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ABOUT OUR COVER ARTIST:

Michael DiGiorgio

"Northern Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*)"

The drawing on the cover of this issue of the "Connecticut Warbler" is provided once again through the generosity of Connecticut artist Michael DiGiorgio. Michael's previous drawings were of a Great Horned Owl and a Red-breasted Nuthatch. His drawings have appeared in a number of wildlife and birding publications and he is presently finishing the illustrations for the "Connecticut Breeding Bird Atlas." Mike is also a member of the singing group, "The Cuckoo's," who have performed throughout the Connecticut birding community.

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

AN INVITATION

to our readers...

The Editors of *The Connecticut Warbler* want you to know that letters and comments -- opinion or informational -- occasionally "make our day," so we have decided to share them with you. You don't have to be famous. You don't have "to know" somebody. There is no secret password. If you enjoy birds and there is something you want to say about birds, birders, or this quarterly, please tell us so occasionally. We may need to trim submissions to our needs, even correct spelling or syntax, but we won't tamper with your ideas. We would like to hear more of them, so help us enliven future issues of "The Warbler" with your unique views.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To The Editor:

Jim Bair's excellent article, "Tundra Swan In Connecticut" (CW 10:49-61), should provide a beginning rather than an end, for research into the occurrence of this rare migrant in Connecticut. Having always wondered about two specimens of this species on display at the Science Museum of Connecticut in West Hartford, I recently asked the Museum's Director of Environmental Sciences, Hank Gruner, to pull the collection records for the specimens. The swans were given to the Museum in 1966 by a Mr. C. M. Pond. Of greater interest was the fact that these birds were collected in Elizabeth Park, Hartford in 1887. The specimens are not listed in Bair's table and should be an addition to the state's ornithological records for this species.

Connecticut is blessed with a number of private, non-profit museums and nature centers. One wonders what other ornithological finds may await those researchers who may care to look for their "rare birds" on a museum shelf rather than in the field. Articles such as Bair's may serve to stimulate other such discoveries in the future.

Jay Kaplan, 71 Gracey Rd., Canton, CT 06019

SITE GUIDE
**THE SOUTHWESTERN CONNECTICUT
SHORELINE**

Frank W. Mantlik

The shoreline of southwestern Connecticut is one of the state's outstanding birding areas. The varied environments of shallow bays, salt ponds, harbors, salt marshes, mudflats, sand spits, beaches, rocky outcroppings, grassy parks, coastal thickets, forests and offshore islands found along this part of Long Island Sound, attract a wide diversity of water and landbirds. In addition, the unique islands off Norwalk and Westport serve as important nesting colonies for many waders, gulls, terns and shorebirds. During peak migration periods, a birding trip to the Fairfield County coast may produce 120+ species, and a winter jaunt may result in 60+ species. This area also has a reputation for attracting rarities, and many "first" state bird records have been documented by birders in this area.

For this site guide, the southwest Connecticut coast is considered to stretch west to east from Holly Pond on the Stamford-Darien border, to Ash Creek, on the Fairfield-Bridgeport border. (See CW 2, p. 17-18, for birding Greenwich Point Park). It will concentrate on major stops that afford especially good birding opportunities with public access, despite the relatively heavy residential and commercial development of the county. Other good areas along the way are mentioned, many of which deserve a check. You may want to follow the entire route, which will take a full day, or just visit one or more of the key areas. In either case, birding the southwestern Connecticut shoreline will provide rewarding experiences afield.

Spring and fall with the potential of a major movement or "fallout" are generally the best birding seasons, but winter can also be productive. Summer, too, is a time when many birders visit the region in search of rarer nesting waterbirds, but beware of the increased recreational use and subsequent restricted access of much of the shoreline area. The shorebird migration in May and again in August-September at Norwalk Harbor or Penfield Reef can be superb. The fall raptor migration is an annual event along the coast and can frequently be spectacular.

Specialties

The list of rare and unusual species observed along this shoreline area is extensive and includes Red-necked, Eared, and Western Grebes, Black-capped Petrel (specimen), Wilson's Storm-Petrel, Northern Gannet, Brown Pelican (specimen), Anhinga, Tricolored Heron, Sandhill Crane, Thick-billed Murre, Monk Parakeet, Snowy Owl, Chuck-will's-widow, Boreal Chickadee, Northern Wheatear, Blue Grosbeak and Painted Bunting. Thirty-two species of waterfowl have been recorded, including Tundra Swan, Eurasian Wigeon, Common and King Eiders, Harlequin Duck and Barrow's Goldeneye. Shorebirds, too, are well represented with 35 species, including Lesser Golden Plover, Hudsonian and Marbled Godwits, Baird's, Sharp-tailed, and Buff-breasted Sandpipers, Ruff, and Wilson's Phalarope. Rare larids include Iceland, Glaucous and Lesser Black-backed Gulls, Caspian, Forster's and Black Terns, and Black Skimmer. The long list of warblers includes Orange-crowned, Prothonotary and Connecticut, while the sparrow list includes Lark, Grasshopper, Henslow's and Le Conte's.

Nesting Species

The coastline of southwestern Connecticut with its numerous islands and marshes, provides important nesting and feeding habitat for a variety of waterbirds. Most noteworthy are the cormorant, gull, tern and heron colonies of the Norwalk Islands. The federally endangered Piping Plover and threatened Least Tern have nested, and a half dozen pairs of American Oystercatchers now nest annually. With annual appearances, it may be only a matter of time before Laughing Gull and Black Skimmer breed in this region.

The Birding Tour

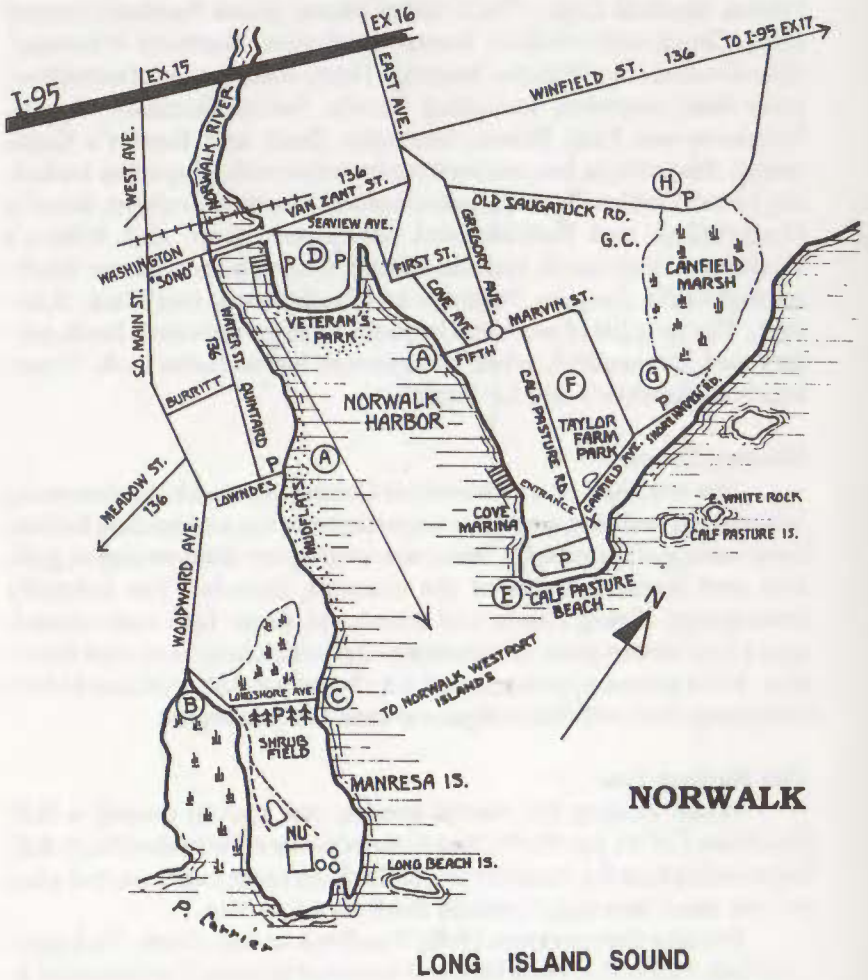
When looking for coastal species, one should consult a tide chart (see CW 10, pp. 92-97); two to three hours either side of high tide is generally best for shorebirds and ducks in most locations, but plan to visit sand bars (e.g., Penfield Reef) on a low tide.

We take the tour from Holly Pond east to Ash Creek. To begin, take Exit 9 off I-95 in Stamford and turn east (toward Darien) on U.S. Rt. 1 for three-tenths of a mile. Turn right at the light onto Weed Avenue, travelling south with Holly Pond on the left.

STAMFORD-DARIEN

Holly Pond and Cove Island Park

This tidal pond on the lower Noroton River is excellent in fall



and winter for a variety of waterfowl (swans, geese, and ducks such as Northern Pintail, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Canvasback, Greater and Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Hooded and Red-breasted Mergansers), gulls (including Bonaparte's), and waders. Although Weed Ave. is a busy residential street, you can park in the small lot on the left, as well as briefly scan from various pull-offs (A). Since people feed birds at the small lot, photographic opportunities are great, especially in the afternoon.

Cove Island Park is a Stamford city park and recreation area for swimming, boating, tennis, and skating. The park is open year around but a resident parking sticker is required May 1 - October 30. Check the brush dump (B) at the south end, especially in the fall, for flocks of sparrows, including Lincoln's, Vesper, White-crowned, and Dickcissel. If the gate is locked, enter the dump by walking along the path just north of the small brick building. Near the park entrance, park and walk across the foot bridge to the island (C). Check the open fields in fall and winter for Horned Larks, Snow Buntings, and Lapland Longspurs, and check the brushy area at the south end for migrant passerines, hawks, etc. An Eared Grebe was present at the mouth of Holly Pond in Dec. 1989.

Visit the 2.5 acre Holly Pond Preserve of The Nature Conservancy (D) for a view of the east side of the pond. To reach this area, return to Rt. 1, turn right, then right again on Nearwater Lane. The preserve is on the right, just south of Nickerson Lane; park alongside the road where you can view the salt marsh and the Pond. Continue south on Nearwater Lane to the entrance to Weed Beach on the right (E). This 20-acre Darien town park is also open to non-residents in the off-season (Oct.- May), and boasts excellent views of Holly Pond, a marsh for waders and shorebirds, a pine / cedar hillside that sometimes harbors roosting owls, and offshore rocks with Purple Sandpipers.

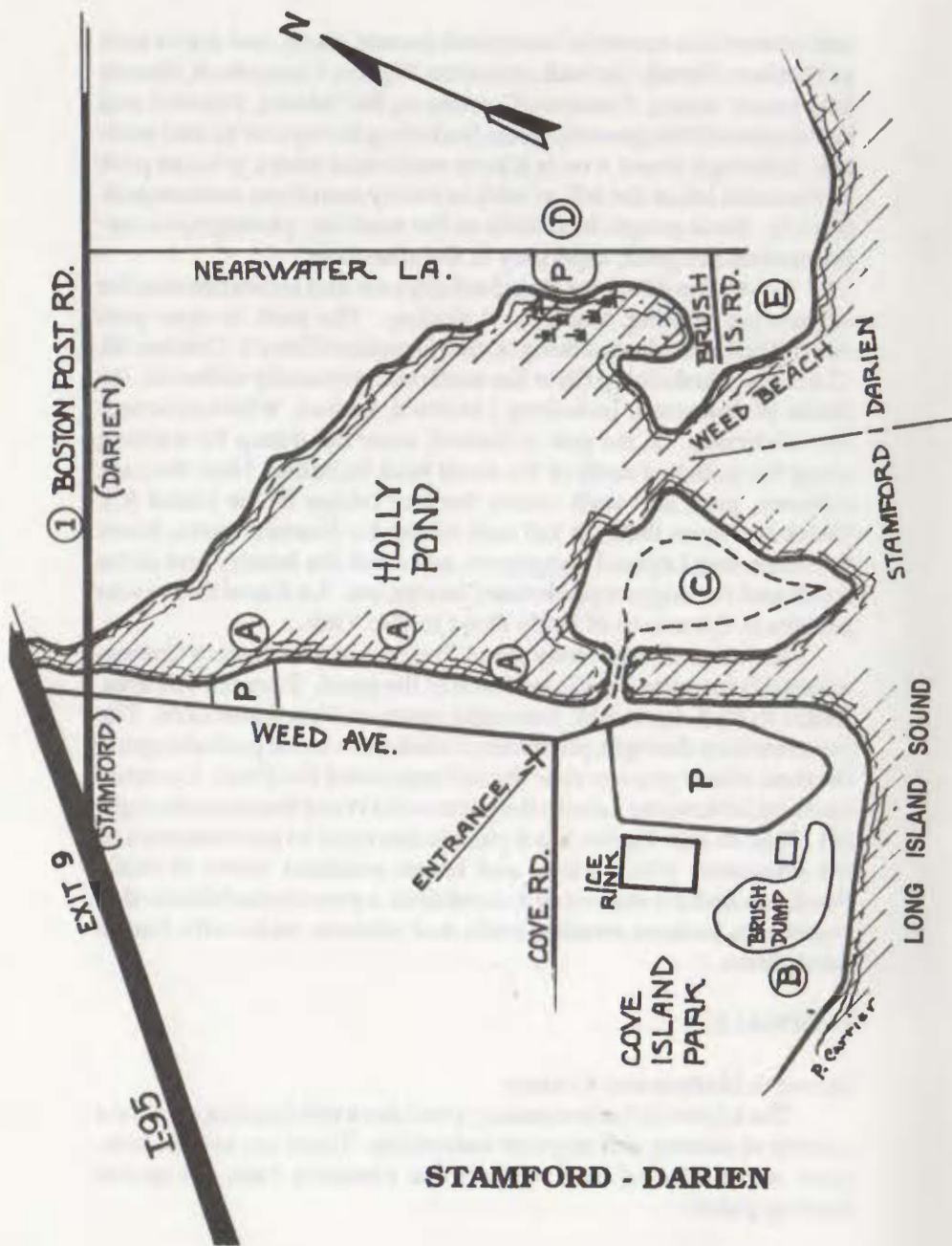
NORWALK

Norwalk Harbor and Vicinity

The Norwalk harbor estuary provides a rich feeding area for a variety of nesting and migrant waterbirds. There are several locations worth birding, and we will use Veteran's Park (D) as our starting point.

Veteran's Park

To reach the park, take Exit 16 off I-95 and travel south on East Avenue. Go under the railroad bridge, continue straight through the



STAMFORD - DARIEN

light, then take the second right onto Van Zant Street (Rt. 136). Follow Rt. 136 south to the Park entrance on your left just prior to crossing the bridge over the Norwalk River. This city-owned Park with ballfields, boatramp, and walking/jogging path is open to the public daily, dawn to dusk. Situated at the head of the harbor, the extensive mudflats (at low tide) to the south provide a valuable feeding area for a variety of herons, shorebirds and waterfowl. For years, the ballfields have proven attractive to resting gulls and shorebirds, especially during and after storms (and especially at high tide). Rarities recorded here include Lesser Golden Plover (annual), Hudsonian Godwit, Pectoral, Stilt and Buff-breasted Sandpipers, and Black Skimmer. The state's first Sharp-tailed Sandpiper was documented here in October 1985 (See CW 6, p. 15-17). This is also a proven fall hawkwatch site with Peregrine Falcon, Merlin, Osprey, buteos and accipiters common in September-October. For the adventurous birder, wishing to bird by boat, the launch ramps are open year round with a fee, payable to the attendant, charged during summer.

To continue the tour, a quick view of the Norwalk River upstream can be worthwhile. Drive west over the bridge, turning right at the light on Water Street. The Maritime Center is a worthwhile detour with an aquarium, nautical museum, and IMAX Theater. Continue north on Water Street to the rotary on the right adjacent to the river. Depending on tide and season, this stretch of the River can be good for waterfowl, waders and gulls.

Next on the tour is the Manresa Island marshes, located on the western side of the harbor. From the bridge, travel south on Water Street (Rt. 136), turn right on Burritt Avenue, then left on Woodward Avenue. At the three-way stop sign, continue straight on Woodward. Taking your second left onto Lowndes Avenue to its deadend (A) provides a rare view of the western side of the harbor, where waders, shorebirds, waterfowl, gulls and terns feed on the extensive mudflats. A scope is advised. Continuing on Woodward, the road makes a 90° left bend onto Longshore Avenue which leads to the Manresa salt marsh and Northeast Utilities power station (B).

Manresa

The salt marshes here are famous among birders as one of the most reliable sites in the state to see the rarer species of waders such as Tricolored and Little Blue Herons, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron and Glossy Ibis. More common species include Great and Snowy Egrets, Great Blue and Green-backed Herons and Black-crowned Night-Herons. Most nest annually (May-Sept.) on the nearby Nor-

walk Islands and use Norwalk harbor's marshes and mudflats heavily to feed. Though the power plant grounds are private and posted, parking is allowed along Longshore Ave. just past the entrance. Walk or drive the road, birding the marsh on the north side for the above species, as well as for Clapper and (occasional) King Rails, Fish Crow and Sharp-tailed and Seaside Sparrows. Looking through the chain-link fence at the Utility property, one can often see various raptors in winter, including Red-tailed, Rough-legged and Sharp-shinned Hawks, falcons and Short-eared Owls which hunt over this shrubby-marshy area at dawn and dusk. (In a few years plant succession has turned this area from barren fly-ash fields to a shrubby forest of birches, willows, cedars and phragmites). Other rarities seen here and along the adjacent shoreline include Peregrine Falcon, Lesser Golden Plover, American Oystercatcher, Marbled Godwit, Black Tern, Black Skimmer, Snowy Owl and Yellow-breasted Chat.

Now the tour takes you to the east side of Norwalk harbor. Exiting Veteran's Park, turn right onto Seaview Avenue, which curves to the right. The millpond on the left is worth a quick check in summer for egrets and herons, and in winter for ducks such as Hooded Merganser. The road curves left and becomes First Street. Take the second right onto Cove Avenue and turn right onto Fifth Street, which deadends at the harbor and provides a great place from which to scan. Go back up Fifth Ave. to the monument/rotary. Continue straight on Marvin Street, then bear right onto Calf Pasture Beach Road, following signs to the beach.

Taylor Farm Park and Calf Pasture Beach

Just before entering the Beach, you will see the open grassy fields of Taylor Farm Park on your left (F). This city-owned park is open to the public; access can be gained by one of several gates in the chainlink fence along Calf Pasture Beach Road or Canfield Avenue on the left. Although this park is not very productive for birds, on the fields there are sometimes Cattle Egrets in spring and summer and Black-bellied and Lesser Golden Plovers in the fall. Check the small pond for waterbirds and if you're ambitious, the thicket woods for passerines. Just before the entrance to the beach is a right turn into Cove Marina, where a view of Norwalk harbor can be had from the parking lot of Skipper's Restaurant.

Calf Pasture Beach (E) is a city-owned park on Long Island Sound, popular in summer with the beach crowd. Resident stickers are required May - October, or pay an out-of-town parking fee. Birding is best in fall, winter, and spring, as this is an excellent area from which to scan the offshore islands, sandbars and bay for

waders, shorebirds, waterfowl and gulls. Common species include Common and Red-throated Loons, Double-crested and Great Cormorants, Great and Snowy Egrets (spring-fall), Brant, Greater Scaup, Oldsquaw, scoters, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Red-breasted Merganser, shorebirds, gulls, Fish Crow, and Snow Bunting. In recent years, this has become a great place to see American Oystercatchers (which nest annually on the islands and feed on shellfish at low tide) and Black Skimmers (a few each year); scope the sandbars for both. This park is also an excellent place to check during storms, both for wayward seabirds (e.g., gannets in November) and for gulls and shorebirds that take refuge on the grassy ballfields. Other rarities seen here include Tricolored Heron, Harlequin Duck, Lesser Golden Plover, Snowy Owl and Lapland Longspur.

Canfield Island Marsh

From spring through fall, this salt marsh (G) is a reliable place to see a variety of herons, egrets and shorebirds. The two best areas of access are as follows. From Taylor Farm travel east on Canfield Avenue, and turn right at the stop sign on Shorehaven Road (posted as private, but birders are welcome). Park in the lot on the left opposite the Knights of Columbus and walk east on the road to the small bridge over the marsh channel. **DO NOT CROSS THE BRIDGE** to the private island, but scan the marsh and offshore bay. To reach the second access, return to the rotary at the north end of Calf Pasture Beach Road, and drive north on Gregory Blvd. 0.4 mi. Turn right onto Old Saugatuck Road. Park at the pull-off on the right along the golf course, just opposite Sasqua Road on the left (H). Besides getting fine views of the marsh, check the large lawns nearby for foraging Cattle Egrets. This has been a reliable location for several years.

The Norwalk Islands

The group of 16 islands off the coast of Norwalk and Westport, collectively known as the Norwalk Islands, represent a unique and invaluable sanctuary for birds. Several of the islands serve as home for a number of colonially-nesting waterbirds, making them one of the largest such colonies in New England. As many as nine species of long-legged waders nest here, in addition to Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls, Common and Least Terns, American Oystercatcher and Piping Plover (occasional). Several of the islands have been preserved as part of the Stewart McKinney National Wildlife Refuge (contact Refuge Manager, P.O. Box 307, Charlestown, RI, 02813, phone (401) 364-9124), and several have restricted access during the nesting season. The more important islands are:

Chimon Island (NWR). The largest (70-acre) of the islands has for years served as the primary nesting colony for Great, Snowy, and Cattle Egrets, Little Blue, Tricolored (rare) and Green-backed Herons, Black- and Yellow-crowned Night-Herons, and Glossy Ibis. Also, a large Herring and Great Black-backed Gull colony surrounds the southern half of the island. Dense tangles of bittersweet and poison ivy provide needed protection against human intrusion. The first state record for Painted Bunting, a female, was banded here in May 1982.

Shea Island (city of Norwalk). This 45-acre island has a variety of habitats - sandy and rocky beach, salt marsh, mudflats, dunes, thickets, and woods - attractive to a variety of birds. Black- and Yellow-crowned Night-Herons nest here, as do other wader species (some years), Clapper Rail, and American Oystercatcher. Prickly pear cactus grows in the dunes, blooming in June-July.

Sheffield Island (NWR). This 52-acre island is largely wooded. Although it was the first island in Connecticut to be recolonized by nesting egrets (1961) in recent times, no waders currently nest. The gravel tombolo at the eastern end hosts a nesting colony of Common Terns and American Oystercatchers. The historic Sheffield Lighthouse on the western end is now a tourist attraction and can be visited by boat through the Maritime Center (see below).

Grassy Island (city of Norwalk). This 14-acre island has for the last two years served as another nesting site for as many as seven species of egret/heron. Adjacent to Chimon Island, it is an important alternative nesting island.

Cockenoe Island (town of Westport). This 25-acre island has, like Shea Island, a variety of habitats attractive to birds. Perhaps the most important is the long sand dune that extends northwest, and serves in some years as a nesting site for the threatened Least Tern and endangered Piping Plover. American Oystercatchers nest annually. The remains of a Brown Pelican were found here in March 1977.

Goose Island (SVAS). This 3.5-acre island once was the site of a colony of Common and Roseate Terns (Roland Clement, pers. comm.), but now supports a colony of Great Black-backed and Herring Gulls. American Oystercatcher also nests annually.

ACCESS.

For the past twenty years, access to the Norwalk Islands has been possible aboard the "Conservator", a boat operated by the Saugatuck Valley Audubon Society. At the time of writing, SVAS is entering a joint agreement with the Maritime Center in Norwalk to continue the operation of this boat. Individuals and groups interested in visiting these islands with a naturalist between May and October should contact the following :

Saugatuck Valley Audubon Society, P.O. Box 684, Westport, CT 06881. Contact: Phil Reinertsen, (203) 762-5704 or Marcia Hegeman (203) 846-4181.

Maritime Center in Norwalk, 10 N. Water St., Norwalk, CT, 06854, phone (203) 852-0700

17 Seabreeze Place, South Norwalk, CT 06854

AUBADE

Pickerel weed anchors our canoe,
prow eastward.
Quail call from uplands
behind fog's opaque wash
but Kingfisher rides his rattle
out of the watercloud.
Beached in arrow leaves, we stay
a long peace.
Trees net the westward moon
while east grows opaline.
Sun lifts into white gauze
and a nimbus of wild rice;
we dip paddles into quicksilver,
pleats fold from the bow.
Crossing our stern,
a sandpiper, piping.
Marsh transpires into sky.

By Polly Brody

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PREFERRED HABITAT OF NORTHERN BARRED OWLS IN LITCHFIELD COUNTY, CONNECTICUT

Leonard C. Yannielli

ABSTRACT

The preferred habitat of the Northern Barred Owl (*Strix varia*) was studied by broadcasting tape recorded calls and by measurements of topography and vegetation at nests and randomly selected sites. The study area was in the northwest corner of Connecticut which is characterized by a hilly landscape of mostly mixed coniferous and deciduous forest. Owls responded significantly more on nights with cloud cover and with low illumination by the moon. The most responses per time were in May, June and July. Most Barred Owls were located in mixed coniferous-deciduous forest. Topography and vegetation of six nest sites were compared with those of randomly selected forest plots. Barred Owls selected sites in forest blocks of substantial size, near open water, wetlands, and trails, and away from hills. Although Barred Owls prefer nearby wetlands, conifers within 100 m of the nest site, and trees with cavities for nesting, these features are apparently not absolutely essential; however, the absence of these features renders the owls more susceptible to adverse changes in their environment.

INTRODUCTION

There are few published data on the preferred habitat of the Northern Barred Owl (*Strix varia varia*) (Devereaux and Mosher 1984; Fuller 1979; Smith 1978). Although the Barred Owl is considered a common resident in parts of Connecticut, relatively little has been published about this species in the state (Sage et al. 1913; Smith 1978). The object of this study was to determine the characteristics of the preferred habitat of the Barred Owl based on call counts and nest sites in Litchfield County, Connecticut.

STUDY AREA

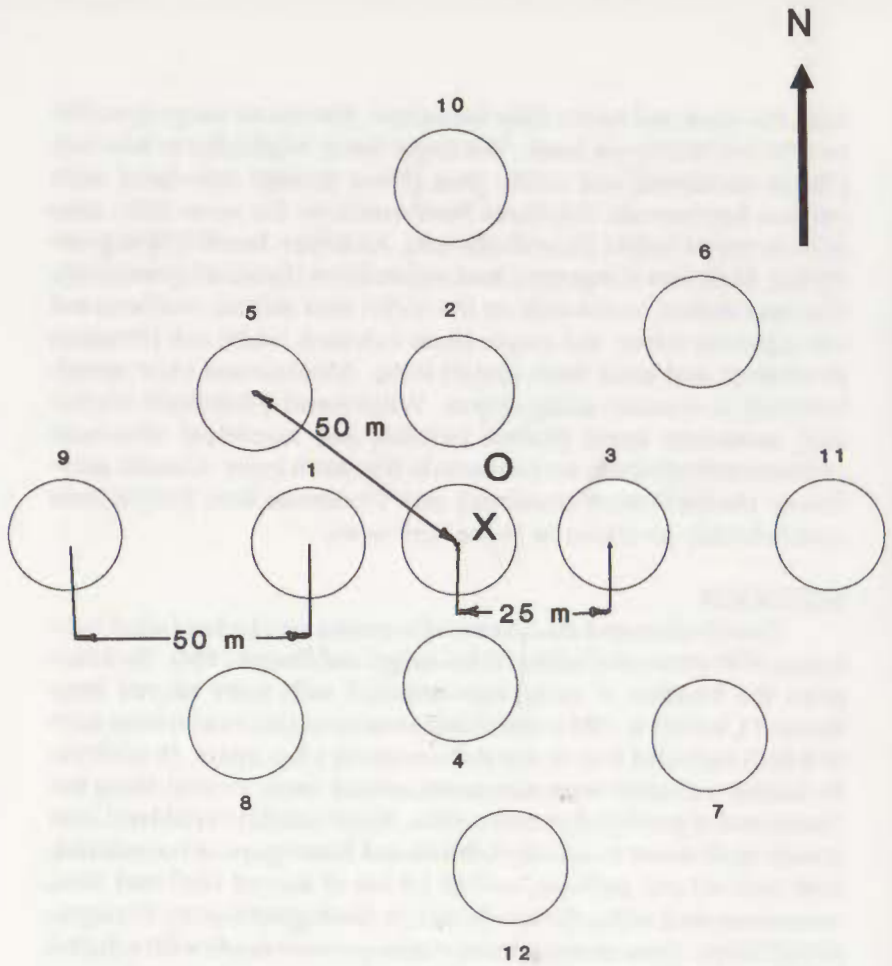
The study area was in Litchfield County with a particular focus on the ecological regions designated by Dowan and Craig (1984), as I-A (Northwest Highlands), II-A (Northwest Uplands), and III-A (Northwest Hills). A composite summary of the topography and vegetation is given here. These ecological regions are 25 to 45 miles

from the coast and have a hilly landscape. Elevations range from 750 to 1500 feet above sea level. The major forest vegetation is hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) and white pine (*Pinus strobus*) associated with various hardwoods. Northern hardwoods on the more drier sites include sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), hickories (*Carya* spp.), and yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*). The transitional hardwoods on the moist sites include northern red oak (*Quercus rubra*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*), white ash (*Fraxinus americana*), and black birch (*Betula lenta*). Moosewood (*Acer pensylvanicum*) is common along slopes. Witch-hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*), mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*), and mapleleaf viburnum (*Viburnum acerifolium*) are common in the shrub layer. Canada mayflower (*Maianthemum canadense*) and Christmas fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*) are common in the herb layer.

METHODS

Distribution and abundance of a species are the key initial indicators of its preferred habitat (McGarigal and Fraser 1984). To determine the location of owls, tape-recorded calls were played from March 11, to July 8, 1988 to elicit responses along six road routes, each of which included four to ten stations about 2 km apart. In addition 55 habitat variables were measured around nests located along the routes and at previously known sites. Major habitat variables (Level I) such as distance to aquatic habitats and forest gaps or boundaries, both natural and artificial, within 1.5 km of Barred Owl nest sites, were measured with a divider from U.S. Geological Survey Topographical Maps. Area measurements on maps were made with a digital planimeter. Depths of forests containing owl nest sites were measured using a divider along the shortest distance from the edge, usually a road, to the center of the forest block. Vegetation structure (Level II) was measured at three nest sites, one from each ecological region. Percent canopy, percent ground cover, shrub density, slope, and tree species including trunk diameter at breast height (DBH) were measured on 12 circular plots of 0.04 ha area and 11.3 m radius located less than 100 m from each nest site (Figure 1). Level III involved measuring the same habitat characteristics as Level II but at all Barred Owl nest sites ($n = 6$) and with the nest site tree in the center of the plot (Fig. 1, plot 0). Variables of the nest cavity tree and the cavity itself (Level IV) included successional stage of the tree, compass direction of the entrance to the cavity, DBH of cavity tree, cavity height and depth, and other features delineated by Devereaux and Mosher (1984) and Noon et al. (1987).

Levels I, III, and IV of Barred Owl habitat were compared with



X = nest site tree.

O = nest site vegetation plot.

1 - 4 = vegetation plots within a 25 meter radius of the nest site tree.

5 - 8 = vegetation plots within a 50 meter radius of the nest site tree.

9 - 12 = vegetation plots within a 75 meter radius of the nest site tree.

* Adapted from Noon et al. (1947)

FIGURE 1 - Sampling scheme for level II forest habitat analysis within a 100 meter radius of the nest site area.*

equivalent measures at randomly selected habitat sites ($n = 12$). Transects, about 100 m apart and 1.6 km long, were selected along a dirt road in the study area. Transect direction, east or west, was determined by a coin flip. Every third tree with a suitable cavity was measured with a maximum of three per transect to ensure sampling of a variety of habitats. Trees were selected if they contained a cavity with the following characteristics: 1) at least two m from the ground, 2) at least a 15 cm diameter opening or a 25 cm DBH for hollow tree stubs (Devereaux and Mosher 1984). Due to the study design, forest depth was not measured at the randomly selected sites. Variables were statistically analyzed with the nonparametric two-tailed Mann-Whitney U-Test (Walonick 1985). A chi-square test (Zar 1974) was used to compare response/non-response proportions under different phases of the moon and cloud covers.

RESULTS

There were 16 responses by Barred Owls to 120 broadcasts, a response frequency of 13.3%. Pairs responded to five of these broadcasts. The most common response of Barred Owls was the standard eight hoot call: "hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo, hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo-a-ah" (McGarigal and Fraser, 1984, and many other authors). Once, on March 11, 1987, a member of a pair gave the famed shriek call: "uh-uh-ah-ah-ee-ee-ee". Barred Owls responded significantly more on dark nights with lower phase of the moon and some cloud cover ($\chi^2 = 14.74$, $P < 0.0001$). The highest response rate, 1.1 per census, occurred in May, June, and July (see also Smith 1978). The remaining months had a lower response rate of 0.5 per census. Censusing was not done during January and February because preliminary studies of call broadcasting produced no responses between January 4, 1986 and February 23, 1986. There was a response to 30% of broadcasts in mixed deciduous/coniferous woodland. In contrast, agricultural, coniferous woodland, deciduous woodland, lake, and marsh habitats yielded only one response, in coniferous woodland, for an overall frequency of 1.3%.

Of the 55 habitat variables measured, five (9.1%) significantly differed between nest sites and random sites (Table 1). All were on the major habitat level (Level I). No nest sites were occupied in 1988 when measurements were made, but there were active pairs near two nest sites. Barred Owls showed a significant preference for nest sites close to wetlands and areas of open water ($P = 0.007$). Owl nest sites were significantly further away from the nearest hill than were random sites ($P = 0.005$). There was a strong correlation between nest

TABLE 1 - Comparison of Barred Owl nest sites and random nest sites for selected habitat variables

Selected Habitat Variables	Nest Sites n = 5 (means \pm SD)	Random Sites n = 13	MWU ¹	U' ²
Open Water -Distance(km)	1.51 \pm 1.80	0.02 \pm 0.04	3.0	62.0*
Open Water -Edge Diversity ³	3.30 \pm 2.60	1.43 \pm 0.89	23.0	42.0
Wetland -Distance(km)	0.56 \pm 0.46	1.28 \pm 0.28	59.5*	5.5
Wetland -Edge Diversity	2.91 \pm 1.74	1.72 \pm 0.61	18.5	41.5
Nearest Hill -Distance (km)	1.16 \pm 0.42	64 \pm 0.23	10.0	55.0*
Nearest Trail -Distance(km)	0.40 \pm 0.36	1.54 \pm 0.21	45.0*	0.0
Buildings ⁴ -Number	45.8 \pm 23.9	23.0 \pm 7.40	12.0	53.0*
Foliage -Density ⁵	11.2 \pm 5.10	7.0 \pm 2.20	10.0	40.0

* = statistical significance at the $P \leq 0.05$ level.
(critical value = 53 for most variables)

1 MWU = Mann-Whitney U value.

2 U' = Number of nest sites x No. of random sites -U value.

3 Perimeter/ Area Ratio. The perimeter of the habitat divided
by 2 X square root of the area X pi .

4 The number of buildings within 1.5 km of the Barred Owl nest or random site.

5 Measured with a Foliage Density Board. The sum of four readings taken at
four different height intervals at each cardinal point of the plot. Sightings were
taken from the cavity tree (Noon et al. 1987) .

sites and woodland trails. Compared to random sites, Barred Owl nest sites had many more buildings within 1.5 km ($P = 0.005$). The average forest depth for woods containing barred owl nest sites was 0.9 km ($n = 6$). It is interesting to note that the nest site with the lowest forest depth, 0.6 km, was located in Catlin Woods, a preserve of very mature woodland near both swamp and lake front habitats. The importance of a deciduous/coniferous forest composition was shown at Level II with a mean coniferous content of 28.6% ($n = 3$) and with considerable range, 6.8% - 47.6% (Fig. 1). There were fewer trees in the <26 cm DBH size class and fewer live trees in 0 plots at owl nest sites (Fig. 1). However, neither of these differences was significant. All Barred Owl nests ($n = 6$) were in tree cavities. Tree species used as Barred Owl nest sites in this study and that of Root and DeSimone (1978) for Litchfield County is: American elm (*Ulmus americana*) five, sugar maple five, red maple three, eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) three, white pine three, American beech one, white ash one, red oak one, unidentified oak (*Quercus sp.*) one, and pignut hickory (*Carya glabra*) one.

DISCUSSION

Responses by pairs were vigorous in March before egg laying. The shriek call by a member of a Barred Owl pair probably constituted a threat display and defense of territory (Bosakowski et al. 1987). The greater response of Barred Owls on nights with lower phase of the moon and more cloud cover may be attributed to heightened activity of the prey of owls on these darker nights (D. Holland per. com.). The greater response at the end of spring and the beginning of summer is attributable, in part, to presence of young of the year (Springer 1978; McNichol 1981). Truncated calls were also heard during this time period. Tryon (1957) interpreted a shortened call, "whoo-whoo", as a warning call from parents to young. The winter "silent" period may be explained by the energy demands of winter and of preparation for the mating season to follow. Broadcasting of calls was avoided during April and early May so as not to disrupt incubating females.

Data on owl responses indicate a preference for mixed coniferous-deciduous woodland. However, given the preponderance of such mixed forest in Litchfield County and the tendency for the deciduous stands to be often less mature (in various successional stages of development from old fields), more data are needed on deciduous stands of different ages, to assess more accurately whether Barred Owls prefer a particular type of woodland.

