	-	2	-	**5	1	2	*1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
Broad-winged Hawk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Red-tailed Hawk	26	11	32	41	47	17	13	9	CW	1	1	3	1	1	6	8	-	-	217
Rough-legged Hawk	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Hawk sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Black-bellied Plover	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Ruddy Turnstone	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Sanderling	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Dunlin	-	-	-	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	44
Purple Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	95	95
Wilson's Snipe	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Dovekie	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
Common Murre	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Razorbill	-	-	-	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	24
large alcid sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Black Guillemot	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22	22
Black-legged Kittiwake	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3
Bonaparte's Gull	-	-	-	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	15
Ring-billed Gull	20	-	CW	320	178	43	118	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	98	7	-	18	802
Herring Gull	6	-	-	406	1550	-	5	-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	2	-	-	330	2299
Iceland Gull	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	8
Lesser Black-backed Gull	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Glaucous Gull	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Great Black-backed Gull	2	-	-	69	251	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	120	443
Rock Pigeon	857	251	106	817	677	755	282	754	11	65	-	2	98	61	239	20	16	-	5011
Mourning Dove	450	176	208	294	281	206	340	291	32	22	2	10	127	110	153	140	6	-	2848
Eastern Screech-owl	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	*3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Great Horned Owl	-	1	-	9	1	CW	-	-	-	*1	-	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
Snowy Owl	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	6
Barred Owl	1	7	7	2	CW	1	2	1	-	1	1	1	3	2	-	1	-	-	30
Short-eared Owl	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	CW

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+= New Species to New Hampshire

*= New Species to a Count

**= New Statewide Count High

Bold italic=new individual count high

122nd Christmas Bird Count: Dec. 14, 2021 - Jan. 5, 2022 — continued

Species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Lee	Con	Lac	Han	Bak	Grf	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	Man	San	Amc	Isl	Total
N. Saw-whet Owl	-	4	-	2	-	2	-	CW	-	5	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	15
Belted Kingfisher	5	3	1	6	3	4	4	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	2	2	-	-	33
Red-bellied Woodpecker	33	33	44	57	43	20	15	13	2	1	-	-	1	9	7	12	-	-	290
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	1	3	5	2	CW	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	16
Downy Woodpecker	85	127	113	129	141	73	117	73	13	6	19	13	77	54	43	84	13	1	1181
Hairy Woodpecker	26	63	47	29	34	33	41	38	4	3	26	5	47	38	13	54	10	-	511
Black-backed Woodpecker	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	6
Northern Flicker	5	1	1	28	6	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	46
Pileated Woodpecker	12	**28	7	11	10	16	10	15	1	3	13	-	9	4	2	14	CW	-	155
American Kestrel	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Merlin	1	-	1	**4	-	2	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
Peregrine Falcon	1	-	-	4	CW	3	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	9
Northern Shrike	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	5
Blue-headed Vireo	-	-	+1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Gray Jay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	13	-	-	-	-	4	-	34
Blue Jay	201	481	255	177	144	119	398	366	70	32	188	40	296	231	43	269	54	-	3364
American Crow	169	153	205	358	137	152	3000	2632	26	40	28	42	193	122	28	106	23	-	7414
Fish Crow	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Common Raven	5	27	52	12	30	16	27	55	4	9	37	30	15	10	2	37	8	*1	377
Horned Lark	15	-	21	82	7	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	131
Black-capped Chickadee	327	771	833	432	530	282	642	830	-	32	710	905	898	343	99	581	251	-	8466
Boreal Chickadee	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	58	-	-	-	5	13	-	81
Tufted Titmouse	127	298	299	218	286	155	220	197	21	21	2	-	100	73	41	144	14	-	2216
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	33	10	2	12	6	20	36	3	6	339	469	80	28	1	33	96	-	1175
White-breasted Nuthatch	127	186	173	136	182	81	161	125	9	23	13	4	198	80	29	140	14	-	1681
Brown Creeper	11	15	19	12	13	6	9	10	-	2	13	10	14	5	2	8	10	-	159
Winter Wren	2	2	1	6	8	3	1	3	-	*2	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	29
Carolina Wren	35	12	25	**63	28	15	3	16	-	1	-	-	-	1	10	2	-	4	215
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1	11	18	34	5	8	-	4	-	-	34	26	5	1	8	2	16	-	173
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-	4
Eastern Bluebird	83	102	125	277	291	105	109	68	CW	-	-	-	9	7	23	62	-	-	1261
Hermit Thrush	1	-	6	10	5	2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	30
American Robin	328	72	489	380	105	190	7	40	-	3	-	-	19	13	57	7	-	-	1710
Gray Catbird	-	-	-	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	6
Northern Mockingbird	26	-	6	50	15	19	19	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	157

