

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

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ABOUT OUR COVER ARTIST

Brian Kleinman

"Snowy Owl (*Nyctea scandiaca*)"

Brian Kleinman 15, a resident of Barkhamsted, is a sophomore at Northwest Regional High School No. 7 in Winsted. He is a member of the Hartford Audubon Society and serves as a volunteer at Roaring Brook Nature Center in Canton. He has a strong interest in nature and is fast becoming an avid birder.

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

THE MABEL OSGOOD WRIGHT AWARD

Roland C. Clement

The Connecticut Ornithological Association's first award recognizing outstanding contributions to ornithology in the Connecticut environment was presented to Ann Gaylord of Niantic, Connecticut, on March 16, 1991, at Quinnipiac College, Hamden, during COA's annual meeting (see Julie Zickefoose, CW 11:37).

Those of us who have had the pleasure of knowing Ann Gaylord over the years were delighted with this award, but it is surprising how few seemed to know why COA called this The Mabel Osgood Wright Award. How quickly we lose touch with one another, reinventing instead of building on the contributions of those who preceded us.

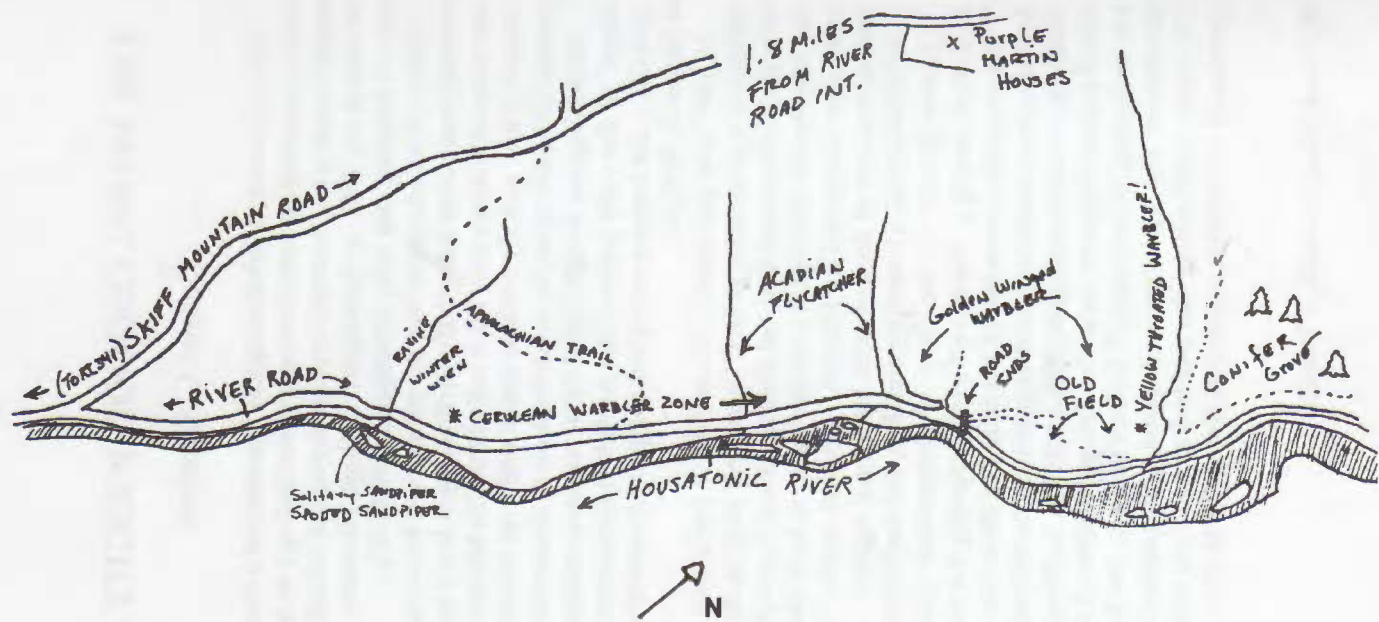
Mabel Osgood Wright (1859-1934) was unquestionably a "grande dame" of the early years of the Audubon movement. Born in New York City, she became a resident of Fairfield soon after her marriage to James O. Wright.

In 1897 she published *Citizen Bird*, a book that surprised and delighted a generation of bird lovers, not only in its own right, but because it introduced the bird illustrations of Louis Agassiz Fuertes. She later wrote *Birdcraft*, a popular guide to bird identification and song, also illustrated by Fuertes. Another work, *The Friendship of Nature*, was one of the first calls for animal rights.

In 1898 she was a founding member, and the first president, of the Audubon Society of the State of Connecticut (now Connecticut Audubon Society). She served in this capacity for twenty-six years!

She was also a member of the board of directors of the National Association of Audubon Societies (precursor to the National Audubon Society) from its founding in 1905, until 1928. In this capacity she was friend and colleague to the entire first generation of Audubon workers, including Elliot Coues, T. Gilbert Pearson, the first professional director of the Audubon movement, and particularly, Frank M. Chapman, with whom she worked as assistant editor of *Bird-Lore* (precursor to *Audubon* magazine) from 1899 to 1911.

71 Weed Ave., Norwalk, CT 06850



KENT ROAD, KENT, CT

SITE GUIDE

RIVER ROAD, KENT, CONNECTICUT

Arnold Devine¹ and Dwight G. Smith²

Natural strips of habitat linking increasingly fragmented woods, wetlands and other preserves of wildlife habitat are called corridors. Corridors may range from narrow hedges and fence-rows to broader riparian habitats that border streams and connect dispersed woods and wetlands. These living landscape linkages act as biotic pipelines that promote the safe movement of birds and other wildlife through the mosaic of human habitats. Corridors thus enhance and conserve biotic diversity of wildlife. Connecticut's prime example of the importance of corridors is found in a stretch of wooded landscape that borders the Housatonic River near Kent. Each spring and summer this riparian woodland corridor that includes a section of the Appalachian Trail becomes a popular hot-spot for Connecticut's birders. During peak warbler migration periods, a trip to this site might be rewarded with 25 species of warblers plus a varied assortment of flycatchers, thrushes and vireos. Swallows, waterfowl and wading birds can be observed along the river while Turkey Vultures, Red-tailed Hawks or the occasional Bald Eagle may be spotted overhead. A good day's birding along this three-to-five mile stretch can result in 80 or more species of birds during the peak migration season.

DIRECTIONS:

The River Road birding site is easily reached via Connecticut's highways. Travelers crossing the state can take Interstate 84 to Danbury and Route 7 north to Kent or take the more scenic cross-country Route 341 to Kent. At the junction of Routes 7 and 341 in Kent, take Route 341 west. Cross the bridge over the Housatonic River and take the first right onto Skiff Mountain Road (this turn is at the west end of the bridge and is 0.3 miles from the junction of Routes 7 and 341 in Kent). Follow Skiff Mountain Road north, paralleling the Housatonic River to your right. About 1.1 miles along this road is a sign announcing the Appalachian National Scenic Trail to your right. Turn right and follow this road (which is River Road) northward.

Specialties

Unusual warblers are one of the significant attractions of this special area. Species consistently encountered include Cerulean, Golden-winged, Worm-eating, Mourning, and Kentucky warblers. Acadian Flycatchers are regular, and Purple Martins are sporadically observed as they hawk insects along the river's edge and out over the

river. A small colony of Martins nests along Skiff Mountain Road.

Other species of interest include Pileated and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Barred Owl, Orchard Oriole, and the rarer Philadelphia Vireo. Black Vultures were observed overhead and also roosting on dead snags along the river in the summer of 1991. Bald Eagles, Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks may also hunt along the river and along adjacent hillsides. The alarm behavior of waterfowl on the river may alert the birder to the presence of Bald Eagles.

Nesting Species

Within the last two decades, this riverine habitat and adjacent uplands have attracted many southern species as nesters. This is one of the few sites in the state, for example, where Cerulean and Golden-winged Warblers nest. The first documentation of Yellow-throated Warbler as a nesting species in the state occurred here within the last three years. Acadian Flycatchers nest in the lower canopy of trees along the feeder streams that discharge into the river. Other nesting species include Barred Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Winter Wren, Hermit Thrush, and a wide variety of warblers, thrushes, vireos, and other species that are common components of the Eastern Deciduous Forest biome.

Birding the Site

After crossing the river on Route 341, turn right onto Skiff Mountain Road and park along the river's edge. From May through August check the river for Warbling and Yellow-throated vireos, and for swallows (all Connecticut swallow species occur here, including the Purple Martin). One or more raptor species can usually be seen soaring along the ridges in this area or sitting on prominent perches overlooking the river. On a good day, both vultures may be seen; Black Vultures are only just now starting to make regular appearances, but Turkey Vultures roost and nest on the high ledges of adjacent hillsides. Red-tailed and Broad-winged hawks are fairly common and one or more of the three accipiters—Northern Goshawk, Cooper's or Sharp-shinned hawks—are occasionally spotted as well. Bald Eagles patrol the river for waterfowl in winter, and migrating Ospreys forage over the deeper pools. Proceed north along Skiff Mountain Road. Check the habitats along the roadway (baseball field, old fields, orchards) for Killdeer, Eastern Bluebird and Field Sparrow. Song Sparrow, Common Yellowthroat and Yellow Warbler are common here.

Continuing on Skiff Mountain Rd., turn right (1.1 miles from the junction of Route 341 and Skiff Mountain Rd.) and follow River Road

northward. The road is paved for a few hundred yards, then becomes dirt and goes through a stretch of typical deciduous woodland dominated by oak, maple and hickory. If hiking is your theme as well as birding, you can hike from this point along the road for the best birding. If time is short, you can drive from spot to spot.

To the left of the road, the hillside habitat is broken up by small, steep wooded ravines dominated primarily by Eastern hemlock. As you pass these ravines, stop briefly to listen and look for Winter Wren, Acadian Flycatcher, and Louisiana Waterthrush, all of which hunt along the brooks that cascade down the ravines.

On the right side of the road note the occasional Slippery Elm, White and Green ash, Black Locust and giant American Sycamores that grow along the river flood plain; also note the more common varieties of oaks, hickories, and maples. About 0.9 miles from Skiff Mountain Road is a small island in the river. In May, Spotted and Solitary Sandpipers are often seen foraging along the island's edge. Check here also for waterfowl, including Mallard, Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Black Duck, Common Goldeneye (rare migrant in winter) and Common Merganser (uncommon).

Great Blue and Green-backed herons hunt in the river's shallows. Often a variety of swallows—Barn, Tree, Bank and Rough-winged—may be seen hawking for insects over the river. Here also, you should start hearing the raspy call of the Cerulean Warbler which sings, feeds and nests high in the tops of the sycamores and other mature trees along the river and on the lower hillsides. This warbler can be quite difficult to locate once the trees have leafed out.

From this point on you can usually encounter a tremendous variety of bird species, especially on a peak migration day in the second or third week of May. Listen for flycatchers, such as Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Kingbird, and Least Flycatcher are all common breeding species in this area. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers are also present in good numbers. The alert birder will recognize the songs of many other deciduous woodland species. Practice identifying the various songs of the American Redstart, which can sometimes confound even the best birder because of its similarity to many other warblers. All of Connecticut's regularly occurring thrushes pass through this valley; Swainson's migrates during the third and fourth week of May, followed closely by Gray-cheeked Thrush in late May and early June. Veery, Wood Thrush and Hermit Thrush all nest here.

Warblers nesting here from May through August include Common Yellowthroat, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Blue-winged, Golden-winged, Cerulean, Worm-eating (on the drier hillsides), Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Black-and-White, Canada,

American Redstart and Louisiana Waterthrush. A very good day's birding might be rewarded with four vireos. Vireos that nest here include Warbling, Yellow-throated, Red-eyed and Solitary, the last less commonly. Other equally intriguing nesting species include Scarlet Tanager, Northern Oriole, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Yellow-billed and Black-billed Cuckoo.

At 1.7 miles from the junctions of Rt 341 and Skiff Mountain Rd., a sign to the left announces parking for the Appalachian Trail. The trail at this point merges with River Road northward along the river. Scout this area for woodpeckers; Downy, Hairy, Red-bellied and Pileated are all permanent residents and may usually be spotted or heard along the trail, the last usually requiring some effort. Migrant Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Red-headed Woodpecker also occur here. Northern Flicker is a common breeder; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker is an uncommon April and early May migrant and rarer breeder, while Red-headed Woodpecker is rare. Other nesting species along this stretch include House and Winter wrens. Acadian Flycatcher occurs most commonly from this area north along the trail. Listen and look for it from late May through July along the streams that feed into the Housatonic. Our experience suggests that the last mile of the roadway is most profitably birded on foot, with frequent stops to listen and look.

It is 2.8 miles to the end of the accessible road. Park here and scout the field and powerline cut to the left. Golden-winged and Blue-winged warblers are regularly seen or heard here, and both nest in the scrubby, secondary growth that borders this field. Prairie Warblers are sometimes heard along the shrubby hillside. Other noisy vocalists here include Least Flycatcher, Warbling and Yellow-throated vireos, and Northern Oriole. Check the nearby river for a variety of swallow species which frequently concentrate over pools or pick up mud along the sand bars for constructing nests.

Return to the unpaved River Road which now continues north along the river as the Appalachian Trail. Hike the trail about 250 meters and bird the old field on the left, now partly overgrown with honeysuckle, azalea, and other bushes. This field, once the yard of a house, now includes goldenrod, milkweed, butterfly weed and a wide variety of other old-field herbs. A large white pine and ancient black locust trees identify the spot. In May and June, the fragrant blossoms of honeysuckle and azalea attract Ruby-throated Hummingbirds which feed on the sweet nectar. They nest along the edges of the fields and can usually be observed perched on dead branches, surveying their territory. The thick bushes frequently harbor a number of warblers, including Mourning (late May and

early June), Canada, Wilson's and American Redstart. The field edge is also ideal for Cerulean, Golden-winged, and Blue-winged warblers. Rufous-sided Towhee also is common here and Brown Thrasher is uncommon.

Since 1989, this site has produced Yellow-throated Warbler. Nesting was probable in 1990 and confirmed in 1991. Look for this warbler singing and foraging high within the canopy of the mature sycamores; be patient and take some time to search and listen for this species, which can be exceedingly difficult to locate. Please do not disturb these birds by using playback of tape-recorded song to attract them—everyone wants to enjoy this new breeding species to Connecticut.

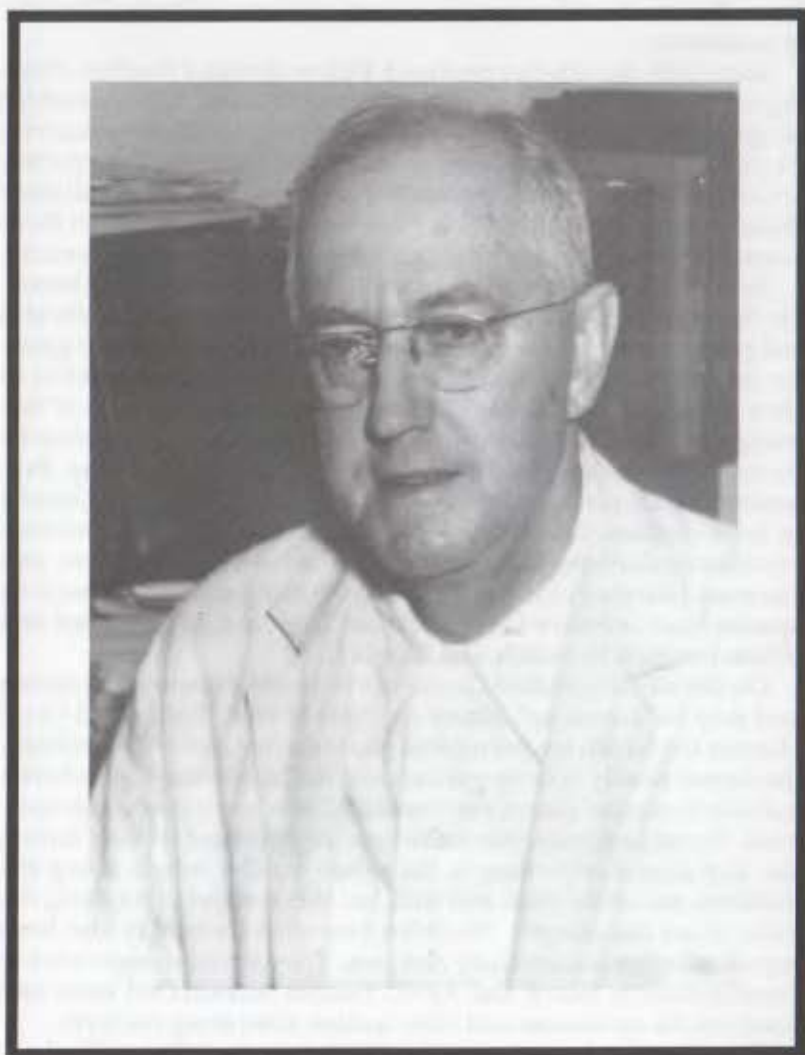
Return to the trail and walk an additional 100 meters to the brook. On the other side is a conifer grove of mostly hemlock and white and red pine—the red pine is diseased and dying. As you bird the grove be careful to avoid the white pine and hemlock seedlings tucked in their protective screens; they represent the future generation of this evergreen woodland. Yellow-throated Warblers may sometimes be found here, foraging high in the canopy. From mid to late May, Bay-breasted, Blackpoll and Cape May warblers are usually encountered in these conifers. Black-throated Green and Blackburnian warblers are common but intermittent nesting species in this grove. Here, you can round out your birding day by tallying some of the more common species, such as Brown Creeper, Tufted Titmouse, Red-breasted and White-breasted Nuthatch, and Blue Jay.

On the hillsides Ruffed Grouse can be heard drumming in spring and may be "scared up" almost any time of year. Barred and Great Horned Owls both are permanent residents that nest on the hillside, the former mostly in deeper woods and the latter almost anywhere a suitable Red-tailed Hawk's or American Crow's nest can be appropriated. Barred Owl may respond to vocal imitations of its song during the day almost anywhere in the mixed conifer woods along the northern end of the road and trail, but this method of locating the owls is not encouraged. Northern Saw-whet Owls have also been reported in this area and may nest here. They are most responsive to vocalizations in March and April. Eastern Screech-Owl nests and roosts in the sycamores and other mature trees along the river.

If you have not yet observed Purple Martins, check the small colony located along Skiff Mountain Road as you return to Route 341. To reach this local colony, return to Skiff Mountain Road, turn right and drive uphill about 1.8 miles. On the right is a small farm with two Purple Martin nest boxes immediately beyond the house. Park and scan the boxes and adjacent fields for the birds.

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JERAULD ARMINGTON MANTOR
1889 - 1990

JERAULD A. MANTER, 1889-1990

James A. Slater

The death of Jerauld Armington Manter in the 101st year of his age, covers the period of bird observation and recording in Connecticut that began with the study of birds over the barrel of a shotgun, and has reached the present period of high powered telescopes, sophisticated field guides, specialized song and call recordings and, perhaps too often, frantic building of lists and one-upmanship.

Professor Manter is known primarily for the two editions of *Birds of Storrs, Connecticut and Vicinity* that were published in 1965 and 1975. These two contributions brought together not only the field notes that Mr. Manter had made over a lifetime of studying birds in eastern Connecticut but also earlier work by some of his predecessors in the Storrs area and especially the notebooks of the Rev. Jones of Eastford.

Eastern Connecticut had, until the publication of the Manter books, been relatively neglected in the documentation of Connecticut birds.

Professor Manter was not a professional ornithologist. He was rather a general biologist/teacher who organized and taught an Ornithology course at what has become the University of Connecticut. He was also a skilled entomologist and, like many of his contemporaries, taught a variety of biological courses during his long career.

It is difficult today to realize the relative isolation in which "Professor Manter" (as he was always known to his students) studied and enjoyed birds throughout his long life. It is true that there were people in Storrs, such as Benjamin Koons (the first president of the Storrs Agricultural College), G.A. Lamson, J.M. Johnson and the Rev. H.K. Job who studied birds before and during Prof. Manter's early years there. However, Manter's interest in birds from the time he arrived at Storrs in 1912 until his death in the summer of 1990, is unparalleled in eastern Connecticut.

This is not an attempt to provide a definitive biography of Mr. Manter, nor even to evaluate objectively his ornithological contributions, but rather to try to give you a little of his background and a sense of what he was and was not.

Prof. Manter was born in Londonderry, New Hampshire, then a small country town near Manchester, on December 30, 1889. His father worked in the "Manter Mill" and like most people in the area lived on a farm. The family moved to East Manchester in 1895 or 1896

where Prof. Manter went to both grade school and high school.

Like many naturalists his interest in birds developed when he was young and was stimulated and directed during his high school days by a teacher named Huse who recognized his intelligence and enthusiasm and presented him with a copy of Hoffman's *Birds of New England* (which incidentally still was in Manter's possession when he died). Prof. Manter, even in his early days, did not collect birds. The incident that stopped this was in his own words (Manter ms.): "I always had an interest in the out-of-doors, especially birds. I had an air rifle and one day in the woods I aimed at a Woodpecker and fired. I was shocked to see red on its head and thought I had hit it. I gave up shooting birds then. Later I learned that the red indicated the male bird."

The Manter family was not wealthy and the young Jed (Jerauld) Manter worked at a variety of jobs all through high school and college. He paid for most of his college education himself (his notebooks indicate that he had a scholarship and his yearly costs in addition, were \$300). He entered what was then the New Hampshire College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts (now the University of New Hampshire) at Durham in 1908. At Durham his interest in insects developed professionally. However his interest in birds remained. His Bachelors Thesis, presented in June 1912, was "A Study of the Food Habits of New Hampshire Birds" which was written under the direction of Professor C. F. Jackson. The thesis was essentially a gathering together of information from various sources, particularly the U.S. Biological Survey food studies. Like most books and articles on the food of birds of that period the emphasis was upon the value or destructiveness of their feeding habits. In a way it was a wonderful period without the ecological overburden and jargon of many of today's papers. Things were simply good or bad. For example, in arguing against the shooting of hawks, Prof. Manter in his introduction, pointed out that because you may have just seen a murder you should not conclude that all men are murderers. Most hawks he felt were beneficial but classified the Marsh Hawk as "neutral" and the Cooper's Hawk as the "most destructive" and "to blame for nearly all the hard feeling for the other hawks."

Prof. Manter did not consider himself a professional ornithologist. He came to Storrs as an instructor in Zoology. When he was hired in 1912 (without even an interview), he arrived on the campus believing he was coming to work under the guidance of W.E. Britton who was then head of Entomology at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station. After inquiring of several people as to where Dr. Britton's office was located he discovered that it was in New Haven. "But I

liked Storrs and just stayed on," he once told me.

We know little of his bird study activities in those early years. I am sure that like so many field enthusiasts of the period his expertise in the field came slowly and painfully. In his notebook he comments that as a boy he had for observation a "spyglass" that had to be settled firmly in the crotch of a tree and had a very limited field. It was fine for ships on the horizon but less useful for following warblers in the tops of sugar maples.

Picture yourself without a pair of adequate field glasses, no telescope, no experienced mentor to teach you call notes and subtle field marks, and no fancy picture books (I remember the period well as I shared with him the joys and sorrows of learning, as he did, how to identify birds from the Chester Reed field guide). Travel was much restricted at that time. Roads were at the whim of the seasons, and one could sink axle deep in mud in spring; the roads were choked with dust in summer and were for the most part, unplowed in winter. I recall Mr. Manter saying that many times in spring and winter if one wished to go to Willimantic (10 miles or so away) it was necessary to walk the two to three miles to the small village of Eagleville on the Willimantic River and take the train back and forth. Perhaps most importantly there was not a cadre of enthusiastic people feeding birds and concomitantly no network of avid birdwatchers seeking out and reporting rare and unusual species from the area.

Despite what today seem to us as major handicaps, Prof. Manter patiently built his knowledge year by year, not only by listing but by careful attention to arrival and departure dates, sensitivity to fluctuations in abundance and, perhaps above all, by his early expertise in the use of the camera. The changes that were occurring in the bird life of eastern Connecticut were of course striking as the formerly cleared and cultivated fields and pasture lands rapidly returned to brush and woodland, but also in the Storrs area a major university was slowly emerging from a small agricultural college.

By the time that I succeeded Prof. Manter in the fall of 1953, he was an expert field man. I became aware of this a year later when he called me to say that a Cattle Egret had been reported in Glastonbury and would I like to see it. As we drove there on a bright spring morning at 50 or 60 miles an hour, Prof. Manter kept announcing at regular intervals the name of warbler after warbler whose songs and call notes his ear was picking up, some not the every day roadside species either. I was much impressed. This was before the virtuoso performances which younger enthusiasts are able to perform today thanks in part to the variety of recordings available for study.

It is more difficult to capture Jed Manter the man. He was the

epitome of the quiet, competent, unassuming New Englander. He was never pretentious and, if anything, was self-effacing. He really did not consider himself unusual in his knowledge of birds and was modest about his entomological ability. But everything he did he did well. For decades he really acted as a sort of extension entomologist for parts of the state, answering letters on all sorts of insect questions, and his files of economic entomological literature were carefully organized and extensive (yet in an oral history tape made in 1970 he never once mentions this). There were no such ornithological files, so it must be assumed that he considered his work with birds more of an avocation, and professional only in that he did teach an ornithology course at the college for many years as he modestly noted in his book on the birds of the Storrs area, in which he says that the course was started "at the request of some students." This course became a formal part of the curriculum. It was first listed in the 1935-36 course catalogue although it had been taught, probably as a "Special Problem" since 1928.

Prof. Manter was a retiring person who never pushed himself forward. When I succeeded him in 1953 he never once offered me advice on what to do, or what not to do, although he was always courteous and helpful when asked a direct question. This must have characterized him throughout his career, for despite his obvious competence he never rose above the rank of Associate Professor and, oddly, never formally became the State Ornithologist despite the fact that there had previously been such an official and that this was known to him. I mention this primarily as an example of the modesty with which Prof. Manter viewed himself.

This was also evident in the formation of the Natchaug Ornithological Society. This society was formed primarily by two active birders named Dolores Hilding and Margaret Meigs. The former was the first chairperson, although I became the first formal president. In both the formation of this society and his subsequent participation in the bird banding program and the Christmas and spring bird counts Prof. Manter was an enthusiastic participant but would not take a formal leading role. His was always a gentle but authoritative voice in the early years of these activities and he was often the court of last resort in decisions as to whether an unusual record was worthy of serious consideration or not. I was always amused as each year I received a quizzical look from him when I reported my early April Whip-poor-will (alas no longer on my doorstep each spring and summer evening).

Lest this give an impression of meekness, that should be dispelled. He was indeed unassuming, quiet and dignified, but by no means

weak willed. He was in fact, in many ways, a stubborn Yankee. He was firm in his convictions, while still considerate of other people and modest of his abilities. We discovered his tenacity when he agreed to write what became his *Birds of Storrs, Connecticut and Vicinity*. Although he was obviously far and away the best person to write this, it took a bit of persuasion to convince him of that and to obtain a small grant from the University Research Foundation and to arrange for a loan of the Jones notebooks from the University of Iowa. Once into it however, Prof. Manter knew what he wanted to include and what to exclude and just what format he desired. Mrs. Meigs (who was the NOS "curator" at the time) and I sometimes had ideas that differed from his, but I cannot remember any of them prevailing. It was Prof. Manter's book from start to finish. I still recall with amusement his somewhat scornful rejection of my desire to include in the Red Crossbill discussion, an entry by the Rev. Jones that went something like "saw a group in tall pines, very beautiful against the snow, got seven." Prof. Manter, the product of the fighting days of bird protection, was not about to admit that an earlier generation could have had a real affection for the beauty of birds while in the act of shooting them.

No account of Jed Manter would be meaningful without some comments about his ability and enthusiasm for photography. Once again this interest came from knowledge given him as a young boy, this time by a relative. He was in fact, although as he frequently pointed out, not officially the college and later the University photographer. His photographs of early scenes and sporting events are in themselves a legacy of the early years at Storrs that would have been irretrievably lost without his devotion and diligence.

His bird photography has yet to be analyzed but almost certainly will prove to contain a large amount of material that will verify the occurrence of rarities in eastern Connecticut.

In 1963 the famous geneticist and later Dean of Yale's graduate school, Edmund W. Sinnott, published a book *Meeting House and Church in early New England* with a title page that read "By Edmund W. Sinnott: Jerauld A. Manter/Photographic Collaborator." This book contains 221 beautiful pictures of the great old churches that are in a sense the essence of New England. All but a few were taken by Prof. Manter. (This book, the result of many trips taken together with Dr. Sinnott and later by Prof. Manter alone, was a product of 35 years of combined pleasure by the two men). Institutions and people both evolve, and the life of Jerauld Manter reflects this well. He developed from a boy with an interest in birds, insects, and plants into a man with great skill and a long career during which time his institution changed

from a small agricultural school to a major university. During this transition, his area of zoology was a leader and today the University of Connecticut is, beyond a doubt, one of the leading institutions in the country in many areas of systematic and ecological research. Without Prof. Manter's presence for over 40 years it is most unlikely that the fields of ornithology and entomology would be the vigorous active areas that they have become.

I know that he was proud and pleased to see the carefully crafted bird theses of George Clark's students and the development of the priceless bird collection through the acquisition of such major state collections as those of Sage, Treat, and others upon which our knowledge of the past of the birds of Connecticut so heavily depends. His book on the birds of the Storrs area will always stand as the pioneer work for northeastern Connecticut.

It was as a self sufficient, self-effacing gentleman of high competence that those of us who knew him will remember him best. I think he loved nature and especially birds in the best sense of the word. One of my most cherished memories is Prof. Manter appearing in my office after I had been here several years and with some embarrassment handing me a large folder that contained his portrait and a copy of the Meeting House and Church book in which he had inscribed, "Glad to have you have my chair and my book...Jed." (Was anyone of my generation or any of his students ever presumptuous enough to call him "Jed"? Absolutely not!)

I think we should remember him as a person with a deep affection for the birds that enriched his life as they were to enrich the lives of generations of students and colleagues. In Prof. Manter's case in an ancient countryside where beauty still remains and of which he once said, "Well some went on and did well and some like myself stayed, but I have noticed that many of those who went elsewhere have wished that they had stayed."

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CONNECTICUT ORNITHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION SURVEYS OF BIRD POPULATIONS - 1991

Robert A. Askins

During the summer of 1991 thirty-nine volunteers participated in a new program to study the distribution and status of particular species of birds in Connecticut. This program, which was organized by the Connecticut Ornithological Association, involves systematic surveys of species that may be declining, to assess population trends and to identify critical habitat. The information from these surveys will make an important contribution to conservation efforts. The following five projects were completed during the first year of the program.

Whip-poor-will Survey

The goal of this study is to determine whether the abundance of this species is declining. Observers listened for birds at night at specific localities or by driving along roads. These localities and routes were recorded so that they can be revisited in subsequent years. Also, observers recorded the precise location of each Whip-poor-will and the time at which it was detected.

A total of 21 Whip-poor-wills was detected in 9 - 10 towns (Burlington, East Lyme, Granby, Hampton/Chapin, New Haven, Old Lyme, Thompson and Waterford). No Whip-poor-wills were detected in 11 surveyed towns (Brooklyn, Deep River, East Granby, Essex, Glastonbury, Guilford, Killingworth, Mansfield, Middlefield, Pomfret, and Suffield). It is evident from only one year of data that these birds were not found in many rural localities, at least some of which historically had Whip-poor-will populations. In future years it will be important to recheck all localities where birds were found in 1991 and to expand the coverage to other areas, particularly to the northwestern part of the state.

Advisor: George Clark, University of Connecticut; Coordinator: Maria Walker; Field observers: Dick Booth, Laura and Mario Castro, Dexter Chafee, George Clark, Bruce Dasinger, Adam and Charlene Fuller, Betty and Gil Kleiner, Kathie Murphy, Dori Sosnsky, Maria Walker, Karl Wegener, Susan Yurkus, Fred Yost.

Common Nighthawk Survey

The breeding populations of Common Nighthawk have declined substantially during this century. Formerly a breeding bird in open country, it now appears to nest only on flat-roofed buildings in urban areas, where it seems to have declined in recent years. There has been no regular monitoring of this species in Connecticut.

This survey is modeled after one conducted in New Hampshire. Volunteers visit town parks, lighted athletic fields and shopping mall parking lots on warm, clear evenings from mid-June through July from 15 minutes before sunset until one hour after sunset.

Eleven observers covered 12 towns (Branford, Bristol, Cheshire, Easton, Fairfield, Mansfield, New Canaan, New Haven, Plymouth, Southington, Stamford, and Terryville). Nighthawks were observed only in Branford, Orange, and New Haven. Ideally this survey should cover all of the urban areas in Connecticut, but Hartford, Danbury, Derby, Meriden, Middletown, Bridgeport, Waterbury and New London were not covered during the first year.

Advisor: George Clark, University of Connecticut; **Coordinator:** Steven Hill; **Field observers:** Michael Anderson, George Clark, Richard English, Elsbeth Johnson, Mary Lou Kramer, Gary Lemmon, Celia Lewis, Alison Olivieri, Peter Picone, Paul Rothbart, Susan Yurkus.

Yellow-breasted Chat Survey

Breeding populations of Yellow-breasted Chats and other thicket-nesting species have declined in Connecticut due to the destruction of open habitat and the maturation of thickets into forest. The Yellow-breasted Chat, which was once a common bird in the state, is now a candidate for the state's endangered species list. The goal of this survey was to determine whether there are breeding populations of chats along powerline right-of-ways (where stable shrubland habitat is maintained) and in other areas of low thicket.

Observers surveyed appropriate habitat for chats by playing a tape of chat song at intervals along a trail or road. The tape was played for two minutes at each survey point. Adjacent points were at least 100 paces apart. The number of chats and other thicket specialists (White-eyed Vireo, Blue-winged Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Indigo Bunting, and Field Sparrow) were recorded for each survey point, and the positions of all survey points were marked on topographical maps.

Yellow-breasted Chats were detected in only three towns: Stonington, Waterford, and Redding. A female with a nestling was seen at the Stonington site, which was an abandoned field. The other two sites were along powerline right-of-ways. No chats were detected in surveys in Fairfield, Montville, Ledyard, Groton, and North Stonington. Blue-winged Warbler, Prairie Warbler and Field Sparrow were frequently detected at survey points, but Indigo Bunting and Chestnut-sided Warbler were infrequent (occurring at only 5% and 8% of the survey points, respectively).

Advisor: Robert Askins, Connecticut College; **Coordinator:** Thomas Ford; **Field observers:** Bruce Dasinger, Charles Barnard, Jr., Thomas Ford, Shirley Mickens.

Fox Sparrow Migration Patterns

The Fox Sparrow appears to be declining as a passage migrant and winter resident in Connecticut, so it is important to learn more about their distribution in the state. At the White Memorial Foundation in northeastern Connecticut, over twice as many Fox Sparrows have been trapped during spring migration than during the preceding fall migration over the past five years. To determine whether this seasonal difference reflects different migratory routes in spring and fall, we need comparable data from other parts of Connecticut, especially from coastal areas.

Data on Fox Sparrows from two coastal banding stations were compared with the data from the White Memorial Foundation banding station. At both of the coastal stations, more Fox Sparrows were recorded during the fall than during the following spring, the reverse of the pattern documented at White Memorial Foundation.

Advisor: Gordon Loery, White Memorial Conservation Center; **Field observers:** Carl Trichka, Ginger Bladen, Gordon Loery

Forest-interior Bird Surveys

Although it is known that the populations of many species of migratory songbirds have declined in small forest preserves during the past 30-40 years, not much is known about their status in extensive areas of forest. It is important to determine whether population declines reflect local changes such as suburban development or more widespread effects such as destruction of winter habitat in the tropics.

It is therefore important to monitor large forests that will remain relatively undisturbed for many years.

Survey points were located in upland deciduous or mixed deciduous/coniferous forest in the interior of large, wooded tracts in three state forests (Nehantic, Pachaug and Cockaponset) and in Devil's Den Nature Preserve. All birds seen or heard at a survey point were recorded during a ten-minute period. Each survey point was sampled on two days in June between 5:30 and 8:30 A.M. Adjacent points were separated by at least 200 meters.

A total of 76 survey points was covered, providing good baseline information on the abundance of many common forest birds. Veery, Wood Thrush, Red-eyed Vireo, Black-and-white Warbler, American Redstart and Scarlet Tanager were frequently detected. Red-eyed Vireo and Ovenbird were especially common, with as many as three or four territorial males of one of these species at some survey points. Species that are known to be "area sensitive" (i.e., absent or considerably less abundant in smaller forest tracts) were found at all sites, and Nehantic and Devil's Den had an impressive diversity of these species. Winter Wren, Hermit Thrush, Yellow-throated Vireo and Worm-eating Warbler were some of the area-sensitive species that were detected frequently.

Additional forests should be added to this survey. We particularly need sites in the northern part of the state.

Advisor: Robert Askins, Connecticut College; **Coordinators:** Steven Hill and Lise Hanners; **Field observers:** Dexter Chafee, John Gaskell, Lise Hanners, Jim Sirch, David Provencher.

Opportunities to Participate in Projects in 1992

The COA Research Committee has decided to continue all projects except the Yellow-breasted Chat project in 1992. These studies were designed for long-term monitoring, so we need to sustain them for many years. Since the various projects require different levels of proficiency in bird identification, from the ability to identify the songs and calls of all forest bird species to the ability to recognize a Whip-poor-will song, any interested person should be able to participate. If you would like to volunteer for any of the four continuing projects, please write to:

Robert Askins
Department of Zoology
Connecticut College
New London, CT 06320

Please indicate which project interests you. Note that each project has special requirements:

- ☛ Whip-poor-will survey - night driving
- ☛ Common Nighthawk survey - night driving, out at night in urban areas
- ☛ Fox Sparrow study - bird banding qualification, including U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service permit and equipment for trapping and banding birds
- ☛ Forest-interior birds - Ability to identify the calls and songs of forest birds; ability to hike two to three miles along forest trails

Participation in one of these projects will be not only an interesting way to spend some time in the field but also a way for you to apply your field expertise to help conserve bird populations in Connecticut.

Research Committee, Connecticut Ornithological Association

Correction :

Volume 11, No. 3, page 99. The last sentence in the first paragraph under OWL THROUGH SHRIKES should read: It was a good winter for Saw-whet Owl with at least seven different reports. (the two birds seen sporadically through the period at Pine Creek, Fairfield, were Short-eared Owls).

THE CROWNED SPARROWS

Roland C. Clement

Along the highlands of the southern cordillera of our hemisphere, from Chiapas in southern Mexico to Tierra del Fuego, a simple, lisping song is flung to the winds and is for many, a "mystery voice." Those of us who ferret out such ghost-like voices have come to know the elusive singer as the Rufous-collared Sparrow (*Zonotrichia capensis*).

Although you may never see it, this South American bird is important to us because it is now thought to be the ancestor of all our North American "crowned" sparrows (the genus *Zonotrichia*).

For nearly three centuries, ever since Linnaeus began the task of naming the world's life forms—and especially after Darwin, in the 19th century, demonstrated that these life forms evolve one from another—those who specialize in taxonomy have been dependent on the skeleton or upon external forms, dimensions and colors to suggest the lineages of the more than 8000 bird species. Fortunately, because some of these characteristics are sufficiently conservative (unchanging) to serve as dependable guides, the resulting classifications have been fairly robust.

In recent years the advent of biochemistry as a new analytical tool has opened new vistas. Molecular methods (DNA analysis, etc.) appear to provide more specific clues to relationships because they address the genetic constitution of the organism. Thus, they may provide mileposts in evolutionary history and offer new clues to the origins of more obvious characteristics. This short introductory article, based on a recent technical report of biochemical studies on the sparrows of the genus *Zonotrichia*, calls attention to this new ornithological arena (Zink, et al. 1991).