Previous Connecticut reports show aquatic prey constituting

from 6% to 13.8% in the diet of Barred Owls (Sage et al. 1913; Root and DeSimone 1978). Wetland and open water habitats may be important for foraging when small mammals are scarce and during the breeding season when food requirements may be especially high for rearing young. The presence of a stream in the 0 plots at Barred Owl nest sites in each ecological region and four ($n = 6$) sites overall is probably a result of past land use. Nineteenth century farmers often left shade trees for livestock near streams. Within secondary forests in Litchfield County, these trees tend to be older and to have more cavities. This relationship did not prove to be significant ($P = 0.22$) however, because randomly selected cavity trees ($n = 12$) were also found more frequently near streams.

Location of nests away from hills can be interpreted as a preference for the more moist lowlands and their more abundant and varied prey. Barred Owls may also be avoiding the greater exposure on the hills in the extremes of a New England winter. Also, snags with potential nesting cavities are apt to be blown down by wind sooner in the hilly areas. Lastly, some of the hilly areas were logged for the production of charcoal. Consequently, these hills tend to have less mature stands and thus fewer potential cavity nest sites.

It is possible that owl nests were more easily discovered because they were near trails. However, studies of other raptors that by design eliminated this potential trail bias also revealed a strong correlation between nest sites and woodland trails (Speiser and Bosakowski 1987). Barred Owls probably stay under the forest canopy above trails, where prey are exposed and the flight path is open (D. Holland pers. comm.). Trails and remnants of wood roads might also be landmarks that facilitate nest orientation by birds returning to the nest (Speiser and Bosakowski 1987).

The nest site correlation with buildings may be an artifact of the study design (see Methods). If sites deep in woodlands had been used in the study, it is possible that this relationship would not have been found. Nest sites used here may simply have been the only ones available to these owls due to the full use of preferable sites deeper in the woods. It is also possible that the Barred Owl nest sites selected for this study might represent traditional sites used for many years before houses and other structures were erected (Bosakowski 1987; Smith 1978). The housing pattern around each of the six forest habitats studied was the same. These structures were not in the woodlands but were located along the roads surrounding each block of forest.

Conifers, when used as roosts, may protect owls from poor weather and conceal them to avoid mobbing by other birds. Twice I

placed Barred Owl mounts in deciduous trees. In both cases mobbing was initiated by American Crows (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) (see also Eckert 1973). These conifers might also play a thermoregulatory role as in the case of the summer cooling provided by the conifers for the closely related Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis*) (Barrows 1981).

Many authors have stated that the open understory of mature woodlands provides relatively unobstructed flight paths and perches for barred owls (Bosakowski 1987; Devereaux and Mosher 1984). However, characteristics reflecting this did not show a statistically significant difference between nest sites and randomly selected sites. This was most likely due to factors inherent in the study, such as the difficulty of finding random cavity trees in less mature woodlands.

Barred owl nest sites had typical characteristics of gaps in the forest (i.e., high density of shrubs and foliage, mostly due to nest site trees in advanced stages of decomposition allowing light to pass down through the forest canopy). These sites did not differ significantly from trees with unoccupied cavities for these also tended to have dropped large limbs creating openings in the canopy.

Cavities may protect owls from predators and inclement weather. However a previous study in Litchfield County revealed one barred owl nest atop an old squirrels' nest (Root and DeSimone 1978). Moreover, Bent (1938) reported 23 out of 38 barred owl pairs using open stick nests. It is possible that in New England at that time second growth forests did not contain enough trees with cavities for barred owl nesting and the birds used other nest locations. Although cavities are apparently preferred by barred owls, they are not essential.

Sufficient subcanopy space, forest depth, trees with cavities, conifers, and proximity to wetlands and open water all contribute to a adequate habitat for barred owls. Without these habitat features they would be more vulnerable to environmental stresses such as poor weather, low populations of prey, disease, and predation. Future studies of barred owls should evaluate whether a greater area of forest could compensate for the lack of such habitat features.

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BOOK REVIEW

Connecticut Birds, Joseph D. Zeranski and Thomas R. Baptist, 1990. Published by University of New England Press, Hanover, NH. 328 pp. ISBN 0-87451-513-0.

Despite the tremendous interest in ornithology among both amateurs and professionals in Connecticut, the most recent reference on the abundance and distribution of Connecticut birds was published in 1913 (*The Birds of Connecticut*) by John Sage, Louis Bishop and Walter Bliss). A less archaic annotated list of the state's birds has been badly needed not only by birders and researchers, but also by nature preserve managers, state wildlife personnel and others who are working to protect natural areas and maintain natural diversity. This new book by Joseph Zeranski and Thomas Baptist fills these needs; it includes a thorough and rigorous summary of the distribution, seasonal occurrence and abundance of each of the 380 species that have been recorded in the state.

Bird populations in Connecticut have undergone dramatic changes as humans have continuously modified the landscape during the past three hundred years. Zeranski and Baptist have carefully searched the early ornithological literature of Connecticut and adjacent New York and Massachusetts to provide a detailed account of the history of each species. For experienced birders, these "historical notes" will probably be the most fascinating feature of the book. Reading through these notes, it soon becomes apparent that the 19th-century Connecticut landscape of open farmland with island-like woodlots had a distinctly different bird community from the one we find in the state's rural areas today. The list of species described as common or abundant breeding birds in the early 1800's seems more appropriate for the open fields and prairies of the Great Plains than for southern New England: Upland Sandpiper, Common Nighthawk, Red-headed Woodpecker, Purple Martin, Eastern Bluebird, Bobolink, Dickcissel, and Vesper, Savannah and Grasshopper Sparrow. Later, as farms were abandoned, meadows and old fields became the "islands" in the forested landscape. Consequently, grassland species became progressively more localized, and many have disappeared entirely. Thicket specialists, including Brown Thrasher and Yellow-breasted Chat, suffered a similar decline. At the same time the populations of Pileated Woodpecker and Worm-eating Warbler, as well as many other forest species that had been rare or uncommon in the 1800's, increased with the regeneration of the forest.

The historical notes provide many surprises for modern ornithologists. Imagine hundreds of thousands of Oldsquaw covering

Long Island Sound "as far as the eye can reach in every direction, and almost deafening one by their constant cackle" (a quotation from C. Hart Merriam's book on Connecticut birds). Or imagine the shore-bird migration before market hunting, when Red Knots and Marbled Godwits were common along the Connecticut coast.

The book begins with a concise discussion of the history of Connecticut ornithology contributed by George Clark, Jr., and a chapter on the geography of Connecticut. A set of four maps provides a useful guide to geographical terms used in the text. Another chapter summarizes the history of ecological change in Connecticut since the last glacial period. The authors have done an excellent job of synthesizing information from recent books by Richard Cronon, Michael Bell and Howard Russell, and from numerous scholarly articles. The result is a vivid and succinct account of the impact of people on Connecticut's natural ecosystems. This provides useful background for understanding the historical notes on particular species, but the chapter would be even better if it integrated some of the information from these notes to illustrate the connections between land use changes and changes in bird populations.

The discussion of the abundance of particular species at different seasons is generally accurate and complete, but there are some omissions and mistakes concerning distributions in southeastern Connecticut. Red-breasted Nuthatch, Hermit Thrush, Black-throated Green Warbler and Bobolink are not described as summer residents for that section of the state, but all are regular summer residents in the proper habitat, and all except the nuthatch are locally common. Cerulean Warbler is described as a rare nester in a few localities in Connecticut, including Haddam and East Haddam, but recent censuses show that it is a regular and fairly common species in many large tracts of forest in Middlesex and New London counties. Moreover, Oldsquaw is described as "very common in winter on Long Island Sound", but this is only true for the western Sound; they are uncommon on the Sound off of eastern Connecticut.

The book includes three appendices: a list of species that have been reported in the state without sufficient corroboration; a brief description of some of the better birding areas in Connecticut; and a checklist of Connecticut birds.

This is an essential reference for anyone with a serious interest in Connecticut birds or with a practical interest in preserving rare and endangered species. It provides a rich historical perspective on the changing bird populations of the state.

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THE TASTE OF FREEDOM

Bruce Dasinger

We read that one reason for man's interest in birds is their freedom of flight. That may have been the reason for the concern Ik Icard's and I had for a Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*) when we were observing shorebirds from a canoe in the marshes near the Blackhall River in Old Lyme, Connecticut recently. The bird appeared to have one foot stuck in the mud and couldn't take flight as we approached. We came nearer, carefully picked up our stuck yellowlegs and found that one toe was held tightly by a sizeable oyster. A kind of panic set in. We had to free the bird immediately! No thought of paddling back to the boat launch area to find someone with a knife. Our first idea was to break away the brittle edge of the shell by carefully pushing it against the canoe railing. This was partially successful, but it soon became apparent that this could be disastrous for our quiet, cooperative friend if we slipped, and the force being applied to the oyster was suddenly transferred to the bird. Ik hit upon a solution which he considered less dangerous. He would break the thin edge of the shell where the toe was caught, by grinding it between his molars. He was about to start when I mentioned that the waters were closed to shellfishing for good reason and suggested that we first wash off the mud. As I held the bird and wondered what to do about that beak so near Ik's eye, Ik ground away, spitting out pieces of shell as the rescue proceeded. The bird was soon free and still had a full set of toes. We let the bird's feet hang free and touch the mud. It took three firm steps and then took flight, sounding off in typical fashion. Even if we'd had a camera we would not have thought of taking a picture as proof for our friends and Ripley's "Believe it or Not". The only evidence remaining is one chipped molar. So how does freedom taste? It tastes somewhat chalky, salty, and muddy.

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UNUSUAL BIRD SPECIMENS FROM CONNECTICUT AT THE BIRDCRAFT MUSEUM

George A. Clark, Jr.¹, and Milan G. Bull²

Preserved specimens and the information attached to them provide important documentation for the historical status of birds in Connecticut. Although the Birdcraft Museum of the Connecticut Audubon Society (CAS) in Fairfield did not open until 1915, the bird collection contains many older specimens including a major group from the late 1800's owned by George Bird Grinnell and donated by his widow. Even older are specimens acquired by the Reverend John Linsley before 1844. The Linsley specimens formerly were at the Barnum Museum in Bridgeport but were transferred to Birdcraft through the efforts of former CAS employee Dennis Varza. As far as we are aware, the only Linsley specimen remaining at the Barnum Museum is an exhibited mount of a Tundra Swan from Connecticut. Linsley's specimens are apparently the oldest extant ones known from Connecticut.

Birdcraft has the third largest collection of Connecticut specimens in the state and these include representatives of a number of species which are not numerous in such historic collections. We here list the names of those exceptional species, represented by only a single specimen unless otherwise noted. Our nomenclature follows the Sixth Edition of the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds (1983). For the rarest specimens we have included some additional information such as catalog number, locality and date of origin, and a literature citation. For each species marked with an asterisk, a Kodachrome photograph of one or more specimens has been deposited in the research photographic collection of the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History in Storrs. The following specimens at Birdcraft are deemed especially noteworthy: Black-capped Petrel* (mount B1244; Fairfield, 7 Oct. 1938; only state record; Bull 1964), Wilson's Storm-Petrel* (mount B1336, female, Southport Beach, Fairfield, 13 Aug. 1955 after Hurricane Connie), White-faced Storm-Petrel* (study skin B587; only state record; Milford Point, 6 Aug. 1976 after Hurricane Belle; only state record), 1 Leach's Storm-Petrel, Northern Gannet* (mounted immature from Norwalk, 27 Oct. 1918), Yellow-crowned Night Heron* (mounted adult from Norwalk, 11 May 1919; apparently the first state record),

Northern Shoveler* (mounted male from Stratford; exact date unknown but from Linsley's collection), 2 Gadwalls*, Common Eider* (mount, Milford; 7 Dec. 1968), King Eider* (mount, Fairfield, Dec. 1922; skin, Stratford, 30 May 1978), Barrow's Goldeneye* (mount, male, Fairfield Beach, 7 Dec. 1954; CW 4:59), Gyrfalcon (Rocky Hill, 17 Oct. 1935), 3 Yellow Rails*, Purple Gallinule* (mount, Stratford, 19 June 1928), American Oystercatcher*, American Avocet* (mount; Stratford, 16 May 1966; Zeranski and Baptist 1990), 3 Whimbrels*, Hudsonian Godwit*, Stilt Sandpiper*, Ruff*, Wilson's Phalarope*, Red Phalarope* (mount), Little Gull*; 2 Iceland Gulls*, Glaucous Gull, Caspian Tern* (Milford, 8 Sept. 1979), Roseate Tern, 3 Sooty Terns*, 2 Black Terns*, Black Skimmer*, Dovekie, Atlantic Puffin* (mount B1487, Fairfield, 16 Nov. 1949; only state record; Auk 67:254), Passenger Pigeon, 2 Red-headed Woodpeckers, Black-backed Woodpecker* (mounted male, Bridgeport, 19 Nov. 1934), Boreal Chickadee*, Philadelphia Vireo, Ipswich subspecies of the Savannah Sparrow.

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CONNECTICUT FIELD NOTES

SUMMER: JUNE 1 - JULY 31, 1990

Jay Kaplan

The summer of 1990 provided just enough excitement to keep Connecticut's birders out and about. Although fewer reports are received during the summer season (do the majority of our state's birders vacation elsewhere?), there were enough observers in the field to produce some interesting sightings. Highlights included a frigatebird and a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, as well as nesting Sedge Wrens and Yellow-throated Warblers.

There are a number of mid-summer counts now being held and if this idea were to catch on, statewide, it might provide us with a more accurate picture of trends within Connecticut's breeding bird populations. Why not consider a mid-June count in your area next year?

Weather

June was a pleasant month with seasonable temperatures ranging from a low of 48° F June 5 to 90° F June 22. Precipitation for the month totalled only 1.9 inches in Bridgeport, although the Hartford area received 3.59 inches, only 0.2 inches below normal. Severe thunderstorms struck the state June 7 and June 29-30 and a tornado occurred in Danbury June 29 (winds of 106 mph were recorded in Newburgh, New York on this date).

July was characterized by many observers as a hot humid month. A cold front provided some relief July 6-7 and rain on July 12 was responsible for a record low of 57° F in Bridgeport on that day and the next. July 22 saw strong easterly winds (15-20 mph). Precipitation for the month in Hartford totalled 2.09 inches, about 1 inch below the norm.

LOONS THROUGH FALCONS

At least three Common Loons were off Stonington throughout the period (RSCB) and non-breeding individuals were also seen sporadically off Milford Point (SM). Inland, adult pairs and immatures were seen throughout the period on Nepaug Reservoir, New Hartford and Barkhamsted Reservoir, Barkhamsted (DR). Laurel Reservoir, New Canaan, hosted an adult in summer plumage June 17 (FM,CW). Pied-billed Grebes again nested in the Lordship marsh, Stratford (m.ob.) and a territorial male was also at White Memorial

Foundation, Litchfield (hereafter WMF) (DR). A Horned Grebe in breeding plumage at Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison (hereafter HBSP) July 13, may have been injured (JKa). Double-crested Cormorants continued to expand coastal breeding colonies. The colony at East White Rock, Westport was at capacity with 25 new nests in trees on nearby Calf Pasture Island (MB).

A former gull colony on Goose Island, Guilford was completely taken over by cormorants (JSp fide FM). Inland, 10 birds at Laurel Reservoir June 17 might indicate possible nesting at these previously documented sites (FM). Adults and immatures were also seen at both Barkhamsted and Nepaug Reservoirs through the period (DR), and 10 birds were seen in Southbury, flying northwest, June 3 (RN). One of the most interesting sightings for the period was a possible Magnificent Frigatebird flying over Falkner Island, Guilford July 18 (JSp et al.). The observers immediately recognized the bird by size, shape and behavior; however, due to the angle of the sun, they were unable to distinguish color, other than to note that the head and chest areas appeared lighter, indicating an immature bird. Although other species of frigatebirds could not be ruled out, the most likely would be the Magnificent Frigatebird. The Connecticut Rare Records Committee has been provided with a written report, about the fourth sighting for Connecticut.

Single American Bitterns were seen at Milford Point June 8 (JF) and at Lordship July 14 (JD,JF). Two Least Bitterns were at Milford Point June 16 (JF), while territorial males were also at WMF July 4 and Roy Swamp Wildlife Management Area, Sharon July 15 (DR). A new nesting confirmation for Great Blue Heron came from Barkhamsted, where a small colony was located July 22 (JKa). An overview of the heron nesting season on the Norwalk Islands indicated that the number of nests was down on Chimon Island, but up on Grassy Island (MB). A maximum of 56 Snowy Egrets were observed at Milford Point July 20 (SM). Little Blue Herons were reported in good numbers along the Norwalk-Westport shoreline through the period. Five birds were seen at Manresa Marsh, Norwalk July 8 (FM,CW) and a single bird was seen at Griswold Point, Old Lyme July 26 (JMa,JMo). A Tricolored Heron was at HBSP June 3 (SM), the only one reported for the period. Cattle Egret reports were down from past years with only one to two birds present through the period in Westport-Norwalk (FM). Yellow-crowned Night Herons were reported from several coastal locations as this species nests on the Norwalk Islands. In addition to the usual coastal reports for Glossy Ibis, three birds were seen far from the coast in Ellington July 8 (CE).

A high of 82 Mute Swans were reported from Milford Point June

8 (SD). Three Brant were off Greenwich Point, Greenwich June 17 (DB fide TBu) and one to three birds were present throughout the period at Milford Point (m.ob.). Additional waterfowl reports of interest included a lingering Oldsquaw off Greenwich June 17 (fide TBu) and Longshore July 14 (CW); a late male Bufflehead in Noroton, Darien June 3 (FM,CW), also off Greenwich Point June 15 (TBa,JZ); and Red-breasted Mergansers from several locations including eight on the Connecticut-Rhode Island border all summer (RSCB).

It's all good news for breeding Osprey in Connecticut. The Connecticut Dept. of Environmental Protection (hereafter CT DEP) reported an increase again during 1990, with 53 nests statewide, resulting in 92 fledged young. Although a nesting attempt at Nell's Island, Milford failed, this does mark the western-most nesting attempt on the Connecticut shore of Long Island Sound in recent years. A brief trip to Great Island, Old Lyme provided 28 birds July 30 (FM,CW). Several inland nesting attempts were also reported. There were a number of Bald Eagle sightings, both adults and immatures, in various parts of the state. Although there was no evidence of nesting, reports of birds carrying twigs in flight at a northwestern reservoir, were exciting and hold hope for a future nesting. An adult Sharp-shinned Hawk with three fledglings was sighted in Goshen July 26 (DR) and a new nesting confirmation for Red-shouldered Hawk came from Brookfield (AD). American Kestrel, for reasons as yet unknown, continues to decline as a breeder in Connecticut. Only five sightings were documented for the entire period. A Merlin was observed in downtown Hartford June 6, while a Peregrine Falcon was in the same area June 27 (CE).

QUAIL THROUGH OWLS

Although several reports for Northern Bobwhite were received, it should be noted that the majority of these sightings in western Connecticut can be traced to released birds. Bobwhite seen at Haley Farm State Park, Groton (RSCB) are more likely wild birds. A pair of Clapper Rails was seen at Milford Point with 10 chicks July 14 (JD,JF). A new breeding confirmation for Virginia Rail came from the Danbury area (DR). Meanwhile, territorial male Soras were seen in June in Goshen and Litchfield (DR). A number of non-breeding Black-bellied Plover spent the summer at Milford Point with a high of 18 birds July 11 (TBa,JZ). The last spring record for Semipalmated Plover at Milford Point was June 3 (LBe,FP); the first fall record was July 21, when 10 birds were seen (JF,SM). Piping Plovers continue to hold their own in the state. By July 1, 40 birds had been counted compared to 35 the previous year (CTDEP). Nesting results were not

yet available.

In addition to their usual breeding grounds, American Oystercatchers attempted nesting in Scott's Cove, Darien (FM,CW), and Bluff Island, Greenwich (TBa,JZ). A pair was also seen at HBSP June 29 (JKa). Milford Point produced a high of eight Willets July 28 (CB); possible breeding at Barn Island, Stonington, and at Manresa Marsh could not be confirmed. Upland Sandpipers peaked at 13 birds, including eight juveniles, July 8 at their breeding grounds at Bradley International Airport, Windsor Locks (DR, et al.). A Whimbrel was at Milford Point July 18-21 (m.ob.). Semipalmated Sandpipers arrived, as usual, en masse at Milford Point, with 2000 birds July 30 (FM,CW). Other maximum shorebird numbers at Milford Point included 16 Least Sandpipers July 17 (SM) and 83 Short-billed Dowitchers July 11 (TBa,JZ).

A Little Gull was at Milford Point June 2-6 (LBe,RE,JY) in the company of three immature Bonaparte's Gulls. There were 10 Bonaparte's Gulls off Greenwich June 10 (DB) and two to five birds remained through the period. There were reports of one to two Caspian Terns through much of the period at Milford Point (m.ob.), including a report of courtship behavior on a sandbar June 24 (CB, fide FM). There was no evidence of nesting, however. Approximately 4,000 pairs of Common Terns and 150 pairs of Roseate Terns nested on Falkner Island this season (JSp, fide FM). The CT DEP reported in the periodical, "SCOPE," that there were 827 pairs of Least Terns in the state this season, compared to 712 in 1989. Black Terns were reported from Greenwich Point June 10 (DB) and from Falkner Island July 20 (JSp). There were numerous sightings of one to four adult Black Skimmers at Milford Point through the period (m.ob.). Two birds were also reported from Griswold Point July 26 (JMa,JMo) and from Norwalk July 21 (JSt).

Although reports on cuckoos were mixed, and most likely tied to the presence of Gypsy moth caterpillars, it would appear that both species were scarce through much of the state this season. A dead Barn Owl was sighted along I-91, New Haven July 19 (MM). Perhaps this bird was one of a pair or a fledgling from a suspected nesting at the nearby New Haven landfill. A Long-eared Owl was on Falkner Island June 26-July 2 (JSp), a most unusual location and time of year for this species. A pair of Northern Saw-whet Owls, a rare nester in the state, were on territory throughout the period in Mohawk State Forest, Cornwall (DR). The status of Whip-poor-will continues to be of concern with few reports from across the state.

SWIFTS THROUGH KINGLETS

Over 200 Chimney Swifts were seen funnelling into a large brick chimney near the Maritime Center, South Norwalk June 1 (FM,CW). Red-bellied Woodpecker and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker continue to expand their nesting ranges in the state, the latter in the northwest hills. Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were reported in Cornwall June 25 (DR, et al.) and at Milford Point July 24 (CB). Acadian Flycatcher also continues to expand its breeding range. A singing male was in Canton June 3 (JKa) and nesting was confirmed in New Milford July 30 (JKf). An adult, full-plumaged Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was discovered at Bradley International Airport July 7 (PC,SC). The bird was seen by many and photographed. The sighting represents the fourth documented occurrence of this species in the state. The bird was not present the following day, but reappeared in the Mclean Game Refuge, Granby July 20 (DR,JMs,et al.) about five miles to the west. What was most likely the same bird, was reported a third and final time July 25 in Farmington (KM).

A new Purple Martin breeding colony was found in Sharon (DR,et al.) and two adults in Rowayton, Norwalk June 3 (FM,CW) suggested another possible nesting site. In spite of several new breeding colonies, Bank Swallows appear to be declining across the state, while Cliff Swallows increased with 45 colonies statewide (DR). A pair of adult Fish Crows with three juveniles was in Watertown throughout the period (RN), as this species continues to expand beyond the shore. Last winter's influx of Red-breasted Nuthatches carried over with several confirmations of nesting including four birds coming to a Simsbury feeder through the period (JMs). Winter Wrens were confirmed nesting in Southbury (RN) and Canton (JKa), but easily the most significant wren species of the season was Sedge Wren. The Sedge Wrens, first discovered in Goshen in May, were confirmed breeding (two to three males/pairs) and photographs of adults attending young were obtained (LBe,JKi). Carolina Wren continues to do well in the state in spite of last December's harsh weather. Two pairs of Golden-crowned Kinglets were confirmed nesting in Bloomfield (DR,et al.).

THRUSHES THROUGH FINCHES

The state's Eastern Bluebird population is now estimated at some 1200 pairs (DR), due in large part to habitat modification and the construction of nest boxes. Hermit Thrush continues to expand as a breeder in northern and western portions in the state. After several years of declining numbers, Brown Thrashers were reported as increasing in number. Last spring received accolades as one of the

best for warblers in recent memory. Excellent warbler reports continued into the summer season as well. There were several reports of Brewster's Warblers including a female paired with a Blue-winged Warbler in New Milford, feeding three fledged young July 1 (AD), and a second bird mated with a Golden-winged Warbler along Kent's famed River Road in early July, attending a nest with two chicks (JSt). The pair of Yellow-throated Warblers reported in May were seen carrying food in mid July along River Road in Kent (JKi,DR,et al.). This is the first confirmed nesting for this species in Connecticut, but unfortunately no photographs were obtained of this record. There is some concern over the future of Prairie Warblers in several areas. Birds have disappeared from many former sites, most likely due to habitat loss. Cerulean Warbler continues to expand as a breeder in the Housatonic Valley with new nesting confirmations in Sharon (JKf) and Kent (DR,DTr). Worm-eating Warbler was located at four different Mansfield sites June 24 (GC). A Kentucky Warbler was found during the Greenwich-Stamford June count June 17 in Fairchild Gardens, Greenwich (JZ). Singing Mourning Warblers were at Haley Farm State Park, Groton June 1 and on territory in Mohawk State Forest, Cornwall May 28 - June 29 (m.ob.). There are no breeding records for this species in the state. Yellow-breasted Chats were at Staples High School, Westport June 2 (FM) and off Rt. 156, Waterford, along a powerline cut (RSCB).

At least 10 pairs of Savannah Sparrows were in the Storrs area through June (RC). Although Bradley International Airport remains the state's primary nesting grounds for Grasshopper Sparrow with at least one bird July 7 (WB,GC,et al.), three males were in Storrs through the period (RC). Eastern Meadowlark was reported in low numbers throughout the region. A pair of Purple Finches was at Southbury Training School, Southbury June 3 (RN), and a singing first year male was in Pawcatuck July 1 (RSCB). Pairs of Pine Siskins were in Woodbury (RN), Litchfield and Winchester (DR). This species has been known to nest in Connecticut following winter invasions, although there were no breeding confirmations from these locations.

Observers; Contributors (boldface): Tom Baptist (TBa), **Charles Barnard, Jr.**, Louis Bevier (LBe), Doris Bova, Milan Bull, Tom Burke (TBu), Winnie Burkett, Paul Carrier, Seth Carrier, **George Clark, Jr.**, Connecticut Rare Bird Alert, **Robert Craig**, Julio de la Torre, Sue Dickson, Angela Dimmitt, Carl Ekroth, Richard English, **Jeff Fengler**, Paul Fusco, Hazel Guest, Ed Hagen, **Isabel Higgins**, Jay Kaplan (JKa), Jeanne Kauffman (JKf), Jeff Kirk (JKi), **Betty Kleiner**, Steve Kotchko, **Frank Mantlik**, Joyce Marshall (JMs), John Maynard

(JMa), Steve Mayo, Joe Morin (JMo), Kathy Murphy, Mark Mushkat, Russ Naylor, Fred Purnell, Records of Southeastern Connecticut Birds (RSCB), Sally Richards, Dave Rosgen, Michael Sparso, Jeff Spendelow (JSp), Jerry Stanley (JSt), David Titus (DTi), Dave Tripp (DTr), Connie Wood, Jeff Young, Joe Zeranski.

71 Gracey Road, Canton, CT 06019

FEBRUARY EAGLE

I watched you play
in air over the river,
mock-stooping on ducks.
Broad-winged, rowing upward
clear the ridge, start soaring.
Your primaries slotted,
let sky through feathered quills.
The Immelmann turn you just threw
across blue,
half loop then roll,
up-ended the valley and I standing in it
felt vertigo.
I lost you when you coasted a thermal
into high distance,
but you kept a fix on me.
At the peak of your tower,
folded elbows became one delta wing
hurtling down a long curve,
function of power,
leaving your thin almost feminine scream
behind in the zenith.

By Polly Brody

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THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

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Guide for Contributors

Preparation of Manuscripts:

The editors welcome submission of articles and notes for the *Connecticut Warbler*. Manuscripts should be typed double spaced on one side of the sheet only, with ample margins on all sides accompanied with an IBM disk, if possible. Style of the manuscript should follow general usage in recent issues. All manuscripts receive peer review.

Illustrations:

The editors welcome submission of line artwork of Connecticut and regional birds. Black and white photographs of particular interest will also be considered, but tend to print at less than optimum quality. Line art should be submitted as good-quality photographic prints or in original form. All originals and prints will be returned promptly after publication prints are made.

Winter 1991

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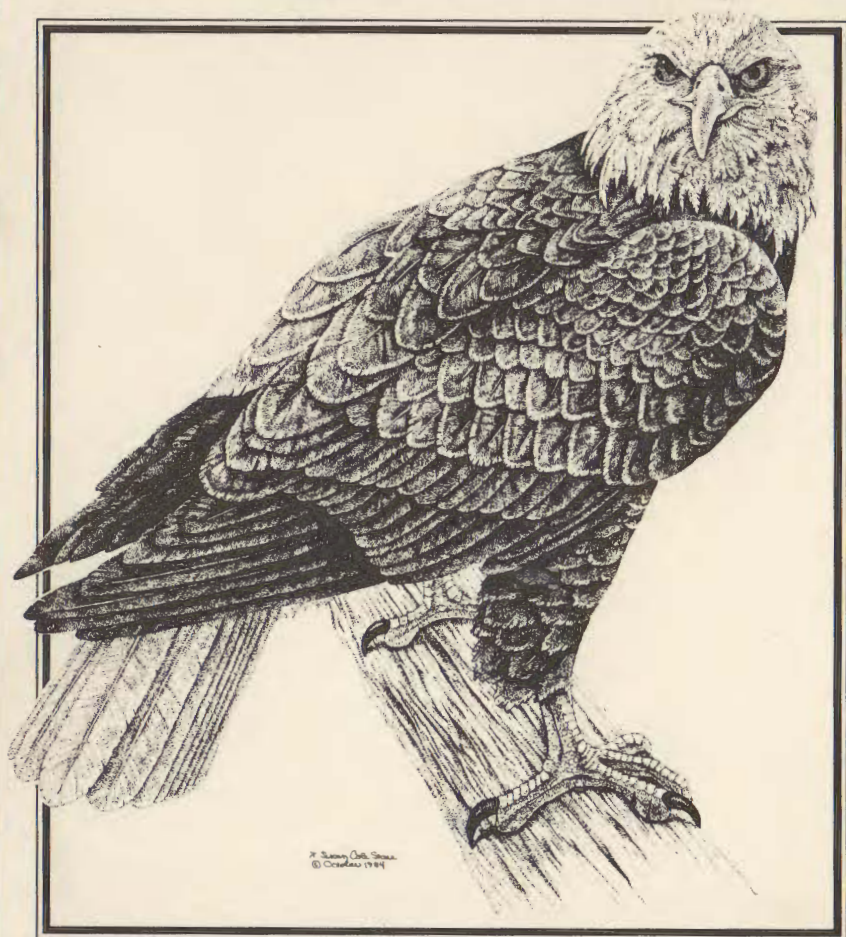
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ABOUT OUR COVER ARTIST

J. Susan Cole Stone

"Bald Eagle (Haliaeetus leucocephalus)"

Susan Cole Stone has been painting and drawing birds for 14 years. After studying illustration at Paier School of Art in New Haven, Conn., she began illustrating a weekly wildlife column for a Waterbury newspaper. She has since provided wildlife drawings and technical illustrations for publication by the Connecticut Arboretum, Thames Science Center, Mystic Marinelife Aquarium, Connecticut Sea Grant, and the National Undersea Research Center at the University of Connecticut. Working primarily in pen and ink and watercolor, Ms. Stone also specializes in architectural rendering. She presently resides in Rhode Island.

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

A NEW COA PROGRAM

To encourage summer bird counts (similar to the National Audubon Society's Christmas Bird Counts), *The Connecticut Warbler* will publish a compilation of the results of such counts to be held in June 1991. These counts will be held within established count circles and other appropriate locations. COA members are encouraged to participate in these counts. Unlike Christmas Bird Counts, which exact a steadily increasing fee from participants, the needed paperwork and publication costs of the summer counts will be absorbed by the COA as a service to the birding community. NO fees from participants will be required. It is anticipated that this activity will become both a popular tradition and an annual feature in "The Warbler".

A few ground rules should be kept in mind: 1) each count will be held within a continuous 48-hour period between Saturday, June 8 and Sunday, June 30, 1991; 2) nesting birds should *not* be disturbed, and extensive use of taped songs is prohibited; 3) only distinctly heard or clearly visible birds are to be counted, not presumed mates or nestlings; 4) the categories and criteria used by the Connecticut Breeding Bird Atlas - *possible*, *probable* and *confirmed* will be used in classifying the degree of verification of an unusual breeding report, which shall be substantiated by a compiler; and 5) the Connecticut Rare Records Committee will be consulted on reports of rare species.

COA's Summer Bird Count Committee will establish procedures, provide submission forms, coordinate the counts and edit the results. Submission packets will be sent to all current Christmas Bird Count Compilers. Interested birders should contact their Christmas Count leaders to encourage and support summer counts for existing circles or new areas. Those wishing to participate who have no local compiler and those seeking further information should contact Summer Bird Count chairpersons Winnie Burkett at (203) 429-3194 or Joe Zeranski at (203) 661-9607. The enthusiasm and dedication of Connecticut birders will insure that this undertaking will be a success. Good birding in June!

SUMMER BIRD COUNTS: THEIR IMPORTANCE AND APPLICATION

Joseph Zeranski

Summer Bird Counts should play an important role in our growing understanding of Connecticut's avian populations. These counts gather invaluable information and are interesting and fun. Intensive coverage during the peak of breeding can also produce exciting discoveries.

As far back as we can look into Connecticut's avian history, bird populations have been changing. Striking alterations in the distribution and abundance of nesting species have occurred even in the last half century (Zeranski and Baptist 1990). Turkey Vulture first nested in Connecticut in 1939, Northern Cardinal in 1942, Tufted Titmouse in 1949, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher in 1950, Northern Mockingbird in 1958, Red-bellied Woodpecker in 1962 and Cerulean Warbler about 1968. These species have all extended their nesting ranges northward into the state. Northern breeders moving south into the state include Dark-eyed Junco in 1922, Northern Waterthrush in 1932, Golden-crowned Kinglet and Magnolia Warbler, both by 1934, White-throated Sparrow and Yellow-rumped Warbler, both substantiated in the 1930's and Common Raven in 1987. Other species have substantially expanded their numbers and extended their ranges within the state.

A number of species, some of which were common nesters during the last century, have experienced pervasive declines. This is particularly true of marsh, meadow, grassland, open-field and young thicket birds. Among these are Upland Sandpiper, Yellow-breasted Chat, Vesper, Savannah and Grasshopper Sparrows. The numbers of both bitterns, inland rails, Northern Bobwhite, Common Nighthawk, Whip-poor-will, Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark have diminished. Northern Harrier, Short-eared Owl, Sedge Wren, Northern Parula and Henslow's Sparrow have either ceased nesting or are in danger of doing so. It is well known that many raptors have undergone great range decreases and later expansions during this period. Some have not recovered while others may yet be declining.

In many ways changes along the coast have been even more striking. Now a regular nester, Herring Gull first nested in Connecticut in 1943 and Great Black-backed Gull in 1961. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron nested in 1953, Snowy and Great Egrets by 1961. Tricolored Heron, Cattle Egret and Glossy Ibis all initially nested in 1971. More recently, first breedings were recorded for Gadwall in 1972, Double-crested Cormorant in 1979, American Oystercatcher in

1981, and Black Skimmer in 1982. A great many other species continue to undergo less dramatic, yet important changes in nesting range.

Occurring within such a relatively short span of time, such significant changes are remarkable. They mirror modifications in human activities and alterations in the environment, locally and globally. For example, the massive destruction of neotropical rain forests where many northeastern nesting birds winter, may have catastrophic effects on their populations. There is every reason to believe that such alterations will continue to occur in the future. In light of these changes it is imperative that baseline data on current breeding populations be collected. As witnesses to continuing and often significant alterations in nesting populations and ranges, we are obligated to chronicle them as they occur.

A practical method of sampling Connecticut's nesting populations over fairly large areas is to use the existing 15-mile diameter Christmas Bird Counts as models. The compilers and personnel who now conduct these popular counts are the natural nuclei for organizing equivalent summer counts. When two counts are conducted six months apart within the same area, they complement each other.

The Greenwich-Stamford, Woodbury-Roxbury, Storrs, and Westport Christmas Bird Counts have already initiated such summer counts within their respective circles. Of the two longest-running counts, Greenwich-Stamford has averaged 131 species and 46 observers per year during its 15-year history and recorded 193 species cumulatively, while Woodbury-Roxbury has averaged 121 species and 35 observers per year during its 13 years and recorded 156 species overall. These counts are not only shedding light on the relative abundance of various species within each circle, but on differences among regions. Over the years they will increasingly document range alterations and long-term population growths and declines (Hagen 1984, Palmer 1982).

Having conducted traditional Christmas Bird Counts for years, most Connecticut birders probably know far more about late December bird distribution than they do of the nesting season. Nesting numbers of most species are fairly consistent from year to year. Changes tend to be gradual. There are relatively few rare vagrants in June, so they normally play a less important role than they do on Christmas Bird Counts. When rarer nestings occur, the birds are on territories and usually can be relocated for confirmation without great difficulty.

To document range changes better it is important to determine which species actually nest within each circle. The vast majority of

birds are established breeders. The remainder may be divided into a) non-breeding visitors which regularly summer here (e.g. Ring-billed and Laughing Gulls), b) non-breeding visitors which nest nearby, but *outside* the count circle (these may include colonial nesters and hawks), c) lingering migrants which, for various reasons, have failed to migrate on time or at all, and d) potential nesters, who *may* nest within the circle, but are, at present, unconfirmed.