Total Number of Species Across all CBCs: 155

CW = Count Week

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+ = New Species to New Hampshire

* = New Species to a Count

** = New Statewide Count High

Bold italic=new individual count high

Species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Lee	Con	Lac	Han	Bak	Grf	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	Man	San	Amc	Isl	Total
European Starling	1157	620	958	2264	2945	1237	539	962	15	38	-	4	324	331	204	135	-	14	11747
American Pipit	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Cedar Waxwing	65	95	863	126	82	30	155	205	CW	15	-	-	93	736	-	89	-	-	2554
Lapland Longspur	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Snow Bunting	69	-	-	58	1	1	6	3	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	2	-	100	243
Pine Warbler	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Yellow-rumped Warbler	-	-	-	1	1	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Prairie Warbler	-	-	-	+1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Amer. Tree Sparrow	61	9	35	88	21	60	46	104	CW	1	11	3	4	8	1	22	-	-	474
Chipping Sparrow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	3
Fox Sparrow	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	*1	-	-	5
Dark-eyed Junco	404	391	1208	367	609	528	537	770	50	127	2	8	196	134	135	615	3	2	6086
White-cr Sparrow	-	-	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
White-th Sparrow	23	5	46	113	50	20	6	71	1	-	-	-	7	-	11	7	1	4	365
Vesper Sparrow	*1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Savannah Sparrow	1	-	-	5	-	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Ipswich Sparrow	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Song Sparrow	43	2	15	112	34	8	11	14	-	-	-	-	-	1	7	-	*1	19	267
Swamp Sparrow	CW	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Sparrow sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Northern Cardinal	153	105	168	300	199	165	112	150	6	14	3	-	11	35	49	58	2	8	1538
Dickcissel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	*1	-	-	-	1
Red-winged Blackbird	106	1	-	34	-	-	1	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	148
Common Grackle	3	-	-	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	9
Brown-headed Cowbird	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	8
Baltimore Oriole	-	-	*1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
blackbird sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Pine Grosbeak	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	27
House Finch	128	12	140	271	166	113	128	91	-	6	-	-	1	16	31	CW	-	-	1103
Purple Finch	4	2	-	10	-	2	5	3	-	-	69	179	-	-	-	2	3	-	279
Red Crossbill	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	4	CW	-	-	1	-	15
White-winged Crossbill	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	71	42	-	-	-	-	31	-	144
Common Redpoll	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
Pine Siskin	-	9	2	-	2	1	-	-	CW	40	503	131	20	5	-	29	12	-	754
American Goldfinch	207	661	413	548	289	237	505	464	46	17	116	46	234	185	166	647	17	3	4801
Evening Grosbeak	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	33	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	33
House Sparrow	878	278	371	986	839	405	325	222	1	62	-	-	95	33	334	28	-	-	4857
Number of Species	65	51	60	104	71	57	63	54	20	40	34	35	46	44	51	51	27	44	155
Number of Participants	23	50	28	31	30	20	25	23	5	4	15	10	84	17	9	25	21	18	438

Total Number of Species Across all CBCs: 155

Lac = Laconia-New Hampton (12/31/2021)

San = Sandwich (1/2/2022)