Robert M. Zink, ornithologist at the Museum of Natural Science at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, has, with the help of a succession of graduate students, specialized in the history of this genus for more than a dozen years. He is an evolutionary biologist specializing in phylogenetics (from the Greek, phylon, meaning tribe or race). Even song dialects are brought to bear in his reassessments.

Both the Rufous-collared Sparrow of South America and the North American White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*) have very extensive and somewhat disjunct ranges, and their populations show enough variation to have led various ornithologists to recognize some 16 subspecies in the Rufous-collar, and at least five in the White-crown (Nuttall's, Gambel's, Mountain, Puget Sound, and the nominate

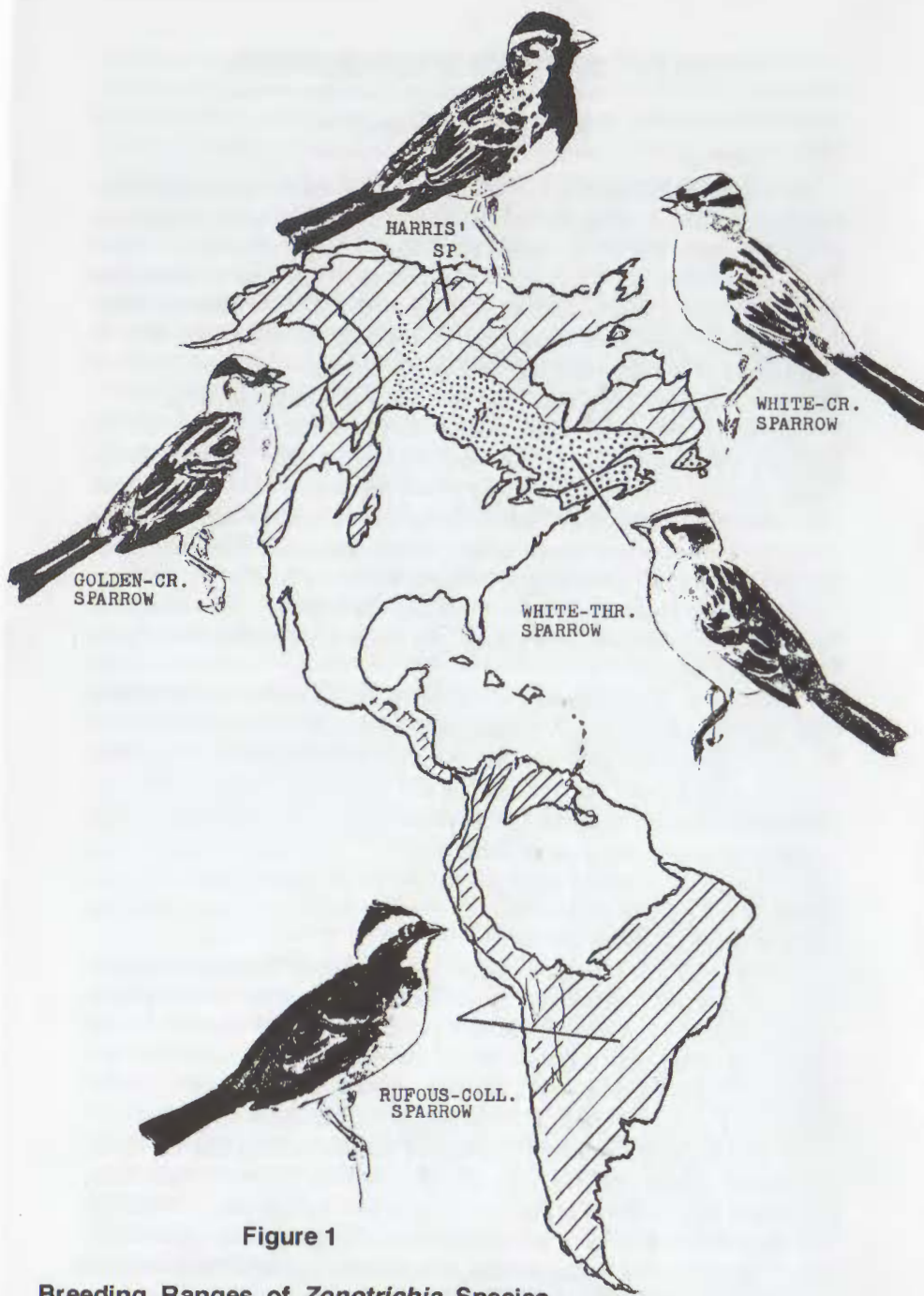


Figure 1

Breeding Ranges of *Zonotrichia* Species

"eastern" race). Whether the White-crown has always been widely distributed, or whether it has expanded more recently into territory vacated by the melting ice of the last Ice Age, we do not yet know. The map (Figure 1) shows the breeding enclaves occupied by the Golden-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*) in the mountainous northwest and by Harris' Sparrow (*Zonotrichia querula*) in western subarctic Canada.

All species of the genus occupy somewhat similar breeding habitats: weedy and shrubby transitions or ecotones between forest and tundra, whether arctic or alpine (or ecological successions following fire, windstorm, or man-made clearings). All have songs that are patterned on roughly similar combinations of whistled notes and reedy phrases, though each species has evolved enough virtuosity to be recognized by song and notes. Somewhat less conformable is the White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*), which occupies openings in the Canadian Zone forest, mostly south and east of the other representatives of the genus, and likewise has the most melodious and articulated song, though this too has many dialects which have changed even in the brief century we have studied this bird afield.

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71 Weed Ave., Norwalk, CT 06080

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER RAISES TWO BROODS IN CONNECTICUT

Eric Sullivan

During the summer of 1991, I observed a pair of Red-bellied Woodpeckers (*Melanerpes carolinus*) raise two broods in our (Portland) backyard. This would not have been unusual had I lived in Florida or South Carolina, where Red-bellied Woodpeckers commonly have two or three broods. In the northeast, however, this species is only known to have one brood. This certainly raises some interesting questions. What allowed this pair to raise two successful broods? Was this an isolated case, or does this species routinely produce multiple broods in Connecticut?

The unseasonably warm weather in the spring of 1991 may have played a role. There was a consensus among birders and non-birders alike, that Connecticut had an "early spring." According to 1991 Spring Field Notes(CW), temperatures exceeded 60°F in Hartford March 1-2. April was warmer still, as the mercury reach 90°F in Hartford on the 7th, and "May 1991 went into the books as the hottest May on record." The warm weather could have triggered early breeding behavior.

My observations began 16 May 1991. The nest hole was about 35 feet high in a dead limb of a red maple (*Acer rubens*). Two nestlings successfully fledged from the first clutch on 20 June, and one nestling successfully fledged from the second clutch 11 August. From my observations, there did not appear to be additional nestlings in the first clutch. According to Stickel (1965) and Andrie (1988), the approximate number of days required for Red-bellied Woodpeckers to raise their young from incubation to fledgling stage ranges from 33.5 to 40. From my field notes, I estimate the first clutch took approximately 36 days, from 15 May to 20 June, and the second clutch approximately 38 days, from 4 July to 11 August. According to the *Atlas of Breeding Birds of New York State*, Red-bellied Woodpeckers fledged nestlings during a period from 23 June to 13 August. The Atlas also states that if a nest or clutch is destroyed, it is probable that a second attempt will be made. Given these dates, and the good fortune to avoid total mortality of a clutch, it would seem possible that this species could raise two broods successfully in Connecticut.

Kilham (1961) states that juveniles usually follow the adults after fledging for up to two and a half months, but that "juveniles may leave their parents within a few weeks in the event of a second nesting." In

such a case the departure of the juveniles would be expedited by the parents chasing them. I noticed this behavior on 20 August, one day after "Hurricane Bob."

A juvenile was following the male around. The female was not in sight until she flew in and began chasing the juvenile. When the juvenile landed on a branch, the female would chase it again. After several "kwirr" calls (Kilham, 1961) she flew-off, leaving the juvenile perched on a branch and making a low chatter call (sounding like a squirrel). The male was not present during this period. The female certainly appeared more aggressive towards the juvenile than was the male. Could this have been a signal to her mate that she was ready to start another clutch? It seems likely that this juvenile was from the first brood rather than the second. Just prior to the chase, the male was feeding this juvenile at our birdfeeder. I assumed this was the bird that had fledged nine days earlier from the second brood. Why would the female have been so aggressive towards this juvenile if it had so recently fledged? It was obviously still dependent on its parents. Perhaps she was confused as to the brood from which this juvenile had fledged. I had heard juvenile Red-bellied Woodpeckers calls from the surrounding woods while both adults were still attending to the second brood in the nest hole. It would seem that there may have been some degree of overlap between caring for the first fledglings and the care of the nestling in the second brood.

The Red-bellied Woodpecker continues to extend its range northward, following the Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*), Tufted Titmouse (*Parus bicolor*), and other species that have extended their ranges into Connecticut in this century. My observations demonstrate that it is possible for the Red-bellied Woodpecker to raise two broods successfully in Connecticut. Perhaps this will become a trend among this species in our state.

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RECOVERIES OF BIRDS BANDED IN CONNECTICUT

Carl J. Trichka

How long do birds live? Where do they spend the winter? How fast do they travel? These and many more questions about birds eluded us for many years. We still do not have all the answers, but we are slowly learning through information provided by bird banding data. Researchers need to identify a particular species, and if possible, determine its age and sex in order to develop the data needed to answer such questions. Banding is one of the many tools researchers use to gather that data.

The U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service coordinates the bird banding program, which began in 1920. Today reports of some two million banded birds are received annually, prepared by about two thousand licensed banders.

The return rate for all these banded birds averages about one percent each year, a very low number. One has to consider that birds travel great distances during migration and can be swept out over water during their annual trek. In addition, mortality rates, especially in the smaller species, is very high and a banded bird expiring in the forest or taken by a predator becomes lost data.

As discouraging as it seems, there are recoveries of banded birds made each year and our bank of knowledge begins to expand despite the low percentages. Listed in the following tables are some of the bird band recoveries of birds banded in Connecticut, that I have received during the past ten years.

65 Glover St., Fairfield, CT 06430

BIRD BAND RECOVERIES

SPECIES	BANDED		RECOVERY		
	DATE	In Conn.	STATUS	DATE	LOCATION
Great Egret	6/08/81	Chimon Is.	Found dead	4/01/85	Dominican Republic
Snowy Egert	6/29/81	Chimon Is.	Found dead	4/08/82	Yaguez R., Puerto Rico
Bl.-cr. Night-Heron	5/26/81	Chimon Is.	Found dead	5/20/82	S.E. Pennsylvania
Herring Gull	6/04/80	Chimon Is.	Found dead	11/25/80	Long Island, NY
Herring Gull	6/04/80	Chimon Is.	Found dead	12/06/80	Morehead City, NC
Herring Gull	6/04/80	Chimon Is.	Caught & rel'd.	10/22/81	Bear Mt., NY
Herring Gull	6/04/80	Chimon Is.	Found dead	4/01/82	Port Richey, FL
Herring Gull	6/26/82	Chimon Is.	Found dead	7/14/83	Back Bay NWR, VA
Herring Gull	6/19/84	Chimon Is.	Caught & rel'd.	7/19/85	Nagshead, NC
Herring Gull	6/24/82	Chimon Is.	Found dead	1985	Chincoteague NWR, VA
Herring Gull	6/16/86	Chimon Is.	Found dead	9/86	Rockland, ME
Herring Gull	6/18/86	Chimon Is.	Caught & rel'd.	11/86	Ventnor, NJ
Gr. Bl.-backed Gull	5/28/82	Chimon Is.	Found dead	2/25/83	Orlando, FL
Barn Owl	6/29/80	Stratford	Seen at nest	Spring 81	Middletown, CT
Eastern Phoebe	3/24/82	Fairfield	Found dead	4/12/82	Dighton, MA
Blue Jay	5/04/83	Fairfield	Found Dead	7/03/83	N. Scituate, RI
Hermit Thrush	10/11/84	Fairfield	Found Dead	10/16/84	Providence, RI
Gray Catbird	5/10/79	Fairfield	Found Dead	5/03/82	Beverly, NJ
American Redstart	8/30/82	Fairfield	Caught & rel'd.	9/15/82	Newport News, VA
Canada Warbler	5/26/82	Chimon Is.	Found Dead	8/84	Lawerence R., Quebec
Northern Cardinal	11/01/79	Fairfield	Found Dead	5/18/80	Chappaqua, NY
Rufous-ed. Towhee	10/06/82	Fairfield	Found Dead	10/22/82	Ridge, MD
Dark-eyed Junco	10/11/86	Fairfield	Found Dead	2/18/87	Hickory, NC
White-thr. Sparrow	11/16/79	Fairfield	Caught & rel'd.	5/13/80	Woburn, MA
White-thr. Sparrow	10/22/80	Fairfield	Found Dead	10/05/81	Quebec
Common Grackle	4/23/79	Fairfield	Found Dead	1/10/80	Felton, Delaware
House Finch	2/02/83	Fairfield	Caught & rel'd.	11/20/83	Budd Lake, NJ
Common Redpoll	2/25/78	Fairfield	Caught & rel'd.	4/12/78	Elizabethtown, NY

CONNECTICUT FIELD NOTES SUMMER: JUNE 1 - JULY 31, 1991

Jay Kaplan

Hot! That was the only way to describe the summer of 1991, and perhaps the extreme heat was a primary reason for the paucity of field reports. The period was touted by the media as the "hottest summer on record," and it was almost enough to make us believe that global warming was at hand. The month of June began with near normal temperatures, but by June 10th the mercury had reached the low 90's in Hartford. Temperatures cooled to the 60's June 19th, only to rise again during late June, reaching 100°F June 28th in southwest coastal communities. Rainfall of 1.2 inches was significant June 16th.

July continued hot and dry with temperatures exceeding 100°F for three straight days mid-month. Bridgeport recorded 96°F July 19th, while Danbury reached a record 103.5°F. A series of violent thunderstorms caused heavy damage and widespread power outages July 22nd and 23rd. Rainfall for the month totalled 2.9 inches, due in a large part to almost an inch falling in Hartford July 23rd and again on the 26th.

In spite of less than ideal conditions for birding, those who ventured into the field were rewarded with several fine sightings. Highlights included Black Vulture, Black Rail, and nesting Yellow-throated Warblers. Also noteworthy was the series of Connecticut Ornithological Association sponsored summer bird counts (see CW11:103-120).

LOONS THROUGH FALCONS

Red-throated Loon went unreported in the state this period. Common Loons, on the other hand, were reported along the coast from Stonington to Norwalk. Of note were inland sightings in Mansfield June 15 (GC) and Woodbury June 16 (RN). Pied-billed Grebes again nested successfully in the Lordship marshes, Stratford (CB,FMa,et al.). A total of eight young were seen June 22 (RN) and it is possible that two pair nested in this vicinity, perhaps the sole breeding site for this species in Connecticut! A Horned Grebe in breeding plumage was seen off Sandy Point, West Haven June 8 (PL). Double-crested Cormorants continue to expand with 91 nests on East White Rock, Westport, and an additional 70 on Calf Pasture Island, Norwalk (MB,FMa,et al.). Birds have also been noted frequenting other smaller, rocky islets to the west (FMa), which may result in

additional nest sites in future years. Inland sightings included individuals in Ashford in mid-June (BD,MS) and at Great Pond State Forest, Simsbury July 15 (JKa).

An American Bittern was reported from mid-June to early July at Lake Pocotopaug, East Hampton (MN fide ES). There were no reports of Least Bitterns on their traditional nesting grounds. A new heronry was discovered on South Dumpling Island, Groton containing Great and Snowy egrets, Little Blue Heron and Black-crowned Night-Herons (RSCB). The birds are a likely spillover from the colony on nearby Ram Island. A Little Blue was inland at the Kellogg Estate, Derby July 14 (JB). Cattle Egrets apparently failed to nest on the Norwalk Islands for the second consecutive year (MB), giving rise to questions about the status of this species as a breeder in Connecticut. A new colony of Black-crowned Night-Herons was found in cottonwood trees at Great Meadows, Stratford with young heard June 9 (TD,FMa). Yellow-crowned Night-Heron nests were present in Bridgeport's Battery Park, and on the Norwalk Islands, and there was new confirmation of two nests with young in large sycamore trees in Darien (FP fide FMa).

Six Brant were at Milford Point June 1, with at least three lingering through the month (SM). Wood Ducks had high nesting success in western Connecticut (DR). Unusual was a male at Sheffield Island, Norwalk June 30 (FMa,et al.). Summer sightings of sea ducks often mean that these individuals are unable to migrate north due to illness or injury. Such was the case with an injured male Oldsquaw seen daily at high tide off Merwin Point, Milford June 22-July 6 (SM). Additional "out-of-place" ducks included a male White-winged Scoter off Stonington June 8 (RSCB), a Bufflehead on the Greenwich-Stamford Summer Count June 15-16 (fide FMa) and a Red-breasted Merganser off Groton Long Point, July 23 (RSCB).

At least two **Black Vultures** were seen soaring with Turkey Vultures over Skiff Mountain Road, Kent June 10 (JMa), and another was seen in this location June 18 (NC fide MB). Of 66 active Osprey nests statewide, 56 successfully fledged a record 122 young (DEP)! An unverified report was received of an American Swallow-tailed Kite in the Mansfield area over a two week period in July. This is the second consecutive year that this species has been reported from this area and it is hoped that additional details will be forthcoming. A pair of Bald Eagles defended territory and built a substantial nest in Barkhamsted but failed to breed. These birds are just reaching maturity and it is hoped that a breeding confirmation for this species, the first in many years, will be obtained within the not too distant future! The first Connecticut nesting of Northern Harrier in recent

decades was at last confirmed when a juvenile was seen following a female at Great Meadows, Stratford July 16 (CB,JZ). Sharp-shinned Hawks nested in at least three northwest Connecticut towns (DR), while Cooper's Hawks were newly confirmed breeding in Salisbury (IS,TS) and Sherman (JKf). A Cooper's Hawk with four young was in Norfolk July 28 (NP). Northern Goshawks were highly aggressive in Pachaug State Forest, Voluntown, although no nest was located (RSCB), and were also reported nesting in several northwest locations (DR,et al.). Although there were scattered reports of American Kestrel from around the state, the concern over this species has not diminished. Additional reports are quite likely due to the fact that observers are more conscious of this declining falcon. There were no reports of other falcons summering in Connecticut.

RAILS THROUGH TERNS

A **Black Rail** was heard calling in Lordship Marsh, Stratford June 20 (NC) and was heard again in mid-morning June 23 (JF fide MB). Two rails called, 10 feet apart in Great Meadows, Stratford July 4 (CB). Is there a breeding population of this species in this area? If so, steps must be taken to protect it as the Great Meadows area was mowed several days after the rails were heard! King Rails were seen in Manresa marsh, Norwalk throughout the period (FMa,CW) and were confirmed breeding when three chicks were seen June 22 (LB,FP). An American Coot, rare in summer, was in Stratford June 1-9 (m.ob.).

Nesting pairs of Piping Plovers decreased by 16 percent along the Connecticut shoreline this summer with 36 pairs compared to 1990's record high of 43 (DEP). It was a good year for American Oystercatcher. Five to six pairs nested on the Norwalk Islands, where 12 birds were seen on an Audubon boat trip June 30 (FMa,et al.). A nest with one young was at Bluff Island, Greenwich July 7 (TB). Additional sightings included four at Lighthouse Point Park, New Haven June 4 (DBa,FG), one at Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison, three at Menunketesuck Island, Westbrook July 12 (JMa), five at Griswold Point, Old Lyme July 16 (JMa,AR), and two at Two Tree Island, Waterford July 30 (DP). A late Solitary Sandpiper was at Southbury Training School, Southbury June 15 (RN). An impressive 30-35 Upland Sandpipers were at Bradley International Airport, Windsor Locks July 20 (JMo,DT), while one bird was at Sherwood Island State Park, Westport July 29 (FMa). Individual Whimbrels were at Milford Point July 6 (SM) and 14 (FMa,et al.), and at Manresa, Norwalk July 7 and 16 (FMa,CW). A breeding-plumaged Hudsonian Godwit was at Barn Island Wildlife Management Area, Stonington July 27 (DP). Three Red Knots were at Milford Point June 6 and July 17 (SM).

Semipalmated Sandpipers peaked at 3000+ at Milford Point July 31 (FMa,SM), and there were 200 Short-billed Dowitchers at this location July 28 (FMa,et al.). A Wilson's Phalarope was at Jupiter Point Marsh, Branford July 30 (NP).

A first summer plumaged Common Black-headed Gull, a rare summer visitor, was found roosting with three Bonaparte's Gulls at Gorham Pond, Darien June 15 (LB,FP). These birds were present the following day (FMa,et al.) and again June 23 (JZ). Two Royal Terns were at Milford Point June 28 (FMc) and an adult was sighted there July 31 (FMa,SM). The 627 pairs of Least Terns in the state represented a drop of 200 pairs from the previous year and the 120 birds fledged were 54% of the 1990 numbers (DEP). A Black Skimmer was at Milford Point July 6 (SM). A skimmer nest was found on Sandy Point, just over the Stonington border in Rhode Island, the first confirmed breeding in the "Ocean State." Alas, the two eggs did not hatch, most likely due to gull predation (RSCB).

CUCKOOS THROUGH GROSBEAKS

Without major outbreaks of Gypsy moths in Connecticut, cuckoos were scarce. Yellow-billed Cuckoos were at Devil's Hopyard State Park, East Haddam June 9 (RSCB) and in Storrs July 2 (MS). Barn Owls had a successful year in the Middletown-Middlefield area with 12 young banded at two nests June 30 (GZ). Four Common Nighthawks at Great Meadows, Stratford July 4 (CB) may have been late migrants. Summer studies on both Common Nighthawk and Whip-poor-will, done under the auspices of the C.O.A. Research Committee resulted in 21 Whip-poor-wills detected in 10 towns and Common Nighthawks detected in only three towns (see article on page 15 of this issue). In addition to the studies or surveys, Whip-poor-wills were singing in Preston July 2, North Stonington July 8 (DP) and East Hampton in mid-July (ES). Of three singing in Salem June 25, one was still singing one month later (DBi).

An adult male Rufous Hummingbird was at a New Hartford feeder July 21-27, the first documented record for the state (DG fide JKa). The bird was photographed and a report has been forwarded to the Connecticut Rare Records Committee. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were reported as extending their breeding range south and east in Litchfield County (DR). There were few reports of the more unusual *Empidonax* flycatchers. Late migrant Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were in Roxbury June 1 (DR) and Redding June 9 (FMa,TD). There is some concern over the status of Alder Flycatcher, as none were reported during the period.

Six pairs of Common Raven nested in northwestern Connecticut,

fledging a total of 18 young (DR). Additionally, three to five ravens were along the Naugatuck River, Watertown, through much of the period (RN), perhaps indicating a range expansion. The pair in Ashford was unsuccessful in their two nesting efforts (GC). There were widespread reports of breeding Red-breasted Nuthatch, with a nest in Pachaug State Forest (RSCB) and pairs in Woodbury (RN) and Simsbury (BK). Golden-crowned Kinglets nested in Granby, Morris, New Hartford and West Hartford (DR). Eastern Bluebirds continue to increase throughout the state, due in large part to the DEP-sponsored nest box program. One observer estimates a current state-wide population of 1200 pairs (DR). Hermit Thrush is increasing southward as a breeding bird, while White-eyed Vireo is expanding into the Naugatuck Valley (DR).

For the third consecutive year, **Yellow-Throated Warblers** nested along River Road, Kent (m.ob.), and another was at McLean Game Refuge, Granby July 8 (DR, et al.). Yellow-breasted Chats nested and successfully fledged two young in the Knox Preserve, Stonington (RSCB). A singing Grasshopper Sparrow was at Millstone Point, Waterford July 1 (DP). At the sparrow's primary breeding grounds, Bradley International Airport, only four birds were observed July 20 (JMo, DT). There were new nesting confirmations for Purple Finch and it appears this species is moving south and east (DR). A male was in Mansfield June 12 (GC). A pair of Evening Grosbeaks appeared at an East Hartland feeder July 22 (EL fide BK); an unusual summer sighting.

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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.

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ABOUT OUR COVER ARTIST

Mark Szantyr

"Hooded Warbler (*Wilsonia citrina*)"

We are happy to have another of Mark Szantyr's drawings for the front cover of "The Warbler". Besides drawing most of the Site Guide maps that have appeared in recent issues, Mark is also doing the artwork for a soon to be published bird-finding guide for Connecticut. He is an avid photographer, birder and bird-bander. He is now living in Storrs, working on his masters degree, and painting.

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

The Connecticut Warbler

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BIRD SPECIES REPORTED IN THE NORTHEAST BUT NOT IN CONNECTICUT

Jonathan Trouern-Trend¹ and Louis R. Bevier²

This paper represents an attempt to generate a list of bird species that have been reported in the geographic area surrounding Connecticut, but never in the state itself. The arbitrary geographic area covered includes most of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to northern New Jersey, all of New England, eastern New York, and eastern Pennsylvania as indicated in Figure 1.

The method used to generate this list was to consult local records in the designated regions in the journal *American Birds* and its predecessor, *Audubon Field Notes*, from 1958 to 1991 for reports of species not on the official state list as accepted by the Connecticut Rare Records Committee (hereafter CRRC). Some records prior to 1958 were included if they were cited in more recent literature. In addition the following state and provincial compilations were consulted: *The Birds of New York State* (Bull 1974); *Birds of Massachusetts* (Griscom and Snyder 1955); *The Status and Distribution of New Jersey's Birds* (Leck 1984); *Pennsylvania Birds* (Poole 1964); *Birds of Nova Scotia* (Tufts 1986); *Annotated List of the Birds of Maine* (Vickery 1978); *Birds of New Brunswick* (Squires 1978); and *Distributional Checklist of North American Birds* (DeSante and Pyle 1986). English and scientific names follow the AOU checklist (1983) and supplements through 1991.

This paper is meant as an initial effort and provides a starting point for future compilations. Additional reports may have been missed or overlooked. Obvious escapees, such as exotic pheasants, flamingos, and the like, are not included on this list. Also not included are records accepted by the CRRC as hypothetical (reports based only on convincing written details but lacking photographic or specimen evidence, see Connecticut Ornithological Association Field-List, 1989). A complete list would require much more time and effort and involve the review of literally dozens of local and regional reports published throughout the area covered. As it stands, this list contains 138 species reported in the Northeast but not in Connecticut, although reports of seven species in this list are currently under review by

the CRRC and three species have been reported but not accepted. Thus, a minimum of 519 species have been reported in the Northeast.

We have not attempted to check the veracity of each report, and consequently the list contains a mixture of well documented records and possibly erroneous reports. Published opinions of most reports are noted in the species accounts, and in some cases we state our own opinion regarding the validity of the reports. It cannot be emphasized enough that the farther from a species' proven range (geographic and ecologic) and seasons of occurrence, the greater the need for concrete evidence of correct identification. We strongly encourage all observers to obtain full detailed descriptions of rarities and especially encourage photography of such finds. Any report of a species not currently accepted to the Connecticut State list should be sent to the Secretary of the CRRC (Louis R. Bevier).

This paper is not intended to predict species that might be found in Connecticut at some future time, but to elucidate patterns of occurrence surrounding the state. The list of species found fifteen or more times in the region surrounding Connecticut is shown in Table 1, and the number of

Table 1. Species with 15 or more records in the Northeast (excluding resident breeding species) and not accepted to the Connecticut State List.

¹ - Species reported in Connecticut but not accepted based on questionable origin.

** - Reports currently under review by CRRC.

Pacific/Arctic Loon	South Polar Skua	Fork-tailed Flycatcher
Sooty Shearwater	Sabine's Gull	Gray Jay
Audubon's Shearwater	Sandwich Tern**	Black-billed Magpie ¹
White-tailed Tropicbird	Bridled Tern	Bewick's Wren
Barnacle Goose ¹	Common Murre	Townsend's Warbler
Mississippi Kite	Razorbill**	Western Meadowlark
Bar-tailed Godwit	Three-toed Woodpecker	
Great Skua	Ash-throated Flycatcher	

species unique to a particular state or province within the Northeast is given in Table 2 along with the approximate total state or provincial list.

This paper reveals interesting patterns of vagrancy such as the many storm-related species that have occurred on Long Island but have never reached Connecticut, a relatively short distance away. In addition, other patterns may emerge from generally unexplained phenomena apart from major storm movements. For example, the presence of a Lucy's Warbler and a Painted Redstart in the Northeast during the same season may indicate an unusual situation encouraging such transcontinental dispersal. In Table 3, we have

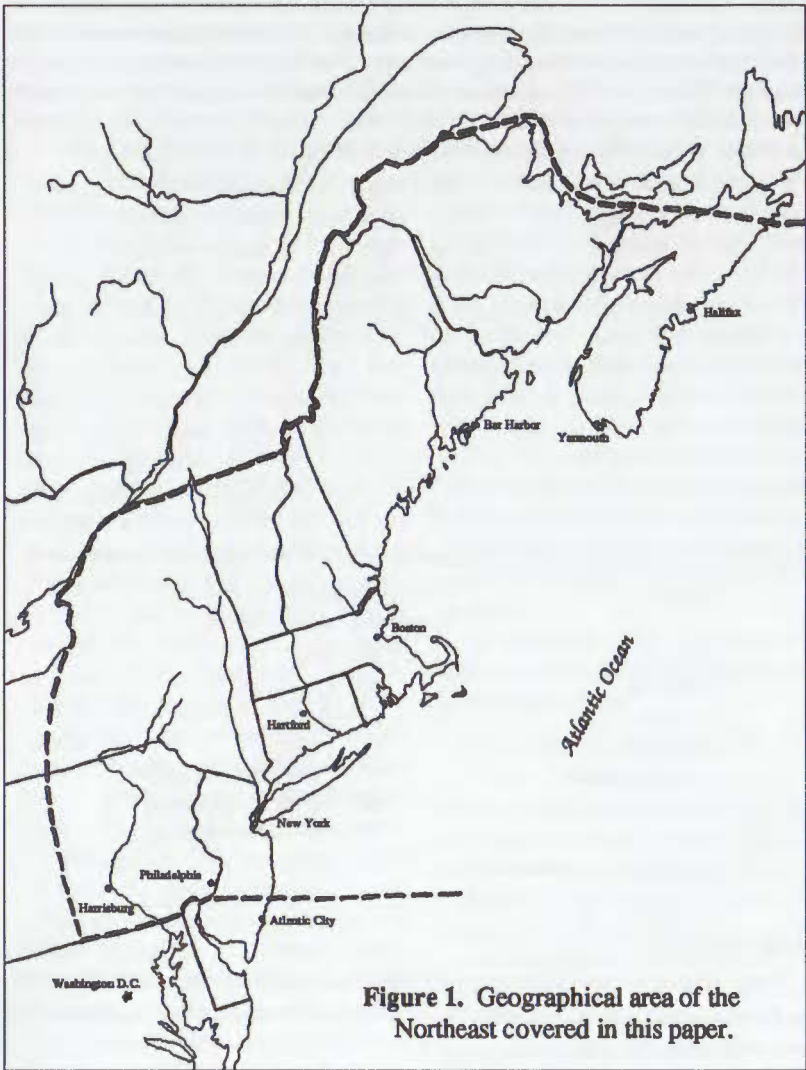


Figure 1. Geographical area of the Northeast covered in this paper.

attempted to list the zoogeographic source regions for the species cited in this paper. Although categorizing the particular source region for some records is not certain, the movement of one or two species between groups does not affect the overall pattern that the majority of species are from North America and over a fourth are from Europe and Asia. Continued trends can elucidate interesting distributional, and in some cases, behavioral patterns. Thus, this paper provides a departure point for examining distributional data of vagrant bird species in the Northeast.

Table 2. Number of species unique to a particular state or province *within* the Northeast (region covered in this paper). Doubtful and unconfirmed reports are excluded, with the total including those reports mentioned in this paper given in brackets. The total number of species recorded for a given state or province includes areas outside our region in some cases; the totals, considered approximate, are based on DeSante and Pyle (updated to include records in this paper) and the CRRC.

state or province	total unique	total species
MA	17 [20]	455
NS	8 [9]	413
ME	6 [8]	409
NY	6 [7]	439
NJ	3 [4]	424
PA	3 [4]	402
NB	1 [2]	372
RI	1 [2]	390
NH	0 [1]	372
VT	0 [1]	344
CT	0	386

Table 3. Zoogeographic source regions for species reported in this paper.

Region	No. of species (%) based on probable source region
Nearctic	66 (48)
Palaearctic	39 (28)
Oceanic	14 (8)
Neotropical	18 (12)
S. American	5 (28 of Neotropical)
Caribbean	10 (55 of Neotropical)
widespread	3 (16 of Neotropical)
Afrotropical (Ethiopian)	1 (<1)

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used for frequently cited institutions that serve as repositories for specimens, journals, geographical localities, compass directions, and other miscellaneous items:

Journals

AB - *American Birds*, AFN - *Audubon Field Notes*

Museums

AMNH - American Museum of Natural History; ANSP - Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia; BMS - Boston Museum of Science; CNHM - Chicago Natural History Museum; CUM - Cornell University Museum; MCZ - Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard Univ.; NMC - National Museum of Natural Sciences, Ottawa; NYSM - New York State Museum, Albany; USNM - United States National Museum, Washington D.C.

Bird Species not reported in Connecticut

States and Provinces

CT - Connecticut, MA - Massachusetts, ME - Maine, NB - New Brunswick, NH - New Hampshire, NJ - New Jersey, NS - Nova Scotia, NY - New York, PA - Pennsylvania, RI - Rhode Island, VT - Vermont.

Geographical localities and miscellaneous items

Co. - County, CRRC - Connecticut Rare Records Committee, e - east, ese - east-southeast, Ft. - Fort, I. - Island, Jct. - Junction, L.I. - Long Island, mi - mile, Mt. - Mount/Mountain, n - north, NP - National Park, NWR - National Wildlife Refuge, Pt. - Point, s - south, se - southeast, spec. - specimen, sse - south-southeast, w - west.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Pacific Loon *Gavia pacifica*

One confirmed record for Pacific Loon exists for the Northeast: one collected 29 Apr 1893 at Sand's Pt., Nassau Co., NY (spec. AMNH; Bull). A sighting 2 Dec 1989 at Sandy Hook, NJ was probably this species (AB 44:241).

Over 15 reported sightings are identified only to the species pair Pacific/Arctic (*G. pacifica/arctica*) in New England. Specific identification is difficult and has only recently been clarified (see *Birding* 20:12-18, 21:154-158, 22:70-73). Arctic Loon is not known to have occurred in the Northeast. A number of characters distinguish Arctic and Pacific Loons, but the presence of white flank patches on non-breeding plumage Arctic Loons is the most conspicuous diagnostic feature.

Yellow-billed Loon *Gavia adamsii*

The mandible preserved from a badly decomposed bird found on a L.I. beach in early 1930 represents the only occurrence in eastern North America south of Greenland (spec. AMNH; Auk 64:145-146). The identification of this mandible is not fully accepted (Phillips, *Western Birds* 21:17-24, 1990), and Nichols (*Birds of Long Island* 5:115:136, 1948) points out that we cannot know where the bird died. There are three unconfirmed reports: Shark River Inlet, NJ, 8 Dec 1977 (AB 32:331 and *Urner Field Observer* 18:35-39, 1983); Montauk, NY, 30 Jan 1988 (AB 42:243); Halifax, NS 2 Dec 1990 (AB 45:244).

Common Loons may show extremely pale bills but will still have the distal half or more of the bill dusky, especially the culmen.

Yellow-nosed Albatross *Diomedea chlororhynchos*

One photographed off L.I., NY, 29 May 1960 (Bull); Machias Bay, ME, 1 Aug 1913 (spec., Auk 39:58-65); East Freyburg, ME, mid Jul 1934 (spec., Auk 51:507-508). Sight records for Monhegan I., ME, 21 Mar 1960 and 12 May 1964; Gulf of Maine, 12 Jul 1968; Bird I., MA, 7 May 1971; Gardiner's I. of L.I., NY 8 Jun 1971; off Cape Cod, MA, 14 Jun 1976; 40

mi off Yarmouth, NS, 20 Aug 1976; Cox's Ledge off RI, 21 Aug 1976 (AB 31:226); and one off NH. See McDaniel (AB 27:563-565) and Finch (AB 30:926 & 32:140-155) for a summary of the records cited above.

Black-browed Albatross *Diomedea melanophris*

Never adequately substantiated with recognizable photos or specimen off North America, although a specimen exists from Greenland. Sight reports in our area of two off Bird I., MA, 28 Jun 1972; over Hudson Canyon 100 mi off NY, 26 May 1973; Nantucket Sound, MA, 16 Sep 1973 (AB 28:116 with extensive description published in *Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts* 1:137-138); 18 mi off Rockport, MA, 11 Jul 1976; near Isles of Shoals, NH, 1 Aug 1976 (AB 31:226); Cox's ledge off RI, early Jun 1980 (AB 34:875); two sight records from NS.

Curiously, Black-browed Albatross is only documented (photo or spec.) from the European side of the North Atlantic with over a dozen records, whereas Yellow-nosed Albatross is only documented from the western North Atlantic. See McDaniel and Finch (both cited above) and DuMont (AB 27:739-740) for a summary of these records.

Cape Petrel *Daption capense*

A specimen from Harpswell, Casco Bay, ME, June 1873 (*Auk* 39:101-103) is now regarded as of dubious origin (see *Auk* 104:595). All records from the Northern Hemisphere for this species have been questioned.

Herald Petrel *Pterodroma arminjoniana*

One was picked up alive near Ithaca (Caroline Center), NY, after passage of a hurricane on 22 Aug 1933, but subsequently died (spec. USNM, Bull). This species breeds in the southern Atlantic and Indian Oceans and has been recorded several times in the North Atlantic, including at least three times off North Carolina (AB 38:151-163) where one was photographed 22 May 1991 (AB 45:433).

Kermadec Petrel *Pterodroma neglecta*

A bird filmed at Hawk Mountain, PA, 3 Oct 1959, after a hurricane was identified as this species by Robert Cushman Murphy (Poole; published photo in Heintzelman, *Linnaean Newsletter* 13:2-3 and *Wilson Bulletin* 73:262-267). The identification has been questioned by the AOU (1983) but supported by others (see Gochfeld et al. AB 42:1254-1258). Kermadec Petrel breeds in the southern Pacific Ocean but occurs somewhat regularly in the North Pacific. Its distribution is the main basis for questioning the identification, especially in light of its similarity to Herald Petrel.

Buller's Shearwater *Puffinus bulleri*

One 31 mi ese of Barnegat Light, NJ, 28 Oct 1984 (photo, AB 39:32). This is a species of the Pacific Ocean, breeding in New Zealand and thus truly accidental in our area.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

Numerous records from MA, RI, NY. A regular summer visitor in the North Atlantic. Bull (1974) states that this is the most likely shearwater to be seen from shore off NY. Although occasionally abundant off L.I., it has not been recorded in CT.

Little Shearwater *Puffinus assimilis*

One of the two acceptable records for North America includes one found dead on Sable I., NS, 1 Sep 1896 (spec. AMNH, Tufts, AOU) and determined to be the race *baroli*, which breeds on the Azores. Three birds reported as Audubon's Shearwater, but thought possibly to be Little Shearwater, were seen from the Bluenose Ferry between Bar Harbor, ME, and Yarmouth, NS, in the summer of 1971 (AB 25:830). These are not considered acceptable records (see AB 32:153).

David Lee reviewed occurrences and identification of this species in the western North Atlantic (AB 42:213-220). Records suggest that Little Shearwater is more likely to occur in fall and early winter in the northwest Atlantic.