In addition to collecting valuable data, summer counts are popular activities. They challenge birders' field skills in ways that Christmas counts do not. Observers having or developing 'good ears' for bird songs have ample opportunities for utilizing and honing their skills. A June day has 75% more daylight hours than a December count day. The days are usually warm, but not too warm. It's a great time to be looking for birds. One summer count holds a picnic compilation in mid-afternoon. Afterwards, the compilers have sufficient time to follow up on reports of rare species and to verify unusual nestings.

A few summer count guidelines should be kept in mind. They are most effectively held sometime in June and before July when few migrants other than shorebirds remain. At this time most species are on nesting territories, and almost all male passerines are still singing. Even during this brief period, different approaches may be considered. In early June, singing is more vigorous, but more migrants are present to complicate the picture. The reverse is true at month's end. Coastal circles may best be covered earlier in the month, as nesting peaks there somewhat earlier than before it does in northern circles, whose counts may best be held later. Areas largely ignored in winter may be searched thoroughly in summer. Productive winter locations may be much less so in summer and deserve little attention. Summer counts, which rely heavily on singing males, are best covered on foot rather than by car. Thus, unlike Christmas counts, areas should be surveyed relatively slowly and intensively. Small field parties are often used to insure adequate circle coverage.

A two-day counting period provides greater flexibility in coverage and in scheduling field parties, especially during the critical early morning singing hours. It also reduces the likelihood that bad weather will result in insufficient or unrepresentative data for a particular year. As most birds are on nesting territories rather than travelling over large areas, systematically-conducted summer counts produce little duplicate counting, even over a 48-hour period.

It would be desirable for established Connecticut Christmas Bird Count groups to initiate summer counts. COA members should certainly enjoy participating and their contribution to our and their own knowledge of bird distribution during this often neglected

season will be meaningful.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Appreciation is extended to Winnie Burkett and Tom Baptist for reviewing early drafts of the article and suggesting valuable improvements, and to Louis Bevier for his help and advice.

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163 Field Point Rd., Greenwich, CT 06830

FIRST MABEL OSGOOD WRIGHT AWARD PRESENTED

On Saturday, March 16, 1991, the first Mabel Osgood Wright Award was presented to Mrs. Ann Gaylord of Niantic, Connecticut. The Connecticut Ornithological Association has created this award to be presented to someone who has contributed immeasurably to Connecticut ornithology, following in the tradition of Mable Osgood Wright, who was a leader in support of bird conservation, both in Connecticut and elsewhere, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The following is the presentation, as given by Julie Zickefoose, at the annual meeting of the C.O.A. at Quinnipiac College in Hamden:

Ann Gaylord had just turned six when she got her first bird book, *The Burgess Book of Birds*, by Thornton Burgess. The book, graced by Louis Fuertes' plates, is showing some wear, but on the title page, in the sure hand of a six-year-old who knew where she was headed, is a list of birds: Bull Finch, Burrow Owl, Song Sparrow, Slaty the Junco and beneath that, an inscription: "Wild Birds are our Friends. Thornton Burgess."

Thus began a lifetime spent in the company of friends—birds and the people who study them. "I'm not a professional at anything," Ann says. "But I do enjoy putting people together." That interest has led to decades of combined service on the boards of The Nature Conservancy, the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell, and the Thames Science Center, to name a few. Ann has a knack for seeing that good people are put to good use. Over the years, she and her late husband Harvey, former head of Bell Helicopter, have played host to twenty-

three "foster children," many of them researchers and conservationists, who have stayed at least three consecutive months in their home. Those who have been on the receiving end of Gaylord hospitality do not soon forget it, and Ann laughs that she almost never invites anyone—they just show up.

A longtime supporter of Helen Hays' tern research on Great Gull Island, Ann finds her Niantic garage filled with equipment, and guest rooms with hungry researchers each spring and fall as volunteers come on and off the island, and she has logged many hours among the terns herself. "There are now two pages of fine print, listing all the masters' and doctoral theses coming off that little island," Ann points out with pride.

Filmmakers Michael Male and Judy Feith, creators of NOVA's "Return of the Osprey," did much of their work on the film out of Ann's home, as well. Ann has seen to it that Osprey platforms (now twelve) were erected on The Nature Conservancy's Pattagansett Marsh Preserve near her home, and cheerfully fields requests from homeowners who want to emulate her success (nine of the platforms host Osprey pairs). It is clear that of the 1500+ species that crowd her life list, over almost four decades of birding in the Americas, Europe and Africa, Ospreys hold a special place in Ann's heart. She knows the Pattagansett birds personally, speaks of them as friends, worries for them when weather turns foul and predators threaten.

There is a sense of solicitude in everything Ann has done. She is passionate about encouraging research, but even more so about bringing children into an appreciation of the natural world. When first moving to Niantic, Ann was dismayed to find little treatment of natural sciences in area schools. "Between ages nine and twelve—that's the crucial time," she says, "while your brain is eager to absorb and before you take up with the opposite sex." To address the situation, Ann has sponsored eight teachers and principals from area schools to the Greenwich Audubon Camp, an immersion program for educators in the natural sciences. She has also supplied schools with equipment and educational materials about birds.

Much of what Ann Gaylord does could be called thankless work, short on recognition or glory. It is the labor of a person who cannot be content merely enjoying birds. She works to see that their habitats are preserved, and that upcoming generations recognize their responsibility to the natural world. As much as she loves birding, for Ann Gaylord it is a guilty pleasure. "Nothing's free in this world," Ann says. "You've got to pay for everything you get." For her steadfast support of research and conservation, for her untiring efforts to open others' eyes to birds and the need to protect them, we are proud to present Ann Gaylord with the first Mabel Osgood Wright Award.

Box 84, Hadlyme, CT 06439

THE 1990-91 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Stephen P. Broker

Christmas Bird Count season in Connecticut always brings its share of surprises, thrills, memorable tales, frustrations (usually with the weather), and insights into the changes that our bird populations necessarily experience. The 1990-91 go-around was no exception. Our state conducted 17 different counts for the fifth year in a row, including the count which straddles the New York - Connecticut border at Pawling and Hidden Valley.

A BTV (Birding Television) video highlight of this year's count would include elements of the following: warm but difficult weather conditions; good numbers of state rarities, including Black-and-white and Wilson's Warblers, Painted Bunting (more on this later) and Brewer's Blackbird; twice as many new 10-year species high counts as there were low counts statewide; remarkable efforts at Litchfield Hills and Salmon River for locating rarities and new species; continued population growth for those seven species identified last year as undergoing long term increase; continued decline of American Kestrel and Ruffed Grouse, but at least temporary reversal of decline for Virginia Rail, American Coot, Marsh Wren and Eastern Meadowlark; good numbers of most species of hawks; low numbers of winter finches yet again; the need for increased numbers of participants on Connecticut CBCs; best birder awards arguably going to a cat.

November was a warmer, drier month than usual, with warm fronts in the latter third of the month accounting for temperatures that were 10 to 25 degrees higher than in the previous year. Early December continued the period of unusual warmth, giving way to colder, more seasonable weather with the arrival of a cold front December 4-5. Subsequent cold fronts late in the second week of December and during December 25-27 were interspersed by warm fronts, making the month considerably warmer than the typical December. The first 10 days of count period enjoyed highs from the high 40s to the low 60s. The 10 counts held on the first weekend of the defined count period were 10-20 degrees warmer than last year's, and the five held in the last weekend of the period were similarly warmer. On all counts moving water was open and still water was open or partly frozen. Most of the record inland numbers for water related species were probably due to the unusual amount of open water.

However, many counts were bothered by difficult, sometimes

very difficult, weather conditions. The excellent weather which began the December 15 counts at New Haven, Woodbury-Roxbury and Storrs was replaced by light to heavy rains beginning late morning and lasting throughout the day. Ability to locate and identify birds was severely tested at this point. Storrs had icy roads, afternoon fog and rain. At Litchfield Hills the next day, "weather ranged from freezing rain to partly sunny." The Barkhamsted count (December 22) was conducted under conditions 30 degrees warmer than last year, but there was afternoon light rain and fog. Counts of the 29th and 30th experienced heavy rains and frustrated best laid plans.

While this did not prove to be an outstanding year for count results, it was certainly a very good one. Litchfield Hills led northern counts with its record high 85 Count Day species, with Hartford close behind at 82. Mid-state, Salmon River had a record shattering 89 Count Day and 2 Count Week species. New Haven had 123 Count Day species, a number believed to be high in New England. Regional totals for Connecticut were 111 CD + 3 CW in the north, 114 CD + 1 CW mid-state, 148 CD + 5 CW coastally, and 159 CD + 4 CW species statewide.

Counts with abundant field observers were New Haven (100) and Hartford (91), with Greenwich-Stamford (73), Westport (73), and Litchfield Hills (50) having strong showings. Feeder watchers are best organized in Hartford, Greenwich-Stamford, Barkhamsted and Westport, with the rest of us needing to pay more attention to this aspect of the count. Feeder watcher results can account for 10-20% of a species total for 20 or more species on any given count. Those counts exceeding 100 combined observers this year were Hartford, New Haven, Greenwich-Stamford and Westport, a remarkable accomplishment considering that fewer than 35 counts throughout the Americas can boast this level of participation.

Of species exhibiting 10 to 20 year trends of increasing numbers, all were in high or record setting numbers in 1990-91. Mute Swan shows significant spread into mid-state and northern count areas this year, though coastal numbers were down somewhat. Turkey Vulture, Red-bellied Woodpecker and Carolina Wren, all southern species, continue sizeable increases in numbers, vultures particularly mid-state and the latter two species throughout the state. Bald Eagle numbers, down somewhat from the last two years, are still at a level considerably better than pre-1985-86 numbers. Stocking of Wild Turkey has resulted in record numbers mid-state, though northern populations may have diminished somewhat. Eastern Bluebird is responding to conservation measures with steadily

growing numbers. As mentioned above, happier news about the current conditions of four wetland and grassland species is offset by the steady decline of kestrel and grouse populations.

Regionally, both northern and mid-state counts were characterized by many record ten year high counts for species and good numbers of rarities, while coastal counts had good numbers of high counts, very large numbers of record lows, and fewer rarities than in past years. In the 1989 CBC review article Fred Sibley proposed an explanation for the observed phenomenon of exceptional numbers of high counts in the interior of the state and of low counts on the coast (see CW 9(2): April 1989). The argument, which I won't attempt to repeat here - though it centers on our Christmas counts effectively measuring habitat loss coastally while measuring reproductive success inland - is an intriguing one, seemingly supported by this year's data, and requiring further analysis.

Let's take a walk through the 1990-91 CBC check-list, looking at the swirl of information and searching for emerging patterns. Loons to weaver finches, here goes. Red-throated Loon and Common Loon both were in high numbers coastally. Common Loon is a rarity for northern and mid-state counts. One was observed at Barkhamsted in the north, with the species being seen mid-state at Salmon River and Woodbury-Roxbury. Pied-billed Grebe was up in numbers, especially mid-state and coastally, but it remains well below totals of the mid-1980s and before. Horned Grebe was in somewhat below average numbers, but Red-necked Grebes at Greenwich-Stamford (1) and New London (2) tie the 10 year high. A count week Great Cormorant at Storrs is new to the northern counts. Three at Salmon River represent a rarity and a 10 year high mid-state. Great Cormorants were in high numbers coastally. Double-crested Cormorant at Litchfield Hills is a noteworthy northern sighting, and the Salmon River individual is a mid-state rarity. The coastal total was well below average, making the statewide total low also.

Four American Bitterns along the coast represent a 10 year high, continuing a several year observed comeback to earlier levels. Great Blue Heron was at record highs northern and mid-state and in high numbers coastally and overall. Great Egret, a rarity on Connecticut counts, was present in New London and Westport, tying the 10 year high count. Twenty three coastal Black-crowned Night-Herons represent average numbers.

The Mute Swan total of 1320 for this year is the lowest statewide total in the last 8 years. However, the increase in Mute Swan to record high numbers both in northern and mid-state regions (this year most seen at Litchfield Hills and Quinnipiac Valley) suggests that 20 years

of steady coastal proliferation are now being followed by significant expansion of non-coastal populations. Again, this might be due to the unusual amount of open water. Previous mid-state and northern highs of 194 and 6 are now replaced by 286 and 20, respectively. Mid-state counts first showed Mute Swans at a quantum increase on 1983-84 and 1984-85 counts, with Pawling (Hidden Valley), NY-CT accounting for the most significant new population. To addle or not to addle surely must be the question.

The 65 Snow Geese observed at Hartford and on 4 mid-state counts offset average numbers on the coast and resulted in a state-wide 10-year high. Brant was in record low numbers this year, with the 40 individuals counted in New London being the only reports of this goose. The two Connecticut counts that regularly report Brant are New London and Westport, and Westport missed the species for the first time in 14 years. The Atlantic winter range of Brant is from Maine to North Carolina, with peak numbers from New York south. Root (Atlas of Wintering North American Birds, 1988) describes Brant as using "basically the same wintering areas in roughly the same abundances year after year," as this is not a nomadic species. The 100 fold variation in numbers of Brant between its 10 year high and its 10 year low in Connecticut is most likely due to highly variable reproductive success on the extreme northern breeding grounds and to our region lying somewhat north of peak wintering areas and feeling the year to year fluctuations. Canada Goose numbers, in contrast, have been consistent and high for the past 6 years. This year, mid-state counts had a 10 year high count.

A Barnacle Goose was observed December 15 on the Salmon River count. This arctic species, which typically winters from the arctic to northern Europe and coastal Russia, is considered casual in North America from Labrador to New Brunswick. Individuals occasionally are seen as far south as the Carolina's. A hypothetical vagrant (Zeranski & Baptist 1990), Barnacle Goose may occur as a wild species in Connecticut. Most observations made thus far are believed to be of escapees from captivity.

Wood Duck is in great shape in Connecticut, with record highs northern, mid-state and statewide, and high numbers coastally. Overall, Green-winged Teal was in high numbers. Last year, American Black Duck was at a 10 year statewide low. Black Ducks were counted only in slightly higher numbers this year. In contrast, statewide numbers for Mallards have been quite consistent for the last 12 years. We're identifying and reporting more Mallard hybrids than ever before, 55 being this year's tally. Particular care should be taken on future counts in identifying a dabbler as a Mallard, a Black

Duck or both, so that we can collect useful information on the blending and blurring that appears well underway. Northern Pintail was in fairly high numbers, especially with the record 7 pintails reported from Hartford. The lone Blue-winged Teal of the 1990-91 count was seen at Westport. Four counts reported a total of 5 Northern Shovelers, a 10 year coastal and statewide high. Gadwall was in average numbers statewide. American Wigeon was at a 10 year low along the coast and well below average statewide.

Diving ducks exhibited as many winter population ups and downs as did dabblers. Many species were counted at average, below average or low numbers but some were at record highs. A mere 287 coastal Canvasbacks accounted for a record 10 year low, while 116 at Storrs were responsible for a northern record high for Canvasback. The Storrs count was an early one (Dec. 15), so low Connecticut numbers of Canvasback, which is known as a late migrant, cannot be attributed solely to their late winter arrival in the state. A breeder of freshwater marshes and prairie potholes of the American and Canadian west, this species is suffering from continued habitat loss. Two Redheads in Storrs (a northern rarity) and a New Haven Count Week species were the only reports of this *Aythya*. Ring-necked Duck was at a record high coastally and statewide, including a high total of 351 reported from Westport.

Rare sightings of Greater Scaup were made both northern and mid-state, and the species was at the second highest total statewide in 10 years. Though at record high numbers in the north, Lesser Scaup was on the low side overall. The only eider of this year's count was a King Eider at Old Lyme (CW), the third occurrence of this species in 10 years of Christmas Counts. Oldsquaw, the three scoters, Common Goldeneye and Bufflehead were at average or below average numbers. In contrast, the mergansers are coming! Hooded saw record or near record totals everywhere. Common was in low numbers coastally but in huge numbers in the interior. Red-breasted shattered all records coastally, and thus statewide. Eighty seven Ruddy Ducks at Pawling were the sole reason for a 10 year mid-state high.

Most falconiforms are experiencing steady or significant increases in the state. Turkey Vulture exceeded last year's record high this year, with mid-state and western coastal counts recording population strongholds. Sorry, no Black Vulture was seen on a count this year. Osprey was reported for the 8th time in 10 years, at Salmon River and New London (CW) this time around. Bald Eagle numbers were down from high counts of 1988-89 and 1989-90, but all 6 of the last CBCs show numbers considerably higher than in preceding

years. Northern Harrier numbers were far short of last year's record total, and they were below average overall. The accipiters were generally in high numbers, certainly true for Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks. Northern Goshawk was high only in the north. Of buteos, Red-shouldered Hawk paralleled goshawk in northern abundance only; Red-tailed was in average numbers statewide; Rough-legged followed last year's record high with a record low this year.

The last four years have seen appreciably fewer numbers of American Kestrel; the littlest falcon continues its prolonged slide downward, this year's low total being second only to that of last year. In contrast, Merlin and Peregrine Falcon, though rare or noteworthy species, continue to be seen in appreciable numbers.

While pheasants were in totally average numbers, Ruffed Grouse achieved a new ten year low. The total of 58 statewide represents a mere third of the previous 10 year average. Wild Turkeys were counted in near record numbers mid-state, where their numbers have been high only for the past three years. Significantly fewer turkeys were counted this year on the northern counts. Still, the statewide total is the 4th highest ever. Hartford's 26 Northern Bobwhite made for a 10 year high in the north. Average numbers were seen mid-state, and none were reported coastally; this not the normal situation.

Single Clapper Rails at New Haven and Old Lyme produced a below average total. A Virginia Rail at Pawling was a rarity. Twenty two coastally, including 12 Virginias at New London and 8 at Old Lyme, represented a good number, highest since the 1985-86 count. A Quinnipiac Valley Sora added a new species to the mid-state count list. American Coot numbers improved significantly over the two previous years, 137 being reported statewide. This at least temporarily reverses a recent decline in their numbers. Most notable this year were 64 coot at Litchfield Hills.

Recent CBC summaries have noted a decline in shorebird numbers. This year's data lend some additional support to such a view. Black-bellied Plover, Sanderling, Dunlin, Common Snipe and American Woodcock were all at average or below average numbers, Sanderling being comparatively higher than the rest. Ninety Ruddy Turnstone were a low count. Purple Sandpiper, uniform in numbers for the past 4 years, has seen an overall decline from the preceding years. In total contrast were Killdeer, which this year achieved record counts throughout the state, and Greater Yellowlegs with second highest count in 10 years. It should be noted that woodcock numbers mid-state were at a 10 year high.

Among the big three of gulls, Ring-billed were at slightly above

average numbers, due to comparatively high numbers on northern and mid-state counts; Herring was at a record low statewide and coastally, with low numbers in the interior; Great Black-backed was at a record high on northern counts but in average numbers statewide. The far less abundant gulls were well represented this year. Three Laughing Gulls at New Haven, present for some time before the count, were a statewide rarity and a new high. A Bonaparte's Gull in Woodbury-Roxbury added this species to the mid-state list, the CBC sighting being the first non-coastal one in the state in 13 years. The coastal count was a record high. Four state Iceland Gulls were an average count, as were 3 Glaucous Gulls; the Woodbury-Roxbury Glaucous was a regional rarity. A Lesser Black-backed Gull in Hartford was the third seen here in the last 5 years.

Both Rock Dove and Mourning Dove were at lower than average numbers, though more were seen than on last year's count. The Monk Parakeet total is nearly three times that of last year, then a record high. For the first time, Monk Parakeet was seen on the Stratford-Milford count, not surprising as the established population has been in the adjacent Westport count circle since 1985-86. Up, up and away with Monk Parakeet!

The majority of years have just one Barn Owl reported on Connecticut counts. This year New Haven had the only one to be observed. Eastern Screech-Owl was at a 10 year low, continuing a recent trend of reduced numbers. Great Horned Owl numbers were again below average, but they were half again as numerous as on the 1989-90 counts. Hartford had the only Snowy Owl to be reported, a CW individual. Barred Owl was at below average numbers statewide. Four mid-state Long-eared Owls were a record high in an otherwise average year for this species. A Lakeville- Sharon Short-eared Owl was a regional rarity, the first reported in the north in the last 9 years. Statewide they were in average numbers.

There were lots of Kingfishers, especially in the north. This was not a great woodpecker winter, except for the steady and continuous increase of Red-bellied Woodpecker throughout Connecticut. In six years this species has increased 3-5 fold, with greatest percentage increase taking place away from the coast. We usually get one or more Red-headed Woodpeckers each year; Greenwich-Stamford was the winner this year. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Northern Flicker were in average numbers, Pileated Woodpecker slightly above average, and Downy and Hairy Woodpecker at record lows. Just 2 years ago they were at record highs.

Eastern Phoebe at Quinnipiac Valley, New Haven and Westport extended the appearance of this species on CBCs to 9 straight years.

Horned Lark was at a 10 year low coastally and in 2nd lowest numbers throughout the state. Among corvids, Blue Jay and American Crow were in below average numbers, Fish Crow was observed on mid-state counts (Oxford, Quinnipiac Valley) just for the 2nd time in 10 years, and Common Raven was seen on a northern count for the fifth year in a row. Northwestern counts in Barkhamsted and Lakeville-Sharon are the only ones to have reported raven; this year Lakeville-Sharon made the observation.

Counts for passerines from titmice to starlings are as follows: Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Brown Creeper, House Wren (2 mid-state and 2 coastal), Golden-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, Gray Catbird and Northern Mockingbird were all counted in average numbers. Red-breasted Nuthatch was at a record high, particularly due to considerable numbers in the north. Carolina Wren broke all records yet again, increasing in numbers for the 8th straight year. While there are 4 times as many counted on the coast as mid-state, and 4 times as many mid-state as northern, all regions of Connecticut have seen tremendous increases in Carolina Wrens during this period. Winter Wren was in high numbers for the 3rd year in a row. Fifteen coastal Marsh Wrens represent a 5 year high. This was the third successive year of very high Eastern Bluebird numbers, with new highs in the north and coastally. Two Wood Thrushes, one at Greenwich-Stamford and one at Stratford-Milford, were a record high for this species, which very rarely occurs in Connecticut during winter. Brown Thrasher was slightly above average in numbers. American Pipit at Storrs was rare, and this species was in high numbers on the coast. Cedar Waxwing was in above average numbers. This was a big incursion year for Northern Shrike, 6 counts reporting a total of 7 shrikes, including Salmon River mid-state. Previous incursion years were in 1986-87 and 1978-79. Northern Shrike could be observed throughout winter at some locales. Though European Starling was in below average numbers and the 4th lowest in the last 10 years, this introduced species still accounts for nearly 1/3 of all half million or so individual birds observed on our counts. It hasn't gone away; it's just not quite so overwhelming as in previous years. Species in particularly low numbers were White-breasted Nuthatch, Ruby-crowned Kinglet and American Robin.

The wood warblers made news in equally irregular fashion. There weren't enough Yellow-rumped Warblers with which to butter one's bread, with record lows mid-state, coastally and statewide. Yellow-breasted Chat were in fewer numbers than the usual; Common Yellowthroats were at a high. But oh, the rarities! Orange-crowned

at New Haven (CW) and Stratford-Milford, has now been seen for the 3rd time in 10 years. Palm Warbler at Salmon River adds this species to the mid-state list, but the bird was outdone by a Salmon River Wilson's Warbler, last found in Connecticut in 1984-85 and the only other CBC record of the 10 year period. Best story of all concerns a Black-and-white Warbler which was "caught by a cat on 12/28 at Connecticut Arboretum and survived until 12/30." A statewide rarity, Black-and-white Warbler has been reported on a Connecticut count just three times in the last 10 years. Northern Cardinal was in average numbers. Of considerable interest is that Painted Bunting was seen for the second consecutive year (CW) at the same feeder in the same backyard at Old Lyme-Saybrook; clearly it's the same individual. This bird is either an escaped caged bird or that it has retraced its early winter wanderings some hundreds of miles both north and east of the expected route. Such site fidelity is highly unusual for a passerine species which doesn't belong north of Florida in the winter. The latter explanation requires a certain leap of faith. Any bets for next year?

And now the emberizines. Rufous-sided Towhee was in slightly above average numbers. American Tree Sparrow was in record low numbers throughout the state, especially coastally. Other sparrows at average or near average numbers were Field, Savannah, Fox, Swamp, White-throated and White-crowned. Three Pawling Chipping Sparrows were a mid-state rarity. Six New Haven and one Greenwich-Stamford Vesper Sparrows were a record high. Stratford-Milford reported the only 'Ipswich' Sparrows. Sharp-tailed Sparrow, always in low numbers, was missed coastally and thus in the state for the first time in 10 years. In absolute contrast to the above, Song Sparrow set a new 10 year high total. Juncos? Below average numbers. Lapland Longspur, four from Old Lyme-Saybrook were the only ones reported. Snow Bunting was in low numbers, but this is a highly variable species on Connecticut counts.

Among blackbirds, Red-winged and Rusty were counted in below average numbers, and Common Grackle and Brown-headed Cowbird established new 10 year lows coastally. Prime candidate for best bird of the count was a Brewer's Blackbird, described convincingly from the Stratford-Milford count. This western species, which is expanding its breeding range eastward from Indiana and Michigan, winters in the east from Georgia and South Carolina southward and is casual in New England. It is listed as hypothetical in Connecticut by the Rare Records Committee, but it is considered neither a full nor a hypothetical species in the state by Zeranski and Baptist (Connecticut Birds, 1990). The bird was seen by two experienced observers but

not photographed. This new sighting will strengthen the case for Brewer's Blackbird in Connecticut. The only previous CBC sighting of this species, was in Quinnipiac Valley in 1981-82.

Eastern Meadowlark experienced at least a temporary reversal in declining numbers, with 80 mid-state individuals being a 10 year high. Ninety five meadowlarks statewide were the highest total in 4 years. It was another poor year for winter finches, with Red Crossbill reported only at Litchfield Hills, Common Redpoll only from Lakeville-Sharon, Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch and Evening Grosbeak below average or in low numbers. Pine Grosbeak was not observed on any counts. House Sparrow was low coastally, below average statewide.

INDIVIDUAL COUNT SUMMARIES

The following paragraphs list each of the 17 State counts and provide basic information on the counts individually, by region (Northern, Mid-State and Coastal) and for the State as a whole. Data pertaining to 10 year results span the period 1981-82 (82nd Annual National Audubon Society CBC) through 1990-91 (91st Annual CBC). Barkhamsted held its 7th count this year; Edwin Way Teale-Trail Wood held its 5th.

Data are recorded as follows: Name of Christmas Bird Count (National Audubon Society / American Birds abbreviation for count); date of count; compiler(s); Count Day (CD) species + Count Week (CW) species (% of 10 year CD + CW total, then 10 year total for each); total individual birds counted; number of field observers + number of feeder watchers = total observers. New High Counts = species counted at 10 year highs. New Low Counts = species counted at 10 year lows. New Species = species recorded for the first time in the last 10 years. Rarities = species seen 4 or fewer times in the last 10 years. Other Noteworthy Species = species seen 5 or more times in the past 10 years, but still of special interest or significance. Species, subspecies or forms not seen in the last 10 years (since the 1980-81 count) and dropped from State, Regional, or Individual lists are given. Ten year highs and lows are also provided for numbers of species observed, total individuals counted, and count observers.

Count abbreviations: Barkhamsted (BA), Edwin Way Teale-Trail Wood (EW), Greenwich-Stamford (GS), Hartford (HA), Litchfield Hills(LH), Lakeville-Sharon (LS), New Haven (NH), New London (NL), Old Lyme-Saybrook (OL), Oxford (OX), Pawling (Hidden

Valley), NY-CT (PA), Quinnipiac Valley (QV), Stratford-Milford (SM), Salmon River (SR), Storrs (ST), Westport (WE), Woodbury-Roxbury (WR).

WHOLE STATE (17 Christmas Bird Counts): 159 CD + 4 CW species (% of 10 year total, 210 CD + 6 CW); 410,671 individuals; 690 field observers + 207 feeder watchers = 897 total observers. (10 year low).

New High Counts (23): Red-necked Grebe, American Bittern, Great Egret, Snow Goose, Wood Duck, Northern Shoveler, Ring-necked Duck, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Turkey Vulture, Cooper's Hawk, Killdeer, Laughing Gull, Monk Parakeet, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Wood Thrush, Northern Shrike, Common Yellowthroat, Vesper Sparrow, Song Sparrow. New Low Counts (12): Brant, Canvasback, Rough-legged Hawk, Ruffed Grouse, Herring Gull, Barn Owl, Eastern Screech-Owl, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Yellow-rumped Warbler, American Tree Sparrow, Sharp-tailed Sparrow (missed 1st time in 10 years). New Species (1): Barnacle Goose. Rarities (9): Great Egret, King Eider (CW), Laughing Gull, Wood Thrush, Orange-crowned Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler (CW), Wilson's Warbler, Painted Bunting (CW), Brewer's Blackbird. Other Noteworthy Species (2): Monk Parakeet, Common Raven. Species Dropped (5): Common Eider, Short-billed Dowitcher, Black Guillemot, Bohemian Waxwing, Black-headed Grosbeak.

NORTHERN CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS (BA, EW, HA, LHLS, ST): 111 CD + 3 CW species (76.5% of 10 year total, 146 CD + 3 CW species); 160,787 individuals; 220 field observers (10 year low) + 88 feeder watchers = 308 total observers.

New High Counts (23): Great Blue Heron, Mute Swan, Snow Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Northern Pintail, Canvasback, Greater Scaup, Lesser Scaup, Hooded Merganser, Cooper's Hawk, Northern Goshawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Northern Bobwhite, Killdeer, Great Black-backed Gull, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird, American Pipit, Northern Shrike. New Low Counts (3): Ruffed Grouse, Hairy Woodpecker, Rufous-sided Towhee. New Species (1): Great Cormorant (CW). Rarities (11): Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Redhead, Greater Scaup, Merlin, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Snowy Owl (CW), Short-eared Owl, American Pipit, Northern Shrike, Common Yellowthroat. Other Noteworthy Species (4): Double-crested Cormorant, Peregrine Falcon, Common Raven, Red Crossbill. Species Dropped (1): Varied Thrush.

BARKHAMSTED (BA-CT): Sat., Dec. 22. Compilers: David Rosgen & David Tripp, Jr. Totals: 63 CD + 0 CW species (67.7% of 7 year total, 92 CD + 1 CW species); 8248 individuals; 24 field observers + 32 feeder watchers (7 year high) = 56 total observers. New High Counts (11): American Black Duck, Greater Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Northern Goshawk, Ring-necked Pheasant, Herring Gull, Eastern Screech-Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Purple Finch. New Low Counts (11): Common Merganser, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel (missed 1st time in 7 years), Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey, Rock Dove, Great Horned Owl (missed 1st time in 7 years), American Tree Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, American Goldfinch. New Species (1): Common Loon. Rarities (defined here as those seen twice in 7 years) (6): Great Blue Heron, Greater Scaup, Bufflehead, Northern Harrier, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Shrike. Other Noteworthy Species (1): Carolina Wren.

EDWIN WAY TEALE-TRAIL WOOD (EW-CT): Sat., Dec 29. Compiler: Marilyn S. Higgins. Totals: 60 CD + 1 CW species (71.8% of 10 year total, 85 CD + 0 CW); 13,385 individuals (5 year high); 14 field observers + 2 feeder watchers = 16 total observers. New High Counts (32): Great Blue Heron, Mallard, Sharp-shinned Hawk, American Kestrel, Ruffed Grouse, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Mourning Dove; Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Horned Lark, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, Gray Catbird, Northern Mockingbird, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow. New Low Counts (4): American Black Duck, Common Merganser (missed 1st time in 5 years), Red-tailed Hawk, Hairy Woodpecker. New Species (5): Hooded Merganser, Eastern Screech-Owl, Great Horned Owl, Northern Shrike, Common Grackle. Rarities (defined here as those seen twice in 5 years) (6): Mute Swan, Red-shouldered Hawk, Killdeer, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Gray Catbird, Rufous-sided Towhee.

HARTFORD (HA-CT): Sat., Dec. 29. Compiler: Jay Kaplan. Totals: 82 CD + 2 CW species (63.6% of 10 year total, 131 CD + 1 CW species); 93,118 individuals; 91 field observers + 37 feeder watchers = 128 total observers. New High Counts (8): Snow Goose, Wood Duck, Northern Pintail, Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Northern Bobwhite, Great Horned Owl, Carolina Wren. New Low

Counts (8): Rough-legged Hawk, Herring Gull, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Gray Catbird, Field Sparrow. New Species (1): Wild Turkey. Rarities (8): Horned Grebe, Mute Swan, Northern Pintail, Merlin, Northern Bobwhite, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Snowy Owl (CW), Northern Shrike. Other Noteworthy Species (4): Snow Goose, Peregrine Falcon, Killdeer, Snow Bunting. Species Dropped (2): Varied Thrush (CW), Lapland Longspur.

LITCHFIELD HILLS (LH-CT): Sun., Dec 16. Compiler: Ray Belding. Totals: 85 CD + 0 CW species (74.6% of 10 year total, 112 CD + 2 CW species); 20,475 individuals; 50 field observers + 3 feeder-watchers = 53 total observers. New High Counts (21): Great Blue Heron, Mute Swan, Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Gadwall, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Bald Eagle, Cooper's Hawk, Northern Goshawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Great Black-backed Gull, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Gray Catbird, Red-winged Blackbird, Rusty Blackbird, Common Grackle, Red Crossbill. New Low Counts (3): Ring-necked Pheasant (missed 1st time in 10 years), Ruffed Grouse, Purple Finch. New Species (2): Killdeer, Northern Shrike. Rarities (21): Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Mute Swan, Wood Duck, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Canvasback, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Ruddy Duck, Northern Harrier, Cooper's Hawk, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Carolina Wren, Winter Wren, Common Yellowthroat, White-crowned Sparrow, Snow Bunting, Rusty Blackbird, Red Crossbill. Other Noteworthy Species (6): Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Northern Goshawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Great Black-backed Gull, Gray Catbird. Species Dropped (1): Merlin.

LAKEVILLE-SHARON (LS-CT): Sun., Dec. 16. Compiler: Robert Moeller. Totals: 65 CD + 1 CW species (61.1% of 10 year total, 104 CD + 4 CW species); 11,450 individuals; 23 field observers + 11 feeder watchers = 34 total observers. New High Counts (8): Mute Swan, Hooded Merganser, Rough-legged Hawk, Ring-necked Pheasant, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Eastern Bluebird, House Finch. New Low Counts (8): American Kestrel, Rock Dove, Downy Woodpecker, Horned Lark, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-throated Sparrow, House Sparrow. New Species (3): Snow Goose, Lesser Scaup, Short-eared Owl. Rarities (3): Mute Swan, Wood Duck, Common Raven. Other Noteworthy Species (1): White-crowned Sparrow (CW). Species Dropped (1): Rufous-sided Towhee.

STORRS (ST-CT): Sat., Dec. 15. Compiler: Winifred Burkett.

Totals: 65 CD + 2 CW species (62.0% of 10 year total, 105 CD + 3 CW species); 14,111 individuals; 18 field observers + 3 feederwatchers = 21 total observers. New High Counts (12): American Black Duck, Canvasback, Redhead, Common Merganser, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Bluebird, American Pipit, European Starling, White-crowned Sparrow. New Low Counts (8): Mallard, Mourning Dove, Hairy Woodpecker, Brown Creeper, Song Sparrow, Purple Finch, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow. New Species (1): Northern Shrike. Rarities (13): Snow Goose, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Northern Goshawk, Wild Turkey (CW), Killdeer, Common Snipe, Iceland Gull, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Winter Wren, American Pipit, White-crowned Sparrow. Other Noteworthy Species (1): Red-shouldered Hawk. Species Dropped (1): Rough-legged Hawk.

MID-STATE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS (OX, PA, QV, SR, WR): 114 CD (10 year high) + 1 CW species (75.2 % of 10 year total, 152 CD + 1 CW species); 76,901 individuals; 124 field observers + 16 feeder watchers = 140 total observers (10 year low). New High Counts (22): Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Great Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Mute Swan, Snow Goose, Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Green-winged Teal, Greater Scaup, Common Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Turkey Vulture, Killdeer, American Woodcock, Long-eared Owl, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Fish Crow, Carolina Wren, Common Yellowthroat, Chipping Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark. New Low Counts (7): Mallard, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Ruffed Grouse, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, White-breasted Nuthatch, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Pine Siskin. New Species (5): Barnacle Goose, Sora, Bonaparte's Gull, Palm Warbler, Wilson's Warbler. Rarities (12): Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Great Cormorant, Double-crested Cormorant, Snow Goose, Greater Scaup, Osprey, Merlin (CW), Virginia Rail, Glaucous Gull, Fish Crow, Chipping Sparrow. Other Noteworthy Species (4): Green-winged Teal, Gadwall, Lesser Scaup, Northern Shrike. Species Dropped (1): Chukar (CW).

OXFORD (OX-CT): Sun., Dec. 16. Compiler: Buzz Devine. Totals: 64 CD + 0 CW species (60.4% of 10 year total, 106 CD + 0 CW species); 7926 individuals; 21 field observers + 1 feeder watcher = 22 total observers. New High Counts (7): Common Goldeneye, Turkey Vulture, Ring-necked Pheasant, Killdeer, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird. New Low Counts (6): Mallard, Mourning Dove, Eastern Screech-Owl, Great Horned Owl, White-breasted Nuthatch, Northern Mockingbird. New Species (2): Long-eared Owl, Common Yellowthroat. Rarities (7): Common Goldeneye, Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Cooper's Hawk, Killdeer, Fish

Crow, Common Grackle. Other Noteworthy Species (2): Winter Wren, Red-winged Blackbird. Species Dropped (2): Wood Duck, Snow Bunting.