CW = Count Week

Han = Hanover-Norwich (1/1/2022)

Amc = AMC-Crawford Notch (12/18/2021)

Nsh = Nashua-Hollis (12/31/2021)

Bak = Baker Valley (12/19/2021)

Isl = Isles of Shoals (12/29/2021)

Pet = Peterborough-Hancock (12/18/2021)

Grf = Grafton-Bristol (1/1/2022)

Erl = Errol-Umbagog (12/15/2021)

+= New Species to New Hampshire

Kee = Keene (12/19/2021)

Pit = Pittsburg (12/14/2021)

*= New Species to a Count

Cst = Coastal NH (12/18/2021)

Cnw = North Conway (12/18/2021)

**= New Statewide Count High

Lee = Lee-Durham (12/19/2021)

Sun = Lake Sunapee (12/18/2021)

Bold italic=new individual count high

Con = Concord (12/19/2021)

Man = Manchester (12/18/2021)

What to Watch for in Winter



Snowy Owl by Steve Mirick, 1-4-22, Seabrook, NH.

Winter is the time for Snowy Owls, winter sea ducks and alcids on the ocean. The New Hampshire coast offers the most diversity in winter and there is always something to see. Inland can be more variable. In some years, there's the hoped-for arrival of "winter finches" invading from the north in huge flocks, although it may require a trip north of the White Mountains to find them. Watch for waterfowl to linger on open bodies of water and gather in unfrozen sections of rivers. A few half hardy birds linger into the winter, providing a welcome surprise. Unexpected birds such as orioles, towhees, or Yellow-breasted Chats are often at feeders so be sure to watch for them and keep your camera handy to document their identification. Although it may seem quiet, there are fun birding activities to keep us going – the Christmas Bird Counts, the Superbowl of Birding at the end of January, and NH Audubon's annual Backyard Winter Bird Survey on the second weekend in February.



Long-tailed Ducks by Jim Sparrell, 12-29-21, Isles of Shoals, NH.

December

- Wintering sea ducks and other waterbirds arrive and will stay all winter. For some species, it is the only time we see them in New Hampshire: Long-tailed Ducks, scoters, Horned and Red-necked Grebes, Red-throated Loons.

- Purple Sandpipers are one of the few shorebirds that winter along the coast. Watch for them in rocky areas, not sandy beaches. They blend in very well and are often easiest to find at high tide in Rye or the jetty at the outlet of Hampton Harbor.
- American Tree Sparrows arrive from the north, taking the place of Chipping Sparrows. Dark-eyed Juncos join them at feeders.
- Greater Scaup gather in large numbers (1,000 or more) on Great Bay. Try looking from the Great Bay Discovery Center or the Osprey Cove trail in Greenland, or Adam's Point in Durham. You will want a scope as birds can be distant.
- Barrow's Goldeneye are sometimes seen with large flocks of Common Goldeneye. Stark Landing on the Merrimack River in Manchester can be one of the best spots to see them, but one or two are also usually in Laconia if there is open water, and sometimes at the coast or Great Bay.
- Hampton Beach State Park usually hosts a flock of Snow Buntings, Horned Larks and an occasional Lapland Longspur. Farms along the Connecticut River Valley from Westmoreland to Walpole and open areas near the Berlin Regional Airport in Milan are also good places to check for these species.
- Northern Shrikes can appear anywhere in the state but good places to check are the Great Bay NWR in Newington or Airport Marsh in Whitefield.



Black-legged Kittiwake by Steve Mirick, 1-13-21, Jeffrey's Ledge, NH.

January

- If the fishing boats are still running (e.g. Eastman's Docks, Seabrook), an offshore trip can produce Northern Fulmar, Black-legged Kittiwake, Dovekie, Common Murre, and an occasional puffin or Thick-billed Murre. These species are rare from shore and a boat trip is often required to see them.
- Razorbill and Black Guillemots are the most likely alcids to see on the ocean from shore. Scan from

pullouts such as Pulpit Rocks and Seal Rocks in Rye, Rye Harbor State Park, Hampton Beach State Park, or Seabrook Beach. Great Island Common in New Castle is also a good spot for Razorbills.