Audubon's Shearwater *Puffinus lherminieri*

Over 15 recent records in summer from waters off NJ, NY, and RI. A casual visitor to waters off the Northeast, preferring warm water regions mainly to the south of our region. Five specimen records from NY (Bull). A high count of 225 individuals was seen approximately 100 mi se of Barnegat Light, NJ (Leck).

British Storm-Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

A bird seen 99 mi off Brielle, NJ, 17 Sep 1972, was tentatively identified as this species (AB 27:36). In addition there are dubious reports from the Bluenose ferry running between Bar Harbor, ME, and Yarmouth, NS (AB 32:154). The only confirmed report from the northwest Atlantic comes from Sable I., NS, 10 Aug 1970 (AFN 24:661). This bird was mist-netted (spec. NMC, *Auk* 88:671-672).

Band-rumped Storm-Petrel *Oceanodroma castro*

Hydrographer's Canyon, MA, 21 Aug 1984 (AB 39:26); Hydrographer's Canyon, MA, 4 Sep 1986 (AB 41:53). A warm-water Pacific and eastern Atlantic species that is being sighted with more frequency on pelagic trips into deep water (500-1000 fathoms) to our south, especially off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina (see AB 38:151-163). Just outside our region, one was found dead at Chambersburg, Franklin Co., PA, 15 Apr 1912 (Poole).

This species is exceedingly difficult to separate in the field from Wilson's and Leach's Storm-Petrels.

White-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon lepturus*

All records are from the fall as follows: four records from L.I., NY, following a hurricane in Sep 1938 (Bull); one at East Winn, ME, following

the same hurricane (Vickery); three found dead on Nantucket I., MA, on 13, 14, and 24 Sep 1960 following hurricane Donna (AB 15:10); 150 mi s of Nantucket I., MA, 12 Aug 1967 (AFN 21:548); Chatham, MA, 28 Sep 1985 (AB 40:254); Byfield, MA, 28 Sep 1985 (AB 40:254); Pt. Judith, RI, 28 Sep 1985 (AB 40:254); off Barnegat Light, NJ, 23 Nov 1985 (AB 40:87); Hydrographer's Canyon, MA, 4 Sep 1986 (AB 41:53); ten reports from NS since 1870 (Tufts).

Red-billed Tropicbird *Phaethon aethurus*

Bergen Beach, Brooklyn, NY, 10 Jun 1963 (spec. AMNH; AFN 17:450; *Auk* 81:433–434); Seaside Park, NJ, 27 May 1983 (AB 36:851); Mt. Desert Rock, ME, 31 Aug 1986 (AB 41:53); one thought to be the same individual as in ME was seen at Gay Head, Martha's Vineyard, MA, 15 Sep 1986–early Nov 1986 (AB 41:53) and again 20 Jul 1987–30 Aug 1987 (AB 42:232).

Masked Booby *Sula dactylatra*

Sight report 78 mi sw of NS, 15 Mar 1989 (AB 44:233). This species is seen somewhat regularly in the Gulf Stream north to Cape Hatteras, North Carolina.

Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster*

Two sight reports from L.I., 2 Sep 1936 and 3 Sep 1949, and a specimen from Moriches Bay, L.I., NY (Bull). One photographed at the Salvages, Blanche, Shelburne Co., NS, 28 Jul 1941 (Tufts); Plum I., MA, 30 Sep–20 Oct 1961 (AFN 16:8); Gardiner's I., L.I., NY, 2 Jun 1973 (AB 27:846); off Manasquan Inlet, Ocean Co., NJ, 3 Jun 1973 (AB 27:847 and Leck); L.I., NY, 28 Sep–13 Oct 1975 (AB 30:41); 8 mi se of Block I., RI, 25 May 1977 (AB 31:973); two off Island Beach, NJ, 29 Oct 1978 (AB 34:144); Sandy Hook, NJ, 26 Sep 1990, and Jones Beach, L.I., NY, 4 Oct 1990 (AB 45:80).

Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel*

Deer Isle, Hancock Co., ME, 3 Jul 1960 (AFN 15:13–14 and *Auk* 78:265, photo). This is the only North American record. Breeds in the Indian and Pacific Oceans with two breeding colonies in the south Atlantic.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Sambro, NS, 16–30 Apr 1989; Round Bay, NS, 25 Apr 1989; Bon Portage I., NS, 22–24 May 1989 (all AB 43:444); Plum I., MA, 30 Jul–10 Sep 1989 (AB 44:56); one on Bon Portage I., NS, early May 1990 (AB 44:389) was considered the same as one the previous year; Rye, NH, 28 Apr–2 May 1990 (AB 44:396). See McLaren (*Birding* 21:284–287) for a summary of recent North American sightings and identification.

Reddish Egret *Egretta rufescens*

All acceptable records are in the spring as follows: a sight record from Monomoy I, MA, 30 May 1953–3 Jun 1953 (Griscom & Snyder); Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, MA, 12 May 1991 (photo, AB 45:415);

Jamaica Bay NWR, NY, 18–26 May 1991 (AB 45:420). There are two unaccepted reports from Clam Bay, Halifax Co., NS, 5–6 Sep 1965 (AFN 20:404) and Canso, NS, 5 Nov 1966 (Tufts).

A sight report from Hammonasset Beach S.P., CT, 28 Sep 1975 (AB 30:30) is under review by the CRRC pending resolution of a discrepancy between the published report and the submitted description.

Western Reef-Heron *Egretta gularis*

Nantucket I., MA, 24 Apr to at least early Sep 1983 (photo, AB 37:827–829 & 846; also see AB 37:1032). The bird appears to be a dark morph of the nominate race *gularis* of w Africa. Although this is the only N. American record of this species, two were seen in Barbados, 20 Feb–8 Mar 1984 (AB 38:254–256).

White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi*

Two at Jamaica Bay NWR, NY, 10 Jun 1979–7 Sep 1979 (AB 33:849 and 34:144) returned there 6 Apr 1980 for a second summer, one remaining until 3 Sep 1980 (AB 34:758 & 879 AB 35:162–163) and returning 19 Apr 1981 (AB 35:805); Essex, MA, 24–27 Apr 1984 (AB 38:884); Plum I., MA 10 Jun 1990 and later at Topsfield, MA, 24 Jun (AB 44:1113); Holden, MA, 25–27 Jul 1990 (AB 44:1113).

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Washington Co., ME, in 1903 (spec., AOU). The closest breeding grounds are currently in Iceland, although the species formerly bred in Greenland. The limited pattern of vagrancy suggests that the natural occurrence of this individual, as with other waterfowl, is somewhat suspect. This species is a rare migrant in the western Aleutians, with stragglers to n California.

Ross' Goose *Chen rossii*

Round Pond, Dutchess Co., NY, 13–14 Mar 1983 (AB 37:851); Calverton, L.I., NY, 1 Jan–Mar 1990 (AB 44:242); Dead Creek NWR, VT, 27 Oct–24 Nov 1990 (AB 45:75); Bridgehampton, L.I., NY, 5–15 Jan 1991 (AB 45:254).

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Over 15 records in the Northeast, including several from CT. All are questionable with regard to their origin. For example, see recent revelations on a group that was widely believed to represent wild birds but were in fact escapees (AB 45:244). The possibility of wild birds occurring in our region does exist as the species has been known to occur naturally in North America based on a pair shot in 1981 on the northeast coast of Newfoundland, the male banded in Spitsbergen, a Norwegian archipelago approximately 360 mi n of mainland Norway (Montevicchi and Wells AB 38:257–258, 1984).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser branchyrhynchus*

Several reports from our area, are all suspected of being escapes from waterfowl collections. A recent record from Middle I., Suffolk Co., NY,

16–20 Jan 1991 (AB 45:254). One photographed outside our area in St. Anthony's, Newfoundland, during May 1980 might have been a wild bird. The species breeds as close as Greenland, and the possibility of unassisted accidentals does exist.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Plum I., MA, 4–25 May 1968 (AB 30:819); a subadult male at Marshfield, MA, 1–18 Apr 1978 (AB 32:978); St. John, NB, 4–19 May 1979 (AB 33:752); Plum I., MA, 11–17 May 1985 (AB 39:270); Orwell, VT, spring 1988 (AB 42:432). Some, if not all, the reports could have originated from North American waterfowl collections and have been questioned on that basis. See Spear et al. (AB 42:385–392) for a summary of N. American records.

Cinnamon Teal *Anas cyanoptera*

There are two L.I., NY, records prior to 1960 (Bull). Jamaica Bay NWR, NY, 20 May–Jun 1964 (AFN 18:437); sight record near Grand Manan I., NB, 27 Apr–28 May 1967 (Squires); Manahawkin, NJ, 18 Apr–8 May 1976 (AB 30:818); Martha's Vineyard, MA, 12 May 1983 (AB 37:846). The possibility exists that these records involve escaped birds.

Steller's Eider *Polysticta stelleri*

Scarborough, ME, 1926 (spec., Vickery); Scituate, MA, 29 Mar–7 Apr 1977 (AB 31:973). A bird of the Alaskan and Eurasian arctic that is accidental to our region.

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

Middletown, RI, 3 Jan–2 Apr 1976 (AB 30:691). This Eurasian merganser is accidental to North America. There is another record for this species just outside our region in Buffalo, NY, 17 Jan–30 March 1960 (Bull).

Masked Duck *Oxyura dominica*

Malden, MA, 27 Aug 1889 (spec. CNHM, *Auk* 6:336); Lake Ontelaunee, Berks Co., PA, 12–14 Jun 1984 (photo, AB 38:1002). There is an unconfirmed report of a flock of seven birds on the northern New Jersey coast after Hurricane Donna, 12 Sep 1960 (Leck). The AOU (1983) cites a record for Vermont, but we have been unable to locate any details. Other sightings have been reported to our south in southern New Jersey, Maryland, and Tennessee. All these records could involve escaped birds and not naturally occurring vagrants. The species is essentially resident within its range.

Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus*

Sight record on Martha's Vineyard, MA, 30 May 1910 (Griscom & Snyder); Hopewell Jct., Dutchess Co., NY, 26–27 Mar 1983 (photo reported, AB 37:852).

Mississippi Kite *Ictinia mississippiensis*

Over 15 recent records in NY, NJ, RI, and MA. This species appears to be expanding its range northward. Up to nine birds have been seen in a single day in southern New Jersey (Leck).

White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*

Nantucket Lightship, off Nantucket I., MA, 14 Nov 1914 (*Auk* 2:368). This was an immature bird that was captured and taken to the NY Zoological Park. Two additional sight records from Newburyport Harbor, MA, 16 Feb 1935 and 15–30 Jan 1944 (Griscom and Snyder). This species is a rare breeder in both Iceland and Greenland.

Harris' Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus*

An adult male at Rye Ridge, Westchester Co., NY, 7 Nov–late Dec 1971 (AB 26:39). This species is frequently held in captivity and therefore is considered of questionable origin in our region.

Eurasian Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Nantasket Beach, MA, 29 Sep 1887 (spec., Griscom and Snyder); Coot Hill, NY, 26 Apr 1987 (AB 41:1433); Minudie, NS, 18 Jan–mid-Mar 1988 (AB 42:228). South of our area, an immature female was banded at Cape May, NJ on 23 Sep 1972 (*Auk* 91:172). Also sight records of females at the same location on 9 and 14 Oct 1979 (*Cassinia* 58:19).

Northern Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Sight record reported as probably this species at Morris I., Chatham, MA, 21–27 Sep 1986 (AB 41:56). Just outside our region, a male landed on a research ship 320 mi e of Saint John's, Newfoundland, 9–15 May 1989 (photo, AB 43:445).

Prairie Falcon *Falco mexicanus*

One on Block I., RI, 7 Oct 1989 (photo, AB 44:31). This was considered an escaped falconer's bird. The possibility that this was a hybrid Peregrine X Prairie was not fully eliminated. (One such bird was reported to have escaped in RI only two weeks prior; see CRRC 4th report, *Connecticut Warbler* 10:90, for comments on a report from CT.)

Spruce Grouse *Dendragapus canadensis*

Breeds in the northern areas of our region in ME, NH, VT, NY and the included Canadian provinces.

Willow Ptarmigan *Lagopus lagopus*

Three records from ME: Kenduskeag 23 Apr 1892 (shot, Vickery), Sherman Mills 19 May 1951 (captured, Vickery), and Bailey I. 14 May 1977 (photo, AB 31:974). The origin of these individuals is questionable. Griscom and Snyder point out that the bird taken at Manchester, MA, 10 May 1859 (spec., Forbush 1929) had escaped from a ship on which it had been held captive from Newfoundland (Griscom & Snyder). This sedentary species breeds to the north of our area and has been introduced on Scaterie I. in northern NS.

Rock Ptarmigan *Lagopus mutus*

A sedentary species to the north of our area, but one specimen of an apparent vagrant at Elmsdale, Hants Co., NS, 20 Apr 1922 is just inside our area (Tufts).

Azure Gallinule *Porphyryla flavirostris*

Ft. Salonga, LI., NY, 14 Dec 1986 (AB 41:262 and article AB 42:25-27). See Remsen and Parker for comments on the vagrancy of this Neotropical species (*Wilson Bulletin* 102:380-399).

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Merrick, Nassau Co., L.I., NY, 27 Dec 1883 (spec., Bull); Mecox Bay, Suffolk Co., L.I., NY, late fall 1905 (Bull); Aroostook Co., ME, 1927 (spec., Vickery). Invasions during the late fall and winter of 1927-28 and 1966-67 brought many records but mainly well to the north in Newfoundland and NS. More recently, Montauk Pt., LI., NY, 3-18 Dec 1966 (photo, AFN 21:400); New Scotland, Albany Co., NY, 22 Mar 1991 (AB 45:422); 12 May-early Aug 1991 near Aulac, NB (AB 45:409 & 1089). We were unable to locate details on one older report from RI.

Greater Golden-Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Hartlen Pt., NS, 22-24 May 1990 (AB 44:390, reported as the second for NS). Flocks of this Eurasian species were seen three consecutive springs (1988-1990) in the northern peninsula of Newfoundland and Goose Bay, Labrador (AB 42:408).

Snowy Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

One collected near 'The Pinnacle', Berks Co., PA, 29 June 1886 was originally labeled as a Piping Plover (spec. Reading Museum, Poole). Records of vagrants just west of our region include two from Toronto, Ontario, Canada, May 1880 and 6 July 1897 (Godfrey).

Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

A well documented sight record at Monomoy I., MA, 5 Sep 1990 (AB 45:76). Importantly, the observer heard the call, which is diagnostic for this species and which is necessary to eliminate Semipalmated Plover. Another sight record of a juvenile (not heard) at Seal I., NS, 7 Oct 1989 (AB 44:47). This mainly Eurasian species breeds on Baffin I. in northern Canada.

Mountain Plover *Charadrius montanus*

One collected from a flock of Black-bellied Plovers in Chatham, MA, 28 Oct 1916 (spec. BMS; *Auk* 34:86).

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Cherry Hill, NS, 24 Sep-1 Oct 1988 (AB 43:56).

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

One photographed and voice recorded at Rye, NY, 31 Oct-5 Nov 1990 (AB 45:81). To our west, a specimen of this Eurasian species was

collected 10 Oct 1907 at Gaines, NY (spec. MCZ; AB 34:231). There are no other documented records in North America outside of w Alaska.

Wandering Tattler *Heteroscelus incanus*

Monomoy, MA, 25–30 May 1968 (photo reportedly taken, AFN 22:505). A shorebird of the Pacific coast, accidental inland in w North America east only to Arizona and Manitoba.

Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*

Well described sight record of this Eurasian species from Plum I., MA, 23 Jun 1990 (AB 44:1114).

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*

L.I., NY, 1853 (spec. NYSM, Bull); Monomoy I., MA, 19 Sep 1976–12 Oct 1976 (AB 31:227); Martha's Vineyard, MA, 18 Feb 1978–18 Mar 1978 (AB 32:322); Cherry Hill Beach, Lunenburg Co., NS, 6 May 1978 (AB 32:979); Tuckernuck I. and later Monomoy I., MA, 5 Sep 1984–23 Nov 1984 (AB 39:27).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Dartmouth, MA, 25–30 Apr 1967 (AFN 21:487).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Over 15 recent records for the Northeast. The nominate race, *lapponica*, occurs in eastern N. America; this race breeds in n Europe and w Asia.

Rufous-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis*

Biddeford Pool, ME, 16–21 Jul 1977 (photo, AB 31:1112); Monomoy I., MA, 24–28 Jun 1980 (AB 34:876); Scituate, MA, 17–22 Jul 1980 (photo, AB 34:876); Jamaica Bay NWR, NY, 27 Jul–11 Aug 1985 (AB 39:892).

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Monomoy I., MA, 19–25 Jun 1980 (photo, AB 34:876); Hartlen Pt., NS, 23–24 Oct 1983 (photo, AB 38:176); Jamaica Bay NWR, NY, 17–22 Jul 1983 (AB 37:973); Jamaica Bay NWR, NY, 5 Jun 1984 (AB 38:1003); Scituate, MA, 25 Jul–16 Aug 1985 (AB 40:256); Duxbury Beach, MA, 6–14 Aug 1986 (AB 41:57); Plymouth, MA, 28 Jul–8 Aug 1987 (AB 42:234); Jamaica Bay NWR, NY, 2 Sep 1987 (AB 42:49); Plum I., MA, 19 Aug 1989 (AB 44:57); Squantum, MA, 28 Jul 1990 (AB 44:1114).

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

An uncertain sight report at Monomoy I., MA, 23 Oct 1983 (AB 38:176).

[Cox's Sandpiper *Calidris 'paramelanotos']*

Duxbury Beach, MA, 15–22 Sep 1987 (AB 42:234). The taxonomic status of "Cox's Sandpiper" and the identification of this individual is in question (Auk 106:538 and AB 45:232–233).

Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus*

A well described sight report from Hartlen Pt., NS, 9 Sep 1990 (AB 45:69). An unprecedented record in N. America outside of Alaska.

Eurasian Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Nottingham, Chester Co., PA, Nov 1866; Northampton Co., PA, pre-1890 (both in Poole); another 19th century record from Shrewsbury, NJ. The only North American record this century was in Ohio in 1935.

Great Skua *Catharacta skua*

Rare but regular visitor to the western Atlantic, mainly in winter; numerous records for waters off ME, MA, RI, and NY.

South Polar Skua *Catharacta maccormicki*

Rare but regular summer and fall visitor to the northern Atlantic.

California Gull *Larus californicus*

Rockland Co. Park, NY, 4 Oct 1978 (AB 33:162) and presumably the same individual there 3 Oct 1979 (AB 34:146); Mecox, L.I., NY, 1 Sep 1982 (AB 37:163); Oyster Pond, Montauk, NY, 10 Nov 1984 (AB 39:34).

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*

Over 15 recent records from MA, RI, VT, and NY.

Ivory Gull *Pagophila eburnea*

Newburyport, MA, Jan 1959 (AFN 13:276); Marshfield, MA, 28 Dec 1961 (AFN 16:98); Coney I., Brooklyn, NY, 13 Feb 1964 (AFN 18:341); Eastport, ME, 1-10 Jan 1971 (AB 25:551); Great Boar's Head, NH, 1 Jan 1971 (AB 25:551); Amesbury, MA, 20-21 Feb 1971 (AB 25:551); S. Portland-Cape Elizabeth, ME, 18 Mar 1971 (AB 25:551); Cape Tormentine, NB, 20 Dec 1975 (AB 30:692); Newburyport, MA, 22 Dec 1975-5 Mar 1976 (AB 30:692); Southold, L.I., NY, Feb 8-10 1976 (spec. AMNH, AB 30:700); Newburgh, NY, 11-20 Jan 1981 (AB 35:284).

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Over 15 recent records mostly from RI and MA. This tern breeds as close as Virginia, and is recorded annually in southern NJ. Records in our region are frequently associated with hurricanes. [One was photographed 24 Aug 1991 at Milford Pt., CT by Todd McGrath and Paul Desjardins as this paper was being prepared; the record has been submitted to the CRRC.]

Bridled Tern *Sterna anaethetus*

Over 15 recent records of storm blown birds from adjacent states. This seems to be another case of vagrant seabirds being caught at the L.I. barrier and not making it to Connecticut. Other southern New England states that have unobstructed access to the open ocean have records of this pelagic species.

Large-billed Tern *Phaetusa simplex*

Kearney, Hudson Co., NJ, 30 May 1988 (AB 42:415). A South American species found three times in North America, once in our region.

White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*

Nauset, MA, 18 Jul 1960 (AFN 14:435); Monomoy I., MA, 4 Aug 1960 (AFN 14:435); Salisbury, MA, 11-18 Jul 1963 (AFN 17:445); Grand Lake, NB, 27-30 Jul 1968 (Squires); McGowan's Corner, NB, 23-26 May

1971 and reappearing 6–10 Jul 1971 at Portobello Stream, Sunbury Co., NB, (photo and spec. NMC, AB 25:707 & 835); White River Junction, VT, 12 Jun 1987 (AB 41:1434); Cedar Beach, L.I., NY, 12 May 1991 (AB 45:423). An Old World tern that has appeared more frequently in recent decades in eastern North America, causing some to speculate that a North American colonization is taking place.

Brown Noddy *Anous stolidus*

Martha's Vineyard, MA, 1 Sep 1954 (AB 32:186); three on Block I., RI, 12 Sep 1960 (AFN 15:11); Fire I. Inlet, NY, 8 Nov 1977 (AB 32:186). Also some NJ records associated with Hurricane Donna, 12 Sep 1960 (Leck).

Tufted Puffin *Fratercula cirrhata*

A specimen reported to have been collected by Audubon at the Kennebec River, ME, in the winter of 1831–32 is generally regarded as an error, possibly due to mixed up specimen labels.

Common Murre *Uria aalge*

Over 15 recent records mostly from MA coast north. One found dead at Napatree Pt., RI, 15 Jan 1989 (spec. Univ. of CT). Almost certainly has occurred in CT waters, considering how often it is sighted off MA, RI, and the southern shore of Long Island.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

Numerous records for RI, MA (where regular), and irregularly to Long Island, NY where it may occur in numbers at Montauk Pt. (Bull). [Recent reports have been submitted to the CRRC. Other sight records from CT have all lacked any written description, photographic, or specimen evidence].

Marbled Murrelet *Brachyramphus marmoratus*

Middleboro, MA, 17 Sep 1982 (AB 37:157). This is one of several Marbled Murrelet records from the Great Lakes eastward.

All specimens from interior and eastern North America are of the Asiatic Marbled Murrelet, *B. m. perdux*, which was formerly considered a species and shows a white eye-ring, lacks the rufous tones of the nominate race, and is slightly larger (Jehl, AB 35:911–12). Sealy et al. (*Western Birds* 22:145–155, 1991) provide a detailed summary of vagrancy of this subspecies in North America. Other alcid species have been found far out of range, outside our region. For instance, the Ancient Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus antiquus*) has been recorded from Quebec, Ontario, Ohio, and Great Britain. In Europe two north Pacific species have been recorded—a Crested Auklet (*Aethia cristatella*) was found in Iceland, and in Sweden there is a record for Parakeet Auklet (*Cyclorhynchus psittacula*). The point is that several of the small auks show a propensity for long range travel out of their normal range, and these, or perhaps other species, could appear as accidentals in our region.

Common Ground-Dove *Columbina passerina*

Sight record Middle Ohio, Shelburne Co., NS, 10 Oct 1966 (Tufts); Monomoy I, MA, 7 Oct 1973 (AB 28:116). Also PA records in 1884 and 1955 (Poole). A species that regularly reaches the mid-Atlantic states. It is to be expected to reach occasionally further north during post-breeding dispersal. Populations in the southeastern United States have declined severely in recent years, however, lowering the likelihood that this species will occur in our region.

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Martha's Vineyard, MA, 3-4 May 1981 (AB 35:802).

Smooth-billed Ani *Crotophaga ani*

One collected near Philadelphia, PA, on Petty I., NJ, in the Delaware R., 1849 (spec. ANSP) is considered to have been transported there by man (Poole).

Buff-bellied Hummingbird *Amazilia yucatanensis*

Oak Bluffs, Martha's Vineyard, MA, 10-11 May 1964 (AFN 18:496). This is a very questionable report since there is little other information on this sighting. This species breeds in southern Texas and occasionally reaches adjacent states. There are no other northern U.S. records for this species.

Black-chinned Hummingbird *Archilochus alexandri*

Antigonish, NS, 30 May 1964 (AFN 18:495-496); Cohasset, MA, 25 Nov 1979 (AB 34:140 and AB 35:139); Halifax, NS, 15-23 Nov 1988 (photo AB 43:57-58).

Females and immature males are only distinguishable from female Ruby-throated Hummingbirds in the hand. Black-chinned has a slightly longer bill and the outer (tenth) primary comparatively broad and strongly curved at the tip; immature male Ruby-throateds also show highly sculptured inner primaries.

Rufous Hummingbird *Selasphorus rufus*

Orono, ME, 28 Jul 1957 (AB 31:231); Bedford, Halifax Co., NS, 8-9 Aug 1967 (AFN 22:11); Contoocook, NH, 18-22 Jul 1976 (AB 30:929); Newton, MA, 15-17 Apr 1978 (AB 32:1139); Elizabethtown, NY, 3 Sep 1980 (AB 35:180); Monhegan I., ME, 15 Sep 1980 (AB 35:159. Conway and Drennan summarized records from eastern North America (AB 33:130-132). [An adult male was photographed by Dawn Gallo 24-27 July 1991 in CT as this paper was being prepared; the record has been submitted to the CRRC.]

Allen's Hummingbird *Selasphorus sasin*

Nantucket I., MA, 26 Aug 1988 (spec. MCZ; AB 43:429-430).

Lewis' Woodpecker *Melanerpes lewis*

One from RI, Nov 1928 (spec., AOU); West Newbury, MA, 2-4 Jun 1969 (AFN 23:640). Two sight records in NY during 1954; one in our area at

Ossining, Westchester Co., 27 Oct–6 Nov 1954 (AB 9:13).

Three-toed Woodpecker *Picoides tridactylus*

Over 15 recent MA records; one at Burlingame State Park, RI, 6 Jan–15 Apr 1991 (AB 45:252 & 418). In addition, three birds were reported on the Hackensack, NJ, Christmas Count 27 Dec 1958 (Leck).

Western Wood-Pewee *Contopus sordidulus*

A singing bird on Monomoy I., MA, 28 May 1976 (AB 30:814); one at Plum I., MA, 24 Sep 1980 was not heard vocalizing, thus casting doubt on the identification (AB 35:159). To our south, a specimen taken on 30 Aug 1887 from Morristown, NJ and three records from Maryland (Leck).

The songs and calls are the only known characters that can positively identify Western from Eastern Wood-Pewee; even specimens, without this information, are of little use when attempting to establish an extralimital record. Caution should be exercised in fall as immature Easterns often show dark lower mandibles.

Hammond's Flycatcher *Empidonax hammondi*

Wellesley, MA, 19–29 Dec 1987 (netted and photo AB 42:230); Schnecksville, Lehigh Co., PA (AOU).

Gray Flycatcher *Empidonax wrightii*

Littleton, MA, 31 Oct 1969 (netted, AFN 24:18).

Dusky Flycatcher *Empidonax oberholseri*

One was collected in Kutztown, PA, Dec 1969 (Leck).

Pacific-slope Flycatcher *Empidonax difficilis*

One photographed and voice recorded in southern Lancaster Co., PA, 15–26 Dec 1990 (AB 45:256). Although reported as this species, positive separation from Cordilleran Flycatcher (*E. occidentalis*) has yet to be established. These two species were formerly included under the name Western Flycatcher.

Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus*

Pelham, MA, 12 Aug 1959 (AFN 16:13); Blandford, MA, 23 Jul 1961 (AFN 16:13); Barnstable, MA, 7 Oct 1962 (AFN 16:10); Jones Beach, LI, NY, 24 Sep 1987 (AB 42:51).

Ash-throated Flycatcher *Myiarchus cinerascens*

Over 15 recent records from ME, MA, NY, and NJ. Murphy (1982) reviewed the occurrence of this species in eastern North America (see AB 36:241–247).

Sulfur-bellied Flycatcher *Myiodynastes luteiventris*

Martha's Vineyard, MA, 12–13 Nov 1983 (AB 38:178); Waterside, NB, 14–15 Oct 1990 (photo and well studied, AB 45:70).

Variiegated Flycatcher *Empidonomus varius*

Biddeford Pool, ME, 5–11 Nov 1977 (AB 32:178). This is the first North American record of this South American species, now recorded from Tennessee as well.

Cassin's Kingbird *Tyrannus vociferans*

Eastham, MA, 21–22 Oct 1962 (spec., AFN 17:15); Monomoy I., MA, 9 Oct 1965 (AFN 20:404).

Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus*

Scarborough, ME, 1915 (spec., AOU). Reports of one at Marshfield, MA, 1954 (AFN 9:9) and another at Wolfsville, NS, 18 Jul 1976 (AB 30:929) can only be identified as Tropical/Couch's Kingbird (*T. couchii*). [One was photographed and, most importantly, voice recorded at Lighthouse Pt., New Haven, CT, staying several days from 11 Nov 1990 (Richard English et al., AB 45:77). This report is under review by the CRRC. This report and the Maine spec. constitute the only documented Tropical Kingbirds for the Northeast.]

Fork-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus savana*

Over 15 recent records from the northeast. See Monroe and Barron (AB 34:842–845) for summary of N. American records through 1980.

Brown-chested Martin *Phaeoprogne tapera*

Monomoy I., MA, 12 Jun 1983 (photo and spec., AB 37:969). The specimen was identified as a juvenile of the migratory race *fusca* which breeds in s South America and migrates to n South America and Panama. This is the only North American record of this species.

Violet-green Swallow *Tachycineta thalassina*

Crescent Beach, Lunenburg Co., NS, 30 Aug 1965 (AFN 20:7); New Durham, Stratford Co., NH, 15 Sep 1965 (AFN 20:7).

Cave Swallow *Hirundo fulva*

Nine on Seal I., NS, 17 May–21 Jun 1968 (spec.); three there 14–30 Jun 1969; and another collected 16 May 1971 (all reported in AB 25:707); Louisburg, NS, 9 Jul 1982 (AB 36:956); Jamaica Bay NWR, NY, 23 May 1990 (AB 44:404). The specimens from Nova Scotia were identified as belonging to the Cuban subspecies *H. f. cavicola*.

Gray Jay *Perisoreus canadensis*

Over 15 MA records. This species reaches the southern edge of its range in northern New England. Winter incursions are infrequent, and it has been reported in MA from the Mt. Greylock area, less than 50 miles from the CT border. Reports from CT have not been accepted because none has been accompanied by a written description, photograph, or specimen; nevertheless, this species should be looked for, especially during incursion years.

Steller's Jay *Cyanocitta stelleri*

Topsham, VT, 20 Oct 1986 (AB 41:87). The identification was accepted by the Vermont Bird Records Committee but the bird's natural occurrence was questioned (W. G. Ellison pers. comm.). This species is casually recorded east only to southwestern South Dakota with one occurrence in

southeastern Quebec (AOU); Steller's Jay is unlikely as a natural vagrant to the East.

Black-billed Magpie *Pica pica*

Over 15 area records including CT. All of these records are considered probable escapees. Bull, however, considers some of the reported magpies to be wild birds. He considered three NY specimens with fresh, unworn plumage to be wild—a male caught at Island Pond, Orange Co., NY, 14 Nov 1935; Orient, L.I., 20 Dec 1927; and Islip, L.I., 28 Mar 1951 (Bull). Of course a bird surviving over one year in the wild would likely molt and thus could show a fresh plumage.

Eurasian Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

One present on Nantucket I., MA, 27 Nov 1982 was joined by a second on 9 July 1984 (AB 37:157; *Bird Observ. of E. Mass.* 12:355) with both remaining until at least Nov 1986 (AB 41:59); Block I., RI, April 1984 (spec. MCZ); Brier I., NS, 6 May 1984; Bon Portage I., NS, 20-24 May 1984; at Halifax, NS; on Matinicus Rock, ME; and a pair at Lewisburg, PA. Most of the above records were summarized by Smith (AB 39:255-258).

Jackdaws have been carried to North America aboard ships crossing the Atlantic (up to 52 near Port-Cartier, Quebec, AB 41:63), and this event raises the possibility that earlier accidental introductions are responsible for this species' appearance in North America, especially since this species is ordinarily quite sedentary. The lack of a seasonal pattern of vagrancy and pattern of intervening records, as exists for other Eurasian vagrants, is consistent with ship assisted transport. This type of dispersal is not unprecedented in corvids; for example, the House Crow (*C. splendens*) has been introduced to port cities in Australia and S. Africa by riding on ships and jackdaws may be opportunistically using this vehicle of dispersal. Whether the Eurasian Jackdaw is dispersing "naturally" or "unnaturally" to N. America remains unknown, but the situation is somewhere between known accidental introductions such as the House Finch and natural colonizations exemplified by the Cattle Egret.

A record from West Haven, CT, 16 Feb-16 Mar 1988 (AB 42:230) was not accepted by the CRRC on the basis of questionable origin for many of the reasons stated above (details to be published). This bird also showed a deformed leg, suggesting injury in captivity.

Carolina Chickadee *Parus carolinensis*

This sedentary species breeds within our area north to Mercer and Middlesex Counties in NJ and Lancaster Co. in PA. This species has been reported in CT but not documented; the lack of intervening records casts further doubt on these reports.

Brown-headed Nuthatch *Sitta pusilla*

Despite two old, extralimital specimen records north of the species' range (Haddonfield, NJ, winter 1876; Elmira, NY, 24 May 1888), this nuthatch appears to be quite sedentary and seems unlikely to occur in our region. The species breeds only 25 miles s of Cape May at Cape Henlopen, Delaware, and yet has never been found in appropriate habitat in extreme southern NJ. Three reports for CT are likely in error and lack any written details.

Rock Wren *Salpinctes obsoletus*

Rockport, MA, 19 Dec 1965–25 Jan 1966 (AFN 20:402); Seal I., NS, 4–8 Oct 1980 (AB 35:159); Fredonia, NY, 29 Nov–3 Dec 1986 (AB 41:86 & 280). [One spent the fall of 1991 on Cape Cod as this paper was being prepared.]

Bewick's Wren *Thryomanes bewickii*

Riverhead, Suffolk Co., NY, 21 Sep 1930 (spec., Bull); Ho-Ho-Kus, Bergen Co., NJ, 24 May 1935 (Leck); Sunrise Mt., Sussex Co., NJ, 20 Apr 1958 (Leck); Short Falls, NH, 11 Sep 1966 (AFN 21:11); Block I., RI, 4 Oct 1969 (banded and photo [first RI record] AFN 24:19); Island Beach S.P., NJ, 11 Oct 1969 (Leck); Ship Harbor, Acadia N.P., ME, 2 Jul–7 Aug 1971 (first ME record, AB 25:836); a pair raised 3-4 young at New Paltz, NY, Jun 1974 (AB 29:137); S. Woodstock, VT, 27 May 1975 (AB 29:830, this bird was banded and later recovered in Arkansas); Cuba, NY, Aug 1975 (AB 30:65); Cuttyhunk I., MA, 27 Sep 1975 (AB 30:33); Monomoy I., MA, 12 Oct 1976 (AB 31:229); Island Beach S.P., NJ, 4 May 1977 (AB 31:1119); Chatham, MA, 14 Sep 1986 (AB 41:59).

The subspecies *altus* once bred to central PA and southern NJ. See Wilcove ("A quiet exit," *Living Bird Quarterly*, 9:10–11, 1990) for discussion of species' decline in the East.

European Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

One reported coming to a feeder in Lincoln, MA, 22 Oct 1964 (AFN 19:8). This report is considered unsatisfactory by the AOU (1983).

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Grand Manan I., NB, 10 Oct 1983 (photo, AB 40:16–17). This individual was determined to be one of the two Siberian races, *maura* or *stejnegeri*.

Mountain Bluebird *Sialia currucoides*

Coxsackie, NY, 20 Dec 1974–2 Mar 1975 (photo, first NY record, AB 29:671); Jones Beach, L.I., NY, 15 Nov 1977 (photo, AB 32:187); Schuttsville, Dutchess Co., NY, 17–21 Mar 1978 (AB 32:986); 70 mi sse of Nantucket I., MA, 28 Apr 1980 (spec. MCZ, first MA record, AB 34:756); Beltzville Lake, Carbon Co., PA, 16 Dec 1984–22 Mar 1985 (AB 39:152 & 278); Grand I., VT, 2–8 Apr 1989 (first VT record, AB 43:451 & 396 [photo]); Phillipse Manor, Westchester Co., NY, 20 Apr 1990 (AB 44:1119); Jones Beach, L.I., NY, 20 Oct 1990 (AB 45:83).

The number of records is impressive when one considers that the first one for our region was in late 1974.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Larchmont, NY, 3–12 Feb 1973 (AB 27:594); Concord, MA, 6–14 Apr 1986 (AB 40:445); Caraquet, NB, 23 Jan–early Mar 1991 (photo, AB 45:246). To our north, there are several winter records from Newfoundland of this large Eurasian thrush.

Sage, Bishop, and Bliss (*The Birds of Connecticut*, 1913) included a report of this species on their list of “introduced and doubtful species” based on a specimen taken in Stamford, CT, Apr 1878. The specimen is now lost, leaving no evidence to evaluate the identification. Even though the season of occurrence fits a pattern for others in the Northeast, the origin of this record has been questioned. The CRRC has not yet rendered a decision on this record pending location of the specimen.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Jamaica Bay NWR, NY, 20–25 Feb 1959 was thought to have been an escapee (AFN 13:279; Bull); other Eurasian birds have been known to have escaped from air shipments at Kennedy Airport (Bull). Outside our region this bird has been seen at Sable I., NS, 25 Nov–23 Dec 1989 (AB 44:231) and four times in Newfoundland.

Sage Thrasher *Oreoscoptes montanus*

Barneget Light, NJ, 27 Nov 1949 (Leck); Shinnecock Inlet, L.I., NY, 18 Oct 1958 (Bull); Plum I., MA, 26 Oct 1965 (AFN 20:7); Massena, St. Lawrence Co., NY, 27 Dec 1971 (Bull); Jones Beach, L.I., NY, 22 Oct 1972 (AB 27:33); Jamaica Bay NWR, NY, 14–19 Jan 1973 (AB 27:594); Spring Lake, NJ, 30 Oct 1990 (AB 45:83).

Curve-billed Thrasher *Toxostoma curvirostre*

An unconfirmed sight report from Barrington, NH, 29 Oct 1964 (AFN 19:8). This species is largely resident in the desert Southwest with casual reports ne to s Wisconsin, s S. Dakota, and w. Florida (AOU, Phillips).

Sprague's Pipit *Anthus spragueii*

Lincoln Center, ME, 8 Sep 1975 (AB 30:34); Provincetown, MA, 17 Dec 1988–12 Feb 1989 (AB 43:286). Possible sight record, Monhegan I., ME, 1961 (Vickery).

Phainopepla *Phainopepla nitens*

Nantucket I., MA, Feb 1973 (AB 32:178); an imm. female on Block I., RI, 14 Nov 1975 (netted and taken to Bronx Zoo, AB 30:34); an imm. male on Tuckernuck I., MA, 7 Oct 1977 (AB 32–178).

Bell's Vireo *Vireo bellii*

One collected and later examined by Brewster was taken at Durham, NH, 19 Nov 1897 (spec. MCZ; *Auk* 18:274; spec. *ex mount* examined by Allan R. Phillips [1991]); Island Beach, NJ, 15 Sep 1959 (spec., AFN 14:22); Tiana Beach, Suffolk Co., NY, 25 Sep 1959 (photo; Bull); Fire I., LI., NY,

26 Sep 1970 (spec. USNM, AB 25:35); Maplewood, Essex Co., NJ, 13 May 1980 (AB 34:761). This species, declining in the eastern part of its range, breeds as far east as w Ohio and w Tennessee (AOU). [One was photographed 14 October 1991 at Stratford, CT, by Frank Mantlik as this paper was being prepared; the report has been submitted to the CRRC.]