PAWLING (HIDDEN VALLEY) NY-CT (PA-NY): Mon., Dec. 31. Compiler: Sibyll Gilbert. Totals: 88 CD + 1 CW species (79.5% of 10 year total, 109 CD + 3 CW species); 17,152 individuals; 22 field observers + 11 feeder watchers = 33 total observers. New High Counts (18): Great Blue Heron, Canada Goose, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Cooper's Hawk, Ring-billed Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Rock Dove, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Black-capped Chickadee, Carolina Wren, Chipping Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird. New Low Counts (0). New Species(3): Horned Grebe, Green-winged Teal, Virginia Rail. Rarities(13): Snow Goose, Lesser Scaup, Red-shouldered Hawk, Northern Bobwhite, Barred Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl (CW), Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Horned Lark, Rufous-sided Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark. Other Noteworthy Species (6): Pied-billed Grebe, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, Bald Eagle, Cooper's Hawk, Fox Sparrow. Species Dropped (0).

QUINNIPIAC VALLEY (QV-CT): Sun., Dec. 16. Compiler: Wilford Schultz. Totals: 76 CD + 1 CW species (64.2% of 10 year total, 116 CD + 4 CW species); 19,446 individuals; 10 field observers (10 year low) + 2 feeder watchers (10 year low) = 12 total observers (10 year low). New High Counts (12): Great Blue Heron, Mute Swan, Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Wild Turkey, American Woodcock, Northern Flicker, Carolina Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Eastern Meadowlark. New Low Counts (5): Herring Gull, Hairy Woodpecker, American Robin, Common Grackle (missed 1st time in 10 years), House Sparrow. New Species (4): Merlin (CW), Sora, Eastern Phoebe, Fish Crow. Rarities (8): Snow Goose, Wood Duck, Ring-necked Duck, Northern Goshawk, Wild Turkey, Pileated Woodpecker, Carolina Wren, White-crowned Sparrow. Other Noteworthy Species (2): American Wigeon, American Woodcock. Species Dropped (0).

SALMON RIVER (SR-CT): Sun., Dec. 16. Compiler: David A. Titus. Totals: 89 CD + 2 CW species (72.2% of 10 year total, 124 CD + 2CW species); 12,566 individuals; 36 field observers + 2 feeder-watchers = 38 total observers. New High Counts (17): Great Cormorant, Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Bufflehead, Common Merganser, Red-tailed Hawk, Killdeer, Eastern Screech-Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, American Crow, Black-capped

Chickadee, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Northern Mockingbird, Savannah Sparrow, Song Sparrow. New Low Counts (5): American Kestrel, Ruffed Grouse, Rock Dove, Barred Owl (missed 1st time in 10 years), Yellow-rumped Warbler. New Species (6): Barnacle Goose, Gadwall, Greater Scaup, Osprey, Palm Warbler, Wilson's Warbler. Rarities(16): Common Loon, Great Cormorant, Double-crested Cormorant, Snow Goose (CW), Wood Duck, Green-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, Bufflehead, Wild Turkey, Killdeer, Northern Saw-whet Owl, House Wren, Northern Shrike, Common Yellowthroat, Savannah Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark. Other Noteworthy Species (3): Ring-necked Duck, American Woodcock, Ruby-crowned Kinglet. Species Dropped(0).

WOODBURY-ROXBURY (WR-CT): Sat., Dec. 15. Compiler: Mark Szantyr. Totals: 79 CD + 2 CW species (64.8% of 10 year total, 121 CD + 4CW species); 19,811 individuals; 35 field observers + 0 feederwatchers = 35 total observers. New High Counts (9): Great Blue Heron, Snow Goose, Common Merganser, Wild Turkey, Long-eared Owl, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Swamp Sparrow, Common Grackle. New Low Counts (13): Sharp-shinned Hawk, Ruffed Grouse, Rock Dove, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, European Starling, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Field Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, House Sparrow. New Species (4): Common Loon, Greater Scaup, Bonaparte's Gull, Glaucous Gull. Rarities (6): Pied-billed Grebe, Snow Goose, Wild Turkey, Killdeer, House Wren, Common Yellowthroat. Other Noteworthy Species (2): Wood Duck, Long-eared Owl. Species Dropped (0).

COASTAL CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS (GS, NH, NL, OL, SM, WE): 148 CD +5 CW species (74.6 % of 10 year total, 199 CD + 6 CW species); 172,983 individuals; 346 field observers + 103 feeder watchers = 449 total observers. New High Counts (20): Red-necked Grebe, American Bittern, Great Egret, Northern Shoveler, Ring-necked Duck, Hooded Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Killdeer, Laughing Gull, Monk Parakeet, Eastern Phoebe, Carolina Wren, Winter Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Wood Thrush, American Pipit, Vesper Sparrow, Song Sparrow. New Low Counts (17): Brant, American Wigeon, Canvasback, Rough-legged Hawk, Herring Gull, Eastern Screech-Owl, Hairy Woodpecker, Horned Lark, White-breasted Nuthatch, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, American Robin, Yellow-rumped Warbler, American Tree Sparrow, Sharp-tailed Sparrow (missed 1st time in 10 years), Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, House Sparrow. New Species (2): Wood Thrush, Brewer's Blackbird. Rarities (6): Great Egret, King Eider

(CW), Laughing Gull, Orange-crowned Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler (CW), Painted Bunting (CW). Other Noteworthy Species (4): Osprey, Monk Parakeet, Eastern Phoebe, Vesper Sparrow. Species Dropped (6): Common Eider, Short-billed Dowitcher, Black Guillemot, Bohemian Waxwing, Black-headed Grosbeak, Yellow-headed Blackbird (CW).

GREENWICH-STAMFORD (GS-CT): Sun., Dec. 16. Compilers: Thomas Baptist, Canfield Clark and Gary Palmer. Totals: 108 CD + 2 CW species (67.9% of 10 year total, 162 CD + 0 CW species); 31,803 individuals; 73 field observers (10 year low) + 36 feeder watchers (10 year low) = 109 total observers (10 year low). New High Counts (10): Hooded Merganser, Turkey Vulture, Cooper's Hawk, Virginia Rail, Greater Yellowlegs, Ruddy Turnstone, Bonaparte's Gull, Barred Owl, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren. New Low Counts (17): Lesser Scaup, Common Merganser, American Kestrel, Ring-necked Pheasant, Dunlin, Herring Gull, Eastern Screech-Owl, Great Horned Owl, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Field Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle. New Species (1): Wood Thrush. Rarities (5): Virginia Rail, Red-headed Woodpecker, Common Yellowthroat (CW), Chipping Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow. Other Noteworthy Species (2): Red-necked Grebe, Cooper's Hawk. Species Dropped (2): Short-billed Dowitcher, Lark Sparrow.

NEW HAVEN (NH-CT): Sat., Dec. 15. Compilers: Stephen P. Broker and Frank Gallo. Totals: 123 CD + 5 CW species (75.3% of 10 year total, 166 CD + 4 CW species); 40,497 individuals (10 year low); 100 field observers + 16 feeder watchers (10 year high) = 116 total observers (10 year high). New High Counts (18): Red-throated Loon, Common Loon, Great Blue Heron, Green-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, Hooded Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Black-bellied Plover, Laughing Gull, Bonaparte's Gull, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Vesper Sparrow, Song Sparrow. New Low Counts (9): Canvasback, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Horned Lark, Yellow-rumped Warbler, American Tree Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird. New Species (0). Rarities (8): Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon (CW), Wild Turkey, Laughing Gull, Eastern Phoebe, House Wren, Orange-crowned Warbler (CW), Vesper Sparrow. Other Noteworthy Species (2): Northern Shoveler, Greater Yellowlegs. Species Dropped (7): Lesser Black-backed Gull (CW), Black Guillemot, Bohemian Waxwing, Pine Warbler, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Black-headed Grosbeak, Pine Grosbeak.

NEW LONDON (NL-CT): Sat., Dec. 29. Compiler: Robert Dewire. Totals: 111 CD + 6 CW species (76.5% of 10 year total, 150 CD + 3 CW species); 24,187 individuals; 22 field observers (10 year low) + 10 feeder watchers = 32 total observers. New High Counts (26): Wood Duck, American Black Duck, Mallard, Ring-necked Duck, Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Virginia Rail, Killdeer, Ruddy Turnstone, Great Black-backed Gull, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Blue Jay, Carolina Wren, Winter Wren, Marsh Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, Gray Catbird, Northern Mockingbird, Brown Thrasher, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow-breasted Chat, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Snow Bunting. New Low Counts (9): Pied-billed Grebe, Mute Swan, Surf Scoter, Red-tailed Hawk, Ruffed Grouse (missed 1st time in 10 years), American Coot, Purple Sandpiper, Hairy Woodpecker, Yellow-rumped Warbler. New Species(6): Red-necked Grebe, Great Egret, Northern Shoveler, Osprey (CW), Iceland Gull, Black-and-white Warbler (CW). Rarities (6): Bald Eagle (CW), Greater Yellowlegs (CW), Common Snipe, Eastern Bluebird, Common Yellowthroat, White-crowned Sparrow. Other Noteworthy Species (4): Lesser Scaup, Ring-necked Pheasant, American Pipit, Snow Bunting. Species Dropped (1): Yellow-headed Blackbird (CW).

OLD LYME-SAYBROOK (OL-CT): Sun., Dec. 30. Compiler: Jay Hand. Totals: 94 CD + 9 CW species (65.4% of 10 year total, 153 CD + 3 CW species); 10,991 individuals; 40 field observers + 7 feeder watchers = 47 total observers. New High Counts (8): American Bittern, Ruddy Duck, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Carolina Wren, Winter Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird. New Low Counts (21): Red-throated Loon, Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Great Cormorant, Double-crested Cormorant (CW), Great Blue Heron, Canada Goose, American Black Duck, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Ruffed Grouse (missed first time in 10 years), Dunlin, Rock Dove, Horned Lark, American Crow, Common Grackle, Purple Finch (missed first time in 10 years). New Species (2): Northern Shoveler, King Eider (CW). Rarities (2): Northern Goshawk (CW), Painted Bunting(CW). Other Noteworthy Species (7): American Bittern, Gadwall, Ruddy Duck, Clapper Rail, Short-eared Owl, Lapland Longspur, Snow Bunting (CW). Species Dropped (2): Common Eider, Red-headed Woodpecker.

STRATFORD-MILFORD (SM-CT): Thurs., Dec. 27. Compilers: Steve Mayo and Fred Sibley. Totals: 99 CD + 2 CW species (60.8% of 10 year total, 165 CD + 1 CW species); 22,238 individuals; 38 field observers + 2 feeder watchers = 40 total observers. New High Counts

(12): Snow Goose, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Red-breasted Merganser, Brown Creeper, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Cedar Waxwing, Chipping Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow. New Low Counts (4): Herring Gull, Great Horned Owl, Rusty Blackbird (missed 1st time in 10 years), Brown-headed Cowbird (missed 1st time in 10 years). New Species (3): Monk Parakeet, Wood Thrush, Brewer's Blackbird. Rarities (8): Snow Goose, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, Long-eared Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, Orange-crowned Warbler, Chipping Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow. Other Noteworthy Species (2): Cooper's Hawk, Ruffed Grouse. Species Dropped (2): King Rail, Red-headed Woodpecker.

WESTPORT (WE-CT): Sun., Dec. 16. Compiler: Frank W. Mantlik. Totals: 116 CD + 1 CW species (70.5% of 10 year total, 161 CD + 5 CW species); 43,267 individuals; 73 field observers + 32 feederwatchers = 105 total observers. New High Counts (17): Great Cormorant, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Wood Duck, Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Turkey Vulture, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Northern Goshawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Killdeer, Monk Parakeet, Short-eared Owl, American Crow, Carolina Wren, Chipping Sparrow. New Low Counts (6): Brant (missed 1st time in 10 years), American Kestrel, Black-bellied Plover, Brown Creeper, Yellow-rumped Warbler, American Tree Sparrow. New Species/Forms (4): Great Egret, Snow Goose (blue form), Blue-winged Teal, Eastern Phoebe. Rarities (8): American Bittern, Northern Shoveler, Lesser Scaup, Glaucous Gull, Short-eared Owl, House Wren, Palm Warbler, Chipping Sparrow. Other Noteworthy Species (3): Cooper's Hawk, Merlin, Monk Parakeet. Species Dropped (2): Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Lincoln's Sparrow.

76 Diamond Street
New Haven, CT 06515-1313

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SPECIES \ SITES	NORTHERN						MID-STATE					COASTAL						TOTAL
	BA	EW	HA	LH	LS	ST	OX	PA	QV	SR	WR	GS	NH	NL	OL	SM	WE	
RED-THROATED LOON												5	13	6	4	11	3	42
COMMON LOON	1									1	1	6	12	22	1	2	4	50
PIED-BILLED GREBE				1					2		3	4	10	1	1	3	7	32
HORNED GREBE			1						2			12	29	73	3	23	42	185
RED-NECKED GREBE												1		2				3
GREAT CORMORANT						CW				3		121	78	63	1	22	48	336
D-C CORMORANT				1						1		4	2	49	CW	CW	5	62
CORMORANT, SP.															1			1
AMERICAN BITTERN													1				1	4
GREAT BLUE HERON	1	15	13	6	1	2	1	4	7	6	5	26	29	59	7	24	54	260
GREAT EGRET														1				1
B-C NIGHT-HERON												4	2	6		9	2	23
MUTE SWAN		1	1	12	6		34	56	85	93	18	81	330	416	41	32	114	1320
SNOW GOOSE			65	1	7	1		1	1	CW	2	2	2			4		86
SNOW GOOSE, BLUE																	2	2
BRANT														40				40
BARNACLE GOOSE										1								1
CANADA GOOSE	352	750	3891	3954	4714	2809	397	2369	1896	598	2660	3524	1183	590	308	1199	3769	34963
CANADA GOOSE, SM										2								2
WOOD DUCK			5	4	1				2	2	2	77	1	3			11	108
GREEN-WINGED TEAL			1						2		1	5	79	8		8	3	107
AM. BLACK DUCK	40	34	146	57	62	103	24	55	30	179	88	808	1301	870	150	1196	1123	6266
MALLARD	456	298	1765	665	358	328	152	201	424	294	387	2082	1131	1419	513	1142	1095	12710
MALLARD HYBRID											4	7	37			2	5	55
NORTHERN PINTAIL			7							1		3	17	5	1		2	36
BLUE-WINGED TEAL																	1	1
NORTHERN SHOVELER													1	1	2		1	5

SPECIES \ SITES	NORTHERN						MID-STATE					COASTAL						TOTAL
	BA	EW	HA	LH	LS	ST	OX	PA	QV	SR	WR	GS	NH	NL	OL	SM	WE	
GADWALL				3						1		8	73	67	2	55	41	250
AMERICAN WIGEON				22					1			60	108	58		38	76	363
CANVASBACK				1		116				9		2	10	130	CW	139	6	413
REDHEAD						2							CW					2
RING-NECKED DUCK	4			8		26		13	6	75	7	241	19	48	20	9	351	827
GREATER SCAUP	5									2	1	38	10770	142	2	1916	400	13276
LESSER SCAUP				7	5			1				1	45	CW		1	CW	60
KING EIDER															CW			0
OLDSQUAW												199	135	10		65	130	539
BLACK SCOTER														6				6
SURF SCOTER													7	25			3	35
WH-WINGED SCOTER												1	31	6	1	27	110	176
SCOTER, SP.													35					35
COMMON GOLDENEYE	8	6		19	26	3	8	13		14		102	154	216	47	596	100	1312
BUFFLEHEAD	1							3		10		273	42	604	44	82	188	1247
HOODED MERGANSER	8	2		39	10	2		26		2		267	46	273	8	6	89	778
COMMON MERGANSER	5		59	656		55	39	2977	138	394	792	43	97	62	35	28	28	5408
RED-BR MERGANSER												236	210	1232	89	401	206	2374
RUDDY DUCK				3				87				3	1		7		14	115
DUCK, SP.		9			10													19
TURKEY VULTURE				2			3	23	15	1	60	26	1				24	155
OSPREY										1				CW				1
BALD EAGLE	3		1	3			1	2		6	5		2	CW	1			24
NORTHERN HARRIER	1	CW	3	1	4			1	3				7	6	7	11	2	46
SH-SHINNED HAWK	1	2	10	5	2	1	1	2	2	3	CW	12	16	9	5	3	14	88
COOPER'S HAWK			4	3	3		1	3	2	CW		5	3		CW	2	4	30
NORTHERN GOSHAWK	2			3		1			1		1	1			CW		2	11
ACCIPITER, SP.				1	1								1					4
RED-SH HAWK		1	5	1		1		1		1		1	2		1		5	19
RED-TAILED HAWK	6	4	73	41	28	12	25	34	42	33	25	60	59	10	7	33	36	528

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SPECIES \ SITES	NORTHERN						MID-STATE					COASTAL						TOTAL
	BA	EW	HA	LH	LS	ST	OX	PA	QV	SR	WR	GS	NH	NL	OL	SM	WE	
ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK			1		3								CW			1		5
BUTEO, SP.				1														1
AMERICAN KESTREL		4	14		2	2	1	1	13	1	3	1	10	4	1	7	1	65
MERLIN			1						CW							1	1	3
PEREGRINE FALCON			1										CW			1		2
R-N PHEASANT	4		12		17	2	6	4	8	10	7	10	5	1	1	5	35	127
RUFFED GROUSE	2	3	3	5	5	1	5	5	4	7	5	5	5			1	2	58
WILD TURKEY	9		3	27	58	CW		55	6	4	12		3					177
NORTHERN BOBWHITE			26					1		6								33
CLAPPER RAIL													1		1			2
VIRGINIA RAIL								1				2		12	8			23
SORA									1									1
AMERICAN COOT				64	24			26				4	4	3			12	137
BLK-BLD PLOVER												5	13	28	2		4	52
KILLDEER		1	3	2		1	9			6	1	16	31	14	1	14	45	144
GR. YELLOWLEGS												2	5	CW			8	15
RUDDY TURNSTONE												11	CW	27	50		2	90
SANDERLING													39		46	146	35	266
PURPLE SANDPIPER												51	86	13	3			153
DUNLIN												9	175	72	48	521	204	1029
COMMON SNIPE		1			1	2		1	2		3		13	1	1			25
AM. WOODCOCK									3	1		3	4	CW	2	CW		13
LAUGHING GULL													3					3
BONAPARTE'S GULL										1		126	141	6	12	3	17	306
RING-BILLED GULL	93	125	1010	648	144	107	285	3432	840	1202	892	2703	2608	1185	455	2789	1339	19857
HERRING GULL	366	2390	1641	250	33	255	777	805	537	1094	2205	1480	3528	4479	731	2613	5954	29138
ICELAND GULL			2			1									1			4

SPECIES \ SITES	NORTHERN						MID-STATE					COASTAL					TOTAL	
	BA	EW	HA	LH	LS	ST	OX	PA	QV	SR	WR	GS	NH	NL	OL	SM		WE
LESSER BL-BK GULL			1															1
GLAUCOUS GULL										1			1					1
GREAT BL-BK GULL	20	505	327	17		68	68	148	42	213	43	104	470	838	100	302	201	3466
GULL, SP.					77	13												90
ROCK DOVE	194	220	1212	259	225	735	145	368	856	81	161	861	776	442	154	740	527	7956
MOURNING DOVE	346	380	1080	552	515	284	63	280	678	276	472	612	767	352	427	380	471	7935
MONK PARAKEET																9	186	195
BARN OWL													1					1
E. SCREECH-OWL	5	1	12	11	3		8	3	45	11	30	34	14	3	6	5	12	203
GREAT HORNED OWL		5	14	4	4	2	1	4	8	7	30	8	20	7	9	1	7	131
SNOWY OWL			CW															0
BARRED OWL	4	1	1	3		1		1	1		5	3	1	3	2		1	27
LONG-EARED OWL							2				2		2	1		1		8
SHORT-EARED OWL					1										CW	1	3	5
N. SAW-WHET OWL	7			1	1	4		CW		1	4	CW		6	3			27
B. KINGFISHER	12	4	13	11	5	5	8	11	9	13	18	23	20	34	28	13	27	254
RED-HD WOODPECKER												1						1
RED-BL WOODPECKER	2	18	11	9	6	25	3	17	6	35	15	49	9	13	12	6	38	274
YEL-BLD SAPSUCKER			CW					2				3	6	2	8		2	23
DOWNY WOODPECKER	69	73	189	111	70	78	42	133	43	94	107	180	125	71	80	86	156	1707
HAIRY WOODPECKER	16	6	29	27	17	20	13	27	5	19	20	28	24	9	15	14	30	319
NORTHERN FLICKER	1	16	13	5	5	15	12	17	41	36	18	20	51	37	33	36	24	380
PIL. WOODPECKER	6		1	7	3			8	1	1	4	10	4			2	5	52
EASTERN PHOEBE									1				1				1	3
HORNED LARK		72	87	92	71	124		15	14		147		3	21	14	34	4	698
BLUE JAY	377	620	517	770	377	514	187	336	220	498	595	286	325	623	246	165	217	6873
AMERICAN CROW	437	391	8733	2652	495	319	797	505	1239	604	3112	1580	1531	567	273	980	4713	28928
FISH CROW			3				1		3			3	49			24	6	89
COMMON RAVEN					1													1
BLK-CP CHICKADEE	1556	648	969	1398	485	600	328	958	414	1056	814	1129	733	784	797	311	659	13639
TUFTED TITMOUSE	196	321	418	247	85	225	134	215	109	377	214	367	215	149	308	103	289	3972

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SPECIES \ SITES	NORTHERN						MID-STATE					COASTAL					TOTAL	
	BA	EW	HA	LH	LS	ST	OX	PA	QV	SR	WR	GS	NH	NL	OL	SM		WE
RED-B NUTHATCH	138	4	53	81	25	8	11	19	1	4	17	45	26	3	8	3	9	455
WHITE-BR NUTHATCH	147	126	171	222	82	100	35	115	43	126	127	162	74	47	87	45	119	1828
BROWN CREEPER	39	6	12	20	9	4	8	8	4	8	13	15	14	5	22	10	4	201
CAROLINA WREN	2	8	18	2		4	14	9	22	83	19	86	67	158	141	38	70	741
HOUSE WREN										1	1		1					4
WINTER WREN	1		5	2		1	1	4	1	2	3	11	8	8	8	6	3	64
MARSH WREN													2	3	10			15
G-CROWNED KINGLET	89	39	31	86	27	24	21	39	25	72	48	71	51	89	73		21	806
R-CROWNED KINGLET		1					3	2	2	1	5	2	1	7			1	25
EASTERN BLUEBIRD	23	53	1	119	71	83	59	70	26	168	158	93	12	36	70	14	60	1116
HERMIT THRUSH	1		1	1	3		3	3	3	10	6	13	7	15	3	3	5	77
WOOD THRUSH												1				1		2
AMERICAN ROBIN	21	35	64	217	221	47	26	12	37	144	111	137	101	74	47	19	24	1337
GRAY CATBIRD		2	1	2			2	1	1	4	2	12	7	23	7	9	3	76
N. MOCKINGBIRD	33	53	185	51	32	36	9	65	133	116	103	147	181	171	111	155	101	1682
BROWN THRASHER												1	2	9			1	13
AMERICAN PIPIT						2							40	7				49
CEDAR WAXWING	264	25	33	371	38	143	235	70	103	103	617	288	85	146	53	83	95	2752
NORTHERN SHRIKE	1	1	1	2		1					1							7
EUROPEAN STARLING	1288	3378	61900	2770	1050	4879	2584	1482	9656	1394	2572	7883	7230	4134	2861	2183	16104	133348
OR-CROWNED WARBLER													CW			1		1
YEL-RUMPD WARBLER			5				5	1	10	1	2	6	2	37	21	9	3	102
PALM WARBLER										1							1	2
BLK-&WH WARBLER														CW				0
C. YELLOWTHROAT				1			1			1	1	CW	2	1				7
WILSON'S WARBLER										1								1
YEL-BREADED CHAT														2				2

SPECIES \ SITES	NORTHERN						MID-STATE					COASTAL						TOTAL
	BA	EW	HA	LH	LS	ST	OX	PA	QV	SR	WR	GS	NH	NL	OL	SM	WE	
NORTHERN CARDINAL	90	112	455	189	91	119	90	164	145	189	281	297	362	168	184	184	178	3298
PAINTED BUNTING															CW			0
RUF-SIDED TOWHEE		1						1	2		1	10	15	21	4	5	2	62
AM. TREE SPARROW	64	179	394	248	251	99	59	171	57	161	217	70	176	69	134	229	63	2641
CHIPPING SPARROW								3				1	3			2	3	12
FIELD SPARROW		11	13	3		18	9	4	16	59	13	11	56	195	23	129	24	584
VESPER SPARROW												1	6					7
SAVANNAH SPARROW			3					2	7	2			25	7	8	78	18	150
IPSWICH SPARROW																2		2
FOX SPARROW			5				4	3		3	3	13	2	3	2	2	4	44
SONG SPARROW	41	134	317	92	27	39	67	65	227	176	204	369	586	424	299	607	346	4020
SWAMP SPARROW	5		14	10			5	7	17	6	7	17	33	27	59	36	6	249
WHITE-THR SPARROW	31	268	336	85	28	100	141	213	225	320	403	591	943	410	399	586	291	5370
WHITE-CR SPARROW				1	CW	4		3	1					1		1		11
DARK-EYED JUNCO	288	852	1089	741	320	536	432	493	217	813	950	470	446	223	268	326	583	9047
LAPLAND LONGSPUR															4			4
SNOW BUNTING			11	1										30	CW	32		74
RED-WGD BLACKBIRD		10	73	60	160	1	5	9	7	2	1	1	332	92	52	42	45	892
E. MEADOWLARK								1	68	11				8		7		95
RUSTY BLACKBIRD			2	29								2	8	4	16			61
BREWER'S BLACKBD																1		1
COMMON GRACKLE		1	1137	488			1	4		1	9	3	58	21	3	6	7	1739
BROWN-HDD COWBIRD	1	64	1691	133	72	24		21	62	33	5	2	24	8	15		15	2170
PURPLE FINCH	26	8	10	1	16	3	9	13	11	15	38	64	8	2		5	12	241
HOUSE FINCH	472	284	1269	742	591	405	185	379	242	507	408	1663	795	553	243	483	1001	10222
RED CROSSBILL				20														20
COMMON REDPOLL					16													16
PINE SISKIN	50	7	4	65	48	10		2			CW	13	34	2	CW		5	240
AM. GOLDFINCH	43	146	328	131	114	74	84	117	53	141	128	307	174	45	59	78	133	2155
EVENING GROSBEAK	173			38	36			44		12	33		1				1	338
HOUSE SPARROW	301	650	1089	759	151	482	237	276	218	487	303	845	543	553	509	414	543	8360

SUMMARY - CONNECTICUT CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

1990 - 1991

NORTHERN

SUMMARY	BA	EW	HA	LH	LS	ST	SUB TOTAL
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	8248	13385	93118	20475	11450	14111	160787
TOTAL CD SPECIES	63	60	82	85	65	65	111
TOTAL CW SPECIES	0	1	2	0	1	2	3
TOTAL FIELD OBSERVERS	24	14	91	50	23	18	220
TOTAL FEEDER WATCHERS	32	2	37	3	11	3	88
TOTAL OBSERVERS	56	16	128	53	34	21	308

MID-STATE

SUMMARY	OX	PA	QV	SR	WR	SUB TOTAL
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	7926	17152	19446	12566	19811	76901
TOTAL CD SPECIES	64	88	76	89	79	114
TOTAL CW SPECIES	0	1	1	2	2	1
TOTAL FIELD OBSERVERS	21	22	10	36	35	124
TOTAL FEEDER WATCHERS	1	11	2	2	0	16
TOTAL OBSERVERS	22	33	12	38	35	140

COASTAL

SUMMARY	GS	NH	NL	OL	SM	WE	SUB TOTAL
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	31803	40497	24187	10991	22238	43267	172983
TOTAL CD SPECIES	108	123	111	94	99	116	148
TOTAL CW SPECIES	2	5	6	9	2	1	5
TOTAL FIELD OBSERVERS	73	100	22	40	38	73	346
TOTAL FEEDER WATCHERS	36	16	10	7	2	32	103
TOTAL OBSERVERS	109	116	32	47	40	105	449

GRAND

SUMMARY	TOTAL
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	410671
TOTAL CD SPECIES	159
TOTAL CW SPECIES	4
TOTAL FIELD OBSERVERS	690
TOTAL FEEDER WATCHERS	207
TOTAL OBSERVERS	897

CONNECTICUT FIELD NOTES

FALL: AUGUST 1 - NOVEMBER 30, 1990

Jay Kaplan

The fall reporting period is our longest, lasting four months. For Connecticut birders, there is an almost constant opportunity to observe migration beginning with shorebirds in August and continuing through the next three months with a progression of warblers, raptors, sparrows and waterfowl. There will always be birds, of course, that do not neatly fit into their assigned slots. They may be early or late, show up inland instead of on their usual coastal routes, or appear in fewer or in greater than expected numbers. And, were it not for this tendency to be somewhat unpredictable, there would be little to report in this column. As suggested in previous issues of "The Warbler", take accurate field notes. What may seem inconsequential at Milford Point, may be quite exciting in the northwest corner; what may be expected at a banding station in Storrs may be highly unusual in the salt marshes along the coast.

The highlight for the period was Connecticut's first state record for **Tropical Kingbird**. Beyond this extraordinary bird, there were other unexpected vagrants, among which **Northern Wheatear** and **Lark Sparrow** certainly stand out! Additional reports of sufficient interest kept Connecticut birders in the field, scouring the state for birds and adding to our knowledge of Connecticut's birdlife.

Weather

"1990 was the warmest year in Connecticut since meteorologists began keeping records 85 years ago. Scientists emphasized however, that the warm weather of 1990 is not evidence that the burning of fossil fuels and tropical deforestation are causing global warming." thus wrote Steve Grant, active birder and a staff writer for The Hartford Courant (January 1, 1991). August was only slightly warmer than usual. A high of 90°F August 4th set a record for that date in Bridgeport. It was precipitation, however, that marked the first month of the fall season. Rainfall in Hartford, at 8.3 inches, was more than twice the average of 4 inches. In Bridgeport, precipitation was 2.79 inches above normal.

September was cooler and drier, although there was marked fluctuation in temperatures at the start of the month. Following a low of 42°F September 4th, the mercury soared to 86°F on the 7th in the Bridgeport area. October was again, warm and wet. A record high of 85°F was set in Hartford October 8th and the month's heavy rainfall

(7.6 inches compared to the normal of 3.5 inches) dampened the fall foliage season by dropping leaves before they reached their peak colors. Temperatures finally cooled at month's end with a low of 33°F in Bridgeport October 30th.

November was also warm with temperatures exceeding 70°F in Hartford on three occasions. November rainfall was about normal at 3.8 inches but a storm near mid-month drove a number of pelagic species into Long Island Sound. Whether the warm, wet conditions influenced the fall migration is unknown. Perhaps an article correlating seasonal weather patterns and migration through the state would be of interest to readers of "The Warbler".

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

Red-throated Loons were "plentiful" in southeast Connecticut this season (RSCB). A single report of one bird in western Long Island Sound came from Lighthouse Point, New Haven September 23 (JF). Conversely, Pied-billed Grebes were noted as scarce in southeast Connecticut (RSCB). A high of 13 were on Bantam Lake, Litchfield September 29 with at least two birds remaining November 18 (m.ob.). Two to three Horned Grebes were also on Bantam Lake October 18 - November 18 (BD, et al.) and 19 were at Seaside Park, Bridgeport November 21 (SM). Single Red-necked Grebes were inland on Bantam Lake October 18 (BD, et al.) and November 11 (DT); on Held Pond, Weston November 8 (FMa); off the West Haven shore November 15 (NC); and at Lake Saltonstall, East Haven November 17-18 (m.ob.). Most unusual were two Leach's Storm-Petrels at Hammonasset Beach State Park (hereafter HBSP), Madison November 12 (NP), following a storm. There were also several reports of Northern Gannet in the Sound in mid-November with a high of seven birds off Lordship Beach, Stratford November 13 (NC). Over 100 gannets in Niantic Bay November 30 (RSCB) must have been quite a spectacle.

An early report of Great Cormorant came from the Willimantic Reservoir September 7 (KK). The only other report was an individual at Lighthouse Point October 13 (RE). One to two Double-crested Cormorants remained into November at Mirror Lake, Storrs (GC). The only American Bittern reports for the period were individuals seen at Milford Point October 7 (FMa, CW, et al.) and Pine Creek, Fairfield November 30 (CB). It should be noted that this species appears on the Department of Environmental Protection's (hereafter DEP) newly published endangered species list where it is listed as endangered, rather than threatened. Late Great Egrets were at Lighthouse Point November 12 (RE) and Manresa Island, Norwalk November 24 (FMa). Two Tricolored Herons were at Milford Point

August 16 (JF,SM); single birds were at Lordship Marsh, Stratford August 20 (SM) and again at Milford Point September 9 (EH,RN). A Cattle Egret, scarce this year, was at Pine Creek October 1 (CB).

A **Greater White-fronted Goose** was with a large aggregation of Canada Geese at McLean Game Refuge, Granby October 21-23 (DR,DT). Large movements of Snow Geese were reported statewide. Among the higher counts were 500 in the Milford Point marsh October 4 (FMa,et al.), 250 at Pawcatuck October 4 (RSCB), 500 over Norwalk October 8 (FMa,CW), 125 at Milford Point in flight October 14 (SK), 110 over Barkhamsted October 25 (JKa) and 300 in Winchester November 2 (DR). There were numerous reports of "blue morphs" migrating with the "snows", as well as three in Westport September 21 through the period (FMa,et al.).

A high of 350 Green-winged Teal were at Milford Point September 18 (FMa). There were a number of waterfowl sightings of special note on inland lakes and reservoirs. Five Redheads on Nepaug Reservoir, New Hartford October 21 (DR); a pair of Lesser Scaup on Lake Dawson, Bethany October 21 (AB,MBr) and another pair on Bantam Lake November 11-18 (m.ob.); five Oldsquaw on Andover Lake November 22 (KK); and at least four reports of Black Scoters, with a high of 13 on Batterson Park Pond, Farmington October 31, (MC). Three male White-winged Scoters were on Bethany Lake, October 11 (AB,MBr). A high of 40 Hooded Mergansers were on Farmington Reservoir, Farmington November 11 (MC).

VULTURES THROUGH ALCIDS

Winter vulture roosts began to form in New Milford (m.ob.) and in North Stonington, where 25-30 birds could be seen (RSCB). There was a report of **Black Vulture**, a fly-over in Cromwell November 14 (JMo). It was another good year for Osprey with 3708 counted during the fall hawkwatch period at Lighthouse Point Park, New Haven and 1038 at the Quaker Ridge, Greenwich hawkwatch site. There were numerous late sightings through November, particularly in the lower Naugatuck Valley (RB,JKa,et al.). A Northern Harrier was a surprise visitor in the banding station nets at Lot W, Storrs October 7 (GC,WB). Sharp-shinned Hawks tallied 10,834 during the period at Lighthouse Point. There were no totals listed for Cooper's Hawk, although single birds were reported in Mystic November 7, where one was seen chasing Rock Doves (RSCB), and in Shelton November 27 (JB).

Hawkwatch sites reported excellent flights for Broad-winged Hawks September 16-17. Top spots on the 16th included Botsford Hill, Bridgewater - 2484, Booth Hill, West Hartland - 1943 and Light-

house Point - 1743. Greenwich Point totalled 11,600 September 17, while other big flights were reported at Longshore Country Club, Westport - 4275, Eastshore Park, New Haven - 4000, East Rock, New Haven - 2250 and West Rock, New Haven - 1938. A late Broad-wing was at Barn Island, Stonington October 19 (RSCB). The only Rough-legged Hawk reported was at Lighthouse Point October 30 (RE). Immature Golden Eagles were at Durham Meadows, Durham October 7 (NP) and over Route 146 on the Branford-Guilford line November 5 (NP). Single Merlins were reported at Lot W, Storrs September 4 (MS) and at Latimer Point, Stonington October 10 (RSCB). It was an exceptional year for Peregrine Falcons with 95 counted at Lighthouse Point during the fall hawkwatch. The previous high was 47. Mid-September appeared to be the peak period for Peregrines.

Wild Turkeys continue to spread throughout the state with nine birds in Orange August 22 (SM). Storrs reported two Virginia Rails near Forest Road August 27 (RP) and a freshly killed Virginia Rail was found in Storrs October 15 (GC,DH). A Sora was also reported in Storrs at Lot W September 11 (LB,WB,MS). A high of 100 American Coot were at Bantam Lake November 11 (m.ob.). A Sandhill Crane was a fly-by at Lighthouse Point October 26 (RE,m.ob.). No fewer than nine reports of Lesser Golden Plover were reported from six different locations including a high count (and late date) of six to seven at Pine Creek Park, Fairfield September 23 (RN,EH).