- White-winged Gulls (Glaucous and Iceland) visit in the winter but are seldom reliable on any given day. Hampton Harbor, Exeter WTP, and Rochester WTP (only open on weekdays) are the most likely places to find them.
- The best places to look for Snowy Owls are Rye Harbor State Park and Hampton Beach State Park. Numbers vary each year and they can be absent some winters.
- Winter finches, such as Pine Siskins or Common Redpolls, can arrive in big flocks or not at all. Watch for them at feeders and stands of Birch trees with catkins.
- As rivers and lakes ice up, Bald Eagles gather at remaining open water on the major rivers, largest lakes, and the coast. Great Bay is a winter hotspot for eagle watching, and eagles are regular along the Merrimack River from Concord to Nashua, as well as southern stretches of the Connecticut River, and the Lakes Region.



Cedar Waxwing by Iain MacLeod, 2-8-21, Meredith, NH.

supermarket parking lots, will attract these fruit-eating species.

- In recent years, a flock of Lesser Scaup has been wintering at the Exeter WTP if the water is open. It's a good place to study this species which can be extremely difficult to separate from Greater Scaup.
- Black-capped Chickadees start to sing their spring "fee-bee" song making it easy to think that your Eastern Phoebes are back, but they won't return until April.
- Hinsdale can be one of the first places for returning waterfowl as open patches appear on Lake Wantastiquet above the dam on the Connecticut River.
- Short-eared Owls can occasionally be seen at the seacoast or the Dillant-Hopkins Airport in Swanzey in winter but are more likely as we transition from February to March.
- South winds can bring the first influx of Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles. If there is some open ground the first Killdeer and American Woodcock will put in an appearance in the southernmost parts of the state.



Short-eared Owl by Debra Powers, 2-15-22, Hampton Beach SP, NH.

February

- Check fruit trees for waxwings and Pine Grosbeaks. Cedar Waxwings are the most common. Bohemian Waxwings can visit from the north at any time during the winter in big years, but sometimes wait until February. Pine Grosbeaks appear in some years but typically in low numbers. Any place with crabapple or ornamental cherry trees that still have fruit, including

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

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Abbreviations Used

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

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Raptors of Winter



Male Northern Harrier with prey by Susan Wrisley, 2-3-22, Hampton Beach SP, NH.



Male Northern Harrier by Jim Sparrell, 1-23-21, Odiorne Point SP, Rye, NH.



Snowy Owl by Jim Sparrell, 12-17-21, Newington, NH.



Rough-legged Hawk by Ken Faucher, 2-10-22, Holley Fields, Dover-Rochester, NH.



Short-eared Owl by Susan Wrisley, 2-16-22, Hampton Harbor, NH.



Bald Eagles by Kyle Wilmarth, 1-14-22, Arlington Pond, Salem, NH.

Winter 2021-22: What's Inside...

Massive raptor shape
golden nape Golden Eagle
you too are stellar.



Golden Eagle photo by Stuart Varney, 2-5-22, Great Bay, NH. Haiku by Jim Sparrell; see inside for more on the reference to the Steller's Sea-Eagle.



Varied Thrush by Robin Lawler, 1-17-22, Fitzwilliam, NH.



A Pine Siskin "green morph," 2-7-22 by Alex Lamoreaux, 2-7-22, Marlborough, NH. This topside view shows the thinner dark streaking over a muted-green body coloration, bright yellow wing stripes, and overall paler appearance. For more on this color morph see the Field Note by Alex.



Susan Wrisley took this photo of an exotic-looking partially-leucistic Red-tailed Hawk on 1-1-21 in Auburn, NH and it returned again this winter. See the Field Notes for more.



Atlantic Puffin by Leo McKillop, 12-15-21, offshore waters, NH.