Lucy's Warbler *Vermivora luciae*

Ipswich, MA, 1 Dec 1979 (photo, AB 34:141 and 35:139-141).

Virginia's Warbler *Vermivora virginiae*

Island Beach S.P., NJ, 6 Oct 1962 (banded, Leck); Island Beach S.P., NJ, 24 Sep 1966 (banded, Leck).

Townsend's Warbler *Dendroica townsendi*

Over 15 recent records, 10 from New York, NY alone. Recent record from Little Compton, RI, 11 May 1990 (spec. MCZ; AB 44:399).

Swainson's Warbler *Limnothlypis swainsonii*

Linwood, NJ, May 1968; New York, NY, 11 May 1973 (banded and photo; AB 27:753); Tobay Sanctuary, L.I., NY, 20 May 1973 (AB 27:753); Forest Park, New York, NY, 10 May 1975 (AB 29:831); New York, NY, 30 Apr 1977 (AB 31:982); Island Beach S.P., NJ, 17 May 1979 (banded, Leck); Provincetown, MA, 4-6 May 1982 (AB 36:830); Wading River, L.I., NY, 19 May 1982 (AB 36:836); Forest Park, New York, NY, May 1987 (AB 41:410).

MacGillivray's Warbler *Oporornis tolmiei*

Troy Meadows, NJ, 12 Sep 1976, (banded, Leck); Lexington, MA, 13-28 Nov 1977 (AB 32:179; Vickery cited another spec. in the MCZ from MA, but this was later said to have been identified as a Mourning Warbler by Richard Forster, AB 33:158); Nantucket I., MA, 23 Nov 1978 (AB 33:157); Island Beach S.P., NJ, 28 May 1979 (netted and photo, Leck); Peabody, MA, 12-14 Oct 1990 (AB 45:78).

A specimen from CT in the AMNH was reported by Lanyon and Bull (*Bird Banding* 38:188) as this species. The CRRC reviewed and rejected the record (identification questionable) based on comments from Jay Pitocchelli, who has extensively studied Mourning and MacGillivray's Warblers and who examined this bird at AMNH. The CRRC is currently reevaluating the identification and origin of the specimen.

Painted Redstart *Myioborus pictus*

Marblehead Neck, MA, 18-19 Oct 1947 (photo, Griscom & Snyder); Dansville, NY, 19 Dec 1979-24 Jan 1980 (photo, AB 34:271).

Lazuli Bunting *Passerina amoena*

Monhegan I., ME, 4-6 Oct 1978 (photo, AB 33:158). A report considered "hypothetical" for Mount Desert I., ME, Oct 1974 (Vickery).

Bachman's Sparrow *Aimophila aestivalis*

Fort Lee, NJ, 9 May 1918 (Leck); Greenport, Suffolk Co., NY, 4 June 1930 (spec. NYSM; Bull); Prospect Park, Brooklyn, NY, 21-22 Apr 1948

(Kingbird 2:82); Atsion, Burlington Co., NJ, 16 Jun 1957 (Leck); Middletown, NY, 25 Jul 1971 (AB 25:840). This sparrow breeds north to N. Carolina; at one time it bred to sw Pennsylvania but not since 1937 (AOU, Leck, Poole).

Cassin's Sparrow *Aimophila cassinii*

Island Beach S.P., NJ, 22 Sep 1961 (Leck); Seal I., NS, 18–20 May 1974 (photo, AB 29:129).

Black-throated Sparrow *Amphispiza bilineata*

Deerfield, MA, 5 Nov 1959 (AFN 14:20); New Brunswick, NJ, 30 Oct 1961–23 Apr 1962 (AFN 16:15); North Amherst, MA, 12–14 Apr 1963 (AFN 17:394); North Arlington, Bergen Co., NJ, 14 Dec 1974–Jan 1975 (photo, AB 29:671).

Baird's Sparrow *Ammodramus bairdii*

Montauk, NY, 13 Nov 1899 (spec. AMNH; Bull). Unsubstantiated sight reports New York, NY, 24 Oct 1949 and Short Beach, L.I., NY 31 Oct 1949 (Bull); Jamaica Bay NWR, NY, 20 Oct and again 12 Nov 1962 (AFN 17:18).

Brewer's Sparrow *Spizella breweri*

Watertown, MA, 15 Dec 1873 (spec. BMS 16865; American Naturalist 8:366–367). Reported twice from NY but neither record accepted to the state list—Gilgo Beach, Suffolk Co., 26 Oct 1947 (Bull); Montauk Pt., Suffolk Co., NY, 14 Oct 1950 (Bull).

Golden-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia atricapilla*

Weymouth, MA, 12 Mar–15 Apr 1960 (AFN 14:291 & 370); Boonton, NJ, 9 Jan–31 Mar 1976 (AB 30:702); Holyoke, MA, winter 26 Jan–9 Apr 1982 (AB 36:275 & 831); Livingston, NJ, 25–26 Dec 1982 (AB 37:287); Warren Co., NJ, late Jan–23 Apr 1983 (AB 37:854); Cliff I., ME, 6 Jan–4 Feb 1985 (photo, AB 39:148); Jones Beach, L.I., NY, 17–18 Oct 1987 (AB 42:51); South Dartmouth, MA, 14–26 Jan 1990 (AB 44:239). [One was well described from Oxford, CT, 15 Dec 1991 by Mark Szantyr; this record has been submitted to the CRRC.]

McCown's Longspur *Calcarius mccownii*

Bridgewater, MA, 9 Jan–3 Feb 1977 (banded, AB 31:309).

Western Meadowlark *Sturnella neglecta*

Over 15 records for this species in surrounding states. All records are from the months April to July when birds are singing or giving call notes. In 1962 a Western Meadowlark summered just over the NY border in Bangall, Dutchess Co., hybridizing with an Eastern Meadowlark.

The CRRC has not reviewed reports of one heard singing in Mansfield, CT, during May 1965, 1966, and 1967, and another at Storrs, CT, 3 Jun 1974 (Manter); no details or recordings of these birds are known to exist.

Bronzed Cowbird *Molothrus aeneus*

Seal I., NS, 6–10 May 1991 (AB 45:411).

Shiny Cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis*

Monhegan I., ME, 24–26 May 1991 (AB 45:419). The northward expansion of this species in the past decade has been well documented, and we should be alert to the possibility that one could occur in CT. However, careful study will be required to detect and confirm this species.

Black-cowled Oriole *Icterus dominicensis*

Seal I., NS, 24 May 1971 (AB 25:710). The closest breeding population of this sedentary species occurs on Abaco and Andros Islands in the Bahamas. It has not been recorded from Florida, less than 150 miles away, thus casting serious doubt on this record. Curiously, however, another bird of West Indian origin, a Cave Swallow, was collected at the same location only a week before the oriole was found.

Common Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Chatham, MA, 1–3 Apr 1961 (AB 34:756); Lincoln Center, ME, 3 Apr 1980 (AB 34:756); Halifax, NS, 19 Nov 1988–19 Jan 1989 (photo, AB 43:281); Oxford, NH, 7 May 1989 (photo, AB 43:451–452); Monhegan I., ME, 28 Sep 1989 (photo, AB 44:60). These records are considered, for the most part, to involve possible escaped cagebirds based on the species' presence in captivity and sedentary nature. There have been, however, many Icelandic records (mostly spring) and one from sw Greenland.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Stanton, Hunterton Co., NJ, 15 Dec 1958 (spec. Princeton Univ., AFN 13:280); Hadley, MA, 29 Nov 1961–18 Mar 1962 (AFN 16:14 & 315); Richmond, MA, 18 Feb–6 Apr 1962 (AFN 16:315 & 393); Tupper Lake, Franklin Co., NY, 6 Apr 1962 (Bull); Branchville, NJ, 20–22 Apr 1965 (AFN 19:457); Mansfield, MA, Dec 1978–Mar 1979 (AB 34:756); Lake Echo, NS, 18 May 1983 (AB 37:848); Pleasant Valley, Dutchess Co., NY, 1–27 Mar 1984 (photo reported, AB 38:893); Tusket Falls, NS, 7 Feb–6 Mar 1989 (photo, AB 43:282 & 447).

Rosy Finch *Leucosticte arctoa*

One of the *tephrocotis* group, Gray-crowned Rosy Finches, Gorham, ME, winter 1936–37. This is one of very few extralimital records of this species to eastern North America, the nearest record (of this group) was one seen at Thunder Bay, Ontario, on Lake Superior in March 1963 (Godfrey).

Eurasian Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Kittery, ME, 24 Mar 1962 (spec. MCZ, *Auk* 80:201); New Bedford, MA, late Mar–3 Apr 1969 (photo); Bloomfield, NJ 11–27 Feb 1983 and nearby Verona in early Mar (AB 37:854); Rockport, MA, 5 May 1983 (banded, AB 37:848). Generally considered to involve escaped cagebirds; see AB 43:1268–1274 for a discussion of identification and occurrence in North America.

European Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

St. John, NB, 31 Mar–3 Apr 1977 (AB 31:977). The sedentary nature of

this species combined with a lack of records indicating long-range dispersal suggests that this was an escaped bird.

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THE 1991-92 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Stephen P. Broker

In many respects the 92nd annual National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count in Connecticut was exceptional. The state experienced a third consecutive year of mild fall and early winter weather. One consequence of the above normal temperatures and lack of snow cover in our region was that an unprecedented 25% of all species observed were in 10 year record high numbers. We had numerous regional rarities and new species on the 1991-92 count, and we recorded six species and one subspecies new to the 10 year state CBC list. Winter finches were noticeably absent, but several boreal species and winter irruptives were present and in high numbers. Many of those species identified as experiencing steady increases or declines in number continued these population changes. A very encouraging aspect of this year's count is that a record 781 field observers participated.

Weather conditions on the seven different count days were again quite disparate. Describing the Saturday, December 14 count in Storrs, compiler Steven Rogers said that "the weather conditions were miserable: foggy and raining (heavy at times) in the morning, and rain in the P.M. too. Winds picked up (heavy gusts) in late afternoon as a front moved through." Ed Hagen, compiler of the Woodbury-Roxbury count, found the December 14 weather equally challenging, and added, "this was the warmest count in recent history, maybe ever." Mild weather held for seven counts on Sunday, December 15 but with skies clear or partly cloudy.

Barkhamsted's count of Saturday, December 21 was the only one held the second weekend of count period. Conditions then included cloudy and partly cloudy skies, light rain and snow and temperatures on either side of freezing. Stratford-Milford's count on Thursday the 26th was held in 18-42 degree weather, light winds and clear to partly cloudy skies. Four counts on the weekend of December 28 and 29 had no further change in temperature, no winds and clear "gorgeous" weather. Trail Wood and New London counts on December 28 were the only ones to report frozen still water and partly frozen moving water.

A total of 160 Count Day and three Count Week species were recorded on the 17 counts held between December 14 and January 2. The 191 feeder watchers who contributed their observations brought the total participant number close to 1000. Nearly 450,000 birds were counted in the process. Numbers of species and individuals were not high; in fact they were below

average numbers. That aside, an examination of the data shows some remarkable happenings.

Forty-one species were counted in record highs. Among them were most of the semi-hardy species, but the high numbers included species from many different bird families. The third consecutive year of minimal snowfall and mild early winter weather had much to do with the abundance of the semi-hardy birds on this list. Species counted in high numbers included: Great Blue Heron, Hooded and Red-breasted Mergansers, Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, House Finch and American Goldfinch. Fred Sibley has written in previous CBC review articles about "significant high species", those counted in numbers at least 50% higher than the previous 10 year high count. This year there were 11 such species: Red-throated Loon, Northern Gannet, Great Blue Heron, Surf Scoter, White-winged Scoter, Osprey, Sora, Common Raven, Cedar Waxwing, Palm Warbler and Lincoln's Sparrow.

Northern Gannet, Red-throated Loon, Common Loon, Surf Scoter and White-winged Scoter, all fairly exclusively coastal species, were at 10 year highs. This was due at least in part to the extensive coverage given coastal and Long Island Sound waters. New Haven contributed a number of loons and most of the scoters, the result of the U.S. Coast Guard taking birders on a 3 1/4 hour survey of the entire coastal count circle. High numbers of loons were also counted from shore in New Haven and at Stratford-Milford. This raises the question of how different our statewide results would be for two dozen or so waterbird species if extensive coverage were given to all waters of Long Island Sound. Interestingly, in New Haven Common Loons were more abundant in the Sound waters and Red-throated Loons were closer to shore and in New Haven Harbor.

This fall saw the biggest incursion of Northern Gannet into Long Island Sound on record. In early October there were tens of thousands of gannets at Cape Cod, feeding off the coast, swimming around piers, even flying over land. At their peak numbers in October, up to 300 gannets were flying by Hammonasset State Park in a single hour. This year of all years would be the time to get gannets offshore on a Christmas Count. New Haven and Greenwich did find them, and these records add to the 1988-89 sighting of Gannet in New London.

Feeder birds were equally divided into species recorded in high and low numbers. However, the ground feeders, fruit and seed eaters such as Northern Flicker, Blue Jay, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, Northern

Mockingbird, House Finch and American Goldfinch were the abundant species. The bark gleaners and flocking birds, such as Downy and Hairy Woodpecker, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, American Crow, and Common Grackle were in low or very low numbers.

The top ten species in total numbers accounted for 71% of all birds counted. They were European Starling (129,000), Herring Gull (43T), Canada Goose (36T), American Crow (26T), Ring-billed Gull (23T), House Finch (16T), Mallard (12T), Black-capped Chickadee (11.6T), American Robin (11.5T) and Dark-eyed Junco (11T). Nine of these species consistently make the top ten list, but American Robin usually doesn't even make it into the top twenty. This year Litchfield Hills recorded more than 2000 robins, and Woodbury-Roxbury had more than 5000, nearly equal the number of starlings counted there. American Robin had the greatest surge in numbers of any species on the count.

Thirteen species were at record low numbers statewide, most notably Hairy Woodpecker, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper and Purple Finch. Two species, Barn Owl and Lapland Longspur, failed to be seen on any count for the first time in 10 years. The one significantly low species this year (50% fewer than the previous 10 year low) was Purple Sandpiper. One coastal counter remarked that this traditional breakwater peep was not to be found because of unfavorable tides during some counts. There has been a fall-off of this species for the last five years, so it bears watching. A second tier of birds at 83-86% of previous 10 year lows consists of Eastern Screech-Owl, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, American Tree Sparrow and Purple Finch.

American Kestrel numbers continue to be well below totals of the 1970's and early 1980's. The erosion in kestrel numbers has been a statewide phenomenon, but the greatest drop in numbers has been along the coast and, interestingly, in the north. During the period 1966 to 1973, 57% of all kestrels seen on Christmas Counts came from coastal counts, 35% came from northern counts, and a mere 8% came from mid-state counts. From 1974 through 1982 these percentages changed to 48%, 32% and 20%, respectively. From 1983 through this year the numbers were 40%, 30% and 30%. All this means that the relative contribution of kestrels from coastal counts has fallen off 30% during these years, while northern counts have fallen off 15%. Kestrels have increased not in total numbers but in relative percentage nearly four fold on mid-state counts. I believe the coastal losses to be due to loss of open field and meadow habitat. This may also be the case in northern Connecticut, with continued loss of agricultural land, but we

need to consider other possibilities, such as broadly changing wintering ranges of American Kestrel. The state hawk watchers continue to count kestrels in high numbers during the fall.

Ruffed Grouse, another species declining in numbers, has fared better the last two years. American Coot may be rebounding as seen by an 8 year high count this year, including 190 coot in Greenwich-Stamford. Eastern Meadowlark shows a similar recent upswing, following a disturbing decline over nearly 10 years. An additional species, Canvasback, now suggests the need for inclusion on the list of declining species. Canvasback was counted in second lowest numbers in at least 14 years. Though a far less abundant species in the state in early winter, Redhead was also on the low side, reflecting a worsening situation in prairie pothole country.

Among winter finches there were no crossbills, just three Common Redpolls in Pawling, 31 Pine Grosbeaks in Oxford, and a total of 121 Pine Siskins and 150 Purple Finches. Only the western uplands had double digit numbers for siskins, greatest numbers occurring in Barkhamsted, Litchfield Hills and Pawling. The last major incursion of winter finches into Connecticut was in 1981-82, with a smaller peak in 1986-87.

Winter range expansions continue to be fascinating. The noteworthy range expansion proceeding from north to south into Connecticut is that of Common Raven. First recorded on the 1986-87 Barkhamsted count, this corvid has now been seen on each of the last six state counts. Fourteen ravens were observed this year, including nine in Lakeville-Sharon. The Pawling, NY-CT count recorded the first mid-state Common Raven, all other sightings having been on northern counts.

Last year's numbers of Carolina Wren were at a record high, but this year this species went through the ceiling, increasing yet another 20% statewide. Northern totals for Carolina Wren were 370% higher than last year, so the range expansion northward continues. It will be interesting to see if one or more hard winters prevent this from being a long term expansion of range. Eastern Bluebird increased 33% over the previous record high of two years ago. There were ten times as many bluebirds on northern counts as in the early 1980s, three times as many mid-state, and twice as many coastally.

Other species provided some real excitement for Connecticut. The Sandhill Crane observed during count week in Old Lyme-Saybrook represents a new species for state Christmas Counts. Sandhill Crane winters from central California, central New Mexico, southern Texas and southern Georgia south to Sinaloa, Jalisco and Veracruz, Mexico. It is casual in fall

and winter from New Brunswick south through the eastern United States. Regional sightings have increased in recent years.

Also recorded on the Old Lyme-Saybrook count was Razorbill, seen in the count circle off Fisher's Island, New York. (A written description has not been submitted to the Rare Records Committee as of this writing.) This pelagic bird winters regularly south to Long Island, but sight reports for the Connecticut coastline are exceedingly rare. A Connecticut sighting occurred this fall at Hammonasset State Park prior to the start of Christmas counts.

The Black-throated Green Warbler remaining to the December 14th Storrs count gives a latest fall date for Connecticut. This warbler is a significant addition to the Connecticut CBC all-time list, which now includes 14 parulids. This Black-throated Green Warbler apparently had a low dose of migratory restlessness to remain north so late.

The Golden-crowned Sparrow found in Oxford represents the third sight report for this species of *Zonotrichia* in Connecticut but is importantly the first with written documentation. While its principal populations reside west of the Cascade Mountains, it occurs casually to very rarely in winter to eastern North America. Golden-crowned Sparrow is documented or hypothetical in Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

European Goldfinch, a popular caged bird which formerly established an escapee breeding population on Long Island, is not known to be established anywhere in the Northeast at present. Its former status of occurrence is reflected by its display in the Connecticut Bird Hall at the Peabody Museum of Natural History. European Goldfinch joins Barnacle Goose, Chukar (formerly an established breeder), Budgerigar, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Monk Parakeet (now established as a breeder), Black-hooded Parakeet and Painted Bunting as species whose occurrences on Christmas counts are either suspect or known to be due to escapes from captivity.

In addition to the above species, new to the State CBC 10 year list are Common Black-headed Gull (seen Count Day in Old Lyme-Saybrook; previously recorded Count Week at New Haven) and Northern "Bullock's" Oriole (seen Count Week Branford in the New Haven count circle). Other notable sightings include Tundra Swan in Old Lyme (which had a most impressive count this year), four Snowy Owls in Stratford-Milford, Common Ravens in Barkhamsted, Litchfield Hills, Lakeville-Sharon and in the mid-state region in Pawling, and Northern Shrike in Quinnipiac Valley, Old Lyme (CW) and Westport.

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Individual Count Summaries

Seventeen Christmas Bird Counts were conducted in Connecticut for the sixth consecutive year. Listed below are summary data for each count, regional summaries for the 6 Northern, 5 Mid-State and 6 Coastal counts, and a State-wide tabulation of data. The count day total is compared with the total for the ten year period from the winter of 1982-83 to 1991-92 in the table. Information from the Pawling, NY-CT CBC is presented based on combined New York-Connecticut results, although the greater portion of the Pawling, NY-CT count circle is in New York State. (Separate records for Connecticut and New York observations are maintained by the Pawling compilers).

The summaries are presented in the following format: Name of Christmas Bird Count (National Audubon Society / American Birds abbreviation for count); date of count; and compiler(s). All other data are listed in the Table. Species that are shown in the table as "Unusual Species" are those seen four or fewer times in the past 10 years, or species considered rare in Connecticut or in winter.

NORTHERN COUNTS (BA, EW, HA, LH, LS, ST): 113 CD + 0 CW species; 175,318 individuals; 302 field observers + 69 feeder watchers = 371 total observers.

BARKHAMSTED (BA-CT): Sat., Dec. 21. Compilers: David Rosgen & David Tripp, Jr. This count is in its eighth year and a total of six species new to the count were found this year alone.

EDWIN WAY TEALE - TRAIL WOOD (EW-CT): Sat., Dec. 28. Compiler: Marilyn Higgins. This was the sixth year for this count. The 61 species seen was a new high for the count.

HARTFORD (HA-CT): Sat., Dec. 28. Compiler: Jay Kaplan and Steve Davis. The only Glaucous Gull on counts in Connecticut was seen at the Manchester Landfill.

LITCHFIELD HILLS (LH-CT): Sun., Dec. 15. Compiler: Raymond Belding.

LAKEVILLE-SHARON (LS-CT): Sun., Dec. 15. Compiler: Bob Moeller.

STORRS (ST-CT): Sat., Dec. 14. Compiler: Steve Rogers. The Black-throated Green Warbler, present for about a week, was not seen after count day, and represented the latest record for the state. Great Horned Owl, seen during count week, was missed on count day for the first time.

MID-STATE COUNTS (OX, PA, QV, SR, WR): 116 CD + 0 CW species; 91,090 individuals; 150 field observers + 24 feeder watchers = 174 total observers.

OXFORD (OX-CT): Sun., Dec. 15. Compiler: Buzz Devine. A potential first state record was seen by Mark Szantyr, who gave a detailed description of a Golden-crowned Sparrow. The Pine Grosbeak flock was an anomaly, for all of New England had very few.

PAWLING (HIDDEN VALLEY), NY-CT (PA-NY): Wed., Jan. 1. Compilers: Sibyll Gilbert and Jeanne Kauffman.

QUINNIPIAC VALLEY (QV-CT): Sun., Dec. 15. Compiler: Wilford Schultz. Ruffed Grouse was missed for the first time in 10 years.

SALMON RIVER (SR-CT): Sun., Dec. 15. Compiler: David A. Titus.

WOODBURY-ROXBURY (WR-CT): Sat., Dec. 14. Compiler: Mark Szantyr. Turkey Vulture was missed for the first time in 10 years.

COASTAL COUNTS (GS, NH, NL, OL, SM, WE): 151 CD + 4 CW species; 183,180 individuals; 297 field observers + 96 feeder watchers = 393 total observers.

GREENWICH-STAMFORD (GS-CT): Sun., Dec. 15. Compilers: Canfield Clark & Gary Palmer.

NEW HAVEN (NH-CT): Sat., Dec. 14. Compilers: Stephen P. Broker & Frank Gallo. Horned Lark was missed for the first time in 10 years.

NEW LONDON (NL-CT): Sat., Dec. 28. Compiler: Robert Dewire. White-winged Scoter missed for first time in 10 years.

OLD LYME-SAYBROOK (OL-CT): Sun., Dec. 29. Compiler: Jay Hand.

STRATFORD-MILFORD (SM-CT): Thurs., Dec. 26. Compiler: Steve Mayo.

WESTPORT, CT (WE-CT): Sun., Dec. 15. Compiler: Frank W. Mantlik

CONNECTICUT CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS 1991 - 1992

SPECIES	NORTHERN						MID-STATE					COASTAL					STATE TOTAL	
	BA	EW	HA	LH	LS	ST	OX	PA	QV	SR	WR	GS	NH	NL	OL	SM		WE
RED-THROATED LOON												<u>9</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>12</u>	6	25	5	93
COMMON LOON				<u>1</u>								<u>3</u>	<u>17</u>	13	7	<u>12</u>	5	58
LOON, SP.													1					1
PIED-BILLED GREBE			CW	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>				3			4	3	3	1	2	7	26
HORNED GREBE	<u>3</u>											11	<u>53</u>	76	8	52	21	224
RED-NECKED GREBE														<u>3</u>				3
NORTHERN GANNET												<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>					3
GREAT CORMORANT						<u>1</u>						125	31	178	13	21	42	411
D-C CORMORANT									<u>1</u>			3	5	82	15	1	3	110
CORMORANT, SP.															4		3	7
AMERICAN BITTERN								<u>1</u>							1			2
GREAT BLUE HERON	CW	<u>16</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	2	<u>10</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	28	<u>29</u>	<u>132</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>70</u>	403
GREEN-BACKED HERON																		
BL-CR NIGHT-HERON												4	3	<u>20</u>		9	5	41
TUNDRA SWAN															<u>1</u>			1
MUTE SWAN		<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>6</u>		20	30	<u>136</u>	35	35	91	324	570	163	63	88	1589
SNOW GOOSE			1			CW			CW		<u>3</u>	1	1	CW		CW	7	13
BRANT							<u>1</u>					CW		78	<u>40</u>		60	179
CANADA GOOSE	20	109	4541	1915	5092	2640	540	2995	1929	136	2682	3993	2394	1111	619	2109	3635	36460
WOOD DUCK	<u>3</u>		4		<u>5</u>				<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	51	5		<u>2</u>	1	3	88
GREEN-WINGED TEAL			<u>12</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	---	<u>18</u>						51	1	1	20	<u>38</u>	144
AMER. BLACK DUCK	106	32	305	63	102	5	34	66	63	168	133	960	1716	715	567	1446	791	7272
MALLARD	448	54	1558	560	231	206	182	402	690	432	370	1807	948	1506	672	946	922	11934
MALLARD HYBRID				1		1			1				10			1	3	17
NORTHERN PINTAIL			<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>16</u>				<u>2</u>			<u>3</u>	14		1			42
NORTHERN SHOVELER															<u>1</u>		<u>1</u>	2
GADWALL	<u>1</u>							<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>		<u>1</u>	9	18	85	10	68	42	237
EURASIAN WIGEON													<u>CW</u>			<u>1</u>	---	1
AMERICAN WIGEON					<u>2</u>				<u>13</u>			99	79	62		87	148	490
WIDGEON, HYBRID																	1	1

SPECIES	BA	EW	HA	LH	LS	ST	OX	PA	QV	SR	WR	GS	NH	NL	OL	SM	WE	STATE
CANVASBACK	1					1						11	266	82	18	125	2	506
REDHEAD														1			1	2
RING-NECKED DUCK	39			2		150	5		3	6	4	245	42	71	52	57	266	942
GREATER SCAUP				3			1					33	2930	64	2	2253	1	5287
LESSER SCAUP				11	2					6		30	45	2				101
SCAUP, SP.														1				1
OLDSQUAW												110	173	4	5	371	133	796
BLACK SCOTER													2	25				27
SURF SCOTER													743	6	2	10	4	765
WHITE-WINGED SCOTER												1	701		8	110	50	870
COMMON GOLDENEYE	1	1	15	44	28	30	1	36		12		274	102	278	207	419	147	1595
BUFFLEHEAD					1			3		14	2	300	63	693	101	83	249	1509
HOODED MERGANSER	5	5	1	43			2	38	2	27	2	309	77	497	15	6	36	1065
COMMON MERGANSER	27	10	150	2158	36	18	17	1604	62	64	33	79	12	10	257	125	86	4748
RED-BR MERGANSER			3						1			374	212	1408	193	365	145	2701
RUDDY DUCK				30				10				85		3			34	162
DUCK, SP.					10													10
TURKEY VULTURE		5	4	1			1	11	11	3		23		1		CW	19	79
OSPREY									1	1	1		CW					3
BALD EAGLE	1		3	5				2		1	11				10	1	1	40
NORTHERN HARRIER		1	8		11			2	3		1		8	7	18	16	3	78
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK	7	1	29	11	6	3	5	3	9	4	3	9	12	7	5	7	10	131
COOPER'S HAWK	2	2	8	1	3			2	1		5	2	2	1	1	1	4	35
NORTHERN GOSHAWK	4							1		1		1		CW	CW		1	8
ACCIPITER, SP.		1					2						1				2	6
RED-SHOULDERED HAWK		1	6	1			1	1	1	2		3	1		4	1	3	25
RED-TAILED HAWK	21	33	137	57	64	8	20	58	43	34	38	56	31	25	11	25	40	701

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 XX New 10 yr. Low Count (Bold)
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CONNECTICUT CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS 1991 - 1992

SPECIES	NORTHERN						MID-STATE					COASTAL						STATE TOTAL
	BA	EW	HA	LH	LS	ST	OX	PA	QV	SR	WR	GS	NH	NL	OL	SM	WE	
ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK			3	CW							---		2		1	2		8
BUTEO, SP.										1								1
AMERICAN KESTREL		5	12	4	7	3	4	4	18	2	3	2	4	2	1	6	3	80
MERLIN									1				2	1	CW	1		5
PEREGRINE FALCON			1									1				1		3
R.-NECKED PHEASANT	1	2	12	6	1	4	2	9	19	5	13	6	10	3	11	5	17	126
RUFFED GROUSE	12	1	4	14	11	8	3	6		8	6	2	3	6	4		4	92
WILD TURKEY	20		10	28	24	2		CW	2	5	2			1	9		---	103
NORTHERN BOBWHITE																		8
CLAPPER RAIL													3	2	2			7
VIRGINIA RAIL								1	1			1		11	6		1	21
SORA												---	1		2			3
AMERICAN COOT				64	34			12	4			190	1	6	6	8	33	358
SANDHILL CRANE															CW			0
BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER														55	19			109
KILLDEER		1							1	2	2	19	30	9	2	6	71	143
GR. YELLOWLEGS												4	7		1		4	16
RUDDY TURNSTONE													16	26	29	2	1	74
SANDERLING													22		30	174	46	272
PURPLE SANDPIPER												13	26	21	5		1	66
DUNLIN												9	43	97	149	606	288	1192
COMMON SNIBE	1	1		1			1		3		8	2	4	1		7		29
AMERICAN WOODCOCK									2	4	3	4	3		2	1		20
LAUGHING GULL														4				4
C. BLACK-HEADED GULL															1			1
BONAPARTE'S GULL												163	98	75	3	6	16	361
RING-BILLED GULL	141	51	2105	1023	53	308	823	236	1067	870	984	3367	5705	878	662	2494	2116	22883
HERRING GULL	167	759	4334	472	111	518	1101	362	305	978	10941	1164	3087	6055	1283	3111	8654	43402
ICELAND GULL			5						1		2				1			9
GLAUCOUS GULL			2															2

SPECIES	BA	EW	HA	LH	LS	ST	OX	PA	QV	SR	WR	GS	NH	NL	OL	SM	WE	STATE
WH-WINGED GULL, SP.															1			1
GREAT BL-BK GULL	14	63	304	8	2	8	88	30	7	129	243	105	856	641	269	228	130	3125
GULL, SP.		23			25	28												76
RAZORBILL														CW				0
ROCK DOVE	124	291	1976	249	225	396	364	133	343	151	396	681	1194	681	228	776	936	9144
MOURNING DOVE	254	145	1519	389	438	336	119	564	440	157	1037	469	775	280	340	453	598	8313
MONK PARAKEET																18	156	174
BARN OWL																		
EASTERN SCREECH-OWL	4		15	9	2		9	4	27	9	18	25	13	3	10	5	17	170
GREAT HORNED OWL	2	4	11	6	5	CW	3	16	5	6	11	9	9	8	18	5	8	126
SNOWY OWL																4		4
BARRED OWL	3	2		2		3	2	3	1	6	2		1	3	2	1		31
LONG-EARED OWL								1	1				1	2				5
SHORT-EARED OWL									1							2		3
N. SAW-WHET OWL	1			5	1	3				1	3		2	11	2	1		31
BELTED KINGFISHER	1	2	27	11	6	6	1	10	7	15	21	27	39	64	37	12	29	315
RED-BLD WOODPECKER	4	8	28	12	8	16	6	19	13	20	14	56	18	10	34	19	43	328
YEL-BLD SAPSUCKER			3	1				6		1	1	3	1	3			2	21
DOWNY WOODPECKER	60	50	249	120	49	52	31	146	43	71	125	153	135	61	92	66	122	1625
HAIRY WOODPECKER	18	4	60	15	15	9	5	38	9	9	21	32	9	12	9	17	27	309
NORTHERN FLICKER	4	20	140	7	6	11	28	35	41	43	76	43	102	60	59	56	29	760
PIL. WOODPECKER	8	1	4	2	5		CW	6		3	4	10	2		3	3	4	55
EASTERN PHOEBE			1		1						2		CW				1	6
HORNED LARK		47	62	100	710	106			9	15	81			26	21	34	10	1221
BLUE JAY	558	544	1380	499	265	432	270	446	465	471	1138	292	614	230	556	530	250	8940
AMERICAN CROW	530	621	7715	3705	562	324	796	406	1151	807	1390	1396	1632	562	414	905	3251	26167
FISH CROW			6				1					4	42	4		22	16	95

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SPECIES	NORTHERN						MID-STATE					COASTAL					STATE TOTAL	
	BA	EW	HA	LH	LS	ST	OX	PA	QV	SR	WR	GS	NH	NL	OL	SM		WE
COMMON RAVEN	2			2	9			1										14
BLK-CP CHICKADEE	1095	806	1070	1353	481	803	212	710	416	609	1018	726	508	538	511	338	472	11666
BOREAL CHICKADEE									---									---
TUFTED TITMOUSE	126	274	606	221	87	257	87	206	130	361	308	298	252	133	255	170	245	4016
RED-BR NUTHATCH	19	1	21	16	4			8		4	2	9	1	1	1	3		90
WHITE-BR NUTHATCH	80	112	157	207	72	93	22	152	31	95	133	141	41	46	38	33	99	1552
BROWN CREEPER	14	7	15	15	13	5	1	27	1	13	14	7	7	5	7	4	3	158
CAROLINA WREN	4	18	70	7	3	24	11	32	10	55	50	103	117	143	137	54	47	885
HOUSE WREN											1		1					2
WINTER WREN			4	1			2	7	1	1	5	8	5	10	3	5	3	55
MARSH WREN				1									11	4	4			20
G-CROWNED KINGLET	201	12	19	95	41	22	14	44	14	73	96	20	17	39	10	14	13	744
R-CROWNED KINGLET			5						4	2	3	4	3	1		2	6	30
EASTERN BLUEBIRD	32	71	29	262	130	151	103	117	49	141	275	60	6	22	71	3	62	1584
HERMIT THRUSH	1	2	5	3	1	3	3	27	2	6	25	23	14	19	16	8	7	165
WOOD THRUSH											---							---
AMERICAN ROBIN	161	117	244	782	2047	18	1019	181	115	92	5086	162	916	157	156	220	29	11502
GRAY CATBIRD			1				1	7	3	3	2	25	19	15	16	8	3	103
N. MOCKINGBIRD	28	67	313	66	43	72	38	86	115	78	158	139	189	206	117	161	103	1979
BROWN THRASHER					---	1			---				1	2	CW	2		6
AMERICAN PIPIT													20					20
CEDAR WAXWING	482	258	238	296	266	207	129	62	384	220	618	194	487	66	302	65	197	4471
NORTHERN SHRIKE									2						CW		1	3
EUROPEAN STARLING	1087	1890	63000	1777	3145	3104	2933	1530	7016	1157	5242	5916	10942	3987	2195	4522	9514	128957
OR-CROWNED WARBLER																		---
YEL-RUMPED WARBLER	5		67				33	17	24	27	37	32	9	140	66	16	23	496
BL-THR GREEN WARBLER						1												1
PINE WARBLER				1											1			2
PALM WARBLER										1		5	2					8
COM. YELLOWTHROAT																1		1

SPECIES	BA	EW	HA	LH	LS	ST	OX	PA	QV	SR	WR	GS	NH	NL	OL	SM	WE	STATE
YEL-BREADED CHAT			---											2	1	1		4
NORTHERN CARDINAL	120	102	396	117	42	83	105	174	106	118	321	220	259	156	163	163	181	2826
ROSE-BR GROSBEAK									---								CW	0
RUF-SIDED TOWHEE	1		4				2	2	4	3	2	8	17	17	17	20	4	101
AMER. TREE SPARROW	112	93	492	272	97	95	40	124	116	40	194	39	204	32	90	160	87	2287
CHIPPING SPARROW												1			2			3
FIELD SPARROW	1	9	35	3	3	7	24	7	25	31	35	12	99	68	31	62	44	496
VESPER SPARROW									---									
SAVANNAH SPARROW		4	11				8	2	24	1			17	5	11	72	27	182
'IPSWICH SPARROW'													CW			3		3
GRASSHOPPER SPARROW									1									1
SH-TAILED SPARROW													1			5		6
FOX SPARROW			7				7	8	2	2	6	8	7	7	6	8	5	73
SONG SPARROW	75	61	457	80	28	74	89	105	104	132	280	312	503	308	259	455	262	3584
LINCOLN'S SPARROW								2			1					2		5
SWAMP SPARROW	6	2	14	12		1	4	16	16	1	9	5	46	12	29	21	6	200
WHITE-THR. SPARROW	81	137	446	101	79	100	251	303	349	457	774	790	1291	394	534	700	352	7139
GOLDEN-CR SPARROW							1											1
WHITE-CR SPARROW			1		3				1				2			1		8
HARRIS'S SPARROW					---													
DARK-EYED JUNCO	1266	493	1323	1230	375	600	312	544	373	734	1194	619	291	258	248	434	721	11015
LAPLAND LONGSPUR																		
SNOW BUNTING			20					6							1	171		198
RED-WGD BLACKBIRD			741		16			1	179	5	1	1	642	8	102	34	68	1798
E. MEADOWLARK	5		23						82				13	19		1	1	144
BREWER'S BLACKBIRD									---									
RUSTY BLACKBIRD	1							58			2		8	3	2			74

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	BA	EW	HA	LH	LS	ST	OX	PA	QV	SR	WR	GS	NH	NL	OL	SM		WE
COMMON GRACKLE			3593	4			3		28	3	5	4	1029	62	12	2	7	4752
BROWN-HD COWBIRD		115	1294	139	305	61	2	10	360	2	70	1	283	12	40	15		2709
NORTHERN ORIOLE				1									1		1		1	4
N "BULLOCK'S" ORIOLE													XX					0
PINE GROSBEAK							31			--		--						31
PURPLE FINCH	6	6	23	7	15	5	7	12	5	5	23	5	3	12	2	5	9	150
HOUSE FINCH	670	352	2321	1533	642	420	455	822	602	826	1297	1363	1177	881	782	616	1116	15875
RED CROSSBILL																		
WH.-WINGED CROSSBILL			--		--	--							--					
COMMON REDPOLL							3						--					3
PINE SISKIN	29		1	53			15	9	1	1			3	1				8
AMERICAN GOLDFINCH	429	121	655	1985	198	58	137	302	136	278	263	475	239	100	62	114	472	6024
EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH		1																1
EVENING GROSBEAK	34		3	11				2		1					9			60
HOUSE SPARROW	538	339	999	699	252	532	167	298	314	277	360	647	640	630	340	1139	521	8692
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	9327	8389	105535	23041	16589	12437	10769	13804	18124	10600	37793	29785	46023	26263	14051	28287	38771	449588
TOTAL CD SPECIES	68	61	88	80	68	56	72	85	86	81	83	102	121	112	116	111	109	160
TOTAL CD SPECIES (10 yr)	98	87	129	118	103	104	112	112	117	121	121	159	166	?	154	162	155	160
% TOTAL CD SPECIES(10 yr)	69.4*	70.1**	68.5	68.1	64.2	55.2	65.2	75.4	73.7	66.4	66.4	64.8	72.9	?	77.1	69.3	68.8	100
TOTAL CW SPECIES	1	0	1	1	0	2	1	1	1	0	0	1	3	3	5	2	1	3
FIELD OBSERVERS	29	17	149	56	29	22	21	20	17	38	54	74	84	41	32	28	70	781
FEEDER WATCHERS	20	1	41	1	6	0	0	21	3	0	0	33	1	8	2	3	51	191
TOTAL ALL OBSERVERS	49	18	190	57	35	22	21	41	20	38	54	107	85	49	34	31	121	972

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GS - Greenwich-Stamford

HA - Hartford

LH - Litchfield Hills

LS - Lakeville-Sharon

* = 8 yr Total

NH - New Haven

NL - New London

OL - Old Lyme-Saybrook

OX - Oxford

PA - Pawling NY-CT

(Formerly Hidden Valley)

** = 6 yr Total

QV - Quinnipac Valley

SM - Stratford-Milford

SR - Salmon River

ST - Storrs

WE - Westport

WR - Woodbury-Roxbury

CD - Count Day

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CW Count Week Species

XX Unusual Species

XX New 10 yr. High Count

XX New 10 yr. Low Count(Bold)

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THE FALL 1991 HAWK MIGRATION IN CONNECTICUT

Neil Currie

In Connecticut, two major hawk watching sites are operated in addition to a half dozen other sites considered less important because they are used only six to ten days in September during peak Broad-winged Hawk migration. The major lookouts are Quaker Ridge at the National Audubon Society Center in Greenwich and Lighthouse Point on the east side of New Haven Harbor. For some as yet unexplained reason, Lighthouse Point catches far more hawks than other coastal points. Quaker Ridge picks up some of the coastal movement and adds great numbers of Broad-wings as they move to the southwest through the state.