A late American Oystercatcher was at Milford Point November 9 (CB). The only Upland Sandpiper report came from Sikorsky Airport, Stratford August 29 (m.ob.). There were five Whimbrel reports including a high of four at Milford Point August 11 (CE,et al.) and an unusual inland sighting at Storrs September 7 (WB,JZ). A final sighting came from Milford Point September 8 (m.ob.). Hudsonian Godwits were reported from four locations; including the first at Sherwood Island State Park (hereafter SISP), Westport August 7 (FMa), an amazing 19 there August 19 (FMa,FP,et al.), and a pair in New Haven Harbor September 22 (NP). A Marbled Godwit was at Milford Point September 1-20 (m.ob.). Red Knots peaked at 275 at Milford Point August 12 (JF). Stilt Sandpipers were also reported at Milford Point, where a pair was seen August 4 (CB,JB,JF); another was at Harkness Memorial State Park, Waterford August 27 (RSCB); and a very late individual was at SISP October 29-30 (CB,FMa,photo). The only Buff-breasted Sandpipers were single birds at the Fairfield Landfill, Fairfield September 14-19 (CB,JF,et al.) and Guilford Sluice, Guilford September 16 (NP). Common Snipe is not uncommon in fall, but 16 in Enfield October 13 (NE) was a good number. A Wilson's Phalarope in Guilford September 28 (NP) was a good sighting. Better

yet was a **Red-necked Phalarope** at Milford Point September 3 (SFi). And a storm-driven **Red Phalarope** was at Indian Neck, Branford November 11 (NP); this is the first time in the editor's memory that all three phalaropes have been reported in a single season in Connecticut.

Birders may be one of the few groups who actually enjoy hurricanes. One need look no further for a reason than a report of a Parasitic Jaeger off Phenolic Point, Old Saybrook (NP) at the tail end of the October 13 hurricane that never really made it to Connecticut. A Common Black-headed Gull was in an unusual location at Torrington's K-Mart parking lot November 26-27 (DT), where it enjoyed french fries with Ring-billed Gulls while being photographed. This is the first interior record for the state. An inland Bonaparte's Gull was at Coventry Lake, Coventry October 22 (WB). A first winter Iceland Gull was at Lighthouse Point November 17 (RB), while a first year bird was in Storrs November 29-to end of period (MS). A Glaucous Gull was a fly-by at Lighthouse Point November 18 (ES). A Lesser Black-backed Gull was at SISP September 26 - October 1 (FMa,FP,et al.), while another was at Coventry Lake October 28 (LB,WB), the first record for the Storrs area. There were no **Black-legged Kittiwake** reported from New London harbor, a locale where they are more often seen, but two-three birds were reported from Indian Neck, Branford November 11-12 (NP).

There were few exotic tern reports. A Caspian Tern was at Milford Point August 25 (FP,DT) and three Royal Terns were reported there August 21 (TB,MBu). A pair of Royals were also in Old Lyme September 12 (TH). A year-old Roseate Tern, in *portlandica* plumage (unusual for this area) was at Falkner's Island August 9 (JS). Forster's Terns were reported as down in numbers over past years (NP). Black Terns were at Milford Point August 4-14 (m.ob.) and at Cockenoe Island, Westport August 27 (TR). At least two Black Skimmers were at Milford Point September 1-23 (m.ob.) and at Ram Island, Mystic September 2 (RSCB). Another "storm" bird, a **Dovekie**, was at HBSP November 12 (NP). A full report has been submitted to the CRRC on these "storm-driven" species.

OWLS THROUGH VIREOS

A Barn Owl was reported at HBSP September 15 (TR). There were no reports of nesting success for this species which is listed as "threatened" on the DEP's new endangered species list. A Long-eared Owl lingered at Lighthouse Point October 28-30 (m.ob.). There were reports of Short-eared Owls this season from six different locations between October 7 and November 22. Two reports of Saw-

whet Owl came from Lighthouse Point October 28 (ES) and Branford November 24 (FMc,SM). Common Nighthawks reached their peak August 25-27 as 500+ were seen over Bristol August 25 (BD) and several hundred were observed during a trip from Canton to New Haven August 27 (JKa,BK). A very late nighthawk report came from New Haven November 3 (FMc). Fifteen hundred+ Chimney Swifts migrated past Lighthouse Point September 30 (JMa,JMc). Five locations reported Red-headed Woodpecker in Connecticut, the most significant was a total of 27 birds sighted at Lighthouse Point between August 20 and November 20 (m.ob.). Two Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were at the Southbury Training School, Southbury November 21 (RN).

A single Olive-sided Flycatcher report came from Storrs August 26 (GC). Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were on Falkner's Island August 2 (JSp) and in Old Lyme October 1 (NP). An Acadian Flycatcher was at Lot W, Storrs September 13 (WB,MS,JZ). A Tropical Kingbird, the first record for Connecticut, was at Lighthouse Point and the surrounding neighborhood November 11-18 (RE,m.ob.), where it was observed and photographed feeding on Virginia Creeper berries and the few remaining insects. The bird was also heard calling, thereby separating it from the Couch's Kingbird, from which it is otherwise indistinguishable. (Detailed descriptions, excellent photographs and a recording of the voice have been submitted to the Rare Records Committee). It was a good year for kingbirds, as Western Kingbirds were at Lighthouse Point September 23 (RE,JF,et al.) and October 7 (RE,et al.); in Branford November 5 (NP); and in Roxbury November 25 (AD,et al.) and 27 (DT). A late Eastern Kingbird was in Pawcatuck October 9 (RSCB).

Fish Crows continue to expand inland as five (two adults, three immatures) were in Watertown August 1 - September 15 (RN). Common Ravens may be expanding from their nesting grounds in the northwest hills, with sightings in East Granby (DT) and at Roaring Brook Nature Center, Canton November 5 and 18 (JKa). Red-breasted Nuthatch, reported in Hamden September 9 (AB), was abundant in the northwest (m.ob.), but there was no major southward movement in the Storrs area (GC). A Marsh Wren, rare in the Storrs area, was at Lot W October 2 (WB,RP,JZ), while another was killed by a cat in Mystic October 18 (RSCB). A Northern Wheatear was photographed at HBSP September 20 (SFr), but could not be located the following day. Gray-cheeked Thrushes were reported in Southport September 30 (CB) and at Lighthouse Point October 1 (RE). There were nine American Pipit reports, beginning September 11 at Lot W, Storrs (LB,WB,et al.). Peak numbers included 20 at SISP

October 14 (FMa) and 25 in Southbury November 18 (RN). A final report of five came from Woodbury November 24 (RN). Numerous Northern Shrikes were sighted during the period; the first was at Lot W, Storrs November 9-15 (MS,et al.). An immature female found dead some five miles away in Willimantic November 28 (fide LB) was felt to be another individual, as a Northern Shrike was seen sporadically over the winter in Storrs. A Northern Shrike was in Stonington November 30 (RSCB), while a Loggerhead Shrike was reported September 8-9 at Griswold Point, Old Lyme (TH,JH) and at Guilford September 28 (NP). A late Solitary Vireo was at Lighthouse Point November 24 (RE). Philadelphia Vireos were at Lighthouse Point September 8 and 15, October 1 (JF,et al.) and a very late bird November 16 (JMa,JMo). Additional sightings came from Guilford Sluice, Guilford September 16 (NP) and Woodbury September 17 (RN).

WARBLERS THROUGH GROSBEAKS

There were numbers of late warbler reports, including several into mid-November. Perhaps this was due to the mild weather conditions. A Golden-winged Warbler was on Falkner's Island August 8 (JS,et al.) and another was in Woodbury September 3 (RN). Late Nashville Warbler reports included Lighthouse Point October 20 (m.ob.) and SISP October 21 (AB,MBr). A late Magnolia Warbler was at Lot W, Storrs October 18 (WB), a Cape May Warbler was in Pawcatuck November 22 (RSCB), and a Black-throated Blue Warbler was at SISP November 8 (RS). The peak Yellow-rumped Warbler movement in mid-October included an estimated 8000 at SISP October 15 (LB). Other late warblers included a male Blackburnian at Lighthouse Point November 18 (FMa,et al.), a Blackpoll in Southport October 21 (CB) and American Redstarts in Storrs October 19 (JMc) and at Lighthouse Point November 18 (ES). There were five Connecticut Warbler reports including three in Guilford September 16 (NP). Mourning Warblers were reported at Lot W, Storrs September 4 (MS) and September 13 (MS,WB,JZ). Lot W also reported Yellow-breasted Chats September 5 (WB) and October 2 (WB,RP,JZ). A chat was at the Knox Preserve, Stonington October 23 (RSCB).

A late Rose-breasted Grosbeak remained at a Storrs feeder until October 31 (GC). An immature Blue Grosbeak was a good find in Foote Park, Branford October 16 (NP). Dickcissels were at Lighthouse Point September 24 (m.ob.), in Branford September 27 (NP) and at Station 43, South Windsor October 8 (CE). Lot W, Storrs and Lighthouse Point, two of the state's hottest locations during the fall season, had Vesper Sparrows October 2 (WB,RP,JZ) and October 16

(RE), respectively. But the seasons' best sparrows were a Lark Sparrow in Sherman October 29 (DK,JKf) and a Henslow's Sparrow in Guilford October 30 (NP). Fox Sparrows were reported as scarce in the southeast (RSCB), although a flock of up to five was in the Storrs area October 28 - mid-November (WB,GC). Lapland Longspur, usually scarce other than at HBSP and SISP, was reported in six locations with a high of 12 at Great Island, Old Lyme November 16 (TH). Snow Buntings were also reported from at least a half dozen spots including 220 at SISP October 30 (FMa). Bobolinks peaked at 800+ at Station 43, South Windsor August 28 (JKa,et al.). An immature Yellow-headed Blackbird was at a Stratford feeder August 28-29 (MBu), a female was at Lighthouse Point October 31 (ES) and a male was at a Windsor feeder November 30 (fide PD). One would think that these birds could have the decency to hang around so that other birders might see them!

Winter finches appeared sporadically along the coast and in the northwest. Three Pine Grosbeaks were at Lighthouse Point October 31 (ES) and two were at Nepaug Reservoir, New Hartford November 17 (m.ob.). The only Common Redpolls reported were a bird at Lighthouse Point November 13 (ES) and three at a Cromwell feeder November 20-21 (JMo). Pine Siskins were erratic in the northwestern part of the state and a few individuals were reported from southern sections. A Eurasian Goldfinch of unknown origin, was present and photographed at SISP September 22-23 (FMa,FP,et al.). Three Evening Grosbeaks in Ellington November 2 (CE) did not pave the way for a major incursion, although by mid-month, flocks of 20-30 were in Storrs (WB), East Hartland (m.ob.) and the Voluntown area (RSCB).

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CORRECTION:

Photographs of adult Sedge Wrens only, were obtained in Goshen, rather than adults attending young, as reported in the January 1991 issue of the Connecticut Warbler Vol. XI, p30.

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

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Guide for Contributors

Preparation of Manuscripts:

The editors welcome submission of articles and notes for the *Connecticut Warbler*. Manuscripts should be typed double spaced on one side of the sheet only, with ample margins on all sides accompanied with as IBM disk, if possible. Style of the manuscript should follow general usage in recent issues. All manuscripts receive peer review.

Illustrations:

The editors welcome submission of line artwork of Connecticut and regional birds. Black and white photographs of particular interest will also be considered, but tend to print at less than optimum quality. Line art should be submitted as good-quality photographic prints or in original form. All originals and prints will be returned promptly after publication prints are made.

Spring 1991

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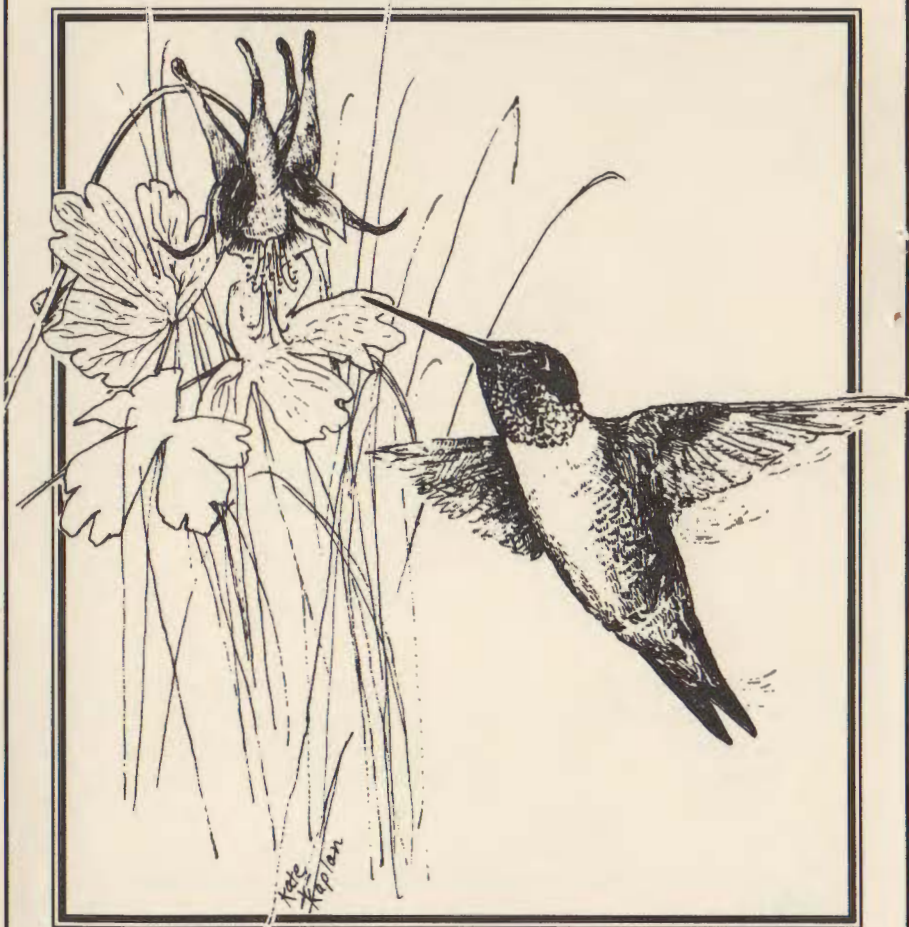
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ABOUT OUR COVER ARTIST

Kate S. Kaplan

"Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*)"

Kate Simmons Kaplan is a freelance artist and calligrapher from Canton, Connecticut. She is a graduate of The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, and a member of the Connecticut Valley Calligraphers Guild. Mrs. Kaplan has won awards at several area art exhibitions. She frequently assists with bird rehabilitation at Roaring Brook Nature Center and has cared for several injured hummingbirds over the past few years.

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

COMMON RAVEN IN CONNECTICUT

Thomas R. Baptist

The return of Common Raven (*Corvus corax*) to Connecticut has been one of the more interesting ornithological events in the state in recent years. After an absence of about 200 years, the Common Raven is now a year-round resident and nester in hillier portions of Litchfield and Tolland counties, and the number of sightings continues to increase.

The Common Raven is a holarctic species with the race *principalis* occurring in North America. It resides in a wide variety of habitats from the treeless tundra to desert to forested mountains. In southern New England, ravens favor mountainous or hilly terrain with mature forests of deciduous and coniferous trees.

Ravens are omnivorous; they feed on carrion, insects, bird eggs, berries, shellfish and numerous other plants and animals (Bent 1946). They are majestic and skillful fliers capable of soaring to great heights, diving, even hovering like a kestrel. Vocalizations are varied and loud, and often include a guttural *cruk* or *croak*. During the nesting season, ravens are remarkably wary and sagacious and, despite their large size, are difficult to observe near nest sites. Ravens prefer to nest on ledges of steep rock outcroppings. Rock overhangs above and below the ledge typically protect the nest against predators, particularly raccoons. Ravens occasionally nest in trees (Bent 1946).

Although there is little information about the status of Common Raven in Connecticut in the 1600's and 1700's, accounts from surrounding states suggest that ravens were present in Connecticut during the settlement period. Archaeological excavations in New York indicate that ravens inhabited that state as long as 9,500 years ago (Andrle & Carroll 1988). Bull (1974) said ravens were formerly distributed widely over New York before the virgin forest was lumbered, and at one time occurred along the coast from southern New Jersey to Virginia. In Massachusetts, Forbush (1927), citing earlier authors, noted that the raven was "numerous" in the 1600's, but it "soon became known as a killer of sickly sheep and new-born lambs, and the settlers waged relentless warfare upon it".

By the late 1700's, most of Connecticut's forests were cut for

agriculture and fuelwood (Cronon 1983). This change in the landscape caused a decrease in the ravens' food supply and undoubtedly disturbed or destroyed nesting territories. Additional stress may have been imposed by the decline in white-tailed deer numbers concurrent with declines among predators upon which the raven, as a scavenger, depended for winter food (Andrle & Carroll 1988). These factors, coupled with substantial persecution by humans, undoubtedly resulted in the demise of this species in Connecticut. Rev. James Linsley (1843) did not mention the species in his compilation of Connecticut's birds, thus indicating that the species was extirpated from the state by that time. C. Hart Merriam (1877) included Common Raven in a list of Connecticut birds that were "once common along the coast, (and) are now either extremely rare or not to be met with at all".

Sightings of ravens in Connecticut during the first half of the twentieth century were probably of individuals that wandered into the state from northern or western populations, if indeed these reports were correct.

The recovery of Common Raven in New England began about 1940 when the eastern Maine population increased and expanded westward (Snyder 1950). By 1961, the population increased westward into New Hampshire and Vermont (Bagg & Emery 1961; Laughlin & Kibbe 1985). In 1965, breeding was confirmed in Vermont and the population there has increased dramatically since 1972 (Laughlin & Kibbe 1985). The range expansion turned southward, and by the mid 1970's ravens were regularly sighted in the southern Berkshire Mountains of Massachusetts (Vickery 1978).

Sightings of ravens in Connecticut in the 1970's and early 1980's were undoubtedly of birds wandering southward from the Massachusetts, Vermont and New Hampshire populations. The first such sighting was by Mike Root of two birds at Bald Peak in Salisbury on October 21, 1977, and three were seen there one week later (Vickery 1978). On November 2, 1978, Mr. Root observed two birds on Mt. Riga in Salisbury (AB 33:157). Following a handful of sightings in 1983 and 1984, the population expansion in Connecticut began in earnest in 1985 when diligent searches of ridge tops and local landfills in Litchfield County regularly yielded a raven or two (Zeranski & Baptist 1990).

In Litchfield County in the spring and summer of 1986, a novice observer reported to Dave Rosgen a pair of ravens

"calling and consistently flying close together" on Canaan Mountain (D. Rosgen, pers. comm.), thus suggesting possible nesting behavior. In the summer of 1987, fledged young were reportedly observed begging for food on Canaan Mountain, but there is no evidence that these birds actually nested in the area and, unfortunately, no written description was made at the time. In 1987, a pair of ravens constructed a stick nest on a rock ledge at Sharon but did not hatch any young. However, three young were fledged there in both 1988 and 1989, and four young fledged there in 1990 (John McNeely, pers. comm.).

In 1989, nesting occurred on rock ledges in Barkhamsted and Hartland, Connecticut and eleven young fledged from three nests. In 1990, those nests fledged eight young. There were numerous sightings of ravens in May and June, 1990 in Kent, Cornwall, Canaan, and several other northwestern towns, but to date no corroborating evidence of nesting in these towns exists (CW10: 98-106 and CW11: 26-32).

East of the Connecticut River, a pair of ravens were observed in 1987 in Ashford and their behavior suggested that nesting might have occurred. The first corroborated nesting in Connecticut occurred in 1988 (CW8: 79-86) when a nest with two young was photographed by L. Bevier in Ashford on a steep rock ledge. Nesting has occurred on that same ledge annually since that time. Sightings in northeast Connecticut remain restricted to the Ashford area.

The continuing maturation of Connecticut's forests and an increase in white-tailed deer numbers will probably result in a further increase of the raven population in Connecticut. New nest sites should be watched for on rock ledges in dense forest. It will be interesting to see whether ravens will extend their range in the coming years to include lower elevations in the major river valleys and along the coast.

Acknowledgments:

The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Louis Bevier and Joseph Zeranski, who provided comments and suggestions that greatly improved the manuscript. A thank you is owed to Ted Gilman of the Audubon Center of Greenwich for lending copies of *Audubon Field Notes* and to Jack Clark of Bruce Museum for lending copies of *The Auk*.

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103 Sunset Hill Road, Redding, CT 06896

SUMMARY OF RECORDS OF COMMON RAVEN
(*CORVUS CONRAX*) **IN CONNECTICUT FROM 1889 - 1989**

DATE	No.	LOCATION	OBSERVER	SOURCE
28 Dec 1889	1	West Haven	L. Bishop	Sage et al. 1913
18 Sept 1890	1 sp.	S. Manchester	O. Hagenaw	Sage et al. 1913
25 May 1919	1	Norwalk	A. Saunders/ C. Pangburn	<i>Auk</i> 36:572
12 Oct 1921	4	Hartford	C. Case	<i>The Oologist</i> 39:29
11 Mar 1942	1	Waterford	E. Stoddard	<i>Auk</i> 67:104-105
2 Apr 1943	1	Waterford	E. Stoddard	<i>Auk</i> 67:104-105
29 Feb 1948	1	Bethany	H. Bunting	AFN 2:134
Mid Jan - late Mar, 1958	1	Wilton	O. Schlechtweg	AFN 12:265
21 Oct 1977	2	Salisbury	M. Root	AB 32:178
28 Oct 1977	3	Salisbury	M. Root/N.Proctor	AB 32:178
2 Nov 1978	2	Salisbury	M. Root	AB:33:157
27 Feb 1983	1	Canton	J. Kaplan	CW 3:24 (a)
17 May 1983	1	West Hartford	P. Desjardins	CW 3:35
7 Sep 1984	1	Fairfield	C. Tricka	CW 5:22 (b)
Nov, 1984	up to 5	Salisbury	fide D. Varza	CW 5:22
16 Feb 1985	1	Thomaston	P. Carrier et al.	CW 7:49
Summer, 1985	?	?	fide D. Rosgen	CW 6:13 (c)
Sept-Nov, 1985	1-4	Norfolk dump	D. Rosgen, T. Rochovansky	CW 6:22
22 Mar 1986	1	N. Canaan dump	N. Currie	CW 6:51
22 Jun 1986	2 w/3 fl.	Canaan	D. Rosgen	CW 7:11
Fall, 1986	12+	northwest corner	fide D. Verza	CW 7:26
Summer, 1987	1 pr.	Canaan	D. Rosgen	CW 8(1):70 (e)
Summer, 1987	2 nests	Sharon	D. Rosgen	CW 8(1):70 (f)
Summer, 1987	1 pr.	Ashford	L. Bevier/R. Craig	CW 8(1):70 (g)
Winter, 1987-88	#?	Barkhamsted Res.	many obs.	CW 8:66
21 May 1988	1 nest w/ 2 young	Ashford	L. Bevier/G. Clark	CW 8:84 (h)

SUMMARY OF RECORDS: NOTES

(a) This report was reviewed and accepted by the Rare Records Committee of the Connecticut Ornithological Association (CW 9:22). The report was incorrectly published in CW 3:24 as 26 Feb 1983.

(b) This report was reviewed and accepted by the Rare Records Committee (CW 7:49). The report was originally published (CW 5:32) with the incorrect date 13 Sep 1984.

(c) This report was published without specifying the number seen and precise location: "Common Ravens were found in three northwest corner blocks during the breeding season, but there was no evidence of breeding activity."

(d) This report was from a novice observer and told to D. Rosgen. There is no evidence that nesting occurred in the vicinity of the sighting; it is possible that the sighting was of a family group wandering from outside the area.

(e) This report was from a novice observer; there is no evidence that nesting actually occurred in the area of the sighting.

(f) The only evidence of nesting in Sharon in 1987 was of the pair that constructed a stick nest without successfully hatching young (J. McNeely, pers. comm.).

(g) The report published in CW 8 (1):70 incorrectly stated "two nests" in "Westfield". The correct location is stated above.

(h) The report published in CW 8:84 incorrectly reported the location of the nest as "Union". The correct location is stated above.

Abbreviations: AB = *American Birds*; AFN = *Audubon Field Notes*; CW = *Connecticut Warbler*; fl. = fledged young; obs. = observers; sp. = specimen.

BOOK REVIEW

Birds of the Connecticut College Arboretum / Population Changes Over Forty Years, Robert A. Askins, 1990. Bull. No. 31, The Conn. College Arboretum, New London. \$6.50 postpaid.

This welcome 6x9 inch 48-page booklet reports on the status of birds and their habitats on the 435-acre arboretum in which the Connecticut College campus is nestled, with a special emphasis on the changes observed in plant succession and bird populations.

We should all congratulate the trustees and officials of Connecticut College for fostering forty years of uninterrupted attention to its surrounding environment. Few American college or university administrations have had such insight into the value of long-term studies by faculty and students.

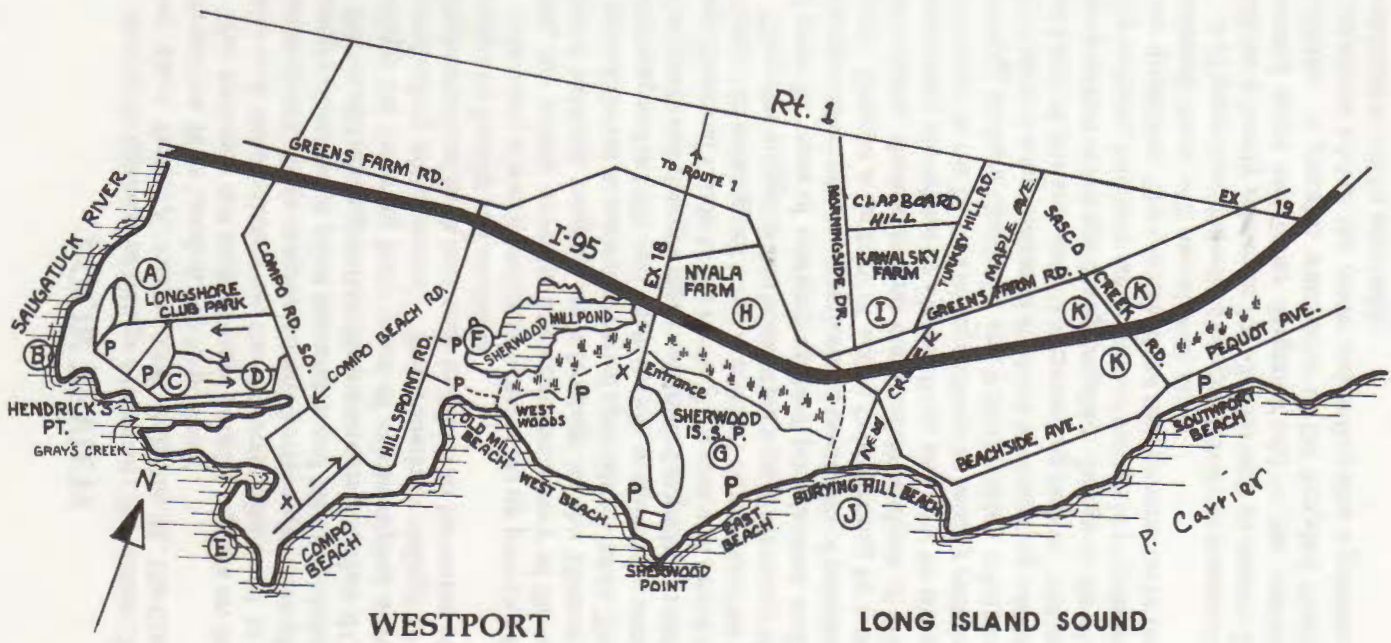
Following a brief introduction that sums up previous bird studies here, the author provides a succinct summary of the arboretum's varied habitats, ranging from frontage on the Thames River to a hemlock ravine, to acres of reverted agricultural fields. These habitats were mapped in 1953, and again in 1976, so there is an accurate record of vegetational changes that explain bird population shifts. A four-page Seasonal Guide to the birds of the area will orient visitors and students in seeking out what is resident throughout the year.

The prize nugget in this booklet is a 9-page summary of the results of over 30 years of research on bird populations, and how these changes reflect plant succession and the effects of suburban development. Despite a century of active field birding by a multitude of enthusiasts, there exists no comparable analysis of what is really happening elsewhere in Connecticut, and few to compare with it elsewhere in the U. S. This is a tribute to faculty members William Niering, Richard Goodwin, and Robert Askins, who have involved the labors of a succession of students in observing and investigating the birds of this area and its surrounding region. Not only does the composition of the species aggregation change as the plant community matures, but there are numerical swings in populations that pose new questions. The studies of the next generation or two, if we can maintain them, will reveal even more.

A 17-page checklist with a bar graph to show seasons of abundance will be a handy reference for all who bird in eastern Connecticut. Several maps and other diagrams add to the usefulness of this bulletin. A graceful watercolor of the Hooded Warbler by Julie Zickefoose adorns the cover and anticipates a promise which this publication fulfills admirably.

Roland C. Clement

VOLUME XI, NUMBER 3



SITE GUIDE

THE SOUTHWESTERN CONNECTICUT SHORELINE - PART 2

Frank W. Mantlik

This is the second of a two part site guide for the southwest Connecticut shoreline (see *Connecticut Warbler* Vol. 11, No.1 for Part 1) and continues the account eastward to the western part of Bridgeport.

WESTPORT

Nature Center for Environmental Activities

In Westport, the NCEA is synonymous with nature. In addition to a 55-acre sanctuary with woodlands, swamp and fields, this environmental center includes a museum, aquarium, exhibits, gallery, gift shop and wild animal rehab/shelter. To reach the center, located at 10 Woodside Lane, take exit 17 off I-95, go north on Riverside Ave. 0.8 mi., turn left on Sylvan Rd., right on Route 1, first left onto Woodside Ave. to its end. Center is open 9-5 Tuesday-Saturday; 1-4 Sunday. Sanctuary open daily, dawn to dusk. Phone: 203-227-7253.

Longshore Club Park

Longshore Club Park can be reached by taking Exit 18 off I-95, traveling north on the Sherwood Is. Connector, then left at the second light onto Greens Farms Rd. Follow this 1.5 mi. to the traffic light, turning left on South Compo Rd. The entrance to the Park is 0.6 mi. down on the right. This town-owned park consists of a golf course, marina, inn, picnic area, woods, salt marsh and brush dump, a variety of habitats that attract a variety of birds.

Cool Woods (A): Proceeding down the one-way entrance road, keep to the right at the three-way fork, then take your first right onto Vista Terrace. This, along with Waterside Terrace and Glen Rd. (all public roads with a few scattered houses, best birded on foot), winds through a cool, moist, mature forest of hemlock, white pine, oak and hickory. This coastal forest, a rare habitat in the state, can be excellent during spring and fall migration for flycatchers, kinglets, thrushes and warblers. The author has seen several days of significant migrant "fallout" in May when weather conditions were right. Among the 114

species noted in this forest over the last five years have been Great Horned Owl (breeds), Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Kentucky (rare), Hooded, Connecticut and Mourning Warblers (the latter two in the thickety areas), Pine Siskin and Evening Grosbeak. It is a very reliable area in which to find Red-bellied Woodpecker and Carolina Wren year-round.

Hendrick's Point (B): Park in the overflow lot just west of the golf pro shop, and walk through the gate to the picnic area along the Saugatuck River. The brushy perimeter harbors sparrow and Bobolink flocks in the fall, and provides a great place from which to scan the river for waterfowl. Fall hawkwatching from here has also proven quite rewarding, with several 1000-plus days recorded.

Gray's Creek Salt Marsh (C): Continue on the one-way road past the inn and marina to the tidal creek and marsh on your right. Pull over wherever there is room to view the waterfowl, waders, shorebirds and gulls that may be present.

Brush Dump (D): Continuing along, you will see a shrubby area on the left across the fairway and beyond a small pond. To reach it, turn left just before the exit at Compo Road. (One can also drive here by taking the left fork at the 3-way fork of the entrance road). This area has become famous for attracting a wide variety of finches and sparrows in September-October. In addition to the annual Song, Swamp, Savannah, Field, Am. Tree, White-throated, White-crowned, Lincoln's and Vesper Sparrows, this weedy dump has produced Blue Grosbeak, Dickcissel, and Lark and Grasshopper Sparrows. And it was here that an Anhinga flew over on September 25, 1987 during a hawkwatch! At the Park exit, turn right onto Compo Rd., then right again at the Minuteman Statue onto Compo Beach Road.

Compo Beach.

This beautiful beach (E) is popular with sun worshippers in the summer; it is town-owned and resident beach stickers (or a hefty parking fee) are required from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Luckily for birds, the best time to visit is in the off-season (Sept.-May). Scan the offshore waters for loons, grebes and sea ducks such as Oldsquaw, Common Goldeneye and Red-breasted Merganser. Check the gravel/grass parking area to the west for Horned Larks and Snow Buntings. Upon exiting the beach proper, turn right and follow the coastline along Soundview Drive, turning right at the stop sign onto Hillspoint Road. The shallow Compo Cove on the right behind Cafe de la Plage often concentrates number of waders and gulls and is worth a quick look.

Sherwood Millpond

This tidal millpond and marsh (F) is an important feeding and resting area for a variety of waterbirds. Going north on Hillspoint Rd., just after the stop sign near the small store, pull into Allen's Clamhouse on the right (#191), where birders are welcome. Snowy and Great Egrets, Little Blue Heron and night-herons are all regular here in summer. Be sure to scope the gulls, terns, and shorebirds that like to use the grassy island to rest, especially during high tide. In winter the usual waterfowl includes No. Pintail, Gadwall, Am. Wigeon, Canvasback, Greater Scaup, Bufflehead, and Hooded and Red-breasted Mergansers. A Sandhill Crane spent the winter of '83-'84 here, and Bald Eagles are seen on occasion. Continuing north on Hillspoint Road brings you back to Greens Farms Rd. A right turn takes you back to the Sherwood Is. Connector.

Sherwood Island State Park

This 235-acre park (G), the second most heavily used state park, is a favorite of beachgoers, picnickers, fishermen and birders alike. It is open daily, 8 am to sunset, with a per-car entrance fee payable from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Veteran birder Richard Soffer has kept a lifetime list for the Park that numbers 240 bird species (not counting exotics). Among the rarities recorded here have been Red-necked (annual) and Eared Grebes, Northern Gannet, American and Least Bittern, Tricolored Heron, King Eider, Barrow's Goldeneye, Peregrine Falcon (annual), Whimbrel, Hudsonian Godwit, Upland, Baird's, and Stilt Sandpipers, Ruff, Wilson's Phalarope, Lesser Black-backed and Iceland Gulls, Caspian and Forster's Terns, Barn, Short-eared and No. Saw-whet Owls, Red-headed Woodpecker, Northern Wheatear, Philadelphia Vireo, Golden-winged, Orange-crowned, Connecticut, and Mourning Warblers, Blue Grosbeak, Vesper, Lark and Leconte's Sparrows, and Eurasian Goldfinch.

Just off exit 18 off I-95, first view the east end of the Millpond from the elevated connector (note: light conditions are best in the morning, poor in the afternoon). In addition to the species mentioned in the previous section, look in winter for Eurasian Wigeon (occasional), No. Shoveler, Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal, and in spring and summer at low tide for Glossy Ibis, shorebirds and Diamond-backed Terrapins.

The main areas worth birding in the Park are Sherwood Point, the West Beach and Woods, the East Beach, the salt marsh and Millpond, the grassy fields throughout, and the conifer grove. Park at the lot near the pavilion and walk to Sherwood Point, an excellent vantage from which to scan Long Island Sound. The steps at the Pavilion lead

to an observation deck. Commonly seen offshore are loons, grebes and a variety of sea ducks, many of which "stage" here in large numbers in March before migrating north. Fish Crows nest in the nearby trees.

Walk west from the pavilion to the West Beach (the road to this lot is open only in summer) and West Woods. The beach itself is usually lackluster, but following storms the lowlying grassy area behind the beach fills with rain and is an excellent area for shorebirds (including Wilson's Phalarope) and Glossy Ibis. Also check the weedy dirtmounds in fall for sparrows, with Song, Savannah, Lincoln, Vesper, White-throated and White-crowned being annual (Oct.).

The West Woods, a nice stand of oaks and hickories, can be either boom or bust for birds. Nevertheless, the loop trail leads back to a good vantage from which to overlook the Millpond and salt marsh, where Clapper Rail and Sharp-tailed and Seaside Sparrows can be seen or heard. On good days in spring or autumn, migrant "fallouts" can fill these trees with warblers, thrushes, kinglets and orioles. Red-headed Woodpecker and Blue Grosbeak have occurred. Retrace your path, but follow the shrub-lined edge of the marsh (great for Brown Thrasher) to the north to another small wooded area on the left. This is the best area in the park for species that favor underbrush. Walk up the slope to the paved road and follow this around past the maintenance buildings to the conifer grove (which is just west of the entrance booth). Check the spruce, pine, and cedar trees in winter for roosting owls and northern finches. Walking south on the paved road leads back to the pavilion lot.

Scan the gulls that frequent the East Beach for Lesser Black-backed, a species that appears here annually. The flock often rests on the lot itself, especially during high tide and during storms. The lot, too, has been very reliable over the years for flocks of Snow Buntings, Horned Larks, American Pipits (Oct.-Nov.) and an occasional Lapland Longspur; unfortunately, the recent spreading of waste asphalt has reduced the suitable habitat. The grassy areas at the East Beach and at the model airplane field (when not being used) have rainpools after storms that are a magnet for shorebirds during migration. Twenty-nine species of shorebirds have been seen here, including Lesser Golden Plover, Hudsonian Godwit, Wilson's Phalarope, and Upland, White-rumped, Baird's and Stilt Sandpiper.

Cattle Egret has been easy to find on the grassy lawns in some years, absent in others. Hawkwatching can be excellent in September and October, especially following the passage of a cold front with northwest winds. Ospreys, Harriers, accipiters, falcons and Broad-wings all pour through.

Nyala Farm

Nyala Farm (H), now a private corporate park, contains one of the few remaining meadows in the area. It is easily reached by going east from the Sherwood Connector (exit 18) 0.3 mi. on Greens Farms Rd. Pull off and bird from the roadside, being careful about traffic. During spring (March-May) and fall (Nov.-Dec.), it is a very reliable place to see Common Snipe feeding in the wetter areas. Glossy Ibis and Cattle Egrets also sometimes feed here, especially in spring before the grass grows too high.

Kowalsky Farm

Continue east on Greens Farms Rd., bearing left just before the highway overpass. Take the first left onto Morningside Drive and follow it 0.2 mi. to Kowalsky's Farm (I) on the right. Other views of the farm can be had by turning right on Clapboard Hill Rd., and right again on Turkey Hill Rd., which eventually returns to Greens Farms Rd. For the past 12 years or more, this has been the most reliable place in the area, if not the state, to see Cattle Egret. As many as thirty birds have been present at once (August). Birds breeding on Chimon Island fly here to feed in the meadow and among the livestock. Unfortunately, numbers have plummeted since 1989, for reasons unknown; it can only be hoped that the population will someday rebound.

Burying Hill Beach

From Turkey Hill, turn left on Greens Farms Rd., then a quick right on New Creek Rd. Follow this to its end at Beachside Ave. and the entrance to Burying Hill Beach (J), a Westport town park (resident beach pass or entry fee required May-Oct). Bordering Sherwood Is. State Park on its eastern boundary, this small, scenic beach and cove are worth a check by birders, as the parking lot overlooks the Sound. It is a reliable place in fall, winter and spring for Common and Red-throated Loons, Horned Grebe, Oldsquaw, White-winged, Surf and Black (occasional) Scoters, and Red-breasted Merganser. It is also a great place to watch for storm-blown "pelagics" from the shelter of one's car, such as during the November 1985 Northern Gannet incursion. In winter scope the rocky Frost Point to the east, where Harbor Seals occasionally haul out.

Smith-Richardson Sanctuary

Continuing east on either Beachside Ave. or Greens Farms Rd., turn onto Sasco Creek Rd., which connects the two. Just north of the turnpike bridge is a parking area for the Smith-Richardson Sanctuary (K). Open from dawn to dusk, this sanctuary of the Connecticut

Audubon Society (CAS) consists of a Christmas tree plantation and dense, thickety hedgerows. It is most famous among birders as the former wintering site of a flock of Boreal Chickadees. Unfortunately, they have not been reported here since 1981-82. The sanctuary is divided into three "quadrants" (see map), with numerous foot trails through each. The two north of the turnpike are straightforward, but to reach the 'southwest' plot, walk through the small meadow west of Sasco Creek Rd. just north of Hedley Farms Rd. It is productive to walk the trails for pheasant, woodcock, hawks (Red-tailed, Sharp-shinned, Cooper's), owls (Great Horned, Barred), both kinglets, chickadees, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Cedar Waxwing, White-eyed Vireo (breeds), Yellow-breasted Chat, and "winter finches" (Evening Grosbeaks, Pine Siskins and Red and White-winged Crossbills). The presence of the latter varies from year to year. NOTE: Birding here is often good, if you can stand the traffic noise from I-95; early Saturday/Sunday/holiday mornings are the least noisy. At the south end of Sasco Creek Rd., turn left on Pequot Ave. over the bridge into Fairfield and Southport Beach.

FAIRFIELD

Southport Beach

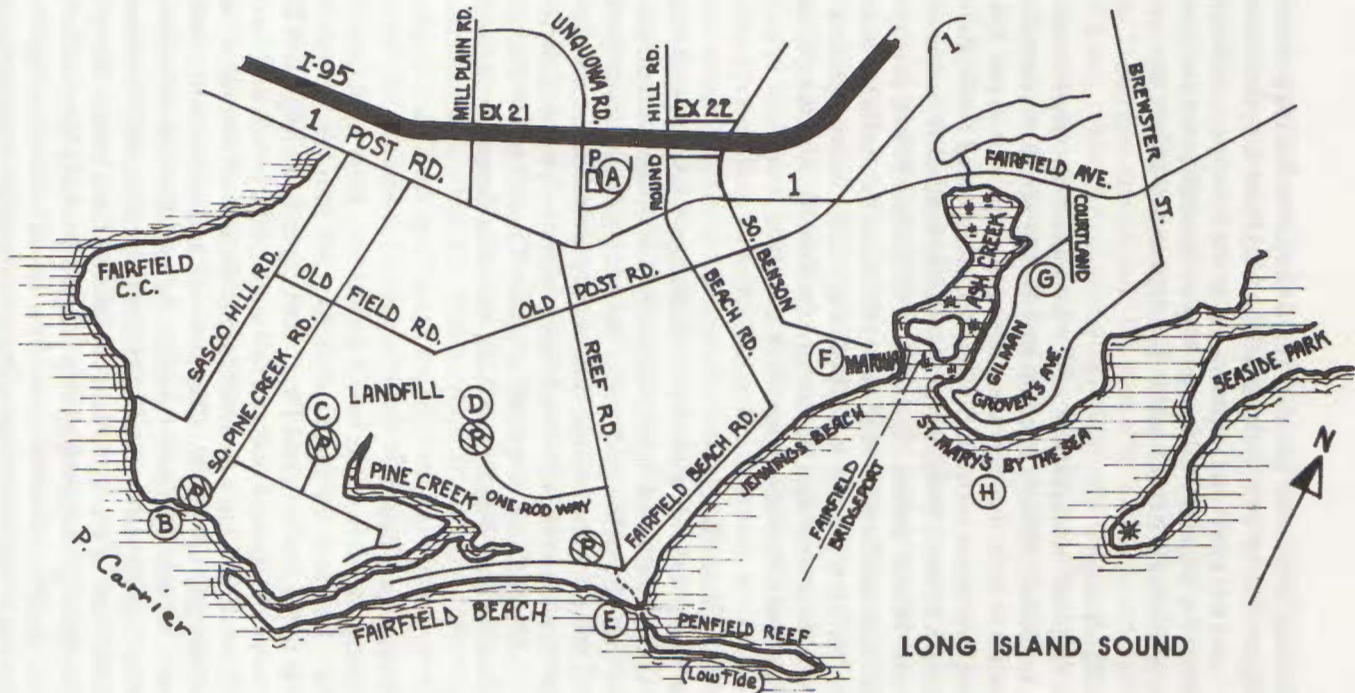
Town-owned Southport Beach (non-resident parking allowed in off-season) is a beautiful sandy beach, with the creek mouth and tidepools along the west side which attract a variety of waders, gulls, terns, waterfowl and shorebirds. Iceland and Lesser Black-backed Gulls have been recorded here. Continue east on Pequot Ave. 0.8 mi. to a left on Center Street, which leads to I-95 (exit 19).

Sasco Creek Pond Park

From Exit 19 of I-95 drive west on Route 1 a short way to the light at the intersection of Hull's Highway. Turn right and go north 0.3 mi. to Sasco Pond Park (6 acres) on the left. The brushy trail, great for Carolina Wren, Brown Thrasher and White-eyed Vireo, leads to a view of the pond. Wood Ducks breed, and Green-winged Teal, Green-backed Heron and Solitary Sandpiper are regular in the appropriate season.

Birdcraft Sanctuary

This was the first land preserve in the U.S. established primarily as a bird sanctuary, and, nestled among development, it still serves this valuable purpose. This small five acre sanctuary (A), owned by the CAS, boasts nature trails, a natural history museum, and an active



FAIRFIELD

bird-banding operation. Located at 314 Unquowa Rd. , it is reached by taking exit 21 off I-95, going south on Mill Plain Rd., then left on Route 1, and left again on Unquowa Rd. to the driveway on the right just before the highway overpass. Open Thursday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons, it is advisable to call first (203-259-0416).

Larsen Sanctuary

This regional headquarters of CAS includes an environmental center, bookshop, library, exhibits and the 150-acre Sanctuary, with seven miles of trails through woodlands, swamps, ponds and fields. Breeding species are many, including Red-shouldered Hawk, Banded and Eastern Screech Owls, Pileated and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Veery and Wood Thrush. Located at 2325 Burr Street, it may be reached from exit 21 off I-95 (follow Mill Plain Rd., which becomes Burr St., for 4.5 miles), or exit 44 off the Merritt Pkwy (go west on Congress St. to stop sign, then right on Burr St. 0.9 mi.). Closed Mondays; call for information at 203-259-6305.

South Pine Creek Beach

From exit 21 off I-95, go south on Mill Plain Rd. to Route.1. Turn right and then left at the light onto South Pine Creek Rd. and follow it to the end (B). Though there is limited parking (beach permit required, but ask to birdwatch), this is not a problem in the off-season. Scan the Sound and the offshore Sunken Island (exposed at low tide) for seaducks, gulls, terns and shorebirds. Great Horned Owls can sometimes be heard calling at dusk from the dense conifer stand nearby.

Pine Creek Open Space

Returning north from the beach a short way, turn right onto Old Dam Rd. Just past the racket club, turn left into the lot near the ballfields to the town-owned Pine Creek Open Space (C). This 220-acre preserve includes a restored salt marsh, tidal ponds and the old Fairfield landfill. This is an area that is little known among birders, but that has great potential. Clapper Rails and occasionally Sharp-tailed and Seaside Sparrows breed in the marsh, while a variety of herons and egrets visit to feed. Northern Harriers and Short-eared Owls hunt here in winter. Walk the several trails (some along the dikes), including the one straight up the grassy-weedy slope to the top of the old landfill, where the view of the marsh below is exceptional. In autumn be prepared for migrant hawks, shorebirds (Lesser Golden Plover and Buff-breasted Sandpiper are occasional) and large flocks of finches and sparrows (mostly Song, Savannah, and Swamp, though

a Grasshopper occurred in Dec. 1989). At the time of writing, the town is considering a proposal to "improve" this area with a park and bandshell.

Another area that is sometimes good for birds is the town brush dump, reached by returning north on So. Pine Creek to the four-way stop. Turn right on Old Field Rd. and after 0.75 mi., turn right onto Reef Road. About 0.6 mi. down turn right onto One Rod Hwy., and follow it to the brush dump (D). Species are similar to those mentioned above. Return to Reef Rd. and continue south.

Penfield Reef

This is a beautiful sand/gravel bar, which is exposed only at low tide (check the tide listings for Bridgeport). Jutting out into the Sound for about a mile, it is a favorite location throughout the year for birders and fishermen alike. With sightings here in recent years of Am. White Pelican (probable), Black Scoter, Common Eider, Caspian and Roseate Terns, Red Knot, Iceland and Glaucous Gulls, some consider it a "Milford Point, West"! Parking is limited, however, with a few legal spaces along Reef Rd. across from the Seagrape Cafe. If all else fails, park in the town park opposite One Rod Hwy. Walk to the end of Reef Rd., and across Fairfield Beach Rd. to the right where there is a sign indicating "Public Right of Way"; the sidewalk leads to a stone jetty and the reef. Walk out as far as you care to, remembering the tide.

Driving east on Fairfield Beach Rd., you will pass a residential area with private beaches. Turn left on Beach Rd., right on Old Post Rd., and right again on So. Benson Rd., bearing left on Benson Place to South Benson Marina (F). This location affords good views of the mouth of Ash Creek and its salt marsh, with the chance of seeing a resident flock of Monk Parakeets which nest nearby.

BRIDGEPORT

Ash Creek and St. Mary's-by-the-Sea

Return via So. Benson Rd. to Route 1, and turn right (east). Bear right after MacDonald's onto Fairfield Ave. After crossing the bridge, take the second right onto Courtland Ave., then right again onto Gilman St. Soon the Ash Creek salt marsh (G) will be visible on the right. Birds sighted here include Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (bred in 1991), Hudsonian Godwit and Com. Black-headed Gull. You are also sure to hear and see the noisy flocks of resident Monk Parakeets. Gilman St. becomes Grover's Ave. as it curves left along the shoreline park (City of Bridgeport) known as St. Mary's-by-the-Sea. Great

views of the Sound can be had by those in search of loons, grebes, waterfowl (Brant are regular in winter), gulls and terns. Though one should have a resident's beach sticker in summer, brief stops to scan for birds shouldn't pose a problem. Continuing east on Grover's Ave., turn left on Brewster St., which becomes Black Rock Tpke., and leads north to I-95 (exit 24).

Seaside Park

This large coastal City park, situated just south of the University of Bridgeport, is one of the few remaining open spaces in the "Park City". It can be reached by taking exit 27 off I-95, turning south on Lafayette St. and taking it to its end. Turn right on Waldemere Ave., then left at the park entrance with a big stone arch. Though the beach area at the west end requires a resident sticker (or a parking fee), the east side of the park is open to all. Drive straight to the seawall, checking the small pond to the right, then drive west along Soundview Drive at your leisure. The park is best for waterfowl, gulls, and shorebirds; a visit during and after storms could hold some surprises. Among the rarer species recorded here are Eurasian Wigeon, Snowy Owl and Hudsonian Godwit. Noisy Monk Parakeets now nest in the area.

Addendum to Part I: (January 1991)

The following was omitted from Part I, (CW11:2) due to lack of space.

Cummings Park, Stamford

This sizable city-owned coastal park (resident sticker required in summer) has grassy fields and sandy beach attractive to waterfowl, gulls, terns and shorebirds in the off-season. During high tide and storms, check the resting gulls for rarer species. To reach this park, take exit 8 off I-95 and travel south on Elm Street, bearing right at the light on Shippan Ave. to the park entrance on the left.

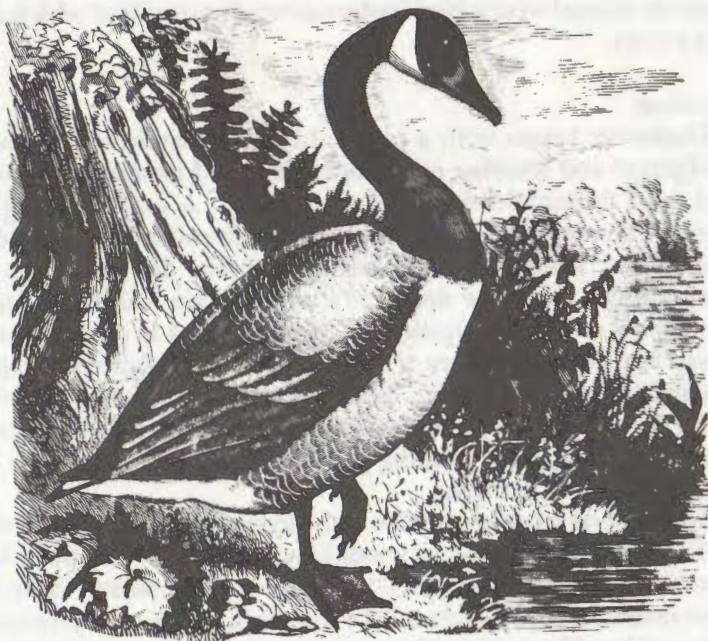
Gorham Pond and Peartree Point Park, Darien

Located just east of Holly Pond, continue from Nearwater Lane east on Route 1, turning right at the light onto Ring's End Rd. After crossing the bridge, turn left onto Goodwives River Rd., with Gorham Pond on your left. Excellent for waterfowl, it is not unusual to see 50 Hooded Mergansers here in November or March. Also, drive to the north end, where there is an exposed mudflat, used as a resting area for egrets, herons, gulls, shorebirds and an occasional Osprey. In recent years, Yellow-crowned Night-Herons have bred in the area,

and can often be seen here in summer.

Turn around and go south, through the stop sign, and bear right on Peartree Point Rd., which borders the marshes of tidal Darien River. Eventually on the right will be the entrance to Peartree Point Beach, restricted in summer to town residents. In winter, though, it is worth a quick look at the marsh and cove for waterfowl and gulls. Complete the loop by continuing on, turning left onto Long Neck Point Rd. One May, a Chuck-will's-widow was heard calling from the pine stand on the corner. Cattle Egrets can sometimes be seen in the farm meadows along with the cattle and sheep.

17 Seabreeze Place, South Norwalk, CT 06854



CONNECTICUT FIELD NOTES

Winter: December 1, 1990 - February 28, 1991

Jay Kaplan

The winter of 1990-1991 was not exceptional. There were no "blizzards" and few significant weather systems during the three month period. The season began with unusually warm weather, then settled into a month of more typical winter temperatures. Birds were equally unimpressive with few highlights. Unfortunately, some of the more interesting sightings were fleeting ones, such as the alcids reported from Long Island Sound. Among winter's highlights were a Golden Eagle, Sandhill Crane and Varied Thrush. Winter finches, for the second consecutive year, were few and far between, as evidenced by a lack of reports from observers in the field, as well as from the annual winter bird feeder survey, the results of which are in this report.

Weather

December began with a pleasant 52° F temperature reading in Bridgeport and weather conditions continued unseasonably warm and mild throughout much of the month. A cold, freezing rain hampered some Christmas Bird Counts (hereafter CBC's) held December 15. The following Saturday, the first day of winter, saw temperatures reach the upper 50's with drizzle and dense fog. A participant on the Barkhamsted CBC was heard to remark that his group had equal numbers of Red-breasted Nuthatches and Spring Peepers (*Hyla crucifer*). Temperatures had fallen by Christmas and a snowstorm December 27-28 dumped four to eight inches of snow along the coast, making participation in several of the later CBC's somewhat arduous.

January was more seasonable with daytime highs ranging from 28-40°F. Steady east/northeast winds blew January 7-9 and there was a three inch snowfall January 11-12. These conditions may have been responsible for the appearance of a Razorbill off the coast January 10, followed by a Thick-billed Murre on the 13th. Bitter cold on January 22 saw temperatures struggle to reach double digits and a northwest wind of 15-20 mph resulted in a windchill factor of well below zero.

February just couldn't make up its mind. The cold weather broke with a heat wave February 3-6, with record temperatures of 59°F in

Bridgeport and 67°F in Hartford on the third. Conditions remained mild until an "Arctic blast" February 12 dropped temperatures into the teens. The coldest spell of the winter followed with a reading of 4°F in Bridgeport February 16. The winter season concluded with a real variety of weather conditions - fog and damp drizzle February 18-20, a spring-like 60°F February 22 and a covering of three to four inches of wet snow on the 26-27th. Is it any wonder that few reports were received during this time period?

Winter Bird Feeder Survey: 1990-1991

The winter bird feeder survey continues to draw responses primarily from feeding stations situated in residential and rural/residential woodland settings. Of 37 reports received, all but three were classified as follows: residential (19), rural woodland (7), or rural/residential woodland (7). One respondent classified the location of their feeding station as urban, another as rural farmland and a third as rural/farm/woodland. A fourth respondent did not provide a location. With such a small sample of reports (down 16% from the previous year), one must question the validity of the winter bird feeder survey in its present form. The survey does offer a glimpse of those species one is likely to attract at the typical residential feeder; however, might we seek to obtain any additional information through the survey? Any suggestions to this end would be greatly appreciated.

Sunflower seed was, by far, the food of choice at most feeding stations, with 34 respondents providing this staple. Suet was provided at 30 stations, mixed seeds at 27 and thistle at 22. Water was offered at 13 stations, while cracked corn, once a popular food choice, was provided at only five (could this be why there were no reports of Ruffed Grouse, and only one of Wild Turkey or Ring-necked pheasant from our respondents?). Two stations provided sunflower hearts, however, in that there was no differentiation between types of sunflower seed on the report form, one wonders if this offering was under reported. Sunflower hearts do seem to be growing in popularity particularly in residential settings where lawns are involved. Two stations supplied dried bread, while table scraps, corn cobs, chickadee pudding, white millet, peanut hearts and peanut butter/mixed seeds were reported at one station each.

Birds were reported much as they have been in previous years. All 37 respondents listed Mourning Dove, Black-capped Chickadee and Dark-eyed Junco as feeder patrons. Other species reported from the majority of the stations were Tufted Titmouse, Northern Cardinal (36), Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, and White-breasted Nuthatch

(35). The Downy Woodpecker deserves some comment as suet was provided at only 30 stations! House Finch, seen at all reporting stations last year, slipped this season as it was absent on three report forms. American Goldfinch was seen at 30 stations this seasons, while American Crow was reported at 29. Perhaps the most precipitous drop was noted in White-throated Sparrow, seen at 27 stations (73%, down from 91% the previous season).

Other species reported from at least 50% of our respondents included Starling, Song Sparrow (23), Hairy, and Red-bellied Woodpeckers (20). This was actually the first year in the past three that Hairy was seen as often as Red-bellied by our respondents. Species reported at 10 or more feeding stations included House Sparrow (18), Carolina Wren, Tree Sparrow (17), Northern Mockingbird (13), Red-winged Blackbird (12), Common Grackle (11), Brown-headed Cowbird (10). Grackles and blackbirds were sighted at considerably fewer stations this year. Could this have been due to a lack of snowfall and therefore, more availability of natural foods? This would eliminate the need to seek out food at feeding stations. Or, were there fewer blackbirds around this winter?

An additional 21 species were reported this season. They included (in descending order) Purple Finch (9), Pine Siskin, Sharpshinned Hawk and Red-breasted Nuthatch (8), Field sparrow (7), Rufous-sided Towhee, Fox Sparrow and Evening Grosbeak (6), Rock Dove and Brown Creeper (5), Pileated Woodpecker, Northern Flicker and Gray Catbird (4) and Cooper's Hawk (2). Obviously, it was not a good year for winter finches. Does anyone really believe that Rock Doves were only seen at 5 feeders? Perhaps if there were more urban feeder respondents the number would be higher. And, what are those catbirds eating? It was a mild winter, but..... Reported from single stations were Ring-necked Pheasant and Wild Turkey, Budgerigar (an escapee), American Kestrel, Hermit Thrush, Ruby-crowned Kinglet and White-crowned Sparrow. One wonders if we might increase pheasant sightings if we push cracked corn at feeders. Brown Thrasher went unreported for the second consecutive year, and Swamp Sparrow and Common Redpoll, both seen at one feeding station last year, also went unreported this time around.

What does one make of this survey? As Milan Bull so aptly states on the Connecticut Rare Bird Alert tape, "Birders, we need reports." And we do, if we are to get a more accurate reading of activity at winter feeding stations. I say this because I personally know of feeding stations in my area that hosted Brown Thrasher this winter. I know of several flocks of Wild Turkeys in northwestern Connecticut that can be seen at feeding stations daily. And what of the oriole you'll

read about in the field notes? I guess that feeding station was not included among our respondents. As mentioned previously, if there is anything else that our readers would like to see in the winter bird feeder survey, please drop us a line. You've got a whole year to think about it!

LOONS THROUGH DUCKS

In addition to the usual single Red-throated Loons along our coast, highs of 32 were at Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison (hereafter HBSP) January 15, with 47 at Sherwood Island State Park, Westport (hereafter SISP) February 25 (JF). Meanwhile, several observers commented on the scarcity of Common Loons in western Long Island Sound (FM). Single Pied-billed Grebes appeared on several inland ponds and lakes in December with a high of five at Saugatuck Reservoir, Redding/Weston December 9 (FM). Horned Grebes, uncommon on inland bodies of water, were at Barkhamsted Reservoir, Barkhamsted December 6 (SKe) and in Wethersfield Cove, Wethersfield December 29 (SKo). Coastally, 73 birds were at SISP February 25 (JF). Two Red-necked Grebes were on Andover Lake, Andover December 9 (LB, KK), while single birds were at Harkness Memorial State Park, Waterford January 10 (fide FM) and at SISP February 4-8 (FM). An unusual inland, first winter record for Great Cormorant in the Storrs area came from Mansfield Hollow, Mansfield December 17 (JMc), while a high of 50 was at Saugatuck Shores, Westport February 28 (FM). American Bittern was reported on at least seven occasions this season, including a bird at Fairfield December 1 - February 9 (CB). Brooklyn Fish Hatchery, Plainfield hosted 15 Great Blue Herons December 29 (WB, GC). A late Great Egret was at Alewife Cove, New London until January 1 (RSCB). The mild winter saw large numbers of over-wintering geese including several reports of Snow Geese. Among them were two adult "blue morphs" that overwintered with Canada Geese at SISP (m.ob.). Brant were described as "scarce" in southwest Connecticut, while 110 were reported from their traditional eastern Connecticut wintering grounds in Waterford February 16 (SM).

Wood Ducks were seen in Canton December 19 (JKa), through the period in Woodbury (RN), and in Southport January 6 (CB). Thirteen seen in a South Windsor marsh February 26 along with 10-12 Green-winged Teal (CE) were likely early migrants. A high of 90 Green-winged Teal were at Milford Point February 9 (DR, et al.). A male Northern Pintail was on the University of Connecticut campus January 27 - February 17 (GC, et al.), while male Northern Shovelers were in Westport December 16 (RSo, RWi) and on Bantam Lake

February 20 (DR,et al.). A high of 39 Gadwall were at Stratford December 1 (SKo). A male Eurasian Wigeon was located off several West Haven shore points in late February (JF,SM,et al.), while another was at Frash Pond, Stratford January 6 (EHi fide FM). At least one observer felt that American Wigeon numbers were low this winter. A high of 36 were in Norwalk Harbor January 10 (FM).

Canvasback, reported as scarce last winter, peaked at 145 in Smith's Cove on the Thames River, New London January 15 (BK,et al.) and at 182 in Stratford's Frash Pond January 19 (SKo). Unseasonably mild temperatures allowed Ring-necked Ducks to overwinter at Nepaug Reservoir, New Hartford (JKa,et al.), while 14 Ring-necks were at Barkhamsted Reservoir December 6 (SKe) and 13 were on Bantam Lake, Litchfield February 27 (DR). Greater Scaup peaked at 10,000 along the West Haven shoreline December 15 (JF). This number was down to 6,000 a month later (SM). By the end of the period many of these birds had gone, with 2,500 reported from New Haven Harbor February 25 (RE). Single Lesser Scaup were on Bantam Lake December 12-16 (DR), in Fairfield December 13 (CB), in Suffield January 6 (SKe), on Frash Pond January 11-20 (JF) and at Milford Point February 6 (JF). A male King Eider was at SISP February 20-24 (CB,PD,et al.). Oldsquaw were in good numbers in the western Sound this season, while other observers noted that White-winged Scoter numbers were lower than usual. A high of 256 Common Goldeneye was at Milford Point January 5 (SKo). Perhaps more unusual were 19 birds in Barkhamsted December 6 (SKe), a good number for an inland, non-river location. A male Barrow's Goldeneye again returned to the Connecticut River, Enfield January 2-27 (PM,MH,et al.), while another was at SISP February 27 (CB,FM). Hooded Mergansers peaked at 20 December 6 in Suffield (SKe) and at 50 December 12-14 at Bantam Lake (DR). Two females were still present in Canton December 22 (JKa). There were some good-sized aggregations of Common Merganser: 800 at Bantam Lake December 14 (DR), 500 at Shepaug Dam, Southbury February 3 (DR,et al.) and 526 at Putnam Reservoir, Greenwich February 21 (TB). Twelve Ruddy Ducks were at Bantam Lake December 12 (DR), 15 at Old Saybrook December 5 (RBA) and a single bird was at the Oyster River outlet, West Haven December 15 (JY).

VULTURES THROUGH ALCIDS

The New Milford landfill reported 65 Turkey Vultures December 15 (EHa), while 30 vultures were in Guilford February 19 (CG) and four in Huntington State Park, Redding January 1 (TB). There was no word on the southeast Connecticut vulture roost, nor were there any

reports of Black Vulture this winter. At least three Osprey lingered into December in southeastern Connecticut and one remained at Groton Reservoir January 1 (RSCB). The statewide mid-winter Bald Eagle survey tallied 58 birds January 11-13, down from the previous two years. Shepaug Dam, Southbury, reported a high of 19 eagles January 30 (m.ob.) and there were scattered reports from the upper Connecticut River, Enfield to South Windsor (m.ob.) and from the Farmington River in Canton (JKa, et al.). An immature Bald Eagle was at Smith's Cove, New London January 13 (RN, EHa). Seven Northern Harriers were reported on the Stratford/Milford CBC December 27 and there were still five birds at Milford Point February 9 (RE); another in a South Windsor marsh February 5 (CE) was uncommon for northern Connecticut. There were numerous reports of both Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks from throughout the state, including Cooper's Hawks coming regularly to bird feeding stations in New Preston (LW), Stratford (JY) and Canton (JKa). Northern Goshawks were in Willington January 15 (SR) and Roxbury January 19 (BD, RN). Reports of Red-shouldered Hawks included three together in Storrs February 9 (GC). Rough-legged Hawks were down from previous years with only one bird at Lordship Marsh, Stratford January 29 (NC), and others in Manchester February 5 (SKo), in Wallingford February 16 (JF) and in North Haven's Quinnipiac Marsh February 26 (SM). A Golden Eagle was on the ice at a Ledyard Reservoir January 16 (RSCB), the only one reported in Connecticut this winter.

American Kestrel reports continue to wane. Single birds in New Milford January 20 (JKa), at Shepaug Dam February 17 (m.ob.) and a pair off I-84, Manchester February 28 (CE) were the only reports received. At this point, all sightings of this species in winter should be noted in order to assess the statewide population during this season. A Merlin was reported sporadically in Hartford through the period (m.ob), while others were in Stanley Park, New Britain December 19-21 (MC) and at HBSP February 17 (JF). Two Peregrine Falcons took up residence in the Hartford area, but had no favorite roosting site. It might be worthy to note that area Audubon groups and nature centers received numerous calls about a Peregrine eating a pigeon in front of hundreds of onlookers during the downtown Hartford lunch hour. Subsequent photographs revealed the raptor to be a Red-tailed Hawk, thereby stressing the importance of verifying such sightings through photographs and/or knowledgeable observers, rather than through the media or the person on the street! Peregrines seen December 15 in Ellington (CE) and South Windsor (SF) may well have been the same bird, while a bird at Manresa Island,

Norwalk January 29 (CW) could have been the bird seen a month earlier on the Stratford-Milford CBC.

An American Coot was in Woodbury December 2 (RN), while 64 Coot on Bantam Lake December 12-14 (DR) was a high number for this season in the state. Three Coot were in Sharon January 17 (DR). One of the highlights of the season was a Sandhill Crane in the Salisbury/Canaan area January 27 - February 16 (NC, et al.). The bird was photographed and a report will be forwarded to the Connecticut Rare Records Committee. Warm weather conditions were, no doubt, responsible for up to eight Greater Yellowlegs along the Norwalk/Fairfield shore through December (FM), one to two birds at Frash Pond January 13 - February 5 (m.ob.) and two to four birds at Oyster River, West Haven December 15 - January 4 (m.ob.). There were several Killdeer reported during the period and with mild conditions, it is conceivable that one or more of these birds may have wintered over in the state. Birds were sighted in Mansfield December 15 (GC, et al.), in Woodmont, West Haven December 23 (EHa, RN), two in East Haddam February 8 (DR, et al.) and in Storrs February 24 (SR). Two Ruddy Turnstones were in Norwalk Harbor December 16 (FM) and a bird was at Merwin Point, Milford January 26 (SM). Purple Sandpipers were in their usual winter haunts with a high of 15 in Branford Harbor January 1 (RE). Dunlin peaked at 200 in Norwalk Harbor December 11 (FM). There were several American Woodcock reports including an over-wintering bird in Woodbury (RN) and a displaying male in Redding February 6 (TB).

A Common Black-headed Gull was in Westbrook January 4 (NP), while an immature was at Oyster River February 24 (JF). A high of 150 Bonaparte's Gulls was at South Cove, Old Saybrook January 14 (FM, et al.), and 85 were in West Haven February 25 (RE). As the art of winter gull-watching continues to grow in popularity, reports of Iceland, Lesser Black-backed and Glaucous Gulls are also on the rise. There were seven reports of Iceland Gull, including up to four birds at the New Milford landfill and vicinity (m.ob.). Lesser Black-backed Gulls were at Andover Lake, Andover December 9 (LB, KK) and Storrs December 24 (JMc); at the New Milford landfill January 3-17 (m.ob.); and at SISP February 27 (FM, CB). Glaucous Gulls were in Fairfield December 16 (FP, et al.); at the Branford dump on the same date (NP); and two birds were at the New Milford landfill January 3-17 (m.ob.).

A mid-January storm provided some of the most interesting birds for the period. A Thick-billed Murre was off White Sands Beach/Griswold Point, Old Lyme January 13 (DP), where it was seen well at 7:45 as it sat in the water, then flew west along the coast toward the mouth of the Connecticut River. The bird, very rare in the state, was

not seen again. Even more unusual, a **Razorbill** was seen off Pequot Beach, New London January 10 (ET, fide MB). If accepted by the Connecticut Rare Records Committee, it will be the first documented sight record for this species in Connecticut. (There have been three previous, undocumented reports). The Bridgeport Monk Parakeet colony numbers 186 birds. The number was accurately counted on the Westport CBC when a Great Horned Owl flew into the roost!

OWLS THROUGH SHRIKES

Based on discussions with the staff of the Manresa Power Plant, Norwalk, there has apparently been a Barn Owl living on the site in an old coal-loading structure. Unfortunately, the crumbling structure is scheduled for demolition this winter. The plant staff is amicable to the placement of nest boxes on the site as an alternative. A Snowy Owl rambled through the greater Hartford area December 10-30 (m.ob.) during which time it sat atop Manchester's Buckland Hills Mall, appeared at an East Hartford elementary school playground and sat on the roofs of various downtown buildings. It was seen for the last time atop the crossbar of a swingset in Bushnell Park, Hartford where it was videotaped and made the 11:00 PM news! Unfortunately, the bird could not be located on the Hartford CBC December 29, possibly due to dense fog, but more likely the result of its random wanderings. Another Snowy Owl was at HBSP February 22 (fide MB). Long-eared Owls went unreported at HBSP and Lighthouse Point, but individuals were in Middlebury December 17 (BD), North Haven January 6 (BD), Southbury January 27 (BD) and Oxford February 9 (BD). There were at least eight reports for Short-eared Owl including two birds at Griswold Point, Old Lyme January 13 (fide FM) and two more at the Fairfield landfill February 1 (FM, et al.). It was a good winter for Saw-whet Owls with at least nine different reports including two birds seen sporadically through the period at Pine Creek, Fairfield (CB).

Two Red-headed Woodpeckers appeared in a West Simsbury backyard February 14 (fide BK). Red-bellied Woodpeckers continue to expand throughout Connecticut and were reported on many of the winter bird feeder survey reports. Good numbers of Northern Flickers wintered throughout the state.

In addition to their expected shoreline strongholds, a "good-sized" flock of Horned Larks remained in the Storrs area through January (WB, et al.) and six birds were at the Simsbury airport January 10 (BK). A late Barn Swallow was at HBSP December 2 (KM, SM, et al.). Up to six Common Ravens were in the Norfolk/North Canaan area throughout the period (fide DR) and additional reports came from Barkhamsted December 6 (SKe), from Canton December 19-26 (JKa) and from

Simsbury February 6 (K&GC, fide BK). Red-breasted Nuthatches, although not as abundant as the previous winter, were still plentiful at feeders in northern Connecticut. Carolina Wrens were also reported from feeders throughout the period and the mild weather may have been responsible for a plethora of Winter Wren reports - eight in all, including three birds in East Rock Park, New Haven February 3-22 (JF). A Marsh Wren was at Station 43, South Windsor February 18 and 26 (PD,CE). A Ruby-crowned Kinglet was reported throughout the period in Easton where it was eating suet and seed (JR), while another was at East Rock Park January 5 (RE). There were good numbers of Eastern Bluebird sightings, both singly and in flocks throughout the state this winter. Perhaps the bluebird nest box program, along with the mild winter, should take some credit! American Robins, on the other hand, were sparse through much of Connecticut, although 200 were at Shepaug Dam January 12 (m.ob.). One of the season's highlights was a male Varied Thrush in west Goshen February 4-11 (NC,JKi,BD,et al.).

Warm weather was also responsible for numerous reports of overwintering Gray Catbirds and Brown Thrashers. Catbirds were in New Milford December 3 (AD), in Fairfield December 16 - January 30 (CB), in Bridgeport December 27 (JF), in East Rock Park January 7, 19 and February 22 (JF,RE) and in Southbury January 19 (RN). Thrashers were in Simsbury January 6 (fide BK), at Larsen Sanctuary, Fairfield February 4 (JF) and in South Windsor February 18 (PD). American Pipits were seen on the Storrs CBC December 15, at Waterford Beach, Waterford January 13 (SM) and two at SISP January 16 (CB). There were at least 20 reports of Northern Shrike, the biggest invasion year in recent memory! (Also see the Fall Season report CW11:65 for the initial stages of this invasion).

WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

In spite of the mild winter, there were few warbler sightings during the period. A Common Yellowthroat on the Litchfield CBC December 16 was the only report received. A male Painted Bunting was observed sporadically at three Old Lyme feeders throughout the period. The bird was likely the same individual seen the previous winter and, according to some, casts suspicions on the bird's origin. Two Chipping Sparrows were at Larsen Sanctuary, Fairfield January 1 (JF). A Savannah Sparrow near the University of Connecticut campus, Storrs January 29 (WB,DR) was far from the coastal marshes where this species usually winters. For example, 70 Savannahs were in the Lordship marshes on the Stratford/Milford CBC December 27. The "Ipswich" race of Savannah was reported at Long Beach, Stratford,

on the same CBC (FM,MS,et al.), and at Milford Point January 5 (SKo). A Vesper Sparrow was at HBSP December 5 (NP). A White-crowned Sparrow seen at Short Beach, Stratford January 12 (SM) may have been the same bird seen on the December 27 Stratford /Milford CBC (BK,et al.). Two White-crowned Sparrows were in Lordship marsh January 14 (NC). It was a good year for Lapland Longspur at HBSP where birds were seen December 5- February 2, peaking at 12 January 6 (JF). A single longspur was at Storrs January 1 (SR) and again late in the month (GC). Storrs also hosted a Snow Bunting in late January (GC), while 65 were at Milford Point January 5 (SKo) and a whopping 226 were at SISP February 25 (JF). Over 100 Red-winged Blackbirds in Farmington January 10 (MC) were unusual for the area in mid-winter. Early migrants of this species were noted in Redding February 8 (TB). Eastern Meadowlark has declined as a wintering bird in the state; therefore six at Huntington State Park, Redding January 1 (TB) were a welcome start to the new year. The only other report was a bird in Sherman December 31 (RN,DR). A Rusty Blackbird was reported in Farmington January 10 (MC). A Northern Oriole was at a Wilton feeder through December 10 (fide FM).