Over a 20-year period, many sites have been manned in interior Connecticut on September weekends, but only two of these have operated all these years: South Windsor and Whippoorwill Hill, Newtown. Others are manned almost every year: Botsford Hill in Bridgewater, East Shore Park in New Haven, and Huntington State Park in Redding. Observers at these "lesser" sites spend up to 40 hours during September hawk watching (Table 1).

As usual, hawks were on the move in small numbers in late August and early September. A cold front on 10 September produced northerly winds across the state. The following day saw the first big push of Broad-wings: 238 in South Windsor, 226 over Newtown, and 1244 at Quaker Ridge. On 12 September 2778 Broad-wings passed by Quaker Ridge and smaller numbers were observed at other sites. At Lighthouse Point over 1000 hawks, including 141 Ospreys, 260 Sharp-shinned Hawks, and 402 American Kestrels, were counted on those two days.

The peak period for Broad-wing migration had arrived, but with unfavorable weather. Winds shifted to the east, bringing moisture and low overcast from the Atlantic, and for the next seven days little movement was observed, while to the north, in Maine and New Hampshire, skies were clear. A cold front on the 19th brought the kind of weather that watchers had anticipated all week, and on the 20th Broad-wings were overhead again: 410 in South Windsor, 965 at Botsford Hill, 1141 at Whippoorwill Hill, and a combined total of 3100 at Harwinton and Litchfield. At Quaker Ridge the total hawk count for the 20th and 21st was 3721. On the same two days at Lighthouse Point, the count was 2824: 417 Ospreys, 978 sharp-shins, 29 Northern Harriers, 148 Cooper's Hawks, 462 kestrels, and the only significant count of Broad-wings during the fall, 588.

Despite these numbers, observers at all lookouts were disappointed and felt that counts were down from previous years. And they were. What happened? Had hawks flown past Connecticut to the north and the west around the overcast? Low counts at New York and New Jersey lookouts seemed to indicate that this had not occurred. A report from a glider pilot to Tom Laura, who monitors the Raccoon Ridge flight near the Delaware Water Gap in New Jersey, offers a possible answer. On 15 September the pilot was at 7,000 feet and observed a steady stream of Broad-wings passing to the southwest about 1,000 feet above him. Had these birds been out of our sight above the overcast?

After the Broad-wings were gone, coastal migration began to build, with 16000 hawks counted at Lighthouse Point to the end of November and over 3000 at Quaker Ridge until 3 November. A Quaker Ridge count of 139 Turkey Vultures October 20 was a record day for this species. The year's total of 453 TV's was also a record for that site. At Lighthouse Point, year records included 1,863 Cooper's Hawks, 474 Red-shouldered Hawks, and 658 Red-tailed Hawks. Also at Lighthouse Point, Osprey counts continued high (3034), down somewhat from 1989 and 1990 counts.

Bald Eagle numbers were normal with 12 at Quaker Ridge and 17 at Lighthouse Point. Following six good years, Northern Harrier numbers were low at both sites, 399 at Lighthouse Point and 74 at Quaker Ridge. Sharpshin counts were also down at both locations. Cooper's Hawks were somewhat lower at Quaker Ridge, but continued their three-year increase at Lighthouse Point. Northern Goshawk numbers remained low and normal.

Although buteos usually move along the coast only in small numbers, on 29 October a record 227 Red-shouldered Hawks was over Lighthouse Point, accompanied by 161 Red-tails; 9 November saw a record 199 Red-tailed Hawks at Lighthouse Point. The usual handful of Rough-legged Hawks were counted at some Connecticut sites. Golden Eagles totaled six in the state. On 12 October, a highlight was a very rare Swainson's Hawk low over the watchers at Quaker Ridge. Another Swainson's Hawk had been reported from Harwinton on September 20th. Among the falcons, kestrels and peregrines were normal, and Merlins continued their six year increase.

It would be nice to recognize all of the "watchers" and "counters" here, but there are far too many. Two, however, who each spend several hundred hours each fall counting the hawks, should be mentioned—Elsbeth Johnson at Quaker Ridge and Ed Shove at Lighthouse Point. They are devoted watchers and teachers.

10 Mountain Laurel Road, Sandy Hook, CT 06482

TABLE 1: CONNECTICUT - ALL LOOKOUTS - FALL 1991

SITES	Hrs.	SPECIES																Total	
		TV	OS	BE	NH	SS	CH	NG	RS	BW	RT	RL	SW	GE	AK	ML	PG		UR
South Windsor	54.5	2	34	1a	3	18				1623					28			35	1744
Harwinton	3.0		2			17		1	2077			1				1			2099
Litchfield	2.5		4						1064										1068
N. Harbor, New Haven	7.0	1	23	1	1	23	2		1254					9					1314
East Shore, New Haven	16.5	7	165		2	375	15		81	16				589	4	1			1255
Lighthouse Pt.	579.5	228	3034	17	399	8659	1863	30	474	910	658	4	1	4115	783	44	1182		22401
Bridgewater	42.5	3	22	3	2	50	5		1857	2				33	1	3	14		1995
Newtown	47.5		63	3	2	116			2898	25				50				33	3190
Redding	27.5		17		5	104	7	1	1	1330	4			34				7	1510
Quaker Ridge	535.0	453	461	12	74	2128	146	13	106	7823	349		1	5	622	39	13	182	12427

TV - Turkey Vulture

OS - Osprey

BE - Bald Eagle

NH - Northern Harrier

SS - Sharp-shinned Hawk

CH - Cooper's Hawk

NG - Northern Goshawk

RS - Red-shouldered Hawk

BW - Broad-winged Hawk

RT - Red-tailed Hawk

RL - Rough-legged Hawk

SW - Swainson's Hawk

GE - Golden Eagle

AK - American Kestrel

ML - Merlin

PG - Peregrine Falcon

UR - Unidentified Raptor

a - Adult

TABLE 2: BROAD-WINGS IN CONNECTICUT - FALL 1991

SITES	SEPTEMBER																Total		
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25		26	
South Windsor	7	238	415	207			1		29		410	314	2						1623
Harwinton											2077								2077
Litchfield											1064								1064
N. Harbor, New Haven			381									873							1254
East Shore, New Haven		44																37	81
Lighthouse Pt.		69	36	4							55	588	2		14	Rain	142		910
Bridgewater	15		542	64				4	151		965	116							1857
Newtown		207	669	495			1	65	138		1141	182							2898
Redding			808	114					4		294	62	48						1330
Quaker Ridge	138	1244	2569	379				7	14		2450	813	38		8			163	7823

CONNECTICUT FIELD NOTES

FALL: AUGUST 1 - NOVEMBER 30, 1991

Jay Kaplan

As we struggle to come up with the "perfect" vehicle upon which to develop a Field Report Form, allow me to make a brief comment upon one aspect of the current form, now being phased out in hopes of more efficient reporting. I have always marvelled at the section of the report asking "which species impressed you as being more common...or scarce...this season." In the past, I have often been amused, as the same species has appeared in both the common and scarce columns. As we phase out this particular form, these sections will disappear and thus, it seems only fair to take a few paragraphs to discuss those birds perceived as scarce or common in this season's hefty batch of reports. Of the numerous species listed as common, three stand out - Northern Gannet, American Bittern and Snowy Owl. I would agree, all three species were seen more often than one might expect. The question is why? In the case of Gannet, various weather patterns, fish movements and ocean currents could combine to bring this species into Long Island Sound. Recently, this has happened on a fairly regular basis every few years. American Bittern is another story. Perhaps we were just looking more intently for this bird, as it has been listed as scarce in past reports. And then there is the Snowy Owl. Is there a food shortage up north? How well do these owls survive when forced south? (One was found dead at Milford Point and an examination showed that it died of starvation). Each question begets additional questions.

Other species are reported as scarce. We are all familiar with the decline of the American Kestrel. What about Ruffed Grouse, also mentioned in low numbers on report forms. Common Nighthawk and White-crowned Sparrow were also listed as "scarce" on more than one report. Do these reports mean anything? Perhaps we need to rethink our ideas about report forms. They need to be more than a vehicle for reporting only the more unusual species and rarest of vagrants that pass through our state, if we are to get a true measure of avian trends.

The fall reporting period is our longest, and it may also be our most prolific. Those delightful late summer and early autumn days provide perfect conditions for peak migration as well as just the incentive one needs to head for the Connecticut shoreline or the northwest hills. As the field notes attest, those autumn jaunts were, at times, well worth the effort. Swainson's Hawk, Golden Eagle and Sandhill Crane were among the birds sighted from Connecticut hawk watching stations, while a first state record Sandwich Tern was one of a number of exciting finds along the coast.

With this issue, Connecticut Field Notes will require that documentation be submitted to the Editor or the Secretary of the Rare Records Committee for all rare species designated by that committee (see C.O.A. Field-List). This policy

is similar to those followed by prominent ornithological journals, including *American Birds*.

Although Connecticut was spared a direct hit from Hurricane Bob on August 19, rainfall for the month totalled 8.69 inches, more than twice the August normal of 4 inches. The mercury reached 90°F in the Hartford area on seven days, continuing a trend established in early summer. Temperatures reached 90°F for a final time September 16-17, while on September 25, in excess of 3 inches of rain fell in the Hartford area. Rainfall for September, at 5.64 inches, again exceeded the norm for the month by well over 1.5 inches. October was a more seasonable month—until the end that is, when an unusual Halloween storm caused the worst coastal flooding since Hurricane Carol in 1954. In spite of this event, precipitation for October and November was normal for the period, with significant precipitation measured only on November 10th and 21st.

LOONS—WATERFOWL

Loons were not reported in great numbers this season. Red-throated Loons peaked at 15 November 24 at Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison (hereafter HBSP) (RN), while 10 Common Loons were off Stonington Point, Stonington November 1, and eight were at HBSP November 16 (DP). The only grebe reports of note were single Red-necked Grebes at Coventry Lake, Coventry November 18 (JMc, fide GC) and at Milford Point, Milford November 28 (DR). The Coventry sighting was only the fourth record for that area of the state. It was an invasion year for Northern Gannets with reports from throughout Long Island Sound from October 31 through the period. Peak numbers included 300+ from Stonington Point November 1 (DP) and 100+ from HBSP November 15 (DP). The massive coastal Halloween storm, no doubt, played a major role in this invasion as Gannets were reported as "being everywhere" November 2 (NP). An unidentified shearwater species was seen briefly from Stonington Point November 1 (DP), another result of the previous day's storm. American Bitterns have been reported as scarce in previous seasons; thus it was

refreshing to learn of more than a dozen sightings of this species from at least seven different coastal locations. Other heron reports of note were a Tricolored at Milford Point August 14-30 (CB, SM), single Cattle Egrets at Milford Point August 20 (JB), Westport October 6 (FM) and Oxford November 4 (BD), and a late Green-backed Heron at Mirror Lake, Storrs October 19 (DH).

Two Tundra Swans flew over Route 2, Preston November 2 (DP) and two more were at Lake Saltonstall, Branford November 12 (NP). A Greater White-fronted Goose was at MacKenzie Reservoir, Wallingford October 31 (DP). Of the many reports of Snow Geese, peak numbers included 174 in South Windsor October 12 (DP), 50 in Harwinton November 11 (DR) and 45 in Sharon October 16 (TS). Brant peaked at 54 at Milford Point October 26 (SKo), while 43 were at Greenwich Point, Greenwich October 9 (BO). Wood Duck peaked at 97 in South Windsor's Station 43 marsh September 14 (SKo), while a very high count of 303 Green-winged Teal was at Griswold Point, Old Lyme October 7 (SKo). A Eurasian Wigeon was at Aspetuck Reservoir, Easton October 22 - November 29 (m.ob.). Greenwich

Point hosted 14 Common Eider September 14 (BO,JZ), while an immature male was sporadic at Harkness State Park, Waterford November 1-20 (DP). Black Scoters were at Middle Reservoir, Killingly October 20 (THa) and at Milford Point November 9 (CE). Large flocks of Ruddy Ducks included 242 at Laurel Reservoir, New Canaan October 20 (F. Gallo, fide FM) and 70 at Bantam Lake, Litchfield November 23-27 (DR, et al.).

HAWKS THROUGH ALCIDS

The hawk watch site at Lighthouse Point Park, New Haven provided some interesting data this fall (see Fall Hawkwatch Report in this issue). From August 23 - November 10, a total of 22,257 hawks were observed including 3034 Osprey, 8563 Sharp-shinned and 1859 Cooper's Hawks; 4114 American Kestrel, 783 Merlin and 45 Peregrine Falcons (AR,NHBC). Bald Eagles were reported throughout the state and the pair at Barkhamsted Reservoir, Barkhamsted remained throughout the period (DR, et al.). Sharp-shinned Hawk is a rare breeder in Connecticut; thus three fledglings in Morris August 4 was a good find (BD,DS). Three Northern Goshawks were killed in collisions with windows in the Farmington Valley area in mid-November (JKa), calling attention to this mortality factor in birds of prey. An unprecedented 321 Red-shouldered Hawks were seen at Lighthouse Point October 28-29 (m.ob.). Late Broad-winged Hawks were sighted at Station 43, South Windsor October 20 (CE), Quaker Ridge, Greenwich October 27 (FM, et al.) and at Millstone Point, Niantic October 28 (DP). There were two sightings of Swainson's Hawk this period, both in the company of migrant

Broad-wings. Birds were reported in Harwinton September 20 (PC) and at the Quaker Ridge hawk watch, Greenwich October 12 (Julio de la Torre, Joseph Ferrari). Red-tailed Hawks totalled 282 at Lighthouse Point October 28-29 (m.ob.), a very high count for this coastal site. Rough-legged Hawks were scarce this fall, with a report of 1-3 at HBSP November 5-17 (m.ob.) and one at Bluff Point, Groton November 14 (DP). Golden Eagle sightings included single birds at Quaker Ridge October 13 (BO) and October 27 (FM, et al.), an immature at Lighthouse Point October 17 (SM, et al.), and additional birds at Lighthouse Point October 18 (JMa) and 24 (JMa,BO). Peregrine Falcons were reported from at least 10 locations around the state.

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection now estimates the state's Wild Turkey population at 6500 (DEP). American Coot peaked at 80 at Bantam Lake November 10 (IS,TS). Five Coot were at Konold's Pond, North Haven November 7 (AB) and eight were in Old Saybrook November 17 (THa). A Sandhill Crane flew over the Quaker Ridge hawk watch site October 13 (BO).

There were numerous sightings of Lesser Golden Plover along the coast ranging up to 15 birds from Bluff Point, Groton to HBSP from early September to mid-November (m.ob.). American Oystercatcher was also common along the coast, primarily along the eastern shoreline with a high of 28 at Bluff Point September 4 (DP). Killdeer were reported as abundant this fall with a flock of 40 in Storrs October 16 (GC). Two Hudsonian Godwits were at HBSP August 21 (RE,JMa,JMo), two were at Milford Point September 10 (CB) and a single bird was at Griswold Point Octo-

ber 19 - November 4 (The, DP). Marbled Godwits were at Milford Point August 23 (JF), two at Sandy Point, West Haven August 27 (NP) and at Long Wharf, New Haven October 10 (SF, JKa).

There were few reports of Upland Sandpiper this fall. Single birds were at HBSP August 12 (RE) and at Sikorsky Airport, Stratford August 7 to mid-September (JKa, et al.). Baird's Sandpipers were at HBSP August 14-24 (m.ob.), Bluff Point August 28 (DP) and Griswold Point, October 11 (The). Two Stilt Sandpipers were at Barn Island Wildlife Management Area, Stonington August 20 (DP) and one was at HBSP August 23 (RE). Buff-breasted Sandpiper sightings included a bird in a West Suffield sod farm September 2-3 (SKe, et al.), two at HBSP September 4-16 (m.ob.) and one to two in Guilford September 4 (NP). Two Wilson's Phalaropes were at HBSP August 14 (JMa, JMo), with another at this location August 24-25 (BD, et al.). Laughing Gulls peaked at 500 at the mouth of the Connecticut River November 16 (NP). Common Black-headed Gulls were at Bluff Point November 6, an immature at HBSP November 12 and at Griswold Point November 13 (all DP). An immature Iceland Gull was at HBSP November 4-13 (m.ob.), while first year birds were at Bantam Lake November 17 (BD, RN) and at Shepaug Dam, Southbury November 30 (DR). A Lesser Black-backed Gull was at Lighthouse Point November 15 (ES). There were numerous tern sightings of interest, a majority resulting from Hurricane Bob, a storm that hit our southeast coastline August 19. Two Caspian Terns were at Old Saybrook August 19 (NP), and additional sightings were at HBSP August 20 (JMa, JMo), at Old Saybrook August 24 (BD) and at Milford Point

September 16 (SKo). Royal Terns were seen at seven different coastal locations, including a late sighting at Sandy Point November 4 (NP). A late Common Tern was at HBSP November 2 (RE). Milford Point was a prime location for refugees from Hurricane Bob. At least three Arctic Terns were seen there October 20 (CB, JF). A first state record Sandwich Tern was photographed August 24 (TM, PD, et al.). This bird was presumed to be one of many that appeared in Massachusetts following the hurricane. Black Terns at Milford Point included two August 20 (JF) and one September 1 (CB, DP). An unusual inland Black Tern was at Mansfield Hollow, Mansfield following the hurricane August 20 (LB). A flock of 21-30 Black Skimmers lingered at Milford Point August 24-30 (m.ob.).

A Razorbill, only the second Connecticut record, was at HBSP November 15 (HF, BMC, NP).

OWLS THROUGH SHRIKES

Snowy Owls invaded the state in early November with seven sightings throughout the state during the first week. Individuals were at HBSP November 2-4 (JMa, DR, et al.); in East Windsor November 12 (fide Jane Hopkins), and at Great Pond State Forest, Simsbury November 14 (LK, et al.). An incredible four Snowies plus a fifth dead bird on a sand bar were at Milford Point November 9 (CE) and at least two of these birds remained through the period. Two Long-eared Owls were at Lighthouse Point November 2 (ES) and one was at HBSP November 9 (m.ob.). Short-eared Owls were at Lighthouse Point September 30 (RE) and Milford Point October 30 (AO) and November 4 (CB). A Northern Saw-whet Owl was in North Haven November 17 and 29 (BD, JF).

Amigrant Whip-poor-will was found dead on a Mansfield road August 6 (fide GC). Many observers felt it was a poor migration for Common Nighthawks. A high of 80 were in Watertown August 13 (RN), 110 over Guilford August 21 (David Hill, fide FM), and the latest report was two in Vernon October 3 (CE). A late Chimney Swift was in Hamden October 2 (AB). A Ruby-throated Hummingbird was regularly visiting a nest in Willington August 27-31 (fide GC). The nest was too high to examine its contents and it is now at the University of Connecticut, Storrs. The dates are at least two weeks later than any egg dates listed in A.C. Bent's *Life Histories of North American Birds*. A late hummingbird frequented flowers in Storrs September 25 (NCl). Eight Red-headed Woodpeckers were sighted at the Lighthouse Point hawk watch in October (m.ob.) and another bird was at the Quaker Ridge site September 21 (m.ob.).

The only Olive-sided Flycatcher reported was at Osbornedale State Park, Derby August 23 (JF). Late swallow reports included two Tree Swallows at Lake Saltonstall, East Haven November 9 (RS, et al.) and a late Barn Swallow at Griswold Point November 26 (The). Blue Jay migration peaked at 6000 at Lighthouse Point October 4 (m.ob.). A pair of Ravens frequented Talcott Mountain, Avon September 3 - November 25 (THa). A Northern Wheatear was described at HBSP November 15 (JG, NP) and a report has been forwarded to the Connecticut Rare Records Committee. Small flocks of American Pipits were observed throughout the state from late September - early November including a high of 25 in Farmington October 18 (BD). The first Northern Shrike reports

for the season came from White Memorial, Litchfield November 9 (Soney Wing, fide FM) and Mt. Carmel, Hamden November 18 (AB).

VIREOS THROUGH GROSBEAKS

A Bell's Vireo photographed at Longshore Club Park, Westport October 14 (FM), provided the first documented state record. It could not be relocated and a complete report has been submitted to the CRRC. Orange-crowned Warblers were in Storrs September 23 (MSz), in Branford October 7 (NP) and at Lake Dawson, Woodbridge October 18 (AB). A late Black-throated Green Warbler was at Mount Carmel, Hamden November 16 (AB). A Connecticut Warbler was found dead in a Cromwell yard September 6 (JMo), possibly a victim of a window collision. Additional Connecticut Warblers were at Connecticut Audubon Society's Fairfield Sanctuary September 6 (JF), in Middletown September 11 (JMa), in Woodbury September 15 (RN) and in Branford October 17 (NP). The sole Mourning Warbler report came from Greenwich Point September 21 (TM, et al.). There were five reports of Yellow-breasted Chat including birds in Guilford September 9 (NP), at Lot W, Storrs September 10 (LB), at Lighthouse Point September 29 (SM), at Mount Carmel October 19 (AB), and at HBSP October 24 (JMo).

Blue Grosbeaks were in Branford October 3 (NP) and Woodbury October 13-14 (NCu, RN). An immature Indigo Bunting, apparently not in good health, was in Simsbury October 28 (BK). Dickcissels were at Lot W, Storrs September 14-15 (SR, JMc), in the South Windsor meadows September 16 (PK), and at Lighthouse Point October 4 and 17 (SM).

It was a good fall for sparrows! A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was discovered in South Windsor October 8 (CE) amidst hundreds of migrant sparrows of numerous species. A Vesper Sparrow was at Lighthouse Point October 13 (JF). A Savannah Sparrow, "Ipswich" race, was at Sherwood Island State Park, Westport November 23 (BO). Grasshopper Sparrows were in Storrs October 12 (THa) and Woodbury October 20 (BD, et al.). A **Henslow's Sparrow** made a brief appearance at HBSP November 9 (JKa, TM). A late Seaside Sparrow was at Milford Point November 9 (BD, et al.). Lincoln's Sparrows were reported from many locations throughout the state. Finally, White-crowned Sparrow, listed as "scarce" on several report forms, was observed in no fewer than eight locations, all in October, including a high of eight in Southbury October 20 (BD, RN).

Scanning the grounds of Hammonasset State Park for longspurs is an annual autumn pastime. This season, one to three Lapland Longspurs were present November 2-15 (m.ob.) and three were also at Griswold Point November 9 (SKo). Snow Buntings peaked at HBSP with 113 November 16 (SKo). Other substantial flocks included 40 at Sandy Point, West Haven November 9 (BD), and 30 at Storr's Lot W November 10 (AB). An inland sighting at Dennis Hill State Park, Norfolk October 31 (NP) was unusual. A late Bobolink was at Lot W September 29 (GC), while an Eastern Meadowlark was heard singing in Storrs October 13 (GC). A massive flock of 2,000 Common Grackles was migrating over Stamford at dawn September 1 (FM, et al.). An adult male Northern Oriole was at HBSP November 15 (DP).

For the third consecutive year, there

were no large movements of winter finches during the fall season. Purple Finches were sporadic in the northern sections. Two Red Crossbills were reported in Branford October 12 and five were at Lake Saltonstall November 21 (NP). Small groups of Pine Siskins were reported in the northwest hills and 18 were at Quaker Ridge October 30 (EJ). Evening Grosbeaks were also scarce with 12 in Harwinton October 29 (PC) the largest flock reported.

Observers; Contributors (Boldface):

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PHOTO CHALLENGE

With this issue of the *Connecticut Warbler*, we have initiated a new regular feature, the *Photo Challenge*. Each issue will contain an unidentified photograph of a bird species that has occurred in northeastern North America. An emphasis will be placed on species of regular occurrence in Connecticut and on confusing species or plumages which create an identification challenge. A detailed explanation of each Photo Challenge will appear in the following issue.

Louis R. Bevier and Frederick Purnell, Jr.



Photo Challenge 1. Identify the species. Answer next issue.

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

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ABOUT OUR COVER ARTIST

Nicole Kohut

"White-throated Sparrow (Zonotrichia albicollis)"

Nicole Kohut of Westport, CT is once again our cover artist. She has given us a delightful drawing of a "Whitethroat" with young in the nest. Nicole will shortly be moving to the southwest and we thank her for sharing a number of her fine drawings with us and wish her well in her new location.

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

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MABEL OSGOOD WRIGHT AWARD PRESENTATION

Editor's Note: The following is an excerpt from the presentation speech by Milan Bull.

One of the most important gratifying roles of this organization is that it gives us, as a group, an opportunity to recognize outstanding achievements made by those people in this field who have significantly impacted our mission of birds and conservation in Connecticut.

The Mabel Osgood Wright Award is presented by this group, from time to time, to highlight remarkable contributions made by exceptional people.

Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Roland Clement is such a person. For those of you who haven't had the pleasure of knowing him, let me say that Roland's name is synonymous with birds, conservation, and the environment. Author, lecturer, philosopher, and artist, Roland has been in the forefront of the conservation movement in Connecticut and across America long before the term "environmentalist" was popularized. To list all his accomplishments here would require more time than I am allotted, but I know you will applaud some of these highlights:

A 35 year Connecticut resident, Roland started his career in ornithology and conservation in the 1930's as a bird bander at the O.L. Austin Ornithological Research Station in Eastham, Mass., on the Cape.

He then went on to edit the New England Bulletin of Wildlife published by the Boston Museum of Science, and spent at least part of his World War II service years as a weatherman at Goose Bay in Labrador, doing what most of us would dream about, studying birds. Subsequently, his work was published in Todd's Birds of the Labrador Peninsula, and additional expeditions resulted in the species account for the Eastern White-crowned Sparrow in A.C. Bent's Life History series.

After the war, Roland earned a B.A. in botany from Brown University, and a Masters in wildlife conservation at Cornell before becom-

ing the first executive director of the Rhode Island Audubon Society.

In 1958 Roland began a 20 year career with the National Audubon Society that resulted in 3 books, including *The Living World of Audubon*, a successful battle against DDT, work with the California Condor Advisory Committee, and the International Conservation of Birds of Prey/US section.

Roland was president of the Connecticut Audubon Society for three years, a Richard C. Mellon Fellow at Yale's School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, and for two years served as the first president of the COA.

Therefore, Roland, it is with great pleasure, and sincere appreciation that we present to you the Mabel Osgood Wright Award.

ESCAPED AND RELEASED BIRDS IN CONNECTICUT

George A. Clark, Jr.

In Connecticut the number of bird species that have escaped or been deliberately released from captivity is impressively large. Reported examples, either published or preserved in institutional files, cover 66 species and one hybrid. In addition to these known examples, it is likely that many unrecorded species have occurred in the state. The aim of this article is to provide a list of the species involved in known releases or escapes together with an indication of one or more sources for these reports. Information on ten of these species and the hybrid has not been previously published, and new data are included for seven other species. This compilation was undertaken in view of earlier difficulties in attempting to trace information on several of the species listed here. Although an extensive search of museum specimens and published literature was undertaken, no claim is made for completeness of this survey.

Numerous birds have been released deliberately into the wild to provide opportunities for hunting (e. g., the Ring-necked Pheasant). Many decades ago some releases of passerines were undertaken in an effort to introduce species from other parts of the world simply to enrich our native birdlife. Examples are the European Starling and House Sparrow, whose introduction many people now view as serious mistakes. For a great many of the species, we do not know whether deliberate releases or escapes were involved, but the net result has been numerous occurrences of certain species of birds far from their usual ranges.

In some cases, releases of birds have ultimately led to sizeable Connecticut populations. Examples include the Mute Swan, Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Wild Turkey, European Starling, House Finch and House Sparrow. In other cases it is difficult to assess how important past releases have been in influencing present population levels; examples here include Osprey, Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Ruffed Grouse, and Northern Bobwhite. The Ring-necked Pheasant is a bird whose continued presence in the state has been sustained for several decades by annual releases of birds stocked for hunters. In the case of the Monk Parakeet, we do not know whether birds now in the wild originated through accidental escapes or deliberate releases; a more significant question is whether the populations will continue to grow.

When any rare bird is found in the wild, it is appropriate to consider the possibility of captive origin. In some cases it is easy to reach a decision. For example, if any of the living species of flightless birds were to be found in the wild in Connecticut, it would be fairly safe to assume a captive source. In many other cases reaching a decision on origin is much more difficult. For example, many of the European waterfowl species have been commonly kept in captivity, but the same species might also conceivably reach Connecticut without human assistance. In contrast, gulls are rarely kept as captives, so the occurrence of a European species is plausibly attributed to vagrancy. When in doubt about the source of a rarity, the conservative position is to assume a captive origin.

There has been a tendency to disregard escaped and released birds as unnatural and hence unworthy of attention. From an ecological viewpoint, the impact of one escaped bird is indeed likely to be minimal. However, examination of cases of birds of captive origin being found in the wild can potentially reveal patterns that may help to clarify the questions that arise for birds of uncertain origin. For example, it is known that Jackdaws have at least once reached Canada by riding a ship across the Atlantic. It is then conceivable that one such bird eventually reached Connecticut. However, there is no indication that a Chough would be at all likely to fly across the Atlantic or to cross by riding a ship, and the presumption has been that the Chough in Connecticut was of captive origin. But if one European corvid species in Connecticut has a captive origin, why should we invoke a different explanation for the origin of another?

There is very little published information about the actual escape of birds from captivity, but below I list examples for a hybrid Wood X Muscovy Duck, a Smew, Crested Caracaras, and a Lesser Golden Plover.

In the following annotated list I have indicated sources for the information. Abbreviations are as follows: AB = American Birds, AFN = Audubon Field Notes, BM = Birdcraft Museum, Br = now breeding in the state, FBr = formerly bred in the state, B-L = Bird-Lore, CW = Connecticut Warbler, MFN = Mianus Field Notes, RNEB = Records of New England Birds, UCMNH = University of Connecticut Museum of Natural History, YPM = Yale University Peabody Museum of Natural History. The sequence of species is that of Morony et al. (1975). Many of the exceptional reports mentioned below have not been reviewed by the Connecticut Rare Records Committee, but the species involved are in many cases quite distinctive. I have included only those species for which publications, specimens, photographs, or written reports were seen by me. It should be emphasized that the quality of documentation for the following species varies greatly, ranging from bare mention of an occurrence to detailed records with photographs or specimens. There is a possibility that some of the species for which details are scant might have been incorrectly identified.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Scarlet Ibis (*Eudocimus ruber*)

One was found in Ridgefield in September 1937 (B-L 39:469, 1937).

American Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*)

Two reports (AFN 19:19, 1965; RNEB 20, August 1969).

Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*)

Br; Merola and Chasko (1989) surveyed the history and increase in numbers of this species.

Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*)

One was present in Greenwich in January 1984 (MFN January 1984:2).

Black-necked Swan (*Cygnus melanocorypus*)

An individual was seen some years ago on the Thames River by William Gaunya (report on file at UCMNH).

Graylag Goose (*Anser anser*)

A specimen shot by a hunter on 18 January 1980 in Clinton is in the collection at BM.

Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*)

Br. Stocking of relatively sedentary birds in the northeastern states led to the establishment of a year-round large population in recent decades (Merola and Chasko 1989).

Escaped and Released Birds in Connecticut

Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*)

There are now a number of records from the state (CW 5: 16-18, 1985; CW 9:24, 1989). At least one group of birds of this species found in New England was later determined to have been released from captivity (AB 45:250, 1991).

Egyptian Goose (*Alopochen aegyptiacus*)

Reported by Sage et al. (1913).

Ruddy Shelduck (*Tadorna ferruginea*)

A photograph on file at UCMNH shows a bird that was in Mansfield in October and early November 1983. Another record from Southbury came in 1987 (CW 7:53, 1987). At Mystic a bird was seen by numerous observers and photographed in January 1992.

Common Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*)

One in Westport in 1987 (CW 7:51,53, 1987).

Muscovy (*Cairina moschata*)

This species was listed without details by Linsley (1843). One bird was photographed by me in Storrs, 30 October 1983 (color slide at UCMNH).

Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*)

Br. More than 9,000 individuals were reported to have been released in Connecticut over two decades prior to 1939 (Ripley 1957).

Wood Duck X Mandarin hybrid (*Aix sponsa* X *Aix galericulata*)

This rare hybrid was reared at a now defunct game farm in Willington and photographed there by me on 28 April 1975. Paul A. Johnsgard of the University of Nebraska examined my color slides and confirmed the hybrid origin of the bird. Personnel at the game farm reported that the bird eventually flew out of the penned area and was not subsequently seen.

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)

Br. Stocking of birds in the northeastern states contributed to the establishment in recent decades of a breeding population in Connecticut (Merola and Chasko 1989). A Connecticut state program of releasing pen-reared juveniles was discontinued in 1977 (Merola and Chasko 1989).

Spot-billed Duck (*Anas poecilorhyncha*)

One appeared in Litchfield in May-June 1955 (AFN 9:366, 1955, and Ripley 1957).

Phillipine Duck (*Anas luzonica*)

A specimen shot by a hunter 29 November 1985 in Danbury is in the collection at UCMNH.

Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*)

One was reported in Wethersfield, October 1944 (Zeranski and Baptist 1990).

Red-crested Pochard (*Netta rufina*)

A bird was seen and photographed in Bridgeport on 13 December 1987 (CW 9:24, 1989).

Smew (*Mergus albellus*)

There is a published report of one having escaped from captivity in Connecticut (Birding 8:223-228, 1976), but there were no reports of this bird being subsequently seen.

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)

Br. During the time when the numbers of breeding Ospreys in the state were greatly reduced as consequence of pesticide residues in the food chain, Osprey eggs brought from the Chesapeake Bay region were successfully hatched by Connecticut adults (AB 34:236, 1980).

Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

FBr. The increased number of sightings of this species in Connecticut in recent years is likely to be partly a consequence of releases of young birds in other states such as at the Quabbin Reservoir in Massachusetts.

Crested Caracara (*Polyborus plancus*)

Four were known to have escaped from the Hartford area and one of these appeared in New York state (MFN December 1974:3).

Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*)

A New Haven sighting of a bird believed by the observers to be of this species came not long after a reported escape of a hybrid Prairie X Peregrine Falcon in Rhode Island (CW 10:89-90, 1990).

Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)

FBr. Some of the sightings of this species in Connecticut in recent years are evidently a consequence of the successful reintroduction (through releases) of young Peregrine Falcons in northeastern North America (Audubon Afield, Winter-Spring 1983: North Central Connecticut).

Ruffed Grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*)

Br. Releases of birds from Alberta, Canada, were made in Connecticut (Phillips 1928), but it is apparently unknown whether these

birds contributed in any way towards the present populations in the state.

Sharp-tailed Grouse (*Tympanuchus phasianellus*)

A bird shot in East Windsor apparently came from a group released near Springfield, Massachusetts (Bagg and Eliot 1937). Additional birds were also released in Connecticut in 1924 (Phillips 1928).

Wild Turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*)

Br. This species was originally native to Connecticut, but extirpated in the early 1800s, presumably due to loss of woodland and unrestricted hunting. After unsuccessful attempts to start a wild population by releasing stock held in captivity, successful introduction in Connecticut was finally achieved by transfer of wild birds captured in New York state in the early 1970's (Jackson and Miller 1985).

California Quail (*Callipepla californica*)

Linsley (1843) reported birds of this species near Bridgeport in 1839 and 1840. Subsequently, this species was reported to have survived for three years in the wild in the Hebron area (B-L 24:415-417, 1922).

Northern Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*)

Br. Birds from other states have been released in Connecticut (Allen 1909, Sage et al. 1913, Phillips 1928, Manter 1975), but whether current populations might be derived from such introductions is unknown. It is known that Bobwhites have been reared in captivity in recent decades in northeastern Connecticut, but it is not known whether any of these captives might have been released or escaped to contribute to the population of wild birds remaining in that part of the state.

Chukar (*Alectoris chukar*)

FBr. (MFN 4[6]:2, 1976). A small number of this partridge survived and bred in Greenwich for a few years in the 1970s (AB 30:928, 1976; AB 31:306, 1977; MFN 4(3), 1976; MFN 1977, MFN 1978). McDowell (1965:7-8) indicated that birds had been released in the state prior to the 1970s, but I know of no details concerning such earlier releases.

Gray Partridge (*Perdix perdi*)

FBr. Specimens from Connecticut are at UCMNH and at the Springfield Museum in Massachusetts. This European species was introduced and present in the state from at least 1908 until 1935 (Auk 38:466, 1921; Phillips 1928; Bagg and Eliot 1937; Bull 1964, E. A. Bergstrom unpubl. ms. at UCMNH).

European Quail (*Coturnix coturnix*)

FBr. A Connecticut specimen from 14 December 1878 is in BM. References on this species in the state are Allen (1909), Sage et al. (1913) and McAtee (Auk 61:652, 1944).

Chicken, domestic (*Gallus gallus*)

This species was mentioned by Linsley (1843) as being found in Connecticut, but there are apparently no details on its status in the state.

Kalig Pheasant (*Lophura leucomelana*)

An attempted introduction was not successful (Phillips 1928).

Ring-necked Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*)

Br. The long history of stocking of this originally Asian species in Connecticut has been discussed in numerous references (e. g., Sage et al. 1913; B-L 21:399, 416, 1919; B-L 22:395-396, 1920; Clark 1932; MFN 1973). In recent decades thousands of pen-reared birds have annually been stocked in the state. Eggs found in 1991 in Chaplin (and now in UCMNH) indicate that at least a few birds still breed, although the amount of habitat for pheasants has decreased in the state in recent decades with reduction in agriculture and increase in woodlands.

Golden Pheasant (*Chrysolophus pictus*)

The presence of this species in the wild in Connecticut is documented by a UCMNH photograph of a male in Storrs on 16 November 1987.

Common Peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*)

Presence of this species in the wild in Connecticut is documented by a photograph at UCMNH of a male in Wilton in the spring of 1985.

Helmeted Guinea Fowl (*Numida meleagris*)

This species was mentioned by Linsley (1843), but apparently no details are available on its past status in the state.

Lesser Golden Plover (*Pluvialis dominica*)

An individual of this species hatched in captivity escaped in Storrs in 1969 and was seen in the wild but not recaptured.

Rock Dove (*Columba livia*)

Br. Feral populations of this European species have long been established in the state (Linsley 1943, Zeranski and Baptist 1990).

Budgerigar (*Melopsittacus undulatus*)

Escapes of this species, originally brought from Australia but now often captive bred in the U.S., have appeared throughout the state

(MFN December 1974:3; CW 7:51, 1986).

Senegal Parrot (*Poicephalus senegalus*)

An individual of this species survived for most of one year in Fairfield County (CW 9: 11, 1989).

Rose-ringed Parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*)

A specimen of this Old World species was shot in a garden in Harwinton in June 1974 and is now at UCMNH. The species has also been seen in Cos Cob (MFN 2 (12)3, December 1974). A bird was reported to be present in Woodbury for some months (Audubon Afield, Winter 1984 issue, section on West Central Connecticut). This species has a reputation for being particularly destructive to cultivated crops (Forshaw 1978).

Blue-crowned Conure (*Aratinga acuticauda*)

Six were reported at Milford Point in late August 1986 (CW 7:25, 1987).

Black-hooded Parakeet (*Nandayus nenday*)

FBr. (CW 9:11, 1989; AB 43: 450,1989). This species has been reported from widely separated localities within the state (AB 43:450, 1989; CW 9:11, 24, 1989).

Monk Parakeet (*Myiopsitta monachus*)

Br. A Connecticut specimen from 1973 is at YPM. This species, native to temperate regions of South America, has fared better than any other of the parrots in Connecticut, and populations in this state are still expanding (AB 25:839, 1971; MFN 1973:2; AB 31:273-278, 1977; AB 42:229,1270,1988; AB 43:450, 1989; AB 44:530-533, 1990; CW 9:45, 1989; CW 10:77, 1990; Birding 7:76, 1975). In view of its reputation as a destructive pest to agriculture (Forshaw 1978), growth of the Connecticut population may eventually lead to crop damage.

Canary-winged Parrot (*Brotogeris versicolurus*)

Bull (1973) reported this species from southeastern Connecticut.

Red-crowned Parrot (*Amazona veridigenalis*)

Reports from Fairfield County appeared in the 1970s (MFN 2 (12) 3, December 1974 ; MFN 4(9)4, October 1976).

Yellow-headed Parrot (*Amazona ochrocephala*)

This species has been reported in Cos Cob (MFN 2(12):3, December 1974).

unidentified hornbill (*Tockus*) species?

A photograph taken of a dead bird lying on a roadside in Eastford in May 1983 showed a small hornbill with a reddish bill color.

Abyssinian Ground Hornbill (*Bucorvus abyssinicus*)

One was found alive in a field in Pomfret and brought to Storrs, where on 1 May 1966 I identified it in captivity; eventually the bird was returned to the finder.

European Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*)

This species has been reported once from Connecticut, in Cornwall (Birding 11:121, 1979).

Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*)

This species was represented by a specimen (Sage et al. 1913, Bull 1964) whose location is presently unknown, but there remains uncertainty as to whether the bird was genuinely wild or an escapee. Allen (1909) considered this bird to have been an escapee. By the time of its occurrence in 1878 there was already a brisk trade in cage birds (Oldys 1907)

Red-crested Cardinal (*Paroaria coronata*)

FBr (Peterson 1980:302). There has been at least one winter sighting (AFN 21:117, 1967).

Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*)

Br. Linsley (1843) reported this species which at that time in this state would have most likely been due to escapes. In the last 50 years this species has expanded its natural range to become a regular breeder throughout the state.

Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*)

Linsley (1843) knew of escaped birds in the state, but within the last decade there have been several records attributable to natural occurrence (Zeranski and Baptist 1990).

European Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*)

A specimen at UCMNH came from Hartford, but it is unclear from the label whether the specimen was taken in the wild. For many years there have been reports of birds in the wild in the state (Auk 9:301, 1892; AFN 6:240, 1952; AB 41:404, 1987; CW 9:94, 1989; CW 11:72, 1991). On file at UCMNH is a photograph of a bird in good condition that visited a feeder in Pomfret in December 1991-January 1992.

House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*)

Br. The history of this species in Connecticut has been reviewed by Bull (1964) and Zeranski and Baptist (1990).

Chestnut Munia (*Lonchura malacca*)

A sight record of this species was reported from Storrs, 17 October 1987 by William Gaunya and John McDonald. Another sight

record, almost certainly involving this species, was by Ken Koper in Storrs, 7 October 1991.

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)

Br. Barrows (1889) provided relatively great detail on the dates in the 1860s and 1870s at which this species was first reported in different parts of the state.

European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*)

Br. Sage et al. (1913) traced the early history of the invasion of Connecticut by this species. Jones (1931) reported that this species had reached parts of northeastern Connecticut by at least 1914.

Hill Mynah (*Gracula religiosa*)

One has been reported from Cos Cob (MFN 2 (12) 3, December 1974).

Black-billed Magpie (*Pica pica*)

This species has been found in Connecticut on three separate occasions (AFN 8:9, 1954; AFN 11: 329-330, 1957; Connecticut Naturalist Oct.-Nov. 1973: 23; AB 28:31, 1974). Although the Yellow-billed Magpie (*Pica nuttalli*) has also been listed as having occurred in the state (e.g., CW 8:23, 1988), I have been unable to locate any primary source to support that contention.

Jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*)

The occurrence of a bird of this species in West Haven in February-March 1988 has been well documented (AB 42:193, 230, 1988); however, the source of the bird has still not been unequivocally determined. It might have come across the Atlantic by ship, as is known to have occurred for birds found in Quebec; alternatively the bird might have escaped from captivity.

Chough (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*)

This European species is most unlikely to have crossed the Atlantic on its own, and the bird found in Newtown in November-December 1988 is presumed to have been an escapee (AB 42: 237, 410, 1988; CW 8: 66, 87, 1988; CW 9:24, 1989).

Cuban Crow (*Corvus nasicus*)

A second-hand report mentioned the occurrence of this species near New Haven (Birding 16:173, 1984).

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MANAGEMENT OF THICKETS FOR YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT

Thomas B. Ford

Abstract

The thickets around Haley Farm State Park, Groton, are the only sites in southeastern Connecticut in which Yellow-breasted Chats were found consistently during the breeding season in Connecticut from 1986 to 1990. Spot mapping was used to census chat territories, and vegetation surveys were completed on these territories to determine the characteristics of chat habitat. Two thickets that had chat territories were dominated by Oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*) and had an average height of 1.3 m. Standardized surveys were conducted at other reported chat locations in southeastern Connecticut using a recording of the chat song. This survey yielded an unmated territorial male just outside the park in 1990. No chats were found at the park the following year. A breeding female was discovered in Stonington in 1991. A single male chat was seen in a Niantic powerline right-of-way in 1990 and 1991. The chances of establishing a breeding population of chats in the thickets in and around Haley Farm State Park would increase if trees within the thickets were eliminated and a thicket height of 1-2 m. maintained.

Introduction:

From the latter half of the 19th century through the first four decades of the 20th century, the Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*) was reportedly a common summer resident in Connecticut and other parts of southern New England (Merriam 1877; Sage et al. 1913; Forbush 1929; Cruickshank 1942).

Forbush (1929) noted that chats were then most numerous in coastal Connecticut and Rhode Island.

In the past 30 years, however, chat populations have decreased because much of the preferred habitat,



Nicola Kohut

shrub thicket, has matured into forest or has been lost to housing developments. Niering (1958) reported that chats were infrequent in summer at the Connecticut Arboretum in New London. Bull (1974) stated that the chat was only a local breeder on the coast in New York State. Spear (1976) reported progressively fewer sightings and breeding records of chats in Vermont, which is considered the northern border of the chat's range (Laughlin and Kibbe 1985). Robbins et al. (1986) reported a significant decrease in the chat population between 1965 and 1979 not only in New England, but throughout the eastern United States. In 1987 the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management placed the Yellow-breasted Chat on its state endangered species list (Rick Uneser, personal comm.).

Currently, the Yellow-breasted Chat is considered rare in Connecticut; the last confirmed breeding record was in Greenwich in 1985, although chats have been reported in Old Lyme, Groton, Stonington and Waterford during the past ten years (Zeranski and Baptist 1990). It was proposed for endangered status in Connecticut in 1991 (Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection).

Haley Farm State Park, Groton, is one of the few protected tracts of land in Connecticut that includes extensive thickets. In 1986, three chats (two males and one female) were reported from the Briggs' and O&G properties bordering Haley Farm State Park (Shannon McNew, personal comm.). Chats have been reported at this location every summer from 1986 to 1990 (Robert Askins, personal comm.). This study was initiated to determine how the thickets in and around Haley Farm State Park can be managed to maintain a population of Yellow-breasted Chats and to determine whether the species may be present in other southeast Connecticut coastal locations.

Methods:

A census was taken of Yellow-breasted Chat territories in the thickets and in areas bordering Haley Farm State Park. The three areas I studied were each 1 to 2 ha. in size and were bordered by open fields or deciduous forest. The spot-mapping technique (Hall 1964) and visual observation three to four times a week were used to delimit territories and singing perches. Male chats sing and also perform flight displays over their territories (Bent 1953), which help in mapping their positions. I also sought to determine the number of males which had mates and the number of young that fledged successfully. Female chats can be identified by their gray eyestripe in contrast to the male's black eyestripe, and young can be located by the "clucking" notes given from the nest (Dennis 1958).

The vegetation of the thickets was studied by superimposing a grid on a map of the thicket, with coordinates chosen from a random number table. A Ranging 620 range finder was used to determine the location of random points with reference to thicket edges. A tape was then rolled out 10 meters west of each random point. The line intercept method was used to sample vegetation (Brower and Zar). The length that each plant species in the shrub layer intercepted above and below the tape measure was recorded. The frequency and coverage of species were then calculated using equations in Brower and Zar (1984). Also, the maximum height of the vegetation was determined every two meters along each 10-meter transect.

In determining whether the Haley Farm chat population was an isolated population or one of several in the region, surveys were conducted at the following southeastern Connecticut locations where chats had been reported during prior summers: Bluff Point Coastal Preserve, Barn Island Wildlife Management Area, Old Mystic, and Waterford. The Old Mystic thicket was one mile east of Rt. 27 on Pequot Trail Road; the Waterford thicket was on a powerline north of Millstone Nuclear Powerplant near Rt. 157. A tape recording of the chat song was used at each of these locations. The auditory range of the recording was approximately 70 meters. Therefore, in order to detect chat territories, the recording was played every 100 meters for two minutes at each station, and then shut off for 30 seconds before moving to the next station. This allowed enough time for a chat to respond to the recording.

Results:

One chat territory was found in a thicket near the western border of Haley Farm State Park. The territory roughly encompassed the entire thicket within the property of Bowen Briggs. The male chat occupying this territory was observed from May 29 to July 14. Extensive searches of the territory revealed no evidence of a mate or nest. No chat was found in the thicket south of the Briggs' thicket (O&G property). In a previous 1986 study, two territories were found within the Briggs' and O&G properties (Shannon McNew, personal comm.). In 1991, no chats were found in the thickets and surrounding Haley Farm.

A female chat with a nest and fledgling was observed in a 1 to 2 ha. thicket in Stonington, from July 10 to July 22, 1991. The nest was located approximately 1 meter above the ground in a small clump of Oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*) surrounded by goldenrod (*Solidago rugosa*). A male chat was seen in the thicket earlier in the breeding season (Margaret Philbrick, personal comm.), but was not detected during the observation period.

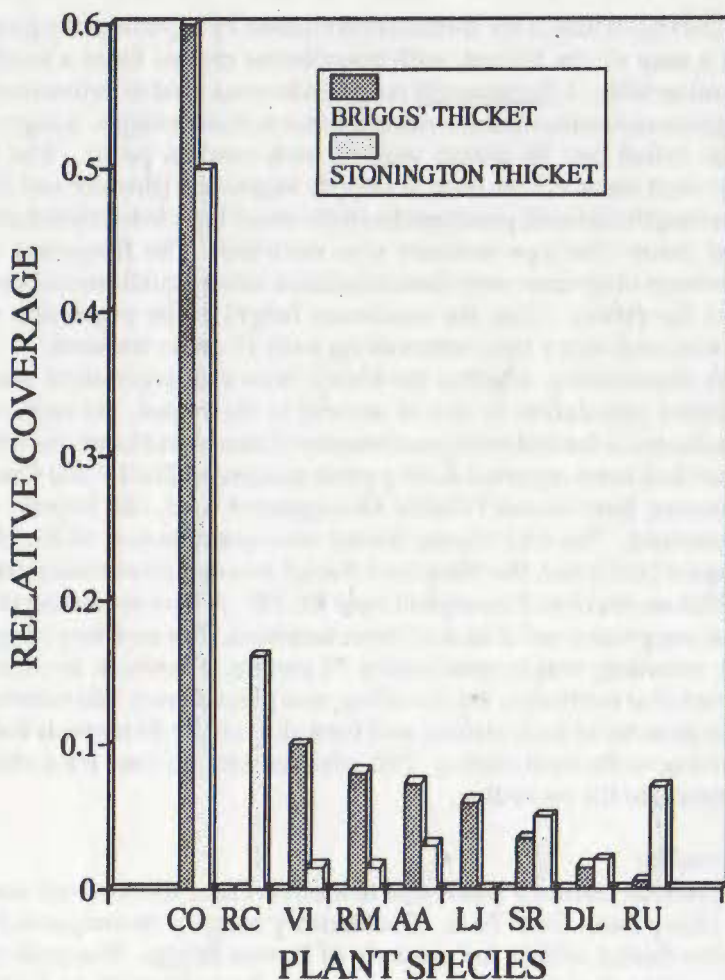


Figure 1. Relative coverage of dominant plant species in the Briggs' thicket west of Haley Farm and the Stonington thicket. Relative coverage equals the sum of the intercept lengths for all plots for a species divided by the sum of the intercept lengths for all species (Bower and Zar 1984). The following plant species are represented in the graph: Oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*; CO), winged sumac (*Rhus copallina*; RC), arrow-wood (*Viburnum recognitum*; VI), multi-flora rose (*Rosa multiflora*; RM), redtop (*Agrostis alba*; AA), Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*; LJ), goldenrod (*Solidago rugosa*; SR), bush honeysuckle (*Diervilla Lonicera*; DL), raspberry (*Rubus* sp.; RU).

The Briggs' thicket was dominated by Oriental bittersweet, arrowwood (*Viburnum recognitum*), and multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*); the Stonington thicket by Oriental bittersweet, winged sumac (*Rhus copallina*) and raspberry (*Rubus* sp.) (Figure 1). The average height of the two thickets was 1.3 meters for the Briggs' property (SD=0.9, n=50) and 1.2 meters for the Stonington site (SD=0.4, n=50) (Figure 2). Trees on the edges of the thicket and vines hanging from the canopy were frequently used as singing perches by the male chat. Contrary to previous descriptions (Dennis 1958), the chat rarely used trees inside the thicket for singing.

Investigations of other likely chat nesting sites in southeastern Connecticut yielded one other territorial male at a powerline in Waterford (observed July 7-10, 1990). This male chat left before it could be determined whether it was mated and had offspring. A male chat was seen in the same powerline right-of-way in 1991 (Bruce Dasinger, personal comm.). Previously reported chats could not be located at Bluff Point Coastal Preserve, Barn Island Wildlife Management Area, or Old Mystic. Moreover, according to Ed Horning of Fisher's Island, New York, chats have not been seen on the island during the breeding season since 1988, and breeding has not been confirmed since 1983.

Discussion:

The last reported sightings of Yellow-breasted Chat from Bluff Point Coastal Preserve, Barn Island Wildlife Management Area, and the Old Mystic site were 1975 (Connecticut Natural Diversity Database), 1986 (Shannon McNew, personal comm.), and 1988 (Margaret Philbrick, personal comm.), respectively. The Waterford powerline site reportedly had two chats in 1987 and 1988 (Robert Dewire, personal comm.), but only one in 1990. In addition, chats were not recorded at the Stonington site before 1991. Thus, Haley Farm State Park is the only location in southeastern Connecticut in which chats have been consistently reported during the breeding season since 1985.

Although the male chat observed there in 1990 was unmated, and despite the absence of chats in 1991, the protection of the Briggs' and O&G properties would increase the probability of establishing a chat breeding population at Haley Farm. In Indiana Thompson and Nolan (1973) reported that 50-100% of the occupied chat territories in their study plot were occupied by breeding males as opposed to non-breeding males. The possibility of breeding in the Briggs' and/or O&G thickets in the future is high, considering the consistent reports of chat territories in these thickets over the past five years. Thompson

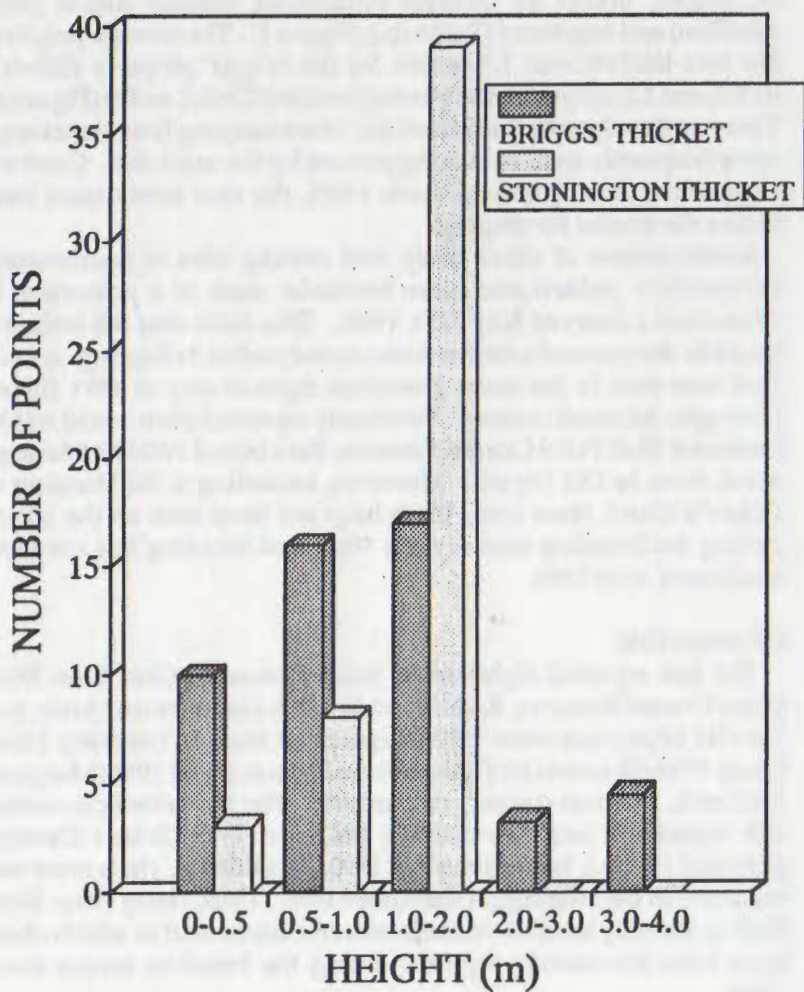


Figure 2. Maximum height of vegetation along transects in the Briggs' thicket west of Haley Farm State Park and the Stonington thicket. Points are the sites at which maximum height was measured every 2 meters along each of the transects.

and Nolan (1973) reported a 14-19% return rate of breeding and non-breeding males in typical chat habitat, but noted that the abandoned territories were occupied by new males each year. The high percentage of males settling in new territories each year would further increase the chances of a breeding pair establishing a territory in the Briggs' and/or O&G thickets. A successful breeding pair would increase the feasibility of enlarging the chat population if additional chat habitat were created in Haley Farm State Park.

The elimination of tree species from these thickets would prevent succession to secondary forest. The chat observed in 1990 only used trees along the stone wall and on the edge of the thicket as singing posts. These trees and others along the edge of the O&G thicket should be maintained as singing perches for future territories, but trees should not be allowed to invade the thicket.

Shrubby areas within Haley Farm could be managed to create additional chat habitat. As with the Briggs' and O&G thickets, mature sapling trees should be removed from these areas. Secondary walking paths within these areas should be eliminated to create a continuous thicket. In addition, the two principal thickets could be combined by the elimination of an island of trees separating them. Dennis (1958) noted that chats apparently prefer thickets of three acres or more.

The occurrence of chats in the Waterford powerline right-of-way in 1987, 1988, 1990 and 1991 may indicate that powerlines are an important refuge for chats during the summer. Management of thickets within powerlines in southeastern Connecticut could provide breeding habitat for chats.

The management plan recommended has focused on the long-term establishment of a chat population in and around Haley Farm State Park, a key link in the effort to maintain breeding chats in southeastern Connecticut.

Acknowledgments

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CORRECTION:

In the "Field Notes - Fall 1991", CW 12 - 2, page 77, the date for Arctic Terns should read August 20.

CONNECTICUT'S MONK PARAKEET COLONIES

Arnold Devine¹ and Dwight G. Smith²

A visit to one of Connecticut's Monk Parakeet (*Myopsitta monachus*) colonies makes for an interesting field trip and illustrates the adaptability of an alien species within the state. In this site guide we will provide directions and general information regarding two of Connecticut's Monk Parakeet colonies. Additional detailed information on species ecology and dispersal is presented in another article in this issue of *The Connecticut Warbler*.

Connecticut's original Monk Parakeet colony dates from the mid 1970's. Stories differ as to its origin. In one version, the progenitors were escaped birds from a transportation crate; in another version they were intentionally released in the general area where the colony now exists. There is also a possibility that the original birds dispersed from still earlier colonies in the New York City area or New Jersey during the late 1960's; these colonies were subsequently eradicated by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. Whichever the case, the long history of the Monk Parakeet in Connecticut provides a basis for its listing as a state species.

The Monk Parakeet is a native of the temperate regions of Latin America. There, its range extends from Bolivia southward through Brazil into Paraguay, Uruguay and Argentina. The first wild record of the Monk Parakeet in North America was in 1967. By the mid 1970's however, Monk Parakeets were found on both the East and West Coasts and in several inland states. Several of these colonies were later destroyed, hence the Connecticut colonies are unique and should be preserved, in the opinion of the authors.

In Connecticut the Monk Parakeet is associated with human modified habitats, parks and suburban lawns. In its native Latin America this psittacine occurs in farmland, orchards, palm orchards and upland woodlands. More remote habitats that may be occupied include riverine woodland and acacia scrub.

Directions: Main Colony

The main colony is found in Bridgeport, near St. Mary's-by-the-Sea. From Interstate 95 southbound take Exit 25. At the bottom of the ramp turn left onto Fairfield Avenue. At the third light (about 0.6 miles) turn left on Brewster Street. Follow Brewster Street to the stop sign and turn right on Grovers Street. Take Grovers Street 0.2 miles to Old

Battery Road on right (white gate identifies road). Follow Old Battery Road up and over the hill and take the second left. On your left, approximately 200 meters down the road are two large trees, a tall ornamental fir (*Abies* sp.) and an equally magnificent Purple European Beech (*Fagus sylvatica atropunicea*). The main colony resides in the fir along the roadside.

Directions: University of Bridgeport Campus Colony

From Interstate 95 take Exit 27. Follow Lafayette Avenue about 0.5 miles south (Lafayette Ave. is one-way heading south) to its junction with Waldemere Street and turn right. At the second stop sign, about 0.35 miles, Waldemere Street junctions with Iranistan Street. Take a right on Iranistan Street, go one block and take a right on Ingleside Street. Ingleside Street is one block long, terminating on Linden Avenue. At the corner of Ingleside and Linden the colony is to your immediate right, in the row of four tall White Pines (*Pinus strobus*). When leaving this colony the best way to return to I-95 is to follow Linden Avenue two blocks to Park Avenue, turn left and follow Park Avenue to the highway.

Warning: Use the utmost birding etiquette when approaching or visiting the colonies. Please be courteous to residents and considerate of private property. Do not walk on the lawns or driveways. Be forewarned that some residents are unhappy with strangers (birders and observers) in the neighborhood of the main colony. These individuals have apparently complained and want the colony eradicated.

Locating the Birds:

Monk Parakeets are easy to identify: In flight the silhouette looks similar to a Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*) in size and shape; being slender with a long pointed tail. Unlike a Mourning Dove, however, the parakeet appears large-headed. Once perched the diagnostic parrot-like profile with bright green upperparts, gray breast and face, yellow to tan belly and blue primaries, is unmistakable.

Generally it is easy to find the parakeets. The noise and activity at the main colony will be immediately evident as the birds attend the nest. Another sure way to find the parakeet is to look for the elaborate nest structure. The nest is a bulky structure comprised of numerous intertwined sticks and twigs. Interestingly, single nests may quickly become communal structures with multiple chambers that are accessed by the parakeets from the bottom or sides. During fall and

winter months the bulky structures are utilized as roost sites. Maintenance of this fascinating nesting structure is a full time occupation and you will undoubtedly observe many parakeets carrying in 12 to 18 inch long twigs or vines to embellish the nests.

Approximately 40 pairs of Monk Parakeets occupy nesting sites at the main colony. One large nest contains seven or eight pairs of birds with each pair residing in a separate chamber. Most of the other nests at this colony site are small, accommodating two to four pairs of parakeets. At the University of Bridgeport colony, the first white pine contains the greatest number of nests, about six, of which the lowest are the largest. Smaller nests exist in two of the other white pines. This colony is quite small (about eight pairs) compared to the main colony and you may have to wait a while to obtain a glimpse of Monk Parakeets traveling back and forth. The Monk Parakeets do forage over several blocks and are fairly well known on the Bridgeport campus.

Adjacent Birding Areas:

While visiting the main colony, take time to bird Long Island Sound from St. Mary's-by-the-Sea and the adjacent estuarine habitat along Ash Creek. While at the University of Bridgeport colony site, take time to search Seaside Park and its beaches along the Sound and Bridgeport Harbor. Over the years a variety of seabirds, waterfowl, gulls and raptors have occurred in these locales. Over 1,000 Brant were seen offshore at St. Mary's-by-the-Sea this past spring.

These adjacent areas are best birded from fall to spring; in summer there are more people than birds. For detailed birding information and directions to these sites refer to *The Connecticut Warbler*, Volume XI No. 3, pages 89-90, *Site Guide: The Southwestern Connecticut Shoreline* (Mantlik, 1991).

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MONK PARAKEETS IN BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT

Alison Olivieri¹ and Linda Pearson²

INTRODUCTION

For approximately 15 years, a colony of Monk Parakeets, *Myiopsitta monachus*, has existed in a residential neighborhood in Bridgeport, Connecticut, near the coast of Long Island Sound. Regarded as something of an oddity by the local birding community, it is always possible to surprise out-of-towners by casually mentioning the parrot colony. If all else fails during a winter day afield, one can count on bright flashes of green and entertaining squawks against the panoramic backdrop of the Sound.

Reviewing Christmas Bird Count data (Westport Count), it is evident that the population is increasing and, recently, new nest sites have been found by local birders. Milan Bull, regional director of The Connecticut Audubon Society's Fairfield Nature Center, had for some time wanted to initiate a study. A research project was begun in January, 1991, with two volunteer bird banders for CAS, Alison Olivieri and Linda Pearson. In the spring of 1992, David Wright, an ornithological docent at the Beardsley Zoo in Bridgeport, joined as an observer.

This report will summarize preliminary results of observations on numbers and distribution of Monk Parakeets in Connecticut, foraging habits and other behaviors. At the present time, nearly 200 birds and approximately 40 nests are located in one tree (*Abies* sp.) on private property. In 18 months of study, 10 new nest sites elsewhere in the state have been confirmed and three are pending confirmation.

BACKGROUND

The natural distribution of Monk Parakeets is widespread throughout southern South America from central Bolivia and southern Brazil south to central Argentina, including Paraguay and Uruguay. Forshaw (1973) recognizes four subspecies: *monachus*, *calita*, *cotorra*, and *luchsi*. Commonly found near humans, Monk Parakeets are considered lowland birds, found in open forests, trees near water, savannah woodlands, dry scrubland, palm groves, farmland and orchards (Forshaw, 1973).

Approximately 12 inches in length, Monk Parakeets have gray foreheads and scaled gray breasts; the rest of the underparts are

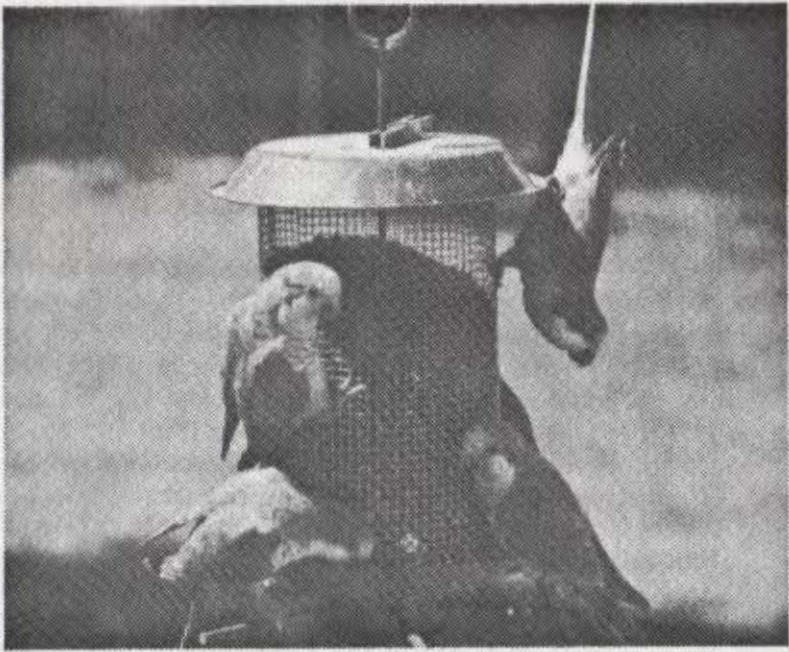


Photo by Bryant Northcutt

predominantly yellowish green; the neck, back and wings are green with dark blue primaries (seen only in flight); tail is blue-green; bill is beige; legs are gray; eyes are brown.

These small parrots are considered to be agricultural pests in their native lands, although there has been no objective evaluation of damage caused. Long (1981) gives 2%-15% crop loss but does not say where figures were obtained. It is probable that crop damage ascribed to Monk Parakeets is exaggerated by farmers and it is commonly associated with poor agricultural practices, i.e., crops left unharvested after ripening and plots with much open space and low plant density (Bucher, 1992). The birds are known to eat cereal and citrus crops, seeds, berries, fruits, nuts, leaf buds blossoms, insects and insect larvae; they have also been observed eating meat (Forshaw, 1973).

Although most parrots are cavity nesters, Monk Parakeets are unique among the more than 300 species in the family *Psittacidae* because they construct stick nests and nest colonially. These nests can become quite large and can be constructed with multiple compartments, each of which has its own entrance hole and is occupied by a family unit. The "apartments" do not connect and have only one opening; only one pair per compartment has been reported in the literature.

The birds forage in small (10) to large (100) flocks in South America. In Connecticut we have observed them leaving the main colony in small groups from one pair up to 14 birds. They fly quickly with rapid wingbeats and are usually seen flying low (15 to 20 feet) to the ground.

PREVIOUS STATUS IN THE EASTERN UNITED STATES AND CONNECTICUT

Throughout the early 1970's, Monk Parakeets were seen in New York (nesting was confirmed on Long Island), New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Ohio, Oklahoma, Florida and North Carolina (Terres, 1980). A popular cage bird, Monk Parakeets were brought into this country by the thousands in the late 1960's and early 1970's; in 1968 alone, 13,000 were imported (Bull, 1975).

Several theories account for the occurrence of this bird in the eastern U.S. The most often-repeated of these concerns a mishandled crate at JFK Airport on Long Island that inadvertently released about 100 birds into the Metropolitan area. The following are also considered viable theories, particularly in combination: an overturned truck on I-95 with the same results as above; pet store owners simply releasing birds they couldn't sell; local breeders doing the same; and finally, individual owners deliberately or accidentally releasing birds.

Contrary to popular opinion, the temperate zone winter does not pose much of a problem for this hardy species. Interiors of the large, bulky nests containing at least two birds apiece would be warm and the climate in the parakeets' native countries, although warmer, approaches that of the east coast.

In February 1973, documentation from the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection showed a count of 34 Monk Parakeets in this state: 15 in Stratford, four in Stamford and 15 in Bridgeport. In April of that year a memo from Wildlife Unit Chief Dennis DeCarli indicated the beginning of a joint venture with surrounding states (New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Massachusetts) to "retrieve" the birds. Subsequent memos listed sightings in the following locations: Granby, Manchester, Glastonbury, East Hartford, West Hartford, Hartford, New Britain and Newington.

A communication from John W. Peterson of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, dated April, 1974, reported 84 birds exterminated in New York State, nine in New Jersey, six in Virginia and five in Pennsylvania. Forty-three nests were observed in six northeastern states; 18 of these were destroyed. At that time, Long Island was the only location with confirmed reproductive success. Shooting was recommended as the most effective

method of removal; live trapping was considered time consuming but acceptable to the public. Damage to ornamental shrubs and trees, as well as vegetables and fruits was mentioned along with several counts of aggressive behavior toward Blue Jays and American Robins (Davis, 1974).

The removal program in Connecticut continued until at least 1976, according to a letter from O. E. Beckley, Supervisor of Wildlife Management. The letter, written to a Maryland researcher, said, in part, "We are anxious to eradicate this species whenever possible since we feel it is a potential threat. Inconsequential damage has resulted from these birds being here, to date, that we know of." After 1976, DEP officials may have lost interest in pursuing the extermination program or decided the program was successfully completed. There is no official policy on managing Monk Parakeets at the present time.

STUDY OBSERVATIONS: BRIDGEPORT COLONY

Census of Individuals and Nests:

The largest colony currently in Connecticut is one located in the Black Rock section of Bridgeport, where the highest reliable count was 186 individual birds (1990 Westport Christmas Count). During more than 200 hours of observation at or near that location, we have not seen more than 97 individuals at one time; however, the birds are difficult to count because it is apparent by vocalizations that some birds remain inside the nests at all times.

The main colony is located in one tree, a massively-branching exotic evergreen approximately 75 feet high (*Abies sp.*) in a residential neighborhood in southwestern Bridgeport, less than 100 meters from the coast of Long Island Sound. A nest census in that tree, done in February 1991, totaled 41 nests; however, this is in constant flux as new nests are continually being built and older, larger nests tend to lose parts (thus changing shape) in severe storms. The largest nest had at least seven entrance holes at that time while new nests only have one. Most of the nests had a minimum of two entries.

The parrots constantly repair, maintain and build nests. At any time of year they can be seen flying in to the main colony carrying sticks. We have observed two parrots sitting in the entrance hole with a third adding sticks. Up to five parrots at a time have been observed at the mouth of an entrance.

Following a severe wind and rain storm in March of 1991, we obtained a large piece of a nest that was subsequently examined by Lauren Brown, a botanist for the Connecticut Audubon Society. It

was found to contain the following: Black Cherry, Forsythia, Norway Maple, Ash and an ornamental cherry.

All confirmed Monk Parakeet nests found in Connecticut during this study occur in evergreen trees and all but one are in coastal locations. The exception is a few miles north of I-95 in a commercial section of Fairfield.

In 1991, six nest sites were found that were not part of the main colony. Four sites with one nest each include Branford (three birds); Bridgeport (14 birds); Southport (four birds); and the above-mentioned one in Fairfield (two birds). The remaining two sites, one on the University of Bridgeport campus (eight birds) and another in the Black Rock section of Bridgeport (four birds) have two nests each.

In May 1992, another site with two nests was confirmed in Norwalk. Reliable observers saw this nest being built in April; up to eight birds have been seen at that location.

In June 1992, two new sites were confirmed in Milford, one in a residential neighborhood near Milford Point with two nests and one near Gulf Pond with three nests.

In addition, two of the sites found in 1991 with only one nest - one in Bridgeport and the other in Fairfield - now have one additional nest each, built this spring. The location in Black Point with two nests in 1991 has six as of June 1992.

Other, newly-reported sites, as yet unconfirmed by study observers, include one each in Stratford, Westport and West Haven.

The closest colony comparable in size to Bridgeport's is in Warwick, Rhode Island. In the April 1991, issue of *Winging It*, published by the American Birding Association, Inc., the population was estimated at 150 birds, spread through several deciduous trees.

Foraging Range and Diet:

Through personal observation and reports from the birding public, we have constructed a map of the Bridgeport-Fairfield area showing some nest locations, feeding areas and sightings. The birds tend to remain near the coast and most of their foraging range appears to be in the direction of Fairfield beaches, southwest of the colony within a distance of about five miles. They fly out soon after sunrise in small flocks of two to 14 birds and seem to maintain these small flocks throughout the day, coming and going from the main colony.

At bird feeders, the parrots favor sunflower seeds but will accept "parrot mixes" from pet stores. We have seen them in the wild eat a variety of food including crabapples; leaf buds from birch, ash, maple and other trees; wild cherries; dandelion stalks; and grass. It has been suggested that they are eating small invertebrates in the grass which

certainly may be true; however, we have seen them ingest strands of grass like so much spaghetti. Other observers have reported the birds to be eating apples, pears, cherries and mulberries from fruiting trees. Finally, we have observed them with cones from the main nest tree, but at such a distance we could not determine whether they were actually eating the seeds.

An autopsy report on two dead birds found during the summer of 1991, from the Cooperative Extension Service, Storrs, did not include written comment on ingested matter although it had been requested. In a subsequent phone call, the veterinarian, Everett Bryant, said he found vegetative material "consistent with grass."

Search for Juveniles:

Cooperation by several pairs of parrots was observed in the spring of 1991. It is evident that the birds are breeding successfully because of the increase in population over the past 15 years and the new nest sites. Although neighborhood observers claim that the young parrots fledge around the first week in July, we were unable to confirm this assertion in the first year.

Forshaw (1973) states the immatures have a greenish (as opposed to grayish) cast to the forehead. We were unable to discern this characteristic in the field. After looking through 209 skins (including all subspecies) at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, it appeared to us that there were no discernible differences between sexes or between immatures and adults. However, it is possible there were no true juveniles among the collected birds from South America. One skin, collected in Long Island, was obviously immature in that it was about eight inches long (three-quarters the size of the other skins) and its rectrices were incomplete; other than these differences, it looked the similar to the adults.

Trapping and Marking:

In order to ascertain accurate foraging ranges for residents of the main colony and in hopes of recapture to assess ages of individual birds, we decided to undertake a trapping and marking program. In consultation with local ornithologists who have had experience with parrots (Noble Proctor, Southern Connecticut State University; Fred Sibley, Peabody Museum; and Steve Beissinger, Yale University), we decided to mark individuals on the breast with waterproof markers as suggested by the project director. Plastic color bands were ruled out as not being able to stand up to the Monk Parakeet bill; patagial markers were rejected due to possible injury from considerable allopreening (not to mention self preening); and the regular U.S. Fish

and Wildlife aluminum band numbers could not be read at a distance.

After trapping five birds at a feeder location near Fairfield Beach in the fall of 1991, we managed to mark two with indelible laundry pens. Not only did we not see them subsequently at the main colony, the property owner never saw them again at the feeders!

Local Predators:

At the trapping location, a back yard in a busy residential street, we noticed an abundant array of birds of prey during weekly visits for six weeks, including several sightings of Sharp-shinned Hawks, Red-tailed Hawks and at least one Cooper's Hawk. The property owner reported regular visits by at least one Northern Goshawk. All these species (except the Goshawk) have been observed at the main colony. In addition, a Great Horned Owl appeared at the colony during the 1991 Christmas Count. It is possible that an aggregation of parrots in any given location attracts these predators.