It was another slow winter for northern finches. Purple Finches were noted on some of the winter bird feeder survey forms, but the high was but five birds in Goshen February 5 (DR,JZ) and some usually reliable feeding stations did not report any. Common Redpoll was reported only from Winchester where five were present February 4 (AD). Evening Grosbeaks were slightly more common with a high of 76 birds in Barkhamsted December 22 (JF,SM). The majority of the grosbeaks remained in the northern part of the state through the period. Pine Siskins were also few and far between with several reports from northern feeding stations and one reporting 25-30 at a feeder in Cos Cob through the period (DC).

Observers; Contributors (boldface):

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71 Gracey Road, Canton, CT 06019

Corrections:

Volume 11, No.1, page 14, under notes should read:

* Adapted from Noon et al. (1987).

Volume 11, No.1, page 16, the first title in the Table should read:

Open Water

- Area (km²)

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

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Guide for Contributors

Preparation of Manuscripts:

The editors welcome submission of articles and notes for the *Connecticut Warbler*. Manuscripts should be typed double spaced on one side of the sheet only, with ample margins on all sides accompanied with an IBM disk, if possible. Style of the manuscript should follow general usage in recent issues. All manuscripts receive peer review.

Illustrations:

The editors welcome submission of line artwork of Connecticut and regional birds. Black and white photographs of particular interest will also be considered, but tend to print at less than optimum quality. Line art should be submitted as good-quality photographic prints or in original form. All originals and prints will be returned promptly after publication prints are made.

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

Summer 1991

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ABOUT OUR COVER ARTIST

Nicole Kohut

"Yellow-headed Blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*)"

We are pleased to have another drawing by Nicole Kohut grace our front cover. Nicole has been able to show her love of wildlife through her fine drawings. She has won awards for her work in several Connecticut cities and has recently exhibited her drawings for a second time at the Connecticut Audubon Center in Fairfield. This past summer she attended Robert Bateman's Master Class in Colorado Springs, CO, which she called an "exciting experience."

THE 1991 SUMMER BIRD COUNT

Joseph Zeranski

Nineteen ninety-one ushered in COA sponsored Summer Bird Counts (SBC's) for Connecticut. Modeled on and resembling Christmas Bird Counts (CBC's), except for their balmy days and singing birds, these counts are much more fun.

The first CBC type census during the breeding season was conducted in Captree, Long Island in 1972. Beginning with the Greenwich-Stamford Count in 1976, Connecticut completed a season-high three SBC's during 1990. This year, COA coordinated a statewide program to promote, organize and publish summer bird counts, and five SBC's were held. The Storrs Count experienced its second year, while Hartford and New Haven were initiated this year. Well on their way to establishing their own distinctive patterns of bird distribution are the Greenwich-Stamford Count and the Woodbury-Roxbury Count. Two other SBC's did not progress beyond the planning stage, although there are hopes for 1992. COA is committed to encouraging the counts, believing they will become popular and invaluable research tools, but it will take a few years before SBC's achieve the consistency of their winter counterparts.

One hundred sixty-nine species were reported on Count Days (CD) in 1991. Of these, 147 are considered current or recent nesters, two potential nesters, two regular summer visitors and eighteen late migrants (see table). Three species, Ruddy Turnstone, Common Nighthawk and Yellow-breasted Chat, occurred only as Count Period (CP) birds this year. Counts averaged 30 observers, 12,828 individual birds, about 118 species (coastal - 132, inland - 109) and 125 party hours (PH). Three new species, Piping Plover, Common Black-headed Gull and Monk Parakeet, were added to the 213 seen from 1976 through last year.

Over 140 observers took to the field and were rewarded with fine birding conditions (if a bit hot some afternoons). These committed and competent participants deserve many thanks and much credit for their time and effort.

Many observers expressed great satisfaction at the variety and numbers of birds they encountered and said they looked forward to re-doing their areas and getting those "should have been found" birds next year. Christmas Bird Count veterans, new to SBC's, found these summer counts much more enjoyable than they had anticipated. Although much time will be spent interpreting the results to improve

our understanding of nesting population changes, for most birders SBC's are basically fun and challenging and, within the bounds of accurate censusing, this is as it should be.

A co-high 144 species (same as in 1989) were seen by 43 observers during Greenwich-Stamford's 16th year. The newly-initiated New Haven SBC's 38 participants totalled 120 species. Inland, the Woodbury-Roxbury Count's 36 birders reported 126 species during its 14th year. The 15 observers in Storrs found 106, while the 17 people on the new Hartford Count noted 93 species.

The 77 species common to all five counts (see table) on Count Day plus the 17 seen on all but one count (either on Count Day or during Count Period) comprise the present SBCs' nucleus of 94 species. These are fairly widespread summer residents and visitors and are present in almost all areas. Fourteen species were seen only on the two coastal counts, while four other species were reported only from the two inland counts with the greatest elevations (Woodbury-Roxbury and Storrs). Nine species were seen on all counts except for Hartford in the Connecticut Valley, and another 30 species, found on only one count, consisted mainly of late migrants or of local to rare nesters.

Eighteen historic nesters (including Tricolored Heron, Cattle Egret, Blue-winged Teal, Hooded and Common Merganser, Common Moorhen & Golden-winged Warbler), five potential nesters, 22 late migrants and one summer vagrant, all found on previous SBCs, were not observed in 1991. The distribution of individual species is not random but reflects predictable and "natural" patterns that are the result of factors that include migration periods, the likelihood of various summer vagrants being present, extensions into the state of more northern or southern nesting ranges, and the presence and absence of habitats.

Occasionally, it is interesting to speculate about the relative abundance of our summer birds. These data are shown in the table under "Rel. Ab." Once SBC's become better established and more regularly performed, the significance of changes in relative abundance will become clearer. Precipitous drops or even gradual declines in a species' numbers could be early warning signs of serious problems, while prolonged increases that represent growing populations may indicate other favorable or unfavorable factors. It is well to keep in mind that year to year fluctuations, additional counts, changes in coverage, and significant alterations in censusing accuracy may also affect relative abundance figures.

The historic (pre-1991) totals deserve greater in-depth analysis than can be provided in this essay. Yet, to put the 1991 numbers in perspective and to give the reader insights into their significance,

previous earlier SBC results are given in the table at the end of this article. It may be useful to discuss briefly, as a sort of benchmark, the 1991 totals of certain species, specifically those which are tenuous nesters, are apparently experiencing population swings (or have recently done so), or are merely interesting.

Four Pied-billed Grebes were found along the Connecticut River and only there. Increasing for at least a decade, Double-crested Cormorants totalled 518 birds this summer. It is difficult to predict how long this expansion might continue and when numbers will stabilize. A total of seven Least Bitterns was reported on three of the five SBC's. This may suggest that observers are awfully good at ferreting them out, or just possibly that these nesters may not be as rare as generally believed. Summering Great Blue Herons, rare breeders but regular vagrants, totalled 34 birds on the five counts. This summer, Great Egret numbers equalled 3/4 of the totals for Snowy Egret, undoubtedly a greater proportion than formerly. A single Little Blue Heron was reported. Two hundred twenty nine Black-crowned Night Herons were counted along the coast, none elsewhere. Three Glossy Ibis were found on a single coastal count.

Always of interest, often commented upon and sometimes a cause for concern, Canada Goose numbers reached 2299. American Black Ducks, essentially coastal, numbered less than 10% of the more widespread Mallards (153 compared to 1634), historically a more western species. Strong concerns remain about Black Duck being gradually supplanted by Mallards. One Gadwall was reported.

Turkey Vultures, having increased steadily after being extirpated in the 19th century both as nesters and winterers, totalled 87 individuals and were spread throughout the state. Another group of birds to be carefully watched are the accipiters. They had reached very low nesting numbers by mid-century. Still scarce and elusive nesters, they have been found somewhat more regularly in recent decades, but their increase has been much more tentative than that of most other raptors. Cooper's Hawk and Goshawk were each reported in three SBC areas and Sharp-shinned Hawk in one. Red-shouldered Hawks, once commonplace nesters, were virtually extirpated by the early 1960's. This year, 16 were found on three SBCs, 15 in the two rural, most northwest and northeast counts. Of growing concern among ornithologists is the apparent rapid decline of the American Kestrel; eleven were seen on the three inland counts, while along the coast they were only CP birds.

The Wild Turkey has been re-established in the state within the last 20 years. This year brought a total of 20 on three SBC's, and a CP bird on another. Future counts will reveal whether its numbers and range

will stabilize. Another native bird is faring less well - one wonders how many of the nine Bobwhites reported were wild rather than released game birds.

Sixteen Virginia Rails were recorded by four SBC's, while three Soras were found on one count. Herring Gulls numbers nearly doubled those of Ring-billed Gull (a potential nester?), both expanding species. Most sightings were along the coast, with lesser numbers along the Connecticut River.

The Monk Parakeet made its first appearance on a SBC - three birds. The healthy population of this exotic species should be closely watched. Nineteen ninety-one was decidedly an "off" year for cuckoos, with only seven of each species identified. Great Horned and Barred Owl totals were almost identical. Common Nighthawk was found during two count periods, while its cousin, the Whip-poor-will, was recorded by three counts and totalled nine birds. Both species deserve careful monitoring. Some observers are concerned about Chimney Swift; 371 were counted. Eighteen Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were found on four of the five counts. A burgeoning species, virtually non-existent 25 years ago and still slowly spreading, Red-bellied Woodpecker numbered 116 on the five counts. The ratio of Hairy to Downy Woodpeckers was about one to four, and there is some feeling that the former might be declining due to competition with the more recently established Red-bellied Woodpecker. Increasing, but ever so gradually, 35 Pileated Woodpeckers were found across the state.

Not so many years ago nesting Acadian Flycatchers were few and far between; this year 27 birds were counted on three SBC's. A near look-alike and close relative, the Willow Flycatcher is expanding northward; 132 birds were observed in all count areas. Almost exclusively on the two upland (Woodbury/Roxbury and Storrs) counts, 80 Least Flycatchers, much reduced coastally in this century, were tallied. Nine Purple Martins were noted on two counts. Another nester experiencing a range increase, this one southward, is the Cliff Swallow; 42 individuals were noted on the two most western counts. Among all the swallows, Barn was the most common with Tree about half as abundant, followed by Northern Rough-winged and Bank. Fish Crows totalled 34 on all counts except Storrs. The Tufted Titmouse totalled about 75% of Black-capped Chickadee numbers. Thirteen Red-breasted Nuthatches, another southward expanding nester, were found on four SBC's, while 28 Brown Creepers were found in four areas.

Carolina Wren, a steadily increasing species, presumably benefiting from a series of very mild winters, was everywhere and totalled

247 birds. A northern nester, now spreading south, is Winter Wren, with 35 birds recorded on all counts except Hartford. The southern Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, although scarce in Hartford and New Haven, totalled 73 birds. Seemingly reassuring were 227 nesting Bluebirds, but none were found in New Haven. Seventeen Hermit Thrushes were found on three SBC's, a few in an unexpected location.

Since the mid 1960's, Northern Mockingbird has nested regularly in the state, spreading northeast and increasing tremendously in numbers. In 1991, 971 birds were found on the five counts. Both Brown Thrashers and their favorite habitat, overgrown thickets, seem to be following a slow, pervasive decline. Ninety-nine birds were observed this year. Our most numerous vireo, the Red-eyed, totalled 755 birds, 75% of which were found on the most established western counts (Greenwich-Stamford & Woodbury-Roxbury, which compiled 65% of the PHs).

Four "Brewster's Warblers" were seen - all in one count area. A former (and potential) nester, three Northern Parula's, were found on two counts. Magnolia and Black-throated Blue Warblers were each on just one count, Woodbury-Roxbury, while Yellow-rumped Warbler was on two. Primarily confined to the southwest, 132 Worm-eating Warblers were reported, but none at Hartford. Three Kentucky Warblers were on the Greenwich/Stamford count. Hooded (22) and Canada (17) Warblers were present in three areas. Seen only during CP was Yellow-breasted Chat, a bird which has decreased and become a rare nester in recent years.

First regularly nesting here in the 1940's, 1020 Northern Cardinals were found this year. Regularly nesting, but possibly decreasing, Rufous-sided Towhees numbered 463 birds. Savannah Sparrow was picked up in two locations. Localized along the coast, Sharp-tailed and Seaside Sparrows were found only in Greenwich-Stamford. Heavily dependent upon rich meadows and grassy fields, 231 Bobolinks and 53 Eastern Meadowlarks were found. Less than one tenth the number of Northern Orioles, 36 Orchard Orioles, a species which has undergone periodic expansions and contractions at this northern edge of its range, were noted on three counts. Just eight individuals of a northern nester, Purple Finch, were found in two count areas; it, too, bears watching.

These are just a few observations which seem most worthy of notice. Certainly there are others - every species has a different story to tell.

Compilers are urged to determine, using Breeding Bird Atlas data and other reliable reports, which species nest regularly, which

are late migrants or summer visitors, and which are potential, but unconfirmed nesters within their respective census areas. Such information will enable us to monitor subtle shifts in avian nesting populations within the state. A prompt investigation of a potential nester by a compiler may result in the confirmation of a new local nesting species. Compilers should also strive to become familiar with the ornithological histories of their areas. This will enable them to evaluate records in a proper time perspective.

The 1991 SBC's canvassed varied habitats in the state and a good cross section of its nesting avian population, but a few additional counts would help fill out the picture. The major entry route for southern nesting passerines expanding into the state is along the coast, whence they spread east and north, while herons, terns, gulls and shorebirds have, in recent decades, re-established themselves as nesters by expanding along the coast in a westerly direction. A second important route is through the northwest hills, a corridor for northern nesters moving into the state. Three well chosen SBC areas could monitor changes in these key areas quite effectively: one near the mouth of the Connecticut River, another near Connecticut's southeast corner, and one in the Cornwall-Norfolk area. Of course, any counts will contribute useful information, provided they are adequately staffed, continue over time, and produce reliable data.

To sum up, the 1991 SBC was an excellent beginning. Not only was it painless, it was actually a lot of fun, and it collected significant data for the very important, but often sadly neglected, breeding season. Like many good studies, it ended up posing more questions than it answered. Stay tuned - there will be more answers and more questions next June. See you then.

Acknowledgments:

I wish to express my grateful appreciation to the compilers who so ably organized the individual counts; without them we would be back at square one. Louis Bevier, Jay Kaplan, and Frank Mantlik have all generously assisted in making this a better essay. I wish to acknowledge the fine examples set by Steve Broker's CBC reports, which are tough acts to follow. Due to the gifted editorial talents of Julio de la Torre, this essay is far more readable than it would have been otherwise.

Finally, a strong word of appreciation is due Winnie Burkett, whose enthusiasm initiated this imaginative undertaking. Her regrettable move to Texas has left a large hole in COA ranks and she will be sorely missed.

INDIVIDUAL SBC SUMMARIES

Greenwich-Stamford Summer Bird Count (founded 1976)

Date: June 15 & 16, Sat & Sun; **Circle Center** (In creating the GSSBC in 1976, the GSCBC circle was squared to 15x15 miles along a north-south and east-west axis): 41° 05' N 73° 37' W ; **Area:** Greenwich, Stamford, Darien, & New Canaan (65% of area); in New York (35% of area), Port Chester, Rye, Armonk, and sections of White Plains & Bedford; **Weather:** 6/15 53° - 90°, clear and hazy, winds var-so 0 - 20 MPH; 6/16 66° - 91°, clear & hazy, wind var-so 0-16 MPH.

Species: CD 144 (109.1 % of 10 yr av [131], 77.7 % of 10 yr total [184], 73.3 % of pre 1991 cumulative total [195]) + 0 subsp + 1 hybr + 5 in CP (217 % of 10 yr ave [2.3]); **Total CD Individual Birds:** 23,722 (129% 10 yr av [18,345]); **Newly Confirmed Nesting:** 0; **New Species:** 2 (Solitary Sandpiper, Black-headed Gull; 48 % of prev 10 yr av increase [4.2]); **10 Yr Highs:** 2 (underlined in tables), **All Time Highs:** 39 (bold face in tables); **Lows** (* 10 year lows, others all time lows): 5 (Ring-necked Pheasant, Brown Creeper*, Rufous-sided Towhee, Rose-breasted Grosbeak*, Northern Oriole*); **Rarities** (reported on less than 4 yrs during prev 10 yrs' CDs): 14 (italicized in tables); **Missed Species:** Black-billed Cuckoo (1st miss after 14 yrs), Purple Finch (only 3rd miss in 16 years); **Comments:** nesting species in census area 122, unproven/potential nesters 1, regular non-breeding visitors 3, & migrants/accidental visitors 18.

Observers: 43 (shares 3rd lowest # in 10 yrs, 93.5% of 10 yr av [46]), **Pty Hrs:** 220 + 15 night (% of 10 yr av: NA); **Compilers:** Thomas W. Burke (235 Highland Rd, Rye, N.Y., 10580) & Gary Palmer (34 Field Rd., Cos Cob, Ct., 06807), **Participants:** Tom Anderson, John Askilsen, Tom Baptist, Trudy Battaly, Gail Benson, Louis Bevier, Lyle Brinker, Canny Clark, Catherine Crean, Julio de la Torre, Townsend Dickinson, Patrick Dugan, Andrew Farnsworth, Mel Flaherty, Anne French, Roger Frost, Jay Gartner, Kathie Goodblood, Deborah Koester, Robert Kurtz, Claudia Leff, Frank Mantlik, Janet Mehmel, Brian O'Tool, Drew Panko, Matt Popp, Charles Pettengill, Fred Purnell, Polly Rothstein, Bob Shriber, Alice Smith, Bruce Smith, Andy Spar, Jerry Stanley, Barbara Steineck, Paul Steineck, Anne Swain, Bill Van Loan, Jr., James Vellozzi, Steve Walters, & Joe Zeranski.

Hartford Summer Bird Count (founded 1991)

Date: June 29 & 30, Sat & Sun; **Circle Center:** 41° 46' N 72° 40' W; **Area:** Hartford, West Hartford, Bloomfield, Windsor, South Windsor,

Manchester, East Hartford, Wethersfield & Rocky Hill;

Weather: 6/29- 82°-94°, hazy, hot, humid, 6/30- AM overcast, rain cool, 67°;

Species: CD 93 + 0 subsp + 1 in CP; **Total CD Individual Birds:** 4,883;

Observers: 17, **Pty Hrs:** 39; **Compiler:** Kathie Murphy (274 Morningside Dr. East, Bristol, Ct. 06010), **Participants:** Bill Altmann, Steve Hamilton, Jay Kaplan, Jeff Kittle, Betty Kleiner, Gil Kleiner, Brian Klienman, Larry Lunden, Patsy Mason, Rob Mirer, Jim Moore, Warren Pease, Dave Porter, Sue Pratheroe, Dave Rosgen, & Chris Sprague.

New Haven Summer Bird Count (founded 1991)

Date: June 15 & 16, Sat & Sun; **Circle Center:** 48° 18' N 72° 56' W; **Area:** New Haven, North Haven, East Haven, Branford, Orange, Milford, West Haven & (in part) Woodbridge; **Weather:** 6/29- 60°-88°, mostly sunny, humid, increasingly cloudy, winds W. 5 mph; 6/30- AM 65°-88°, PM increasingly cloudy, light T storms, clearing, 89°-92°, winds 5 mph;

Species: CD 120 + 0 subsp + 0 hybr + 4 in CP; **Total CD Individual Birds:** 14,116; **Comments:** 33 species found nesting;

Observers: 38, **Pty Hrs:** 112 + 2 night; **Compiler:** Steve Mayo (136 Beach Ave., Milford, Ct. 06460), **Participants:** Lee Aimesbury, Marion Aimesbury, Henry Berliner, Richard Bernard, Nancy Borgemeister, Peter Borgemeister, Andrew Brand, Michelle Brand, Linda Broker, Steve Broker, Janice Bruce, Jerry Connolly, Richard English, Jeff Fengler, John Hamilton, John Holland, Pat Lahey, Bob Lea, Carol Lemmon, Gary Lemmon, Mary Marro, Patrick Martha, William Martha, Tom Mason, Jennie Noll, Mary Respoli, Lee Schlesinger, Ray Scory, Bill Severance, Dori Sosensky, Sandy Stetson, Will Stoddard, Kim Stoner, Tony Tortora, John Wagenblatt, Jeff Young, & Susan Yurkus.

Storrs Summer Bird Count (founded 1990)

Date: June 15 & 16, Sat & Sun; **Circle Center:** 41° 48' N 72° 15' W; **Area:** Mansfield, Ashford, Chaplin, Willington, Tolland, Coventry & Windham; **Weather:** 60°-85°, light breeze, (6/16) rain 3-6 PM; **Species:** CD 106 (96.4 % of 1991 total [110]) + 0 subsp + 0 hybr + 1 unidentified + 0 in CP; **Total CD Individual birds:** 6,734 (100.98% of 1st yr totals [6,669]); **New Species:** 8 (Common Loon, Double-crested Cormorant, Cooper's Hawk, Ring-necked Pheasant, Wild Turkey, Whip-poor-will, Alder Flycatcher, & Northern Parula);

Comments: 31 nesting species reported in 1991;

Observers: 15(125% of 1990 total [12]), **Pty Hrs:** 65.75 + 3 night(56.375% of 1990 total[82]); **Compiler:** Winifred Burkett (17 Southwood Rd., Storrs, Ct. 06268), **Participants:** Louis Bevier, George Clark, Buzz Devine, Bill Gaunya, Sam Higgins, Dolores Hilding, John McDonald, Carol Philips, Bob Pirrie, Steve Rogers, Avo Somers, Mark Szantyr, & Vicki Wetherall.

Woodbury-Roxbury Summer Bird Count (founded 1978)

Date: Sun, June 2; **Circle Center:** 41° 32' N 73° 17' W; **Area:** Woodbury, Roxbury, New Milford, Washington, Southbury & Bridgewater; **Weather:** clear, sunny, 60°-80°;

Species: CD 126 (101.6% of 10 yr av [124], 90.7% of 10 yr total [139], 80.8% of pre 1991 cumulative total [156]) + 0 subsp + 0 hybr + 0 in CP; **Total CD Individual Birds:** 14,686 (107.2% of 10 yr av [13,698]); **Newly Confirmed Nesting:** 0; **New Species:** 2 (Yellow-bellied Flycatcher & Fish Crow) (80% of 10 yr av increase[2.5]); **10 Yr Highs:** 0, **All Time Highs:** 18 (bold face in tables); **Lows** (* 10 year lows, others all time lows): 4 (Yellow-billed Cuckoo*, Red-winged Blackbird*, Eastern Meadowlark, Northern Oriole*); **Rarities** (reported on less than 4 yrs during prev 10 yrs' CDs): 2 (italicized in tables); **Missed Species:** Northern Goshawk (only 3rd miss in 14 years); **Comments:** approximate nesting species in census area 112, nesting outside area 1, unproven/potential nesters 4, regular non-breeding visitors 3, & migrants/accidental visitors 6.

Observers: 36(105.9% of 10 yr av[34]), **Pty Hrs:** 169 (99.7% of prev 4 yr av[169.5]); **Compiler:** Ed Hagen (47 Sycamore Rd., Woodbury, Ct., 06798), **Participants:** Jan Amalavage, Lorain Amalavage, Guy Badger, Ed Briggs, Polly Brody, John Brown, Mildred Brown, Mary Ann Currie, Neil Currie, Buzz Devine, Angela Dimmitt, Bob Erling, Larry Fischer, Ethyl Follet, Emily Gibbs, Jon Gibbs, Rich Gibbs, Scott Gibbs, Sharon Gibbs, Buck Jenks, Carol Longstreth, John Longstreth, Russ Naylor, Dave Rosgen, Bob Shirk, Nancy Shirk, Carol Sidel, Mark Szantyr, Darcy Thurott, Art Titus, Dave Tripp, Tammy Weaven, Geoff Wilcox, Chris Wood, Francis Zygmunt.

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163 Field Point Rd., Greenwich, CT 06830

SUMMER BIRD COUNT RESULTS 1991

SBC results are listed alphabetically from left to right after each species name. **Bold face Species** denote 1991 additions. **Status** denotes statewide nesting status. N = nesting now or in recent past, not necessarily on every count or every year; PN = potential nester; LM = regular non breeding summerer; S = regular summer vagrant. **Rel-Ab** (Relative abundance) is the number of individuals reported per 10 party hours of statewide coverage. **Previous Counts** are historic data from Greenwich/Stamford and Woodbury/Roxbury; listed is the number of counts this bird was reported on previously/average number seen for years reported. The 1990 Storrs SBC and 1980-82 Westport SBC totals are omitted due to space limitations. CP stands for Count Period (species only recorded from 3 days before to 3 days afterwards), but not on count days (CD); a bold face number surpasses the previous high number, or is new to this count. An underlined number for a species denotes a rarity (that is seen on four or less counts during the previous 10 years).

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THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

SPECIES	STATUS	1991 INDIVIDUAL SBC RESULTS:							PREVIOUS COUNTS	
		Greenwich Stamford	Hartford	New Haven	Storrs	Woodbury Roxbury	Total 1991	Rel-Ab 1991	Greenwich Stamford 1976-90	Woodbury Roxbury 1978-90
RED-THROATED LOON	LM									1/1
COMMON LOON	PN	3		CP	1		4	0.06		10/2.4 1/1
LOON SPECIES										1/1
PIED-BILLED GREBE	N		4				4	0.06		1/1 2/1
HORNED GREBE	LM									1/1
GREAT CORMORANT	LM									1/1
DOUBLE-CR CORMORANT	N	360	8	149	1		518	8.28		14/117 4/10
AMERICAN BITTERN	N									1/1
LEAST BITTERN	N	1	4	2			7	0.11		2/1
GREAT BLUE HERON	N	16	2	4	7	5	34	0.54		14/4.4 9/3.6
GREAT EGRET	N	90		7			97	1.55		15/32
SNOWY EGRET	N	100		29			129	2.06		15/55
LITTLE BLUE HERON	N	1					1	0.02		13/1.2
TRICOLORED HERON	N									1/1
CATTLE EGRET	N									8/1.8
GREEN-BACKED HERON	N	52	8	22	19	15	116	1.85		15/33 13/7.9
BLACK-CR NIGHT-HERON	N	162		67			229	3.66		15/68

YELLOW-CR NIGHT-HERON	N	5					5	0.08	15/5.1	
GLOSSY IBIS	N	3					3	0.05	7/1.9	
MUTE SWAN	N	195	92			33	320	5.11	15/77	7/5.0
SNOW GOOSE	LM									1/1
BRANT	LM	7					7	0.11	8/12	
CANADA GOOSE	N	1621	90	171	55	362	2299	36.74	15/1278	13/286
WOOD DUCK	N	58	24	19	29	57	187	2.99	15/43	13/25
GREEN-WINGED TEAL	LM								1/1	
AMERICAN BLACK DUCK	N	128		25			153	2.45	15/58	9/4.2
MALLARD	N	896	163	373	99	103	1634	26.11	15/526	13/115
AM BLACK DUCKxMALLARD									4/3.0	
BLUE-WINGED TEAL	N								1/1	
NORTHERN SHOVELER	LM								2/1	
GADWALL	M	1					1	0.02	3/1.3	
AMERICAN WIGEON	LM								2/1	
CANVASBACK	LM								1/1	
RING-NECKED DUCK	LM								CP	
GREATER SCAUP	LM	6	4				10	0.06	10/5.3	
LESSER SCAUP	LM								1/1	
OLDSQUAW	LM								3/1	
WHITE-WINGED SCOTER	LM								*	
BLACK SCOTER	LM								1/1	
COMMON GOLDENEYE	LM	1		8			9	0.14	3/1.3	
BUFFLEHEAD	LM	5					5	0.08	5/1.2	
HOODED MERGANSER	N								1/1	1/1
COMMON MERGANSER	N									3/1.6
RED-BREADED MERGANSER	LM	1					1	0.02	2/1.5	
RUDDY DUCK	LM								2/2	
TURKEY VULTURE	N	7	2	17	5	56	87	1.39	15/8.9	13/33
OSPREY	N	7		1			8	0.13	4/1.8	2/1

SPECIES	STATUS	1991 INDIVIDUAL SBC RESULTS:						PREVIOUS COUNTS		
		Greenwich Stamford	Hartford	New Haven	Storrs	Woodbury Roxbury	Total 1991	Rel-Ab 1991	Greenwich Stamford 1976-90	Woodbury Roxbury 1978-90
BALD EAGLE	PN								3/1	5/1.2
NORTHERN HARRIER	PN								CP	
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK	N	2					2	0.03	2/1	9/1.8
COOPER'S HAWK	N	1			1	2	4	0.06	3/1	11/3.9
NORTHERN GOSHAWK	N	4		1		1	6	0.10	5/1.4	11/2.8
ACCIPITER SPECIES									6/1	
RED-SHOULDERED HAWK	N	1			5	10	16	0.26	8/1.5	10/6.3
BROAD-WINGED HAWK	N	8	2	4	2	7	23	0.37	15/8.1	13/7.9
RED-TAILED HAWK	N	21	11	14	4	24	74	1.18	15/15	13/25
BUTEO SPECIES			5						2/2.5	
AMERICAN KESTREL	N	CP	2	CP	4	5	11	0.18	10/4.6	13/5.2
CHUKAR									4/8	
RING-NECKED PHEASANT	N	30	2	2	1	16	51	0.82	15/60	13/7.4
GREEN PHEASANT									1/1	
RUFFED GROUSE	N	13			1	10	24	0.38	15/18	13/13
WILD TURKEY	N		CP	5	1	14	20	0.32		4/17.3
NORTHERN BOBWHITE	N	1	1		4	3	9	0.14	8/4.9	5/2.8
BLACK RAIL	PN								1/1	
CLAPPER RAIL	N	9					9	0.14	14/3.4	
VIRGINIA RAIL	N	4	1	1		10	16	0.26	9/2.7	9/5.2
SORA	N					3	3	0.05	1/1(1)	2/1
COMMON MOORHEN	N								1/1	
AMERICAN COOT	LM								1/2	
BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER	LM	1					1	0.02	2/1	
SEMIPALMATED PLOVER	LM	6		2			8	0.13	3/1	
PIPING PLOVER	N			21			21	0.34		

KILLDEER	N	69	31	50	13	43	206	3.29	15/24	13/30
AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER	N	2					2	0.03	2/2	
GREATER YELLOWLEGS	LM	1		1			2	0.03	3/1.7	2/1
LESSER YELLOWLEGS	LM								1/1	
SOLITARY SANDPIPER	LM	1					1	0.02		6/1.2
SPOTTED SANDPIPER	N	5	1	6	1	10	23	0.37	11/2.1	13/8.6
RUDDY TURNSTONE	LM	CP					CP		1/1	
SEMPALMATED SANDPIPER	LM	2		15			17	0.27	1/1	
LEAST SANDPIPER	LM	2					2	0.03	1/1	1/1
WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER	LM								1/1	1/1
CALIDRIS SPECIES										1/1
DUNLIN	LM			1			1	0.02	CP	1/1
SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER	LM								1/2	
AMERICAN WOODCOCK	N	2		CP			2	0.03	15/3.5	12/3.8
LAUGHING GULL	S	39		9			48	0.77	15/4.1	
COM BLACK-HEADED GULL	LM	1					1	0.02		
BONAPARTE'S GULL	LM	1					1	10.02	2/11	
RING-BILLED GULL	S	157	52	294	1	1	505	8.07	15/167	9/19
HERRING GULL	N	663	152	304	1	3	1123	17.95	15/347	12/22
LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL	LM								1/1	
GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL	N	63	10	68		2	143	2.29	15/42	4/9.5
GULL SPECIES									1/1	
CASPIAN TERN	S								1/1	
COMMON TERN	N	99		20			119	1.90	15/48	
LEAST TERN	N	61		255			316	5.05	5/81	
BLACK SKIMMER	PN								5/2.6	
ROCK DOVE	N	485	68	269	102	189	1113	17.79	15/299	13/132
MOURNING DOVE	N	526	188	456	186	370	1726	27.58	15/378	13/425
MONK PARAKEET	N			3			3	0.05		
BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO	N				2	5	7	0.11	14/11	13/9

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		Greenwich Stamford	Hartford	New Haven	Storrs	Woodbury Roxbury	Total 1991	Rel-Ab 1991	Greenwich Stamford 1976-90	Woodbury Roxbury 1978-90
YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO	N	2		3	1	1	7	0.11	14/38	13/14
CUCKOO SPECIES					1		1		12/10	
BARN OWL	N								*	
EASTERN SCREECH-OWL	N	14				9	23	0.37	15/22	13/12
GREAT HORNED OWL	N	9		4	3	1	17	0.27	15/6.2	10/3.7
BARRED OWL	N	2		1	2	11	16	0.26	10/3	12/6.9
NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL	N									1/1
COMMON NIGHTHAWK	N	CP		CP			CP		11/3.7	4/2.3
WHIP-POOR-WILL	N			3	1	5	9	0.14	8/4.6	13/5.5
CHIMNEY SWIFT	N	70	18	70	63	150	371	5.93	15/73	13/148
RUBY-THR HUMMINGBIRD	N	6		4	1	7	18	0.29	15/2.6	12/4.9
BELTED KINGFISHER	N	15	11	8	2	21	57	0.91	15/15	13/15
RED-HEADED WOODPECKER	PN								CP	
RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER	N	66	1	13	21	15	116	1.85	15/28	10/6.3
YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER	N									3/1.7
DOWNY WOODPECKER	N	143	38	52	30	57	320	5.11	15/128	13/53
HAIRY WOODPECKER	N	42	2	9	11	20	84	1.34	15/31	13/18
NORTHERN FLICKER	N	210	51	95	42	127	525	8.39	15/186	13/145
PILEATED WOODPECKER	N	21	2	1	1	10	35	0.56	15/13	11/6.6
OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER	N									5/1.4
EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE	N	100	7	18	52	94	271	4.33	15/52	13/82
YELLOW-BEL FLYCATCHER	LM					1	1	0.02	1/1	
ACADIAN FLYCATCHER	N	14		2		11	27	0.43	8/4.4	13/4.5
ALDER FLYCATCHER	N				2	7	9	0.14	10/2.0	11/4.0
WILLOW FLYCATCHER	N	48	2	34	11	37	132	2.11	15/32	12/19
LEAST FLYCATCHER	N	1	1	5	27	46	80	1.28	14/4.0	13/46

EMPIDONAX SPECIES									1/1	
EASTERN PHOEBE	N	107	20	56	68	169	420	6.71	15/67	13/117
GREAT CR FLYCATCHER	N	53	11	20	29	71	184	2.94	15/49	13/61
EASTERN KINGBIRD	N	102	32	70	51	101	356	5.69	15/101	13/115
HORNED LARK	N								1/2(2)	
PURPLE MARTIN	N	8		1			9	0.14	8/1	7/23
TREE SWALLOW	N	125	185	78	80	79	547	8.74	15/32	13/80
NO ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW	N	49	20	42	11	23	145	2.32	15/44	13/39
BANK SWALLOW	N	1	28	16	39	41	125	2.00	13/2.6	13/189
CLIFF SWALLOW	N	28				19	47	0.75	4/18	13/19
BARN SWALLOW	N	335	114	210	102	285	1046	16.72	15/310	13/300
BLUE JAY	N	432	76	199	108	249	1064	17.00	15/387	13/298
AMERICAN CROW	N	771	222	491	201	576	2261	36.13	15/560	13/483
FISH CROW	N	9	5	19		1	34	0.54	15/12	
BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE	N	384	48	186	183	260	1061	16.96	15/378	13/270
TUFTED TITMOUSE	N	329	35	130	115	215	824	13.17	15/260	13/143
RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH	N	3	4	4		2	13	0.21	8/2.4	5/1.4
WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH	N	84	14	15	39	45	197	3.15	15/115	13/39
BROWN CREEPER	N	3	4		10	11	28	0.45	15/19.2	11/9.4
CAROLINA WREN	N	137	4	53	24	29	247	3.95	15/18	11/4.6
HOUSE WREN	N	206	56	39	81	187	569	9.09	15/162	13/194
WINTER WREN	N	11		7	5	12	35	0.56	9/6.1	10/3.8
SEDGE WREN	N								1/1	
MARSH WREN	N	23	8	24			55	0.88	14/6.6	3/1
GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET	N	5					5	0.08	13/3.2	1/1
BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER	N	13	2	2	10	46	73	1.17	14/6.7	13/25
EASTERN BLUEBIRD	N	45	56		23	103	227	3.63	15/32	13/52
VEERY	N	267	4	39	100	192	602	9.62	15/180	13/158
SWAINSON'S THRUSH	LM								1/1	4/1
HERMIT THRUSH	N			2	9	6	17	0.27	3/1.7	11/6.3

SPECIES	STATUS	1991 INDIVIDUAL SBC RESULTS:							PREVIOUS COUNTS	
		Greenwich Stamford	Hartford	New Haven	Storrs	Woodbury Roxbury	Total 1991	Rel-Ab 1991	Greenwich Stamford 1976-90	Woodbury Roxbury 1978-90
WOOD THRUSH	N	315	28	106	71	263	783	12.51	15/210	13/236
AMERICAN ROBIN	N	1547	319	826	401	1193	4286	68.49	15/834	13/980
GRAY CATBIRD	N	1070	117	642	309	493	2631	42.05	15/670	13/424
NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD	N	236	92	312	120	211	971	15.52	15/157	13/159
BROWN THRASHER	N	39	3	21	15	21	99	1.58	15/64	13/32
CEDAR WAXWING	N	110	62	109	105	271	657	10.50	15/58	13/132
EUROPEAN STARLING	N	1873	681	1872	495	777	5698	91.06	15/1181	13/831
WHITE-EYED VIREO	N	36		5	3	2	46	0.74	15/26	8/2.9
SOLITARY VIREO	N	2	1			10	13	0.21	7/2.9	10/11
YELLOW-THROATED VIREO	N	50	3	4	20	39	116	1.85	15/23	13/40
WARBLING VIREO	N	71	17	11	38	92	229	3.66	15/34	13/78
RED-EYED VIREO	N	251	23	81	73	327	755	12.07	15/175	13/224
BLUE-WINGED WARBLER	N	165	3	90	101	190	549	8.77	15/163	13/170
"BREWSTER'S" WARBLER		4					4		2/1.5	
"LAWRENCE'S" WARBLER									6/1.2	
GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER	N									3/2
TENNESSEE WARBLER	LM									3/1.3
NASHVILLE WARBLER	N					1	1	0.02	1/1	6/1.7
NORTHERN PARULA	PN				1	2	3	0.05	6/1.2	8/1.5
YELLOW WARBLER	N	459	26	191	148	339	1163	18.59	15/389	13/340
CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER	N	32	2	4	40	166	244	3.90	15/24	13/90
MAGNOLIA WARBLER	N					1	1	0.02		9/1.6
BLACK-THR BLUE WARBLER	N					1	1	0.02		6/2.0
YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER	N			1		8	9	0.14	1/5	9/3.6
BLACK-THR GREEN WARBLER	N	15		11	10	19	55	0.88	13/6.5	12/14
BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER	N			1	3	9	13	0.21	1/1	13/7.9

PINE WARBLER	N	19	4	14	11	16	64	1.02	6/9.3	7/3.0
PRAIRIE WARBLER	N	24	5	24	51	78	182	2.91	15/25	13/70
BLACKPOLL WARBLER	LM	1				1	2	0.03	4/1.5	4/3.6
CERULEAN WARBLER	N					2	2	0.03	1/1	10/2.9
BLACK-&-WHITE WARBLER	N	163	1	40	49	107	360	5.75	15/113	13/87
AMERICAN REDSTART	N	22	10	10	80	190	312	12.47	15/16	13/131
WORM-EATING WARBLER	N	94		12	8	18	132	2.11	15/54	13/9.9
OVENBIRD	N	220	12	106	108	239	685	10.95	15/178	13/205
NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH	N	1		3	1	8	13	0.21	9/2.1	13/7.7
LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH	N	51	1		9	54	115	1.84	15/25	13/37
KENTUCKY WARBLER	N	3					3	0.05	8/3.1	5/1.2
MOURNING WARBLER	LM					1	1	0.02		5/1.2
COMMON YELLOWTHROAT	N	353	64	161	149	332	1059	16.92	15/304	13/299
HOODED WARBLER	N	10		7		5	22	0.35	15/8.5	10/4.3
CANADA WARBLER	N	5			2	10	17	0.27	14/4.3	13/8.6
YELLOW-BREADED CHAT	N	CP					CP		13/2.5	2/1
SCARLET Tanager	N	104	20	31	56	127	338	5.40	15/94	13/88
NORTHERN CARDINAL	N	377	73	224	105	241	1020	16.30	15/255	13/226
ROSE-BREADED GROSBEAK	N	87	3	23	39	89	241	3.85	15/110	13/99
INDIGO BUNTING	N	73	20	31	12	83	219	3.50	15/64	13/63
RUFIOUS-SIDED TOWHEE	N	126	16	68	78	175	463	7.40	15/187	13/170
CHIPPING SPARROW	N	504	73	70	154	313	1114	17.80	15/196	13/228
FIELD SPARROW	N	30	20	12	31	94	187	2.99	15/47	13/72
SAVANNAH SPARROW	N		4			8	12	0.19	5/2.6	13/17
GRASSHOPPER SPARROW	N								7/1.4	1/2
SHARP-TAILED SPARROW	N	10					10	0.16	15/5.9	
SEASIDE SPARROW	N	1					1	0.02	5/3.8	
SONG SPARROW	N	748	227	290	239	515	2019	32.27	15/468	13/492
SWAMP SPARROW	N	22	18	5	12	40	97	1.55	15/24	13/34
WHITE-THROATED SPARROW	N			1			1	0.02	3/1	4/1.3

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		Greenwich Stamford	Hartford	New Haven	Storrs	Woodbury Roxbury	Total 1991	Rel-Ab 1991	Greenwich Stamford 1976-90	Woodbury Roxbury 1978-90
BOBOLINK	N		6		24	201	231	3.69	12/4.8	13/201
RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD	N	791	272	919	452	606	3040	48.58	15/796	13/883
EASTERN MEADOWLARK	N	CP	1		26	26	53	0.85	15/8.3	13/45
COMMON GRACKLE	N	1266	216	1467	295	546	3790	60.57	15/964	13/589
BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD	N	275	78	148	127	210	838	13.39	15/113	13/145
ORCHARD ORIOLE	N	28		5		3	36	0.58	13/13	13/6.7
NORTHERN ORIOLE	N	150	21	83	92	190	536	8.57	15/217	13/228
PURPLE FINCH	N				4	4	8	0.13	13/2.2	13/15
HOUSE FINCH	N	859	161	421	180	426	2047	32.71	15/378	13/346
PINE SISKIN	N								2/4.5	2/1.4
AMERICAN GOLDFINCH	N	266	91	160	72	155	744	11.89	15/196	13/200
HOUSE SPARROW	N	956	182	678	211	427	2454	39.22	15/530	13/276
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS		23722	4883	14116	6734	14686	64632	1032.9	17,748 (av)	12,880(av)
PARTY HOURS		235	39	114	68.75	169	625.75		NA	NA
Individual birds per PH		101	125	124	98	87	103		NA	NA
OBSERVERS		43	17	38	15	36	148		46 (av)	32 (av)
Individual birds per observer		552	287	371	449	420	437		386 (av)	403 (av)
TOTAL CD SPECIES		144	93	120	106	126	169		195 (total)	156 (total)
									130 (av)	121 (av)
Count Period		5	1	4	0	0	3			
subspecies		0	0	0	0	0	0			
hybrids		1	0	0	0	0	1			
unidentified		0	0	0	1	0	1			
TOTAL SPECIES (CD & CP)		149	94	124	106	126	172			

1991 Species Totals: 169 CD (147 N, 2 PN, 18 LM, & 2 S; 79.4% of the pre 1991 CD total {213 +3 CP + 11 other forms})

* Westport Count 1980-82

COMPUTERIZATION: Joe Zeranski & Claudia Leff

BOOK REVIEW

The Island Called Faulkner's, Joel E. Helander, 1988. Published by the author, Guilford, CT. Pp. ix + 1-161. ISBN 0-935600-09-4. \$34.95. Available from retail bookstores in south-central Connecticut such as the Yale Co-op or directly from the author-publisher, Joel Helander, 36 Norton Ave., Guilford, CT 06437, \$34.95 plus \$1.60 shipping.

The subject of this book, located in Long Island Sound, approximately three miles from the mainland, would appropriately be included in any list of Connecticut sites that have been important for bird study over many years. Joel Helander has provided a readable and entertaining account of the history of this island in Guilford. Although not primarily ornithological, the book includes much information about bird studies and related topics.

Helander has done well in providing background on the name of the island. He reports an original Indian name of Massancummock, meaning "place of the great fish hawks," presumably referring to Ospreys. All known maps and writings in the English language before 1795 use the name Falcon Island, but reasons for that choice of name remain unknown. The name "Faulkner's" used by Helander is, he reports, first known from 1801 in a deed by which the island was conveyed from private ownership to the federal government for the purpose of constructing a lighthouse. The reasons for that name change are uncertain, and Helander presents several possible explanations. There remains a discrepancy between Helander's choice of the Helander's choice of the name "Faulkner's" and other sources that give the current official name as "Falkner Island" (e.g., A. Hughes and M. S. Allen, 1976, *Connecticut Place Names*, published by the Connecticut Historical Society).

The earliest extensive ornithological study on the island was done by Captain Oliver N. Brooks, who was the lighthouse keeper from 1851 to 1882. He made a major effort to enable terns to continue to breed in that area, at that time on Goose Island, about a mile from Falkner Island. Brooks prepared mounts of birds that he shot or found dead, and some of these are shown in a photograph in this book. According to Helander, the specimens in Brooks' collection were discarded in 1962. Among the more exceptional species from that general region reported by Brooks were Northern Gannet, a frigatebird, Long-billed Curlew, Sooty Tern, and a murre, all noted by Merriam in the *Transactions of the Connecticut Academy* in 1877. It is regrettable that Brooks' specimens were not saved (page 95).

Helander also surveys more recent developments including the important Falkner's Island Tern Project, which has continued since

the 1970s, and the designation of the island as part of the national wildlife refuge system. The site continues to be of critical importance for the endangered Roseate Tern. Those interested in full coverage on the birdlife of Falkner's Island will need to consult additional sources, but Helander has performed a valuable service in bringing together so much of the historic background on this important locality. The book is attractively produced, well illustrated, and should have great appeal for readers with special interests in Connecticut or maritime history.

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AQUATIC FORAGING

Paul Carrier

Would one consider a Swamp Sparrow (*Melospiza georgiana*) an aquatic bird? This species does live in and about swamps, which of course, consist of more or less water. No doubt a swamp creature must live and forage to a great degree, in or around water.

I have always assumed that a Swamp Sparrow forages for seeds produced by the grasses and sedges found in its damp environment. On 25 May, 1990, I observed an unusual behavior that challenged this assumption.

While waiting within a dense swamp for some warblers to venture closer, I noticed a beautiful Swamp Sparrow deep within some grasses. It was looking for food at the waters' edge when it suddenly jumped onto some grass stalks well out from the swamp edge, and proceeded to walk down the stalk to the surface of the water. It then lowered its entire head into the water and appeared to turn over submerged leaves in search of something. (Water bugs, perhaps?).

Returning home I turned to my Bent Life Histories for some clues. Bent states that the Swamp Sparrow is much more insectivorous than the Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*). In winter, its diet consists of 84 per cent or more grains. In summer, grains make up only 12 per cent of the sparrow's diet. Bent continues, that beetles, ants and other hymenoptera are the Swamp Sparrow's chief insect fare.



Behavioral notes state that the Swamp Sparrow wades in shallow water and picks insects and seeds from the surface, but there is no mention of the bird feeding under water. In fact, Bent goes on to explain that E. T. Seton claimed the bird showed great fear of getting wet!

Was my observation a new, or at least an undocumented behavior for this species? I would like to hear from anyone who may have observed this feeding behavior in Swamp Sparrows.

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PUBLISHED PHOTOGRAPHS OF BIRDS IN CONNECTICUT

George A. Clark, Jr.

Photographs serve as a major basis for the documentation of the occurrence of birds in Connecticut. Despite their importance, there has been no source for locating many such pictures. This article provides such a listing of published photographs.

To be included, photographs must have been accompanied by a published text or captions that clearly indicate that the picture was taken in Connecticut. For 16 species, marked with an asterisk, no museum specimens from Connecticut are known to exist. Newspaper citations in the files of the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History in Storrs were included, but no extensive search was made of state newspapers in which photographs of additional species might be found. The bird names are, with the exception of the Jackdaw, from the Sixth Edition of the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds (1983). The following abbreviations are used: AB, American Birds; BL, Bird-Lore; color indicates color photograph; CW, Connecticut Warbler; Pl, plate.

<u>Species in Photograph</u>	<u>Source</u>
Cory's Shearwater*	AB 31:226, 1977
Tundra Swan	AB 28 No. 1, cover, 1974
Mute Swan	Conn. Audubon, Spring 1988:32
Barnacle Goose*	CW 5, No. 2, cover, 1985
Canada Goose	Wildlife Soc. Bull. 13:229, 1985
Mallard	Willimantic Chronicle 2 May 1985:5
Harlequin Duck*	CW 3, No. 4, cover, 1983; AB 43:571, 1988
Turkey Vulture	BL 33:257-259, 1931
Osprey	Bent 1937, Pl. 99; Auk 81:175, 1964
Bald Eagle	Willimantic Chronicle 5 Feb.1981:9; Hartford Courant 25 Jan.1988: A1 (Color)
Cooper's Hawk	Bent 1937: Pl. 38
Northern Goshawk	Welch 1987:20
Broad-winged Hawk	Bent 1937: Pl. 69; BL 8:1-6, 1906
Gyr Falcon	AB 42:222, 1988
Wild Turkey	Willimantic Chronicle 20 Apr.1988:4
Black Rail*	AB 34:876, 1980; CW 1:15, 1981
Virginia Rail	Job 1910
Purple Gallinule	CW 5, No. 4, cover, 1985
Sandhill Crane*	CW 4, No. 3, cover, 1984
Pectoral Sandpiper	CW 6, No. 2, cover, 1986
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper*	CW 6, No. 2, cover, 1986
Franklin's Gull*	AB 26:835, 1972
Common Black-headed Gull	CW 7, No. 2, cover, 1987
Ross' Gull*	CW 4:21, 1984

Black-legged Kittiwake	CW 4, No. 1, cover, 1984
Black Skimmer	CW 2:48, 1982 (nest only)
Rock Dove	Willimantic Chronicle 18 Jan. 1986:1
Monk Parakeet	Hartford Courant 4 Sept. 1988: A1 (color) Manchester Evening Herald 22 May 1974: 10 (nest only)
Barn-Owl	Bent 1938: Pl. 28
Eastern Screech-Owl	Birding 19:12, 1988
Snowy Owl	Manchester Evening Herald 12 Feb 1968
Burrowing Owl*	AB 34:254, 1980
Northern Saw-whet Owl	AB 31:975, 1977 (color); CW4, No.4, cover, 1984
Common Nighthawk	BL 16:172-173, 1914
Northern Flicker	Job 1910
Gray Kingbird*	AB 29:33, 1975
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher*	AB 28:128,1975; AB 31:975,1977; AB 44:1115, 1990
Jackdaw*	AB 42:193, 1988 (color)
Black-capped Chickadee	AB 41:539, 1987
Marsh Wren	Job 1910
Northern Wheatear*	CW 3, No. 2 cover,1983
Eastern Bluebird	Job 1910
Wood Thrush	AB 34:721, (color)
Varied Thrush	AB 30:694, 1976; AB 38:405, 1984
Northern Mockingbird	Hartford Courant, Sunday (section) cover, 3 June 1973 (color)
White-eyed Vireo	Job 1910
Solitary Vireo	Bent 1950: Pl. 36
Blue-winged Warbler (including nests)	Bent 1953: Pl. 12,13
Black-throated Green Warbler	Bent 1953: Pl. 36
American Redstart	Job 1910
Ovenbird	Job 1910
Scarlet Tanager	Job 1910
Painted Bunting*	AB 44:239, 1989
Le Conte's Sparrow*	AB 42:231, 1988
Song Sparrow	Job 1910
Smith's Longspur	CW 2:49, 1982
Yellow-headed Blackbird	AB 28:119, 1974; CW 3, No.3, cover, 1983
Boat-tailed Grackle*	CW 6, No.1, cover, 1986
Northern Oriole	AB 41:539, 1987
Evening Grosbeak	Bent 1968: Pl. 12

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CONNECTICUT FIELD NOTES
SPRING: MARCH 1 - MAY 31, 1991

Jay Kaplan and Frank Mantlik

An oft-quoted saying that "springtime is for lovers" doesn't tell the complete story. Springtime is actually for lovers of birds. Or so it would seem, as over 30 reports were received to document the spring migration. Despite the lamentation of many reporters that the migration was fair, even poor, the list of rarities is indeed impressive and includes Eared Grebe, Northern Gannet, Tricolored Heron, Black Vulture, Black Rail, Marbled Godwit, Varied Thrush, Green-tailed Towhee and Yellow-headed Blackbird.

Perhaps it was the weather, rather than the birds, that lured birders out into the field. March came in "like a lamb" rather than a lion, with temperatures exceeding 60° F in Hartford March 1-2. A warm rain and 20 mph SW winds contributed to the arrival of Piping Plover and other early migrants the following day. Temperatures became more seasonable mid-month and then became unsettled with the mercury struggling to reach 40° F March 25, then soaring to almost 80° F on the 28th. The month ended with wet snow March 30, giving way to a pleasant Easter Sunday March 31. Precipitation for the month totalled 4.52 inches, just above the normal of 4.15 inches.

April saw a warming trend with temperatures reaching 90° F in Hartford on the 7th. Mid-month readings were more seasonable. There was no precipitation until the 15th, when the mercury failed to reach 50° F for the first time that month. Total precipitation for April was about one half inch below normal.

May began with strong northwest winds and over 2.5 inches of rain fell on the 6th. In fact, precipitation for the month was 5.16 inches compared with a norm of 3.37 inches. It was the temperature, however, that was most noteworthy, as May 1991 went into the books as the hottest May on record. Although no daily records were set, the average reading for the month of 65.96° F in Hartford exceeded the normal by about 6.5° F. Perhaps these conditions were at least partially responsible for a lack of migrants, particularly waves of warblers. One veteran observer remarked "With such good weather for migration, most migrants probably blew right by us. Hopefully, this was the case, and not the result of deforestation."

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

There were good numbers of Red-throated Loons present off Sherwood Island State Park, Westport (hereafter SISP) in March and

April, with a maximum of 26 April 8 (FM). An inland report from Goshen May 16 was unusual (RN). Common Loons were reported as less numerous this spring with a maximum of five at Burying Hill Beach, Westport May 14 (FM). Breeding pairs of Pied-billed Grebe were in Sharon and Stratford in mid-May (FM, et al.) and three birds were at Station 43 marsh, South Windsor March 29 (CE). The annual spring build up of Horned Grebes at SISP seemed smaller than in past years. Milford Point, Milford reported 34 birds April 19 (SM), while inland reports came from Twin Lakes, Salisbury March 10 and 23 (IS, TS), Lakeville Lake, Lakeville April 10 (IS, TS), and from Suffield April 8-May 18 (SKe). Three Red-necked Grebes were at Greenwich Point, Greenwich March 30 (FP) and another was at that location April 29 (JZ). An Eared Grebe was discovered at Cornfield Point, Old Saybrook March 10 (JH) and remained until March 25 (BK).

There were numerous sightings of Northern Gannet in Long Island Sound this spring. All were March 28 - April 7 (m.ob.). Local fishermen noted Blue-back Herring were plentiful in mid-March, and perhaps the birds entered the Sound after schooling fish. A noteworthy inland sighting for Great Cormorant was three birds over Durham May 4, a late date (CB, JF). Double-crested Cormorants peaked at 300 at Griswold Point, Old Lyme April 7 (FM, JH). The Norwalk Island breeding site expanded again this year with a total of 161 nests on East White Rock and Calf Pasture Island. Cormorants began nesting on Calf Pasture Island with 15 nests in 1990. At this time, they are taking over the island and their guano is killing the trees (MB, FM). Inland, 12 cormorants were in Coventry/Mansfield April 28 (GC, et al.).

American Bitterns were at Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison (hereafter HBSP) April 13 (JY), at Pine Creek Marsh, Fairfield April 27 (CB) and at "Warehouse Pond", Stratford May 29 (JF). Least Bitterns were at Beacon Hill, East Haven May 17 (RE), at Warehouse Pond May 18 (CB) and 25 (DS), and at Barn Island Wildlife Management Area, Stonington May 29 (RSCB). Herons began to arrive in late March. Early sightings were reported for Great Egret at Manresa Marsh, Norwalk March 23 (SA fide FM), for Snowy Egret at Milford Point March 26 (JF) and a new Connecticut early record for Little Blue Heron at SISP March 28 (JF). Three Tricolored Heron reports included a bird in Old Saybrook March 16-25 (m.ob.), the earliest spring record for the state by over a month. Additional Tricolors were at Guilford April 24 (NP) and at Milford Point May 4-5 (RE, SM, JF). For the second consecutive year, Cattle Egrets did not nest on Chimon Island. There were only three reports: up to four birds at Green Farms, Westport April 29 (NP), and May 4 (MB), and two at Silver Sands State Park, Milford (MB). In addition to nests on the Norwalk

Islands, two Yellow-crowned Night Heron nests were discovered in a shade tree at Bridgeport's Battery Park April 7 (m.ob.) and two more nests were high in a sycamore tree in residential Darien (FP). Six early Glossy Ibis were in Branford April 7 (NP).

Mute Swans peaked at 110 at Griswold Point April 7 (FM,JH). The two previously reported adult "blue phase" Snow Geese remained in Westport through March 12 (FM,et al.). Migrant flocks of Snow Geese included 100 over Hamden March 28 (AB) and 80 that landed on Saugatuck Reservoir, Weston at dusk April 1 (RW). A bird remained at the Mystic Water Company Reservoir, Mystic through the third week of May (RSCB). Brant peaked at 120 at SISP March 26 (FM,RW), and seven birds remained at Milford Point until May 28 (IS,TS). Canada Geese have become a real problem at SISP where several visitors have threatened lawsuits after slipping or falling on goose feces (FM).

Good numbers of Wood Duck were reported, including 15 in Woodbury March 3 (RN) and three females with 22 ducklings on Sasco Pond, Westport/Southport May 27 (CB). Green-winged Teal peaked at 300 in the Blackhall River, Old Lyme March 24, and a Eurasian Green-winged Teal was among the flock (JM). Another Eurasian Green-winged Teal was at Milford Point March 30 - April 19 (RE). Inland, high counts included 72 at Station 43, South Windsor March 10 (SKo). Pairs of Northern Pintail were at Twin Lakes, Salisbury (IS,TS) and in South Windsor March 10 (SKo). Although there were numbers of reports of pairs of Blue-winged Teal from around the state, there apparently has been no confirmation of breeding for the past several years. A male Shoveler was at Cedar Pond, Westport March 23-24 (fide FM), and up to six birds were at Milford Point and the nearby Lordship Marshes, Stratford March 25 - April 20 (JF,SM,SKo). The previously reported male Eurasian Wigeon remained off the West Haven coast until March 25 (CB,JF,et al.). American Wigeon were reported in low numbers this spring with a high of 38 in Norwalk March 19 (FM,CW). Inland, there were five at Salisbury's Twin Lakes March 23 (IS,TS). Five Canvasback remained at Frash Pond, Stratford until March 26 (JF) and a bird was at Mudge Pond, Sharon March 23 (IS,TS). There was but one Redhead report from Lake Saltonstall, East Haven/Branford March 10 (ESh fide SM). Ring-necked Ducks peaked at 200 at Twin Lakes March 23 (IS,TS), while the last report was a pair in Woodbury April 27 (RN).

Inland reports of Greater Scaup included six in Suffield April 17 (SKe). Seven Lesser Scaup were at Greenwich Point March 9 (SKo), and a single bird was inland in Suffield April 8 (SKe). White-winged Scoters peaked at 650 at Merwin Point, Milford May 13, and it was

uncertain whether a second flock of 500 was the same group (SM). Inland, a flock of 25 was observed flying north in Woodbury May 5 (RN). This type of scoter movement in western Long Island Sound occurs annually at this time as flocks apparently migrate north up the Hudson River in neighboring New York (fide TBU,JZ). Hooded Mergansers again nested at Sharon's Miles Sanctuary (FM) and eight were in Bethany March 3 (A&MB). Common Mergansers peaked at 250 at Twin Lakes March 23 (IS,TS), just prior to the onset of the breeding season.

VULTURES THROUGH TERNS

Black Vulture reports included a bird with 20 Turkey Vultures in North Guilford April 27 (NP) and another soaring alone over White Memorial Foundation, Litchfield May 17 (FM,et al.). Osprey at Great Island, Old Lyme peaked at 22 April 7 (FM,JH,et al.). A pair again attempted to nest at Nell's Island Marsh, Milford, but were unsuccessful (FM,et al.). An **American Swallow-tailed Kite** was reported flying rapidly eastward over the Eastford/Woodstock area March 7 (BH fide GC). Later that day, presumably the same bird was reported near Falmouth, Mass. The report has not yet been reviewed by the Connecticut Rare Records Committee, but if accepted, this would constitute an early spring record date for this species in southern New England. An immature **Bald Eagle** was reported flying over Wallingford May 26 (MM). As yet, there are no reports of nesting attempts in the northwest hills. A pair of **Northern Harriers** was present throughout the period at both Great Meadows Marsh, Stratford and Nell's Island Marsh (m.ob.). Of the accipiter reports, the most interesting was a **Cooper's Hawk** aerially harassing a **Red-shouldered Hawk** in Cornwall May 25 (FM,TBa). Equally interesting was a report of a **Red-shouldered Hawk** pursuing an **American Woodcock** through a residential part of Storrs in late April (WB). **Broad-winged Hawks** were reported in low numbers this spring, although a report of a bird at Lake Saltonstall March 10 was exceptionally early (ESh). **American Kestrel** continues in low numbers with four in South Windsor April 20 (SKo) and a few scattered reports of breeding pairs. **Merlins** were in East Rock Park, New Haven March 1 (RE), at SISP March 24 (RW) and in Mansfield April 22 (LB) and 28 (LB,GC,WB). There were several reports of **Peregrine Falcons** from along the shoreline and in the Hartford area, including a bird over the State capitol March 19 that was described as engaging in what may have been "territorial flight" (SKo).

Northern Bobwhite continue to survive in eastern Connecticut. There were three reports from the Storrs area in late April-May (fide

GC) and birds were reported as "all over" Haley Farm State Park, Groton throughout the spring (RSCB).

A singing **Black Rail** was heard in the upper Lordship marshes, Stratford just prior to midnight May 24 (FM, TBA) in the same location that hosted two calling birds the previous year. The bird sang sporadically into June and this site must be considered a potential breeding location for this elusive species. Clapper Rails were at their usual breeding areas, while King Rails were reported from one inland and three coastal sites. Early Soras were in Suffield April 10 (SKe) and South Windsor April 16 (SKo), while a bird in Storrs April 28 (GC, et al.) was an early record for the area. A Common Moorhen at Quarry Road marsh, Branford April 15 (NP) was the only one reported for the period. An American Coot was at Station 43, South Windsor March 16 (CE) and five were at Lake Saltonstall March 24 (SM).

Four early **Black-bellied Plovers** arrived in Norwalk March 3, while numbers peaked at 300 at Milford Point May 27 (FM). An early **Piping Plover** was at Short Beach, Stratford March 3, and 10 were at Sandy Point, West Haven March 29 (FG fide FM). Among a number of **American Oystercatcher** reports were five seen on Menunketesuck Island, Westbrook the first week of April (NP), four pairs at Sandy Point, Stonington (RSCB) and five pairs again nesting on the Norwalk Islands (FM, MB). Early dates for shorebirds included **Greater Yellowlegs** at Longshore Park, Westport March 7 (FM), **Lesser Yellowlegs** at Milford Point March 26 (JF), and five **Willetts** at Guilford Sluice April 28 (JF, et al.). Although the sole **Upland Sandpiper** report came from North Haven March 19 (DS), this species continues to nest at Bradley International Airport, Windsor Locks (m.ob.). Two **Whimbrel** were at Milford Point May 28 (DR, IS, TS). A **Marbled Godwit**, accidental in spring and only the third or fourth spring record for Connecticut, was at Manresa marsh, Norwalk May 18, where it fed in the salt marsh and rested on a small sandbar (m.ob.). Peak shorebird numbers at Milford Point included 200 **Ruddy Turnstones** May 25 (FM, TBA), 40 **Red Knots** May 28 (DR, IS, TS) and 1000 **Semipalmated Sandpipers** May 25 (FM, TBA). There were several reports for **White-rumped Sandpiper** in mid-May including five birds at Milford Point (m.ob.). The latest **Purple Sandpipers** reported were four birds at HBSP May 4 (RE) and five at Stonington Point May 5 (RSCB). Fifteen **American Woodcock** in Woodbury March 20 (RN) was a respectable number. A rare spring **Wilson's Phalarope** was photographed at Milford Point May 28 (DR, IS, TS).

Although there have been no confirmed nesting reports of **Laughing Gull** in the state, several adults were present in Norwalk and Milford from mid-May. There were no reports of **Little Gull** this

spring, but Common Black-headed Gulls were at South Cove, Old Saybrook March 16 (NP), at Bradley Point, West Haven March 25 (RE,JF) and at Ash Creek, Fairfield/Bridgeport March 30 (AC fide FM). In addition to the usual aggregation of Bonaparte's Gulls along the coast, a bird was in Suffield April 13 (SKe). A first year Iceland Gull was on Menunketesuck Island, Westbrook March 10 (JM) and a late second year bird was at Milford Point May 28 (DR,IS,TS). A Glaucous Gull was at Oyster River, Milford April 20 (JF,et al.). Three Roseate Terns were at Griswold Point May 18 (RSCB) and two were at Milford Point May 28 (DR,IS,TS). A Common Tern at Saugatuck River, Westport April 20 (RW) set a new early record for the state. A Forster's Tern, rare in spring, was at SISP April 18 (FP). A Least Tern at Milford Point April 25 (JF) was a new early record for Connecticut, beating the previous early date by ten days. A Black Tern was reported at Milford Point May 22 (Ted Barry,Jack Leggett).

OWLS THROUGH WARBLERS

A Barn Owl was seen hunting over the Lordship marshes at dusk May 31 (FP,FM,et al.) and at least one pair continues to nest in the Middletown area (FM,et al.). A female Snowy Owl was at Milford Point March 16-31 (m.ob.), while another was perched atop a house in Sharon April 9, where it was photographed (IS,TS). A Long-eared Owl was in Oxford March 3 (EH,RN), while Short-eared Owls were at HBSP March 5 (KM) and April 6 (RE), and at Milford Point March 30 (AC,SM), April 13 (JF) and April 19 (SM). Northern Saw-whet Owls were in North Haven March 16-18 (JF,JY,et al.) and Greenwich Point March 30 (FP), while a bird calling on the shore of Bantam Lake, Morris May 19 (SM,et al.) indicated possible breeding. Common Nighthawks were reported as scarce statewide, with no reports from southeast Connecticut (RSCB). An exception was 30 in Woodbury May 21 (RN). Whip-poor-will continues to cause concern as a breeder in Connecticut and it is hoped that a COA sponsored study of this species will provide some information on its current status.

An extremely early Ruby-throated Hummingbird was feeding at an early blooming plum tree in Groton April 9 (RSCB). A Red-headed Woodpecker, less common in spring, was in Bloomfield March 17 - April 2 (m.ob.). A Pileated Woodpecker at Milford Point March 17 (RE) was an unusual coastal sighting. Olive-sided Flycatchers were in Greenwich May 12 (JZ), Mansfield May 19 (AB,GC,et al.) and two were at Cromwell Meadows, Cromwell May 24 (SM). Acadian and Alder Flycatchers were in their usual locations by mid-May with up to three singing Alders in Sharon (FM,MS,et al.). A thriving colony of Cliff Swallows continues under the Cornwall Bridge over the

Housatonic River (m.ob.). A "reverse migration" of Blue Jays was noted at SISP, where 40 were flying southwest May 5 (FM,et al.).

Common Ravens again nested in the Lime Rock area of Sharon this spring (FM,et al.), while a pair in North Ashford was unsuccessful. A Raven was also observed in Canaan May 5 (IS,TS). Winter Wrens were reported as "more numerous in the Mansfield/Ashford area than at any time in the past two decades" (GC). In spite of constant monitoring of the area, the Sedge Wrens that nested in Goshen in 1990, did not return this year. Marsh Wrens were reported as "numerous" along the coast (RE,FM). A Golden-crowned Kinglet was in Pachaug State Forest, Voluntown May 4 (RSCB) and a singing male in Mohawk State Forest, Cornwall May 17 and 25 (FM,MS,et al.) indicated possible breeding. The first Blue-gray Gnatcatcher report came from River Road, Kent April 8 (KM) and eight hours of observation in that area on May 7 produced 31 birds (SKo). There were no reports of Gray-cheeked Thrush and few of Swainson's Thrush this spring. The male Varied Thrush, present at a Goshen feeder since early February, remained through April 8 (fide FM). An early Gray Catbird at East Rock, New Haven March 29 (JF) may have overwintered. Late American Pipits were at Milford Point March 29 (SM) and in Storrs April 3 (LB). Several wintering Northern Shrikes remained into March with a final report from Storrs March 26 (LB). A Philadelphia Vireo in Shelton May 5 (JF) was a new early record for Connecticut.

There were a number of early warbler sightings, but none was more remarkable than a singing male Tennessee Warbler in Storrs April 9 (MS), where it was tape recorded and subsequently confirmed. Cape May and Bay-breasted Warblers were reported as "scarce" this spring, perhaps bypassing Connecticut on their northward migration. A pair of Yellow-throated Warblers returned to nest in Kent and the nest itself was photographed in a large white pine tree (JY,et al.). Another Yellow-throated Warbler was reported from North Guilford April 4 (NP), a very early date! An incredible 30 male Cerulean Warblers were tallied along three miles of River Road, Kent May 2 (NP), while 70 American Redstarts were counted in Litchfield County May 16 (EH,RN). Prothonotary Warblers were in East Rock Park, New Haven April 26 (RE,SM,et al.), Cromwell Meadows May 11 (JM) and Haddam Neck May 19 (E. Reneson, fide JM). A singing male Kentucky Warbler was again present at Fairchild Gardens, Greenwich from May 9 (TBA,JY,JZ,et al.). Additional sightings came from Fairfield May 1 (AO,JF,et al.), Stony Creek, Branford May 3 (NP) and River Road, Kent May 17 (FM,MS,et al.). There were no reports of Mourning Warblers. A Yellow-breasted Chat was in Litchfield May 16 (SKe,JW), while a female was banded in the Knox Preserve,

Stonington May 19 as a male sang nearby (RSCB).

ROSE-BREADED GROSBEAKS THROUGH EVENING GROSBEAK

An early Rose-breasted Grosbeak was in Woodbury April 15 (RN). A Green-tailed Towhee was photographed and videotaped at a Branford feeder April 28 (NP, et al.), the first documented state record (although there is a 1983 sight record from Orange). A report has been forwarded to the Connecticut Rare Records Committee. A Dickcissel was with a flock of Savannah Sparrows in Newtown May 18 (NC). A late American Tree Sparrow was in Pawtucket April 13 (RSCB). Vesper Sparrows were in Portland Meadows, Portland April 7 (JM, DT, et al.) and in Simsbury April 9 (JT). There was a "probable" sighting of a Lark Sparrow, very rare in spring, at Portland Meadows April 7 (JM, DT). Two singing Grasshopper Sparrows were in Salisbury May 25 (TBa, FM) and individuals were also present on their breeding grounds at Bradley International Airport, although somewhat difficult to find early in the season (JK). Lincoln's Sparrows were in Durham Meadows April 27 (JY, et al.), an early date, and at Roaring Brook Nature Center, Canton May 11 (JK, et al.). Compo Beach, Westport hosted 50 Snow Buntings March 5 (JD) and the last report was two birds at Merwin Point, Milford March 9 (RE).

Bobolinks were reported in good numbers by many observers this spring, while Eastern Meadowlarks were "scarce". A male Yellow-headed Blackbird was at a Niantic feeder March 5 (fide FM), while another frequented a yard at Indian Neck, Branford April 4-7 (JF, SM). Subsequent sightings May 2 at Jupiter Point marsh, Branford (NP) and in Guilford May 4 (JF) could have been the same individual. Ten Rusty Blackbirds were in Woodbury March 24 (RN) and two in Suffield April 4-8 (SKe). Orchard Orioles were reported from their usual coastal locations (FM, NP) and inland reports came from Kent (FM, et al.), Suffield (SKe) and South Windsor (JK, et al.). A Northern Oriole April 24 (fide GC) was early for northeast Connecticut. Among the few reports of Purple Finch were two in Simsbury April 11 (BK) and one in Salisbury May 17 (FM, et al.). There were scattered reports of Pine Siskins, the latest from Watertown May 3 (RN). There were also a few reports of late migrant Evening Grosbeaks including eight in Canton May 4 (JK).

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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Why a Yellow-headed Blackbird on the front cover of "The Warbler," a species not normally found in Connecticut? In reading the Field Notes you will find several reports of this species last spring. *Connecticut Birds* by Zeranski and Baptist notes numerous sightings, especially in the fall, so it may pay to look over those large flocks of "blackbirds" during migration.

CORRECTION:

In CW11-3, page 77, in the table title, the correct latin name for Common Raven is *Corvus corax*.

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Guide for Contributors

Preparation of Manuscripts:

The editors welcome submission of articles and notes for the *Connecticut Warbler*. Manuscripts should be typed double spaced on one side of the sheet only, with ample margins on all sides accompanied with an IBM disk, if possible. Style of the manuscript should follow general usage in recent issues. All manuscripts receive peer review.

Illustrations:

The editors welcome submission of line artwork of Connecticut and regional birds. Black and white photographs of particular interest will also be considered, but tend to print at less than optimum quality. Line art should be submitted as good-quality photographic prints or in original form. All originals and prints will be returned promptly after publication prints are made.