In April 1992, Great Horned Owls were observed nesting on top of the largest nest in the parrot colony. One young fledged from the nest and remained in the tree along with two adults as of late May. The Monk Parakeets paid very little attention to the three owls, except during an occasional crow mobbing session when crows, parrots and sometimes smaller songbirds like House Finches joined forces to harass the owls.

CONCLUSION

After more than 17 months of study, it is our opinion that the species *Myiopsitta monachus* may be considered "established" in Connecticut. This species has persisted in the state since at least 1973, and although human assistance is provided in the form of feeding stations, Monk Parakeets forage on local vegetation in the winter. Numbers would probably drop if sunflower and other seeds at feeders were to become unavailable; however, based on what we have seen them eat, we believe the species would survive.

The main colony appears to be thriving and other active nest sites continue to be discovered throughout the period of study, indicating that the population is spreading. Although it is speculated that one or more severe winters could reduce the number of these starter colonies (Milan Bull, pers. comm.), it is doubtful that the main colony would sustain serious losses provided winter food resources remain available.

These small, resilient birds are a source of constant curiosity and controversy. Emotions run high among the public. People who feed them or just watch them for pleasure are fervently pro-parrots.

However, for every 10 to 15 people who have contacted us in the past 17 months to talk about Monk Parakeets, there is one who is ready to shoot them all. Articles in local newspapers, including *The Bridgeport Post*, *The Hartford Courant* and *The Stamford Advocate*, appear three or four times a year and we have been approached by people talking about television documentaries.

Further study is needed to understand more about this introduced species, how they affect native songbirds and surrounding vegetation, their reproductive success or failure, new nest sites, winter food sources and diet in general.

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CONNECTICUT FIELD NOTES: DECEMBER 1, 1991 - FEBRUARY 29, 1992

Jay Kaplan

When the telephone rang on the evening of January 13th, the message was brief: "A Boreal Owl was found today in Middlebury." Similar phone calls echoed back and forth across the state for several days, as Connecticut's birding community was energized by the discovery of a species that, no doubt, ranks at the top of everyone's wish list. The owl remained for almost six weeks and was viewed by over 2,000 birders, some from as far away as North Carolina and Ohio. Most birders were very conscientious with respect to the needs of the owl, but this does not mean there were not problems. Obviously, certain activities can be considered detrimental to birds. Birders are always urged to use extreme caution and courtesy when attempting to view roosting or nesting species. Failure to do so may result in landowners refusing entry to their property, as has happened in other locations around the country. I'm sure all would agree that this would be unfortunate.

The Boreal Owl was found quite by accident, while the observers were looking for Saw-whet Owls. One wonders what other rarities may go undiscovered each season. Such species are not always found only by the "experts", so keep your eyes and ears open whenever you venture out into the field.

WEATHER

The best way to sum up the weather for the winter season is to describe it as "dull." There wasn't a single major storm, and temperatures were seasonal to mild. In Hartford, the mercury never fell below zero degrees Fahrenheit and rose above sixty on but one date. Precipitation was below normal in each of the three winter months. In December, there were 2.96 inches of precipitation, compared to a normal 4.16 inches. Temperatures went above 40°F on fifteen days but exceeded 60°F only once and dropped to single digits only December 8-9. In January, precipitation totalled 2.73 inches for the month, compared to a normal 3.53 inches, with 1.4 inches falling January 23. Temperatures barely reached 60°F in Hartford January 14, but there were no prolonged warm spells, and no "January thaw." The only really cold weather occurred January 16-20, when the overnight lows dipped into the single numbers. February also saw below normal precipitation (2.23 inches compared to a normal 3.19

inches) and, again, no snow! Temperatures remained mild, failing to rise above freezing on only three days and falling to single digits just three times during the entire month. One had to travel well into northern New England for any cold or snow!

WINTER FEEDER BIRD SURVEY

Only 15 reports were received for this year's winter bird survey, about one-third the number received in each of the past three years. It may be that we need to revamp the report form for this survey, or it may be that gathering information from winter feeders is not a high priority for many birders. The survey is now being evaluated, and it may or may not be continued in its present form. Participants who have ideas, suggestions, etc. are welcome to submit them. Of the fifteen respondents to this year's survey, eight maintained feeding stations in suburban areas, five in rural woodlands and two did not specify location. All respondents used sunflower seed, supplemented with the following foods, listed by relative usage: suet (12), thistle (11), mixed seeds (10), corn (3) and peanut hearts, fruit, mealworms and bread (1 each). Six stations also offered water.

A total of 32 bird species were reported at 11 of the feeding stations.

Four stations did not provide a list of the birds seen. Of the eleven stations reporting, only Dark-eyed Junco and House Finch were seen at all stations. Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse and American Goldfinch were seen at ten stations, while Mourning Dove and White-breasted Nuthatch were at nine. Downy Woodpecker, Northern Cardinal, White-throated Sparrow and Purple Finch were at eight stations, with Red-bellied Woodpecker and Blue Jay at seven, American Crow and Carolina Wren at six. Other species and the number of feeders at which they were seen were: Sharp-shinned Hawk (a secondary "benefit" of maintaining a feeding area), Starling and House Sparrow (5); Hairy Woodpecker and Song Sparrow (4); Brown Creeper, Tree Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird and Common Grackle (2); Cooper's Hawk, Rock Dove, Pileated Woodpecker, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Mockingbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Pine Siskin and Evening Grosbeak (1). It is unfortunate that this sample is so limited and therefore really not suitable for drawing conclusions with regard to winter feeding in Connecticut. However, one might note that Red-bellied Woodpecker and Carolina Wren are two species that have benefited greatly from a series of mild winters. Winter finches continue to be scarce, in contrast to American Goldfinches which were abundant as reported by numerous feeder watchers and field observers, with flocks in excess of 100 birds at some feeding stations.

LOONS THROUGH FALCONS

Red-throated Loons were plentiful along the coast this season (RSCB). A Red-necked Grebe was at Eastern Point, Groton, February 22 (DP). An Eared Grebe was at Stamford February 27-28 (BD,DP). Northern Gannets continued to linger in Long Island Sound following their fall invasion, with one off the Fairfield coast December 2 (CB), three off Harkness Memorial State Park, Waterford, December 8 (DP) and two off Branford January 2 (NP). There were numerous other unconfirmed reports of this species in the Sound this winter. An immature Great Cormorant, unusual inland, was at Coventry Lake, Storrs, December 14 (JMc), only the second winter record for the species in the Storrs area. A Least Bittern, very unusual in winter, was photographed at Otter Cove, Old Saybrook, January 18 (BK,GK). North Cove, Essex, hosted four Tundra Swans December 29 - February 23 (m.ob.), and it is assumed that these were the same swans that appeared briefly at Griswold Point February 16 (RSCB). Two swans flying south at Haddam Neck, February 15 (ES) were also most likely from this group. A Greater White-fronted Goose (Greenland race) was in Southbury December 24-27 (NC,RN et al.). There were sporadic reports of Snow Geese including two "blue phase" birds in Southbury (RN). A Barnacle

Goose in Southbury December 29 (NC,RN et al.) was assumed to be an escapee.

A Eurasian Wigeon was reported at Bridgeport's Seaside Park December 3 - January 2 and sporadically thereafter through February 19 (m.ob.). Another was in West Haven January 1-19 (JK,SM et al.). Canvasbacks were relatively scarce in southeast Connecticut (RSCB), with only a flock of 48 on the Thames River, New London January 18 (BK,GK). Canvasbacks numbered 100 at Sherwood Island State Park, Westport (hereafter SISP), February 23 (RSo). Redheads were at Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison (hereafter HBSP), December 6 (JK), at Smith Cove on the Thames River December 1 - mid-January (m.ob.), four birds on the Housatonic River, New Milford (m.ob.), and at West Haven February 22 (DP). A female Harlequin Duck was reported in Fairfield February 28 (CB). A male Barrow's Goldeneye returned to the upper Connecticut River for at least the fourth consecutive winter. It was seen irregularly in the Enfield area January 1-18 (CE et al.). Other Barrow's Goldeneye included single birds at SISP January 25 (RSo), at Stonington Point, Stonington, February 8 (DP), two males and a female at SISP February 26 (CB), at Griswold Point February 26 (RSCB) and at Bridgeport's Seaside Park February 27 (DP). Single Ruddy Ducks

were at Frash Pond, Stratford, January 1-3 (JK,SK,TM), on the Thames River, New London, January 18 (BK,GK) and February 7 and 22 (DP), and at North Farms Reservoir, Wallingford, February 15 and 22 (SM).

Mild weather was likely responsible for numerous Turkey Vulture reports from throughout the state this winter. Black Vultures were reported sporadically in the New Milford area (m.ob.). Bald Eagles were also frequent on the state's larger rivers - the Connecticut, Farmington and Housatonic - as well as around Barkhamsted and Nepaug Reservoirs in the northwest. Red-shouldered Hawks were well represented this winter with at least eight individual sightings including a pair at a nest site in Southbury, February 23 (RN). The only Rough-legged Hawk report came from Fairfield, December 30 (AO), where one was seen eyeing a feeding station. A Golden Eagle was in Canaan, December 2 (NC). American Kestrel reports may have increased slightly over past winters, but this may be due to the fact that field observers are paying closer attention to this possibly declining species. There were seven individual Merlin reports for the period and two for Peregrine Falcons including birds at Long Wharf, New Haven, January 10 (JB) and from Manchester January 29 (SK).

RAILS THROUGH PARAKEETS

Rails fared well in the mild winter. Virginia Rails were at Barn Island Wildlife Management Area, Stonington, December 19 (DP), at SISP January 19 (RSo) and at Otter Creek, Old Saybrook, January 12, where there was also a Sora (SM, et al.) (and where the Least Bittern was seen a week later). Five American Coots remained on the Thames River through the winter (RSCB). A Common Moorhen was sporadic during the first week of January in a Branford marsh (NP). A Sandhill Crane was in the Lyme area December 11 - January 2 (JH, NP), where it was photographed.

Five American Oystercatchers lingered at Avery Point, Groton, until at least December 6 (JK). Other notable shorebird reports included 23 Black-bellied Plovers at HBSP January 4 (SM), a Greater Yellowlegs at Merwin Point, Milford, January 19 (SM) and at Pequotsepos Cove, Mystic, January 29 (RSCB), and a Red Knot that apparently wintered at Harkness Memorial State Park, Waterford (m.ob.). There were also several reports of Common Snipe throughout the period.

Common Black-headed Gulls were at Fort Hale Park, New Haven, January 5 (RE) and at the South Cove in Old Saybrook February 28 (JK, DB). Also at the causeway on that date were 200 Bonaparte's Gulls (JK, DB). There

were numerous reports of Iceland Gulls from around the state including one in a West Hartford parking lot in late December (SF). The only Glaucous Gull reported was in West Haven February 27 (DP). Lesser Black-backed Gulls were at the New Milford landfill from January 15 through the end of the period (m.ob.), at Seaside Park, Bridgeport, January 16 (CB) and at Stevenson Dam, Oxford, February 16 (BD,DS).

It was a great winter for owls. A Snowy Owl on the Storrs campus of the University of Connecticut December 30 - January 5 (GC et al.) was the first record for the area since 1961. As many as five "Snowies" ranged the Milford/Stratford coastline December 26 - through the end of January (m.ob.) and another bird was at Bridgeport's Seaside Park December 3 - January 2 (CB). Long-eared Owls were reported in Bethel December 7 (SM), two in Southport, from January 20 through the end of the period (CB et al.), in Fairfield February 4-24 (CB et al.), and in North Guilford through much of February (SM et al.). Short-eared Owls were in Pine Creek Marsh, Fairfield, December 31 - January 6 (CB et al.) and at Durham Meadows, Durham, January 2 (NP). The "BIG OWL," of course, was the Boreal, discovered in Middlebury January 13 (BD). The bird, from its accumulated pellets, had obviously been roosting in a spruce grove for some time. The owl

remained until February 24, affording many the opportunity to observe this reclusive visitor from the northern forests, last reported from Connecticut in 1946 (Zeranski and Baptist 1990). Saw-whet Owls were in Storrs January 28 (MS), at Barn Island, Stonington January 30 (DP) and in Ellington February 26 (CE), and two or three were in Middlebury in proximity to the Boreal Owl February 2-23 (m.ob.).

The Monk Parakeet continues to expand along the southwest Connecticut shoreline with reports from several towns. It remains to be seen if action will be taken by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service against this species as it is potentially destructive to agriculture!

WOODPECKERS THROUGH GROSBEAKS

A Red-headed Woodpecker was in Mansfield January 8 (fide GC). Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were in Litchfield December 8-15 (EH,RN), in Hartford December 28 - January 1 (JK, TM et al.) and in Madison February 6 (JK, SF). A very early Tree Swallow was at Milford Point, Milford, February 23 (SF, RSc). Although the "early bird" gets the territory, the weather certainly is a factor in the survival rate of such early migrants (I'm betting this bird didn't make it). In addition to their traditional strongholds in the northwest and northeast, Common Ravens were reported in

Watertown February 7 (RN) and South Glastonbury February 13 (ES). There were fewer reports of Red-breasted Nuthatch this winter and primarily of single individuals. Meanwhile Carolina Wrens, without harsh winter conditions to contend with, were reported in ever-increasing numbers throughout the state (m.ob.). It was another good winter for Northern Shrikes, with birds at Pine Creek Marsh, Fairfield, December 12-21 (CB et al.), Cornwall December 18 (DP), Nod Brook Wildlife Management Area, Simsbury, December 26 through the period (JT et al.), and three at Durham Meadows, Durham, January 2-31 (m.ob.). A bird in Middlefield January 11 - February 23 may have been one of the Durham birds (m.ob.).

There were several winter warbler reports of interest. A Black-throated Green Warbler was in Storrs December 8-14 (MS), the first winter record for the area, while a Palm Warbler was at Jennings Beach, Fairfield January 9 (CB). Yellow-breasted Chats were in Milford December 26-January 1 (DR, RN) and in Madison, December 19 into mid-January (m.ob.). A Golden-crowned Sparrow was reported in Naugatuck State Forest, Naugatuck, on the Woodbury/Roxbury CBC December 15 (MS). The bird could not be relocated, but a report has been forwarded to the Connecticut Rare Records Committee and, if accepted,

would constitute a first record for this species in Connecticut. The only Lapland Longspur reported this winter was in Mansfield February 8 (LB). Snow Buntings were also in short supply with four in Storrs December 6 (MS). A flock of 65 frequented the Stratford-Milford shoreline (m.ob.).

A Northern Oriole spent much of the winter at a Suffield feeder (NE). A female Northern (Bullock's) Oriole came to a feeder in Branford, where it was photographed (NP) during the first two weeks of December. Once again, winter finches were in short supply in Connecticut. A single Red Crossbill was in East Hartland February 17 (DP), and three Common Redpolls were in Sherman January 1 (DR, RN). Pine Siskins were scarce except in the northwest corner where small flocks frequented feeding stations. While Siskins may have been scarce, American Goldfinch was abundant with flocks of 100 birds reported at feeders in New Hartford and elsewhere (m.ob.). Evening Grosbeaks were also scarce with but a few reports from northwest feeders. Twenty birds at a Cornwall feeder December 18 (DP) were the only significant flock reported.

Contributors (boldface) and Observers:

James Bair, Charles Barnard, Doug Beach, Louis Bevier, Andrew Brand, George Clark, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Neil Currie, Buzz Devine, David Doubleday,

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PHOTO CHALLENGE

Louis R. Bevier

Last issue's photo challenge was obviously a tern. The rather slender, pointed wings, a long and sharply pointed bill, and forked tail serve to eliminate the closely related gulls and the similarly shaped tropicbirds.

That much of the identification was easy; however, one is now faced with a list of rather similar birds, the black-capped terns of the genus *Sterna*. Within that group are some distinct species, but this is not one of those, showing the typical black cap, grayish upper wings, and white body. The first assessment needed is to determine whether this is one of the smaller sea terns or one of the few larger, crested terns. Looking at the rather thick neck and stout bill, one would correctly surmise that this is one of the larger terns even though the ragged portion of the rear crown is not apparent.

In the field, this might not be a difficult determination, although one should always be wary of first impressions of size, especially with white birds, which often appear large. Closer inspection of the bill shows that it is unmarked and even a bit pale at the tip. All of the smaller terns show some dark marking on the bill, although Arctic Tern (*S. paradisea*) may briefly attain an unmarked deep red bill during the breeding season. That species is eliminated by the lack of dark gray underparts, which would also be apparent in the breeding season, and the presence of a contrasting darker area on the outer primaries of the wing.

Clearly then, this is one of the crested terns with the likely contenders being Caspian Tern (*S. caspia*) and Royal Tern (*S. maxima*). Caspian Tern invariably has a black tip to the bill whereas Royal Tern only does for a brief period as a juvenile. However, bare part colors are hardly the most reliable characters, and this feature could be difficult to discern at times. Also disturbing is the presence of a mostly black cap with some white mottling on the forehead. Except for only a brief period in spring, Royal Tern shows a largely white head with only a

black strap extending around the back of the head.

As with most terns, the important character for identification is the pattern of dark on the wings. Caspian Tern shows a characteristic broad dark area on the underside of the primaries and comparatively uniform upper wings. Royal Tern has the reverse pattern, having contrasting dark areas on the outer primaries above and only a narrow black line on the underside. In



addition, the bill is too slender, the tail too deeply forked, and the white in the lores, the area between the bill and the forward bottom part of the black cap, much broader than found on Caspian Tern. In life, the deeper red color to the bill of that species would also be apparent.

Elegant Tern (*S. elegans*), which has occurred at least once on the east coast in Virginia, is very similar to our bird and the wing pattern is of little help in this case. However, the bill shows an even taper to both mandibles, producing an almost dagger shape, whereas Elegant has a slim bill with a rather marked decurved upper mandible, producing a drooping tip. This Royal Tern

nearing the end of its molt to breeding plumage was photographed in February 1990 in Santa Barbara, California, by Louis Bevier. The Royal Tern is a rare visitor to Connecticut and New England typically in late summer and early fall, to coastal areas such as Milford Point and the mouth of the Connecticut River. Verified spring occurrences are virtually unknown in New England, and the plumage shown by this bird would be exceedingly unlikely to appear in our area. Season of occurrence and the expected plumage for time of year are important considerations when attempting to identify rarities.

P.O. Box 665, Storrs, CT 06268

PHOTO CHALLENGE

With this issue of *The Connecticut Warbler* we continue our *Photo Challenge*. Below is an unidentified photograph of a bird species that has occurred in northeastern North America. An emphasis is placed on species of regular occurrence in Connecticut and on confusing species or plumages which create an identification challenge. A detailed explanation of this Photo Challenge will appear in the next issue.



Photo Challenge 2. Identify the species.

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 PC 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. Good quality photographs of particular interest will also be considered. 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.

Summer 1992

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July 1992

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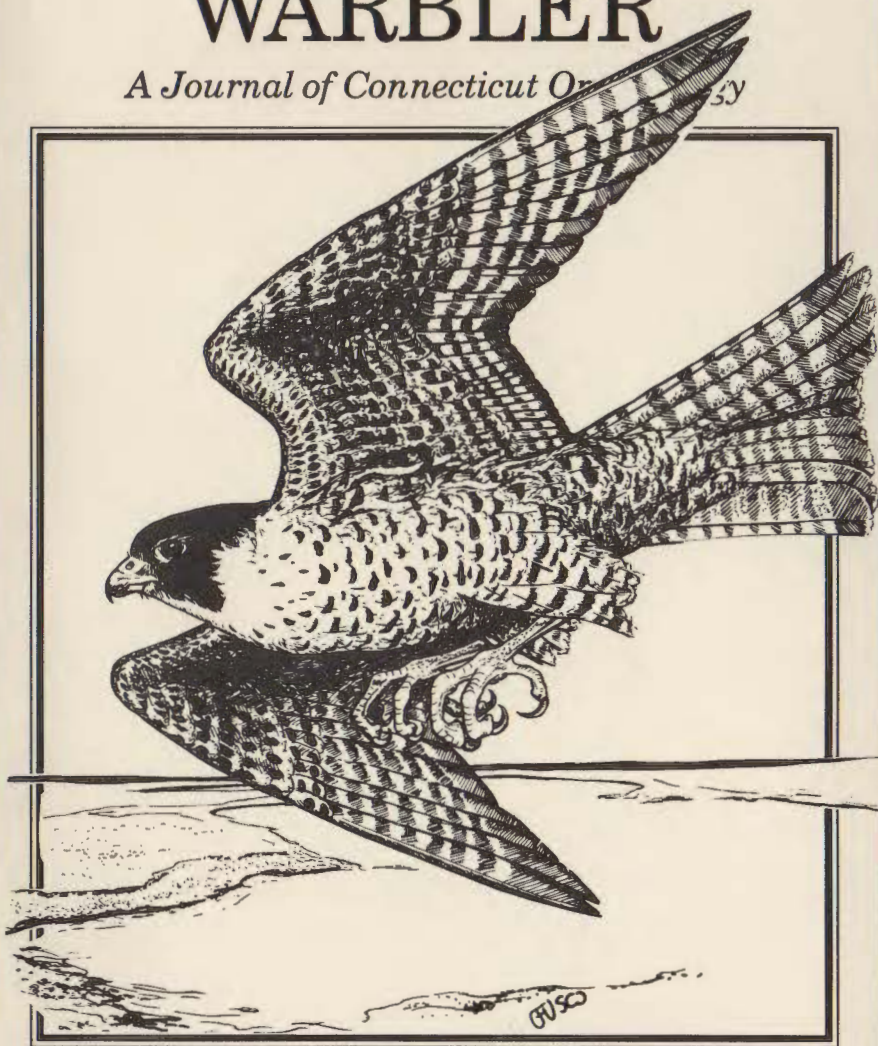
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ABOUT OUR COVER ARTIST

Paul J. Fusco

"Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)"

Paul Fusco has been a graphic designer for the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection's Wildlife Division since 1988. He is involved in media production including illustration, photography and graphic arts in the Division's Public Awareness Program.

Paul is a 1980 graduate from the University of Maine with a degree in art and with special studies in photography and environmental science. Wildlife science and ornithology, in particular, have always been of interest to him. You may see more of Paul's illustrative work in the Wildlife Division's bimonthly publication *SCOPE*.

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

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October 1992

BALD EAGLES SUCCESSFULLY NEST IN CONNECTICUT IN 1992

Donald A. Hopkins

The Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) was last known to nest in Connecticut in the late 1950's (Grier et al. 1983). Thereafter the species was not reported in the state during the breeding season until 1975, after which non-breeding Bald Eagles were in the area through 1988 (Hopkins 1990).

Study Area and Methods

The study area in the Upper Farming River Watershed has previously been described in detail (Hopkins 1990). The procedure was to search a series of transects along the shorelines of the Farmington River and associated reservoirs. A summary of Bald Eagle sights has already been reported for the period 1975 through 1988 (Hopkins 1990). Continuing as in past years, observations were made year round for 1989, 1990 and 1991 and through the summer of 1992. Eagles once found were observed to determine their behavior.

Results and Discussion

The first indication of breeding activity came on March 18, 1990, when a pair of Bald Eagles engaged in an aerial display over Barkhamsted Reservoir. On April 21 the pair was seen perched and billing in a large white pine (*Pinus strobus*) 83 cm dbh, 38 m high and 61 m from the shore of the reservoir. By April 28th enough sticks had been placed in this tree to make the nest visible from the ground. On April 29 the eagles were seen copulating, after which the female returned to the nest tree. On May 6th the male eagle again attempted to copulate, but the female was not receptive. By May 19th the nest, which was poorly constructed, had been blown out of the tree in a rain storm.

The paired eagles can best be described as young birds. Using the latest analysis (McCullough 1989), the male bird appeared to be completing its fourth year while the female appeared to be completing

its third year in 1990. Both birds had United States Fish and Wildlife bands on the right leg, and this was the first time that banded eagles had been observed in this area during the summer months. Throughout the summer and until October of that year, the eagles regularly visited the nest tree and were often seen sitting together either in the same tree or on the same limb.

In 1991, the paired eagles were seen billinging on January 5th. Through the year they regularly visited the nest, occasionally adding nesting material. On April 28th the pair was seen copulating (E. S. Mitchell pers. comm.). The pair was observed perched together on twenty days, from January through August. The paired eagles remained together for two years, despite the failure of their nesting attempts. At no time were the birds found incubating in the nest. Perhaps no eggs were laid because copulation occurred in late April rather than late March, which would be a normal time for such activity. Their failure might have been due to the immaturity of the pair (Stalmaster 1987).

Throughout the winter of 1991-1992, the pair remained together. They perched together and even defended territory over a winter kill at nearby Nepaug Reservoir in New Hartford. The first sign of incubation was observed on April 5, 1992. By May 10 a change had occurred; the adults were taking longer to exchange positions at the nest, indicating that an egg had hatched. The first nestling was not seen until May 24th, and on June 7th a second nestling was observed. On June 19th, under the direction of the Department of Environmental Protection, banding of the nestlings took place. Based upon bill measurements (length of 43.1 and 45.3 mm and depth of 25.3 and 31.8 mm, respectively), it is assumed that one of the nestlings was a male and the other a female (Bortolotti 1984). Fledging of the two chicks was observed on July 26 and July 27.

The change at Barkhamsted Reservoir from an area hosting non-breeding eagles to one supporting nesting birds was to be anticipated following the occupation of prime nesting habitat to the north of Connecticut (Hopkins 1990). Based upon the return of hatched eagles at Quabbin Reservoir in Massachusetts in the winter of 1990, it was predicted that the habitat to the north was becoming filled and that the eagles would begin to breed outside their natal area (W. J. Davis pers. comm.). The expansion of eagle breeding territory had already begun in New Hampshire in 1989, when Bald Eagles nested successfully for the first time in 40 years (Evans 1989). At the same time, a pair Bald Eagles attempted to nest on the Connecticut River in Gill, Massachusetts, but this pair was not successful until 1990. This trend continues with a new nesting attempt in 1992 on the Connecticut River in Northampton, Massachusetts. It would appear that the Bald Eagle recovery plan is showing signs of success in the northeast.

Bald Eagles Successfully Nest in Connecticut



Photo courtesy of CT D.E.P. / Wildlife Division

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank the following other members of the Bald Eagle Study Group who assisted in the many hours of field work: D. Scott Hopkins, Julia S. Hopkins, Mary Jane Hopkins, Seth Kellogg, Gerry S. Mersereau, E. Stuart Mitchell, Jan B. Mitchell and Joyce B. Welch. I also thank Julie Victoria of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection for her cooperation, and Leland E. Sanders of the Metropolitan District Commission for his assistance and cooperation in providing access to the study area. I would also like to thank all others, too numerous to name, who reported sightings of eagles in the study area.

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BOOK REVIEW

George A. Clark, Jr.

Ornithology Books in the Library of Trinity College, Hartford, including the Library of Ostrom Enders. Supplement. 1991. Published by Trinity College, Hartford, CT. pp. [1] - 51.

This paperback supplements a 1983 hardcover book that listed ornithological books and periodicals in the excellent collection at the libraries of Trinity College in Hartford. In the Introduction, Karen B. Clarke, Assistant Curator for the Ornithology Collection in the Trinity libraries, reports that this new Supplement lists additions made between April 1982 and January 1991, as well as other previously acquired books not included in the original volume. Among the newer acquisitions listed are certain major sound cassettes and videocassettes.

The Supplement is being distributed without cost to recipients of the original bibliography. For those who wish to purchase the original volume and the Supplement, both are now available from the Trinity College Library for \$35.00 (the price of the original volume). This represents an excellent value at a time when book prices have risen so much.

The Supplement retains the attractiveness of the original volume and is an important addition to the original bibliography. Any comprehensive ornithological library should have copies of both. Individuals who are frequent users of ornithological libraries may wish to have a personal set. Trinity College has been generous in allowing visitors with serious interests in ornithology access to this major collection. Consequently, bird enthusiasts in Connecticut and adjoining states may find these publications to be especially useful.

Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT 06269-3043.

THE 1992 SUMMER BIRD COUNT

Joseph Zeranski

Summer Bird Counts (SBCs) are alive and doing very well in Connecticut. The Connecticut Ornithological Association's second annual Summer Bird Count grew by three counts and many observers, and tallied a record number of species.

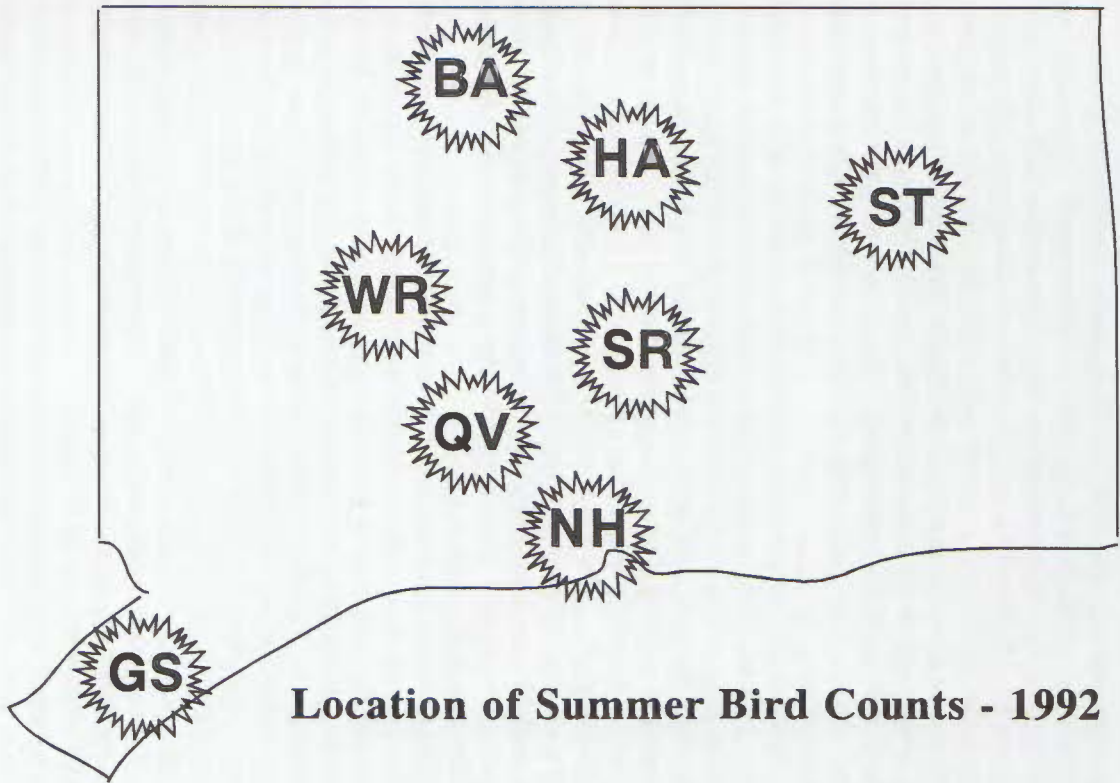
During count days (CD), 178 species and 79,861 individual birds were counted. Last year five SBCs were undertaken; Greenwich-Stamford (GS), Hartford (HA), New Haven (NH), Storrs (ST) and Woodbury-Roxbury (WR). This year, they were joined by Barkhamsted (BA), Quinnipiac Valley (QV) and Salmon River (SR).

One hundred and eighty-eight observers in 99 parties spent 962 party hours (PH) in the field. Compared to last year, the number of observers grew by 27%, PHs by 54%, individual birds 24%, and CD species 5%. This all reflects upon the growing popularity of SBCs, a testimonial to the fact that they are both enjoyable and provide a stimulating challenge for birders. Also contributing to their increase is the growing recognition of the importance of more accurately documenting nesting bird populations.

The 178 species may be categorized by frequency of occurrence and nesting status. Sixty-nine were seen on all eight counts, and another 20 were seen on all but one. Thus, 89 species (50% of all CD species) may be considered widespread summer residents, compared with 94 last year. Fifty-six species were reported on three to six counts and thus may be called fairly widespread residents or visitors. Another 55 were found on only one or two counts. Thirty-six of this group are very local or rare nesters, eight are summer vagrants, seven late migrants, and the remaining four, possible breeders.

One hundred and fifty-eight CD species are current or recent nesters, fifteen are late migrants or summer vagrants, while the remaining five are possible, but unproven, nesters. Eighteen species were seen this year but not last year. Twelve of these are local or geographically restricted nesters, three are late migrants, two summer vagrants and one is a possible nester. Seven species were never seen before on any SBC: Northern Pintail, American Coot, Willet, Roseate Tern, Barn Owl, Common Raven and Dark-eyed Junco. All but the first two are nesters.

Eleven CD species reported in 1991 were uncounted this year. All were non-breeders, with the exception of Seaside Sparrow, a local coastal nester, and Little Blue Heron, an irregular nester. Four of these species were seen during the count periods (CP) in 1992, however,



Location of Summer Bird Counts - 1992

and constituted one-half of the eight CP species noted.

The potential of a given count area is best reached by having as many competent observers in the field as possible. The well-established GS and WR fielded the most observers and produced the most PHs, individual birds and species. Second-year NH, with a strong Christmas Bird Count (CBC) tradition, was a close third. BA, HA, and ST had the next largest totals, while two new counts, QV and SR, are just getting their feet wet and together accounted for 11% of the field observers, 7% of the PHs, and 9% of the individual birds. QV and WR were each held during a single day, while the other six counts took place over a two-day period. It normally takes three or four years for a new count to become established, for its observers to become comfortable with the area, and to develop consistent summercensusing techniques. Gradually each count's characteristics become more distinctive.

This year SBCs were held on seven of the eight possible weekend days in June. Mid-June is a popular and most appropriate time for SBCs. It is a time when almost all migrant passerines have passed through the state and when most breeding species are on nesting territories and in full song. Nine of the 14 count days occurred on June 13 or 14. Nevertheless, having a sampling of counts throughout June can be helpful. The SBCs conducted before and after mid-month provide slightly different insights into the nesting season. The results of each SBC are most useful when they are gathered about the same period every year, preferably from the same locations by the same observers in the same ways.

The spring and summer of 1992 were characterized by much lower than normal temperatures and frequent rainy spells. By most accounts, this resulted in later nesting, perhaps by as much as two weeks. What effect the unfavorable weather had on nesting success is uncertain. Yet CD conditions seemed about normal. Most counts experienced seasonally typical sunny days with winds less than 10 mph. Nighttime temperatures were generally in the very high 50's, rising into the mid 80's by late afternoon. Some counts experienced high humidity, a couple saw brief thunderstorms, hot afternoons or both and drizzle was reported once. A noteworthy first for a SBC and an exciting experience for some birders in the field was a tornado which appeared on the BA June 27.

A majority of the SBCs are new or nearly new. Therefore, unlike CBCs, most SBC results cannot be compared to their own historic averages or extremes. Also it would be misleading and unfair to directly compare one count with another as each is distinctive in many respects. Three new SBCs were initiated this year and it is unknown

how many others may be started in 1993, or how many additional observers will be participating. These factors will certainly change the makeup of future totals. At this time broad generalizations and statistical comparisons are premature. Some insights can be arrived at and should be noted. In the following, traditional taxonomic order is used in singling out some of the more interesting, if not always significant, results.

Increasing strongly during the last decade, Double-crested Cormorants were present on every SBC, although 95% were coastal. A Great Egret was found inland in Southbury (WR), while seven Cattle Egrets, a local nester, and a Tricolored Heron, a possible nester, were seen in NH. Interestingly, individual Green-winged Teal, a species which has nested in nearby states, appeared on both GS and WR, and the WR one was apparently paired with a hen Mallard. Fifteen Common Mergansers, steadily increasing nesters along the Farmington and Housatonic River Valleys, were in WR, while 12 more were in BA.

The most exciting nesting event of the season was a pair of Bald Eagles tending two six-week-old chicks at Barkhamsted Reservoir. This was one of four pairs reported in southern New England (See "Bald Eagles Successfully Nest In Connecticut in 1992" in this issue). Northern Harrier, a possible breeder, was in QV, which also seems to be the nesting American Kestrel capital of Connecticut.

Six of the eight counts reported Wild Turkeys, 43 in all, reflecting their phenomenal growth in recent years. Among these was a hen with five young, perhaps the first nesting in Greenwich in two and a half centuries. A very rare summer vagrant, American Coot, was also discovered (NH). Thirty-four Piping Plovers were counted, all in NH. Eight American Oystercatchers were present in GS. In NH, two Willets and two Roseate Terns were observed, both first-time appearances on a SBC. Monk Parakeets were also represented by two individuals, an apparently expanding exotic species. Quite impressive were two pairs of adult Barn Owls with eight young, all in Middletown (QV). An intriguing curiosity was a CP Red-headed Woodpecker found June 14 as a fresh road-kill (GS).

Newly established BA produced an impressive array of northern species, including 13 Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers. Well established in the northwest within the last 25 years, they are now very gradually spreading southeast. Pileated Woodpeckers were found on all but the ST count. BA also had two Common Ravens, new to SBC's. Singing everywhere, an impressive total of 434 Carolina Wrens were reported. Only six Golden-crowned Kinglets were present (GS) although their nesting range is apparently slowly expanding southeast. Swainson's Thrush is normally a late spring migrant and a single

individual was seen June 7th (WR); Hermit Thrushes were on all counts but one, where the appropriate habitat seems to be present, but historically the birds have not been (GS). The more upland counts, WR, BA and ST accounted for 95% of the Solitary Vireos reported.

A "Brewster's Warbler" is always a nice find (WR); a single Nashville Warbler found in BA is an extremely local northern breeder whose nesting in Connecticut needs to be more adequately described. Two Northern Parulas, potential nesters, were in WR. Among BA's findings were 28 Black-throated Blue Warblers (of 33 statewide), a species that has grown steadily during the last 25 years, 27 Yellow-rumped Warblers (of 31 statewide), and 39 Blackburnian Warblers (of 63 statewide). WR recorded all remaining individuals of these three healthy southward expanding species. The 11 Cerulean Warblers were all in WR and ST; Hooded Warblers, showing up more regularly in recent decades, were on six SBCs and appeared as a CP bird on a 7th. Worm-eating Warblers were on all counts except the northernmost BA count. A single Kentucky Warbler was noted statewide (GS). WR recorded an impressive total of three migrant Mourning Warblers, a traditionally late migrant. Thirty Canada Warblers were found on four counts, but 83% were in WR and BA in the northwest. GS had two Yellow-breasted Chats, whose nesting range has retreated southward with declining habitat. BA reported 11 Dark-eyed Juncos. Finally, 34 Orchard Orioles, our more southern oriole species, were found along the coast and in the Connecticut River Valley with only two reported elsewhere.

Collectors of Connecticut avian trivia will be interested to learn that the 25 most abundant species (based on coverage of these eight SBCs) were European Starling (7,633), American Robin (5,022), Red-winged Blackbird (4,081), Common Grackle (3,276), Canada Goose (3,173), American Crow (2,755), House Finch (2,687), Gray Catbird (2,626), Mourning Dove (2,382), Song Sparrow (2,289), House Sparrow (2,152), Mallard (2,083), Yellow Warbler (1,623), Chipping Sparrow (1,483), Common Yellowthroat (1,367), Blue Jay (1,305), Northern Cardinal (1,302), Rock Dove (1,290), Barn Swallow (1,267), Black-capped Chickadee (1,209), Red-eyed Vireo (1,181), American Goldfinch (1,179), Wood Thrush (1,169), Northern Mockingbird (1,111), and Ovenbird (1,028).

Scarce regular or recent nesters included Pied-billed Grebe, Tricolored Heron, Cattle Egret, Sora, Common Nighthawk, Nashville Warbler, Kentucky Warbler and White-throated Sparrow, with one bird each. Least Bittern, Willet, Roseate Tern, Monk Parakeet, Common Raven and Yellow-breasted Chat were each represented by two individuals. Small numbers of possible, but unproven, nesters

were two Common Loons (in this case not nesting), one Northern Harrier and two Northern Parulas.

From this information we are developing a better picture of the distribution of nesting birds. This overview of 1992 SBCs shows that we are well on our way to assembling data which will become an increasingly valuable asset. It will be compared with future count results to document long-term changes within avian populations. A few more interesting pieces were added to Connecticut's nesting puzzle this June. Next year another chapter will be added to this ongoing project.

The COA would especially like to acknowledge all observers who stumbled over hill and dale to collect this irreplaceable information. A fine ornithological tradition in Connecticut is in the making and all who participated are part of it.

1992 SUMMARIES

The SBC summaries, as well as the tables, are more simplified than last year and should be easier to understand. They do not contain the somewhat detailed 1991 statistical comparisons which attempted to evaluate SBC effectiveness with mixed results. Until the SBCs develop more consistent patterns, such analysis is apt to be misleading.

Brief summaries of each SBC are given below with a quick statistical reference to the most pertinent data. Counts are listed alphabetically. This year the compilers names are underlined, with their addresses supplied in parentheses, alphabetically listed among each count's participants.

All the figures assembled on the SBCs will be found in the tables following the summaries. This table groups similar counts together into Coastal, Ct. Valley, and Inland sections, the latter sub-divided into mid-state and northern SBCs, to help in outlining distribution patterns. In addition to the totals for every species on each SBC, the numbers recorded for each species in the entire state are also provided.

STATEWIDE TOTALS

Count Dates: June 7, 13, 14, 20, 21, 27, & 28. Reported on these CDs were 178 Species and 79,861 individual birds (including two hybrids and four unidentified individuals), plus eight additional species during CP; 188 Observers in 99 Parties spent 962 Party Hours (904.5 daytime and 57.5 nighttime) in the field. Three new SBC's (Barkhamsted, Quinnipiac Valley and Salmon River) joined the five which participated in 1991. Last year, 169 species and 64,634 individuals were recorded during 625.75 Party Hours of field work by 149

observers. Seven species, five of which are nesters, had never been found previously on a Connecticut SBC.

Barkhamsted Summer Bird Count (established 1992)

Date: Sat. and Sun., June 27 and 28. Count Circle: 41° 55' N, 72° 59' W. Area: Barkhamsted, Canton (western), Colebrook (southern), Granby (southwestern), Hartland, New Hartford, Torrington (northeastern) and Winchester. Weather: 6/27- Partly cloudy with scattered thunderstorms, some very strong, hail, and a tornado! Temp 66° to 82°F. Wind WSW, 0-5 mph. 6/28 - Sunny. Temp 70° to 83°F. Wind W, 0-5 mph.

Totals: 109 Species and 4,502 Individuals plus 5 additional CP species. During the initial year of this northern count 70 species were confirmed nesting, including a pair of Bald Eagles with their two 6-week old chicks. Five species were seen solely on this count. Several northern species were found in good numbers. Not recorded were Green-backed Heron, Red-shouldered Hawk, Ring-necked Pheasant, Herring Gull, Red-bellied Woodpecker and Worm-eating Warbler.

17 Observers in 11 Parties. 86 daytime and 2 nighttime Party Hours, held over 48 hours.

Participants:

Ann Bailey, Brian Bailey, George Boynton, Ayreslea Denny, Duncan Denny, Ann Davenport, Doug Davenport, Lydia Granitto, Jim Moore, Kathie Murphy, John Pine, Bruce Porter, Lorna Porter, David Rosgen (72H Leigh Avenue, Thomaston Ct. 06787), Stanley Rosgen, Ann Tancredi, John Tancredi.

Greenwich-Stamford Summer Bird Count (established 1976)

Date: Sat. & Sun., June 13 & 14. Count Center (The GSSBC covers a 15 x 15 mile square): 41° 05' N 73° 37' W. Area: Darien, Greenwich, New Canaan, and Stamford (65% of area); in New York (35% of area), Armonk, Bedford (in part), Port Chester, Rye and White Plains (in part). Weather: Good conditions and no rain, moderate temperatures, not too humid.

Totals: 143 Species and 22,802 Individuals (including 2 unidentified individuals) plus 8 additional species in CP. Three new species were added to GSSBC's cumulative total this year. Purple Finch was not recorded for the second consecutive year, although it was present on 13 of the first 14 GSSBCs held. Thirteen species were unique to this count.

45 Observers in 26 Parties. 280 daytime and 21.5 nighttime Party Hours held over 48 hours.

Participants: Tom Anderson, John Askildsen, Ken Ballis, Tom Baptist,

Trudy Battaly, Gail Benson, Lysle Brinker, Thomas W. Burke (235 Highland Road, Rye NY 10580), Canny Clark, Al Collins, Diane Collins, Julio de la Torre, Townsend Dickinson, Patrick Dugan, Andrew Farnsworth, Roger Frost, Kevin Fung, Jay Gartner, Andy Guthrie, Carol Hartel, Elsbeth Johnson, Jackie Jones, Bob Kurtz, Pat Ledden, Claudia Leff, Mike Lesser, Berna Lincoln, Stan Lincoln, Frank Mantlik, Hugh McGuinness, Jim O'Brien, Brian O'Toole, Drew Panko, Bill Park, Matt Popp, Steve Potter, Polly Rothstein, John Shull, Paul Steineck, Andy Towle, Patty Towle, Bill Van Loan, Jr., James Vellozzi, Mardi Welch, Joe Zeranski.

Hartford Summer Bird Count (established 1991)

Date: Sat. and Sun., June 13 and 14. Count Center: 41° 46' N, 72° 40' W. Area: Bloomfield, East Hartford, Farmington, Glastonbury, Hartford, Manchester, New Britain, Newington, Rocky Hill, South Windsor, Wethersfield and Windsor. Weather: Mostly sunny and very warm. Temp to 85°F. No wind.

Totals: 101 Species and 9,727 Individuals. Ten species were added to the count this year. Newly confirmed nesters were Acadian Flycatcher and Hooded Warbler. One species was found on this count alone. Of all the SBCs this one did not record Black-throated Green Warblers.

25 Observers in 14 Parties. 39 daytime Party Hours held over 48 hours.

Participants: *Bill Altmann, Debbie Barberi, Richard Bialeck, Jack Cooney, Judy Cooney, Ed Czapinski, Mary Czapinski, Paul Desjardins, Stephen Hamilton, Isabel Higgins, John Higgins, Jay Kaplan, Betty Kleiner, Gil Kleiner, Brian Kleinman, Jim Moore, Kathie Murphy (274 Morningside Drive East, Bristol CT 06010), Dave Rosgen, Mary Rudek, Jon Smalley, Shirley Smigel, Jeffery Tishler, John Trouern-trend, Jonathan Trouern-trend, Louise Tucker.*

New Haven Summer Bird Count (established 1991)

Date: Sat. and Sun., June 13 and 14. Count Center: 41° 18' N, 72° 56' W. Area: Branford (western), East Haven, Milford, New Haven, North Haven, Orange, West Haven and Woodbridge (in part). Weather: 6/13 - Humid and Sunny. Temp 65° to 85°F. Wind WSW, 5 mph. 6/14 - Sunny. Temp 60° to 85°F. Wind SW, 5 mph.

Totals: 129 Species and 12,987 Individuals (including 2 unidentified individuals) plus 1 additional CP species. Fifteen species were confirmed nesting this year in addition to the 32 found last year. Twenty-one species were added to last year's total. Seen on this count alone were eleven species. Not recorded were Red-shouldered Hawk, Ruffed Grouse, Barred Owl, Great Horned Owl and Least

Flycatcher.

33 Observers in 15 Parties. 106 daytime and 3.5 nighttime Party Hours held over 48 hours.

Participants: *Lee Aimesbury, Marion Aimesbury, Barbara Amatruda, Nancy Baratz, Andrew Brand, Steve Broker, Lauren Brown, Nancy Clark, Emily Cosenza, Donald Culkin, Richard English, Jeff Fengler, John Himmelman, Gary Lemmon, George Letis, Mildred Letis, Mary Marro, Steve Mayo* (159 Kings Highway #27, Milford CT 06460), *Florence McBride, Louis Metillo, Jennie Noll, Janet O'Donnell, Bill Root, Nancy Rosenbaum, Arnie Rosengren, Lee Schlesinger, Ray Scory, Ed Shove, Dori Sosensky, Tony Tortora, Peter Wilson, Jeff Young, Susan Yurkus.*

Quinnipiac Valley Summer Bird Count (established 1992)

Date: Sun., June 14. Count Center: 41° 28' N, 72° 44' W (Intersection of routes 68 and 157). Area: Cheshire (in part), Durham, Killingworth (in part), Meriden, Middlefield, Middletown and Wallingford. Weather: Mostly sunny. Temp 55° to 83°F. Wind 5-20 mph.

Totals: 99 Species and 4,378 Individuals. This new SBC is being conducted within the same circle as the established Quinnipiac Valley CBC. Two species were unique to this count in 1992. Not recorded this year were Great Blue Heron, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Brown Thrasher, Yellow-throated Vireo and Louisiana Waterthrush.

11 Observers in 4 Parties. 38 daytime and 4 nighttime Party Hours held over 24 hours.

Participants: *Mark Carabetta, Kevin Clark, Angie Dejesus, John Diorio, Joe Fenelly, Marcia Klattenberg, Nancy Morand, John Schultz, Wilford Schultz* (193 Harrison Road, Wallingford CT 06492), *John Wagenblatt, George Zepko.*

Salmon River Summer Bird Count (established 1992)

Date: Sat. and Sun., June 13 and 14. Circle Center: 41° 33' N, 72° 26' W. Area: Colchester (western), East Haddam, Haddam, Middletown (southeast) and Portland. Weather: 6/13 - Temp 58° to 85°F. Wind 0 to 10 mph. 6/14 - slightly warmer.

Totals: 93 Species and 2,989 Individuals (including 3 unidentified individuals) plus 2 additional CP species. This new SBC is being conducted within the same area as the established Salmon River CBC. Eighteen species were reported nesting in 1992. Not found this summer were Broad-winged Hawk, Spotted Sandpiper, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, Eastern Meadowlark and Purple Finch.

9 Observers in 5 Parties. 26 daytime and 3 nighttime Party Hours held over 48 hours.

Participants: *Mary Augustiny, Ellana Coffey, Larry Cyrulik, Ann*

Keane, John Maynard, Joseph Morin (298 Main Street, Cromwell CT 06416), Pat Rasch, Ed Reneson, David Titus.

Storrs Summer Bird Count (established 1990)

Date: Sat. and Sun., June 20 and 21. Count Center: 41° 48' N, 72° 15' W. Area: Ashford, Chaplin, Coventry, Mansfield, Tolland, Willington and Windham. Weather: 6/20 - Mostly overcast, some drizzle and light fog. 6/21 - generally clear and cool.

Totals: 102 Species and 6,788 Individuals (including one unidentified individual). One new species, Hooded Warbler, was added to the cumulative total this year. Not noted this year were Ring-billed Gull, Pileated Woodpecker and Red-breasted Nuthatch.

14 Observers in 9 Parties. 87.8 daytime Party Hours held over 48 hours.

Participants: *Andrew Brand, George Clark, Sam Higgins, Seth Leacock, Bill Liberator, Steve Mayo, John McDonald, Shirley Olson, Carol Phillips, Robert Pirrie, Steve Rogers (58 Pinney Hill Road, Willington CT 06279), Laura Runkle, Avo Somer, Eric Thomas.*

Woodbury-Roxbury Summer Bird Count (established 1978)

Date: Sun., June 7. Count Center: 41° 32' N, 73° 16' W. Area: Bethlehem, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Middlebury, New Milford, Roxbury, Southbury, Washington and Woodbury. Weather: mist and fog. AM- hazy and sunny. PM - Hazy, hot and humid. Temp 65° to 82°F.

Totals: 130 Species and 15,688 Individuals (including 2 hybrid individuals). Two new species were added to WRSBC's cumulative total. Newly confirmed nesters were Mute Swan, American Black Duck, Common Merganser and Red-shouldered Hawk. Recorded only on this count were four species.

34 Observers in 15 Parties. 145.75 daytime and 21.5 nighttime Party Hours held over 24 hours.

Participants: *Guy Badger, Ray Belding, Polly Brody, John Brown, Mildred Brown, Bob Carter, Donna Civitello, Norm Cosker, Mary Ann Currie, Neil Currie, Buzz Devine, Angela Dimmitt, Larry Fischer, Ethel Follett, Bob Folley, Alice Gale, Jon Gibbs, Sharon Gibbs, Ed Hagen, Loren Hayes, Bob Heimgartner, Buck Jenks, Ron Jereau, Madis Linask, Carol Longstreth, John Longstreth, Frank Mantlik, Russ Naylor (44 Church Street, Woodbury CT 06798), Dick O'Brien, Dave Rosgen, Mark Szantyr, Darcy Thurrott, Art Titus, Chris Wood.*

163 Field Point Road, Greenwich, Ct 06830

SUMMER BIRD COUNT RESULTS 1992

All statistics are given for GS & WR counts which are at least 10 years old. Only new species are shown for NH, HA, & ST counts which are 2 or 3 years old. New QV, BA, & SR counts do not yet have sufficient data for analysis. Species reported this year, but not on SBC's of the prior 10 years, are shown as new species.

SPECIES	Coastal Cts		CT Valley Cts		Inland Cts				STATE TOTAL
	GS	NH	HA	SR	Mid-state		Northern		
					QV	WR	BA	ST	
Red-throated Loon		CP							CP
Common Loon	1					1			2
Pied-billed Grebe	1								1
Horned Grebe	1								1
Double-crested Cormorant	488	259	10	4	3	16	1	1	782
Least Bittern		1	1						2
Great Blue Heron	18	8	4	1		5	CP	8	44
Great Egret	81	17				1			99
Snowy Egret	81	26							107
Little Blue Heron	CP								CP
Tricolored Heron		1							1
Cattle Egret		7							7
Green-backed Heron	32	28	12	CP	6	8		6	92
Black-crowned Night-Heron	160	28							188
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	3								3
Glossy Ibis	4								4
Mute Swan	113	113			17	16			259
Brant	7	6							13
Canada Goose	2001	325	152	38	22	459	78	98	3173
Wood Duck	64	20	5	10	4	22	CP	10	135

SPECIES	GS	NH	HA	SR	QV	WR	BA	ST	TOTAL
Green-winged Teal	1					1			2
American Black Duck	56	42			2	15	2		117
Mallard	864	218	621	17	81	<u>210</u>	28	44	2083
Mallard x A Black Duck						1			1
Northern Pintail	1								1
Blue-winged Teal	CP								CP
Gadwall	1	6							7
scooter species		2							2
Greater Scaup	5								5
Bufflehead	4								4
Common Merganser						15	12		27
Red-breasted Merganser	1								1
Turkey Vulture	18	14	4	9	12	35	24	13	129
Osprey	1	4					1		6
Bald Eagle	1					1	4		6
Northern Harrier					1				1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	1				1	1		4
Cooper's Hawk	5				1	1	CP		7
Northern Goshawk	4		1				CP		5
Red-shouldered Hawk	2		2	4	1	9		4	22

GS - Greenwich-Stamford HA - Hartford xxx - Lower number than previous 10 yrs. (boldface)

BA - Barkhamsted NH - New Haven xxx - New count high number (underlined)

SR - Salmon River ST - Storrs xxx - New SBC species (shaded area)

QV - Quinnipac Valley CP - Only reported 3 days before or after count

WR - Woodbury-Roxbury xxx - Recorded four or fewer years during past 10 yrs.

SUMMER BIRD COUNT RESULTS 1992 (Cont'd)

SPECIES	GS	NH	HA	SR	QV	WR	BA	ST	TOTAL
Broad-winged Hawk	4	4	1		3	7	1	2	22
Red-tailed Hawk	33	19	16	2	8	31	7	11	127
American Kestrel	1	1	1	1	11	4	2	1	22
Ring-necked Pheasant	47	13	4	1	1	7		4	77
Ruffed Grouse	12				5	5	4	1	27
Wild Turkey	9	4	4	2		18	6		43
Northern Bobwhite	5	1				3		10	19
Clapper Rail	3	1							4
Virginia Rail	4		3				1		8
Sora			1						1
American Coot		1							1
Black-bellied Plover	5	1							6
Semipalmated Plover	CP								CP
Piping Plover		34							34
Killdeer	49	64	30	5	12	27	9	23	219
American Oystercatcher	8								8
Greater Yellowlegs	CP								CP
Spotted Sandpiper	3	5	1		5	6	1	2	23
Willet		2							2
Ruddy Turnstone	1	3							4
Semipalmated Sandpiper	CP	4							4
Least Sandpiper	CP								CP
White-rumped Sandpiper	CP								CP
Dunlin		1							1
American Woodcock	2	3			2	5	3		15

SPECIES	GS	NH	HA	SR	QV	WR	BA	ST	TOTAL
Laughing Gull	33	13							46
Ring-billed Gull	197	295	97	6	3	14	4		616
Herring Gull	394	247	173	6	9	42		1	872
Great Black-backed Gull	<u>107</u>	70	34	1		5			217
gull species				3				1	4
Roseate Tern		2							2
Common Tern	<u>114</u>	26							140
Least Tern	98	306							404
Rock Dove	315	447	330	4	44	84	25	41	1290
Mourning Dove	445	687	246	67	246	400	83	208	2382
Monk Parakeet		2							2
Black-billed Cuckoo	1					4		1	6
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	4	1	1		1	1		1	9
Barn Owl					12				12
Eastern Screech-Owl	29	1		2	10	13	1		56
Great Horned Owl	8			2	2	6		1	19
Barred Owl	5			4	3	12	CP	1	25
Common Nighthawk		1							1
Whip-poor-will		1		6		5	1		13
Chimney Swift	51	29	35	12	24	142	42	78	413

GS - Greenwich-Stamford

HA - Hartford

xxx - Lower number than previous 10 yrs. (boldface)

BA - Barkhamsted

NH - New Have

xxx - New count high number (underlined)

SR - Salmon River

ST - Storrs

xxx - New SBC species (shaded area)

QV - Quinnipac Valley

CP - Only reported 3 days before or after count

WR - Woodbury-Roxbury

xxx - Recorded four or fewer years during past 10 yrs.

SUMMER BIRD COUNT RESULTS 1992 (Cont'd)

SPECIES	GS	NH	HA	SR	QV	WR	BA	ST	TOTAL
Ruby-thr Hummingbird	7	3		1		9	8	3	31
Belted Kingfisher	23	11	11	1	8	27	11	4	96
Red-headed Woodpecker	CP								CP
Red-bellied Woodpecker	<u>103</u>	18	20	13	6	19		15	194
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker							13		13
Downy Woodpecker	<u>143</u>	67	40	13	10	62	28	33	396
Hairy Woodpecker	49	16	9	8	1	20	14	12	129
Northern Flicker	223	113	107	27	34	167	36	72	779
Pileated Woodpecker	<u>27</u>	4	3	1	1	12	2		50
Eastern Wood-Pewee	92	46	39	28	13	118	30	47	413
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher						<u>1</u>			1
Acadian Flycatcher	7	1	2			11		1	22
Alder Flycatcher				1	1	3	2		7
Willow Flycatcher	<u>86</u>	43	9	1	5	18	3	3	168
Least Flycatcher	2		5	5	3	<u>72</u>	13	29	129
Empidonax species	2								2
Eastern Phoebe	90	41	35	38	17	166	56	134	577
Great Crested Flycatcher	<u>89</u>	46	32	15	10	81	12	27	312
Eastern Kingbird	119	49	46	38	27	158	28	61	526
Purple Martin	8								8
Tree Swallow	86	56	168	28	37	78	215	127	795
N Rough-winged Swallow	67	32	7	6	2	41	14	23	192
Bank Swallow	2	37	3	5	16	23	5	76	167
Cliff Swallow	<u>40</u>					18	1		59
Barn Swallow	305	177	101	53	110	291	75	155	1267

J. Zeranski

SPECIES	GS	NH	HA	SR	QV	WR	BA	ST	TOTAL
Blue Jay	394	250	144	39	53	254	98	73	1305
American Crow	796	464	434	77	106	538	119	221	2755
Fish Crow	<u>20</u>	12	1						33
Common Raven							2		2
Black-capped Chickadee	318	174	112	46	41	277	123	118	1209
Tufted Titmouse	285	133	105	66	17	222	42	82	952
Red-breasted Nuthatch	7	2	6		2	<u>3</u>	21		41
White-breasted Nuthatch	86	14	27	4	10	20	25	32	218
Brown Creeper	5	4	3	1	1	8	2	11	35
Carolina Wren	<u>186</u>	116	20	30	23	<u>40</u>	2	17	434
House Wren	250	78	31	31	2	185	67	53	697
Winter Wren	8	2	<u>1</u>		2	11	5	5	34
Marsh Wren	<u>28</u>	51	5						84
Golden-crowned Kinglet	6								6
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	<u>21</u>	2	4	11	2	46	11	28	125
Eastern Bluebird	55	6	62	28	3	<u>135</u>	69	22	380
Veery	191	54	15	37	12	<u>241</u>	137	119	806
Swainson's Thrush						<u>1</u>			1
Hermit Thrush		2	<u>2</u>	2	8	6	53	4	77
Wood Thrush	360	123	77	61	31	<u>338</u>	94	85	1169

GS - Greenwich-Stamford HA - Hartford xxx - Lower number than previous 10 yrs.(boldface)

BA - Barkhamsted NH - New Haven xxx - New count high number(underlined)

SR - Salmon River ST - Storrs xxx - New SBC species (shaded area)

QV - Quinnipac Valley CP - Only reported 3 days before or after count

WR - Woodbury-Roxbury xxx - Recorded four or fewer years during past 10 yrs.

SUMMER BIRD COUNT RESULTS 1992 (Cont'd)

SPECIES	GS	NH	HA	SR	QV	WR	BA	ST	TOTAL
American Robin	1421	614	601	289	464	1083	173	377	5022
Gray Catbird	846	370	189	137	105	625	159	195	2626
Northern Mockingbird	194	202	134	42	167	250	14	108	1111
Brown Thrasher	39	19	3	8		27	1	6	103
Cedar Waxwing	218	90	70	36	13	244	98	49	818
European Starling	1636	1550	1683	129	462	867	210	1096	7633
White-eyed Vireo	44	6		2		1	1	3	57
Solitary Vireo		2		1		17	30	3	53
Yellow-throated Vireo	44	8	7	6		65	8	20	158
Warbling Vireo	81	34	35	21	8	121	19	21	340
Red-eyed Vireo	319	83	99	67	22	327	172	92	1181
Blue-winged Warbler	216	53	25	81	23	155	37	66	656
"Brewster's" Warbler						1			1
Nashville Warbler							1		1
Northern Parula						2			2
Yellow Warbler	618	166	123	82	46	411	48	129	1623
Chestnut-sided Warbler	41	13	5	7	6	134	72	16	294
Magnolia Warbler	1					1	40		42
Black-throated Blue Warbler						5	28		33
Yellow-rumped Warbler						4	27		31
Black-throated Green Warbler	27	15		1	5	36	12	4	100
Blackburnian Warbler						24	39		63
Pine Warbler	25	13	7	4	3	13	18	6	89
Prairie Warbler	11	15	11	49	25	80	8	23	222
Cerulean Warbler						10		1	11

SPECIES	GS	NH	HA	SR	QV	WR	BA	ST	TOTAL
Black-&-White Warbler	175	27	8	31	11	113	57	45	467
American Redstart	33	5	29	68	4	<u>220</u>	110	84	553
Worm-eating Warbler	79	16	7	13	4	17		10	146
Ovenbird	245	134	37	71	29	235	144	133	1028
Northern Waterthrush	1	3				8	1	1	14
Louisiana Waterthrush	39	4	8	11		40	4	5	111
Kentucky Warbler	1								1
Mourning Warbler						3			3
Common Yellowthroat	350	153	93	89	36	373	155	118	1367
Hooded Warbler	10	1	2	CP	2	2		1	18
Canada Warbler	3					10	15	2	30
Yellow-breasted Chat	2								2
Scarlet Tanager	119	33	28	26	5	122	65	44	442
Northern Cardinal	337	225	169	47	41	<u>327</u>	43	113	1302
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	101	26	21	5	6	101	28	12	300
Indigo Bunting	59	26	19	5	1	77	15	11	213
Rufous-sided Towhee	106	73	29	75	38	160	74	51	606
Chipping Sparrow	490	112	137	59	48	379	119	139	1483
Field Sparrow	41	21	18	33	5	80	4	10	212
Savannah Sparrow			1			9		6	16

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SUMMER BIRD COUNT RESULTS 1992 (Cont'd)

SPECIES	GS	NH	HA	SR	QV	WR	BA	ST	TOTAL
Sharp-tailed Sparrow	5	1							6
Song Sparrow	656	260	321	62	83	597	120	190	2289
Swamp Sparrow	23	3	9	13	14	45	10	9	126
White-throated Sparrow							1		1
Dark-eyed Junco							11		11
Bobolink	1		37		22	167	12	36	275
Red-winged Blackbird	652	758	536	58	832	713	72	460	4081
Eastern Meadowlark	4	10	6		19	22	1	15	77
Common Grackle	896	520	664	99	331	519	67	180	3276
Brown-headed Cowbird	233	145	142	52	34	228	46	119	999
Orchard Oriole	20	9	3	2		2			36
Northern Oriole	247	97	85	78	26	176	27	71	807
Purple Finch		7	1		5	6	20	1	40
House Finch	658	624	340	91	123	552	113	186	2687
American Goldfinch	328	184	156	29	40	222	116	104	1179
House Sparrow	514	595	354	88	105	282	60	154	2152
Hybrid individual	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Unidentified individuals	2	2	0	3	0	0	0	1	8
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	22802	12987	9727	2989	4378	15688	4502	6788	79861

	Coastal Cts		CT Valley Cts		Inland Cts				STATE TOTAL
	GS	NH	HA	SR	Mid-state		Northern		
					QV	WR	BA	ST	
TOTAL Count Day SPECIES	143	129	102	93	99	130	109	102	178
Count Peroid (CP) Species	8	1	0	2	0	0	5	0	8
DEGREE OF EFFORT:									
Party Hours (PH)	301.5	109.5	137	29	42	167.3	88	87.8	962.05
Day Party Hours	280	106	135	26	38	145.8	86	87.8	904.55
Night Party Hours	21.5	3.5	2	3	4	21.5	2	0	57.5
Observers	45	33	25	9	11	34	17	14	188
Parties	26	15	14	5	4	15	11	9	99
									Average
% of ave indiv-up to 10 yrs.	119.8	92	199.2	N/A	N/A	96.2	N/A	101.1	111.37
% of ave Species-up to 10 yrs.	113.4	107.5	109.7	N/A	N/A	104.1	N/A	93.6	105.76
% of ave Obs-up to 10 yrs.	95.5	86.8	147.1	N/A	N/A	101.2	N/A	103.7	101.21
Indiv birds per 10 PH	756	1186	710	1030	1042	938	512	773	830

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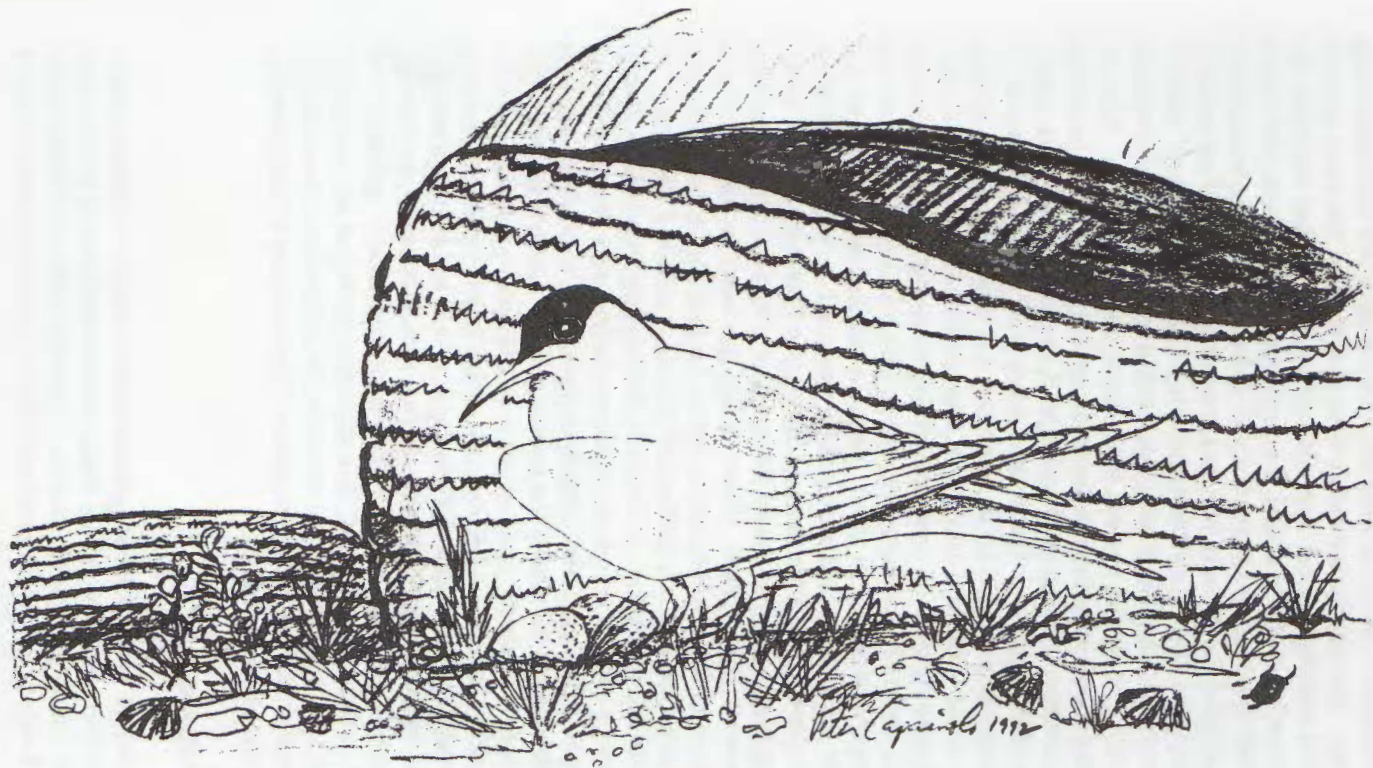
COMMON TERN ADOPTS AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER EGG at FALKNER ISLAND

James M. Zingo

The American Oystercatcher (*Haematopus palliatus*), historically a fall migrant and/or an accidental visitor (Linsley 1843; Sage, Bishop and Bliss 1913), with a former breeding range reaching only as far north as New Jersey, has expanded its range into Connecticut in recent years. Since the first state breeding records in 1980, on Menunketesuck Island in Westbrook (Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection 1982) and off the Mystic-Noank shore (Dewire 1981), American Oystercatchers have nested in at least 10 and possibly as many as 13 different sites from Darien to Stonington (D. Rosgen, pers. comm.). Approximately 18 pairs attempted breeding in the state in 1991, the majority on islands from Darien to Westport (D. Rosgen, pers. comm.). The first record for New Haven County was a pair that nested on Falkner Island (41° 12' N, 72° 39' W), a small island with a predominantly cobble beach located in Long Island Sound approximately 5 km south of Guilford. A more detailed description of the island is given by Spendelow (1982) and Helander (1988). Oystercatchers have been seen on Falkner Island in previous years, but this was the first nesting attempt.

According to Bent (1929), American Oystercatchers prefer to nest on broad sandy beaches with scattered pebbles and bits of shells. The sites used in Connecticut tend toward cobble, gravel, pebbles and bits of shells (D. Rosgen, pers. comm.), perhaps chosen because Connecticut's sandy beaches are subjected to high levels of human recreational use, especially during the nesting season. Human disturbance may be a limiting factor for oystercatcher distribution in Connecticut and elsewhere, and this may be why a nesting attempt was made at Falkner Island, where habitat is atypical but disturbance levels are low.

Two American Oystercatchers were observed foraging at Falkner Island on 26-28 April 1991, and individuals were seen on 31 May and 1 June. On 2 June, I saw a pair of birds and discovered an egg in a shallow scrape on a pebbly section of beach. The nest was located at the outskirts of a colony of Common (*Sterna hirundo*) and Roseate Terns (*S. dougallii*) at the north end of the island. I observed the nest from approximately 3 to 5 PM, but both birds were foraging and did not approach it. About noon on the following day, I found a second



A Common Tern guards its nest of one American Oystercatcher egg and one tern egg.

egg, observed both birds near the nest and saw one bird incubating the eggs. Neither oystercatcher was molested by the terns (mainly Roseate) nesting as close as a few meters away. Later that day, the eggs were labeled. On 4 June, the eggs were evenly warm, the scrape was well worked, and I saw the pair drive off a third oystercatcher. They dipped their heads, bills pointing downward, and advanced a few steps at a time toward this bird while making "kleeping" sounds. The interloper backed off gradually until it reached the waterline and flew off. The whole process took about 5 to 10 minutes. The last sighting of oystercatchers in the area came on 9 June, when two birds were observed on nearby Goose Island, approximately 1 km away.

One of the eggs was discovered missing on 11 June. I turned the remaining egg upright on its wide end and later found it on its side in the same well-worked scrape, apparently still being incubated. This egg was gone on 13 June, most likely washed away by storm tides from 12 and 13 June. However, on the 13th, I found the first missing egg approximately 3 m away from the original nest site, near the outside edge of an old automobile tire used as part of a habitat modification project for Roseate Terns (see Spendelow 1982, 1991). The egg itself appeared sound, not cracked or broken, but by that time it was most likely rotten. How the egg had been moved to its new location is unknown. Before the storm, normal high tide levels were well below the nest site and unlikely to have affected the nest.

On the following day, a Common Tern egg lay next to the oystercatcher egg in a nest scrape and I observed a Common Tern incubating the mismatched eggs and defending the territory. Perhaps the tern was attracted to the site by the presence of the unattended egg. The urge to nest, defend, and incubate might have arisen due to the superstimulus of the similarly colored but larger oystercatcher egg.

Several days later both of these eggs, as well as several other eggs and chicks from other tern nests on that section of beach, apparently were predated by Herring Gulls (*Larus argentatus*). Although no oystercatcher eggs hatched, this situation provided an interesting look at an unusual nest site selection by a Common Tern and an unexpected ending to the American Oystercatcher's first breeding attempt on Falkner Island.

Acknowledgments

Thanks go to the following individuals: the 1991 Falkner Island Tern Project research staff for their observations; David Rosgen and George Clark for information on oystercatchers in Connecticut; David Rosgen, Jeff Spendelow and Peter Capainolo for their helpful

comments on the initial draft; and special thanks to Peter Capainolo for his illustration and final review of the manuscript.

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CONNECTICUT FIELD NOTES

SPRING: MARCH 1 - MAY 31, 1992

Jay Kaplan

Editor's Comment: The Connecticut Field Notes require that documentation be submitted to the Editor or the Secretary of the Connecticut Rare Records Committee for all rare species designated by that committee (see COA Field List).

To borrow a line from the Connecticut Rare Bird Alert Hotline; "Birders, we need reports!" We seem to be receiving fewer reports from around the state. Could it be that we need a more detailed form on which to report sightings? To those who continue to send in detailed seasonal reports, we appreciate your continuing efforts. This column, in addition to providing information on unusual migrants, vagrants, etc., also serves as a measure of ornithological trends in Connecticut; trends that may be useful in future analysis of Connecticut's bird life.

My personal reaction to the spring migration was that it was much "slower" than usual. Warbler waves were virtually non-existent, a point that was noted by many observers. This may have been due, in large part, to weather conditions.

Precipitation was below normal in March, April and May with a cumulative three month total of 9.13 inches in the Hartford area as compared with a norm of 11.54 inches for the period. Temperatures were on the cool side. During the entire month of March, the mercury never reached 60°F in Hartford, and dropped below 20°F eleven times between March 11-25. April was only slightly better. The temperature didn't break the 70°F mark until April 21st, and lows consistently hovered near the freezing mark. May began with a high reading of 80°F, but did not reach this warm-weather benchmark again until the 20th. April and early May were also marked by consistent, strong northerly winds, making the spring migration most difficult for songbirds. A severe storm that featured heavy snow in the Appalachian Mountains in mid-April may also have impacted spring migration. The temperature finally reached 90°F May 21-23, then on the 25th, it failed to reach 60°F. The last week of May saw low temperatures in the lower 40's, over ten degrees below the norm for this time of year. Perhaps this was a harbinger of the cool summer to come?

LOONS THROUGH FALCONS

There were no reports of Red-throated Loons in southeast Connecticut this period (RSCB). Red-necked Grebes, on the other hand, demonstrated an interesting inland migration in late April. Following April 21's sightings of one at Barkhamsted Reservoir, Barkhamsted (BK_n) and nine at Lakeville Lake (TS), six were at Nod Brook Wildlife Management Area, Simsbury April 23 (JMa) and seven were at Nepaug Reservoir April 26 (DA,JK). The previously reported Eared Grebe along the Stamford shoreline remained until March 14 (m.ob.). Northern Gannets made a spring incursion into Long Island Sound with numerous sightings from Stonington to Westport, all between March 21 and April 11. The last report was of three adults at Hammonasset Beach State Park (hereafter HBSP), Madison April 11 (SM). A colony of Great Blue Heron first found in Pomfret May 14 (JMc), had 17 active nests (LBe,MS). Tricolored Herons were at Barn Island Wildlife Management Area, Stonington April 29 - May 29, with a high of three birds May 11 (DP). Another was at Nell's Island, Milford May 3 (FM). Up to 10 Cattle Egrets were at Kowalsky Farm, Westport April 24 - May 23 (m.ob.). A single bird was at Sunny Valley Farm, New Milford May 5 (CW).

The previously reported Tundra Swans in North Cove, Essex,

were present through at least March 22 (SK). Single birds were in Watertown March 31 - April 8 (m.ob.), at Osborndale State Park, Derby April 4 (BD,DS), and in Waterford April 5 (JF). A Bar-headed Goose was found near a small flock of Canada's in Mansfield April 25 (LBe,GC et al.) and two were seen May 4-16 (KK) in this location. These birds must be considered to be of captive origin, but their specific source is unknown. Might these have been the same birds sighted in Granby last fall (BK_r,GK)? Brant remained through the period at the mouth of the Thames River (RSCB), while 700 were at Penfield Reef, Fairfield March 18 (CB). There were scattered observations of migrant Snow Geese, with 50 at Milford Point, Milford April 12 (RE) the largest flock reported. Reports of "blue phase" Snow Geese came from Southbury Training School, Southbury March 4 (RN) and Sherwood Island State Park, Westport April 8 (CB).

A recently completed three-year survey of breeding waterfowl from New England to Virginia (Conn. Department of Environmental Protection) provides minimum estimates of pairs for the following species in Connecticut: Canada Goose 5800, Wood Duck 2950, Mallard 1250, Black Duck 420 and Hooded Merganser 60. It is interesting to note that other breeding waterfowl (i.e. Common Mergansers) were not

included in this study, or at least not included in the results. Other waterfowl reports of note from Milford Point included 25 Northern Pintail March 15 (AB) and 13 Northern Shovelers April 18 (RE,SM). Eurasian Wigeon were at Seaside Park, Bridgeport March 21 (CB), at Woodmont, Milford April 1 (DP) and a late bird at Milford Point May 14 (CB). A drake Tufted Duck was observed and photographed in Greenwich March 24 - April 12 (LBr,m.ob.), the first documented record for the state. A Barrow's Goldeneye was at Bradley Point, West Haven March 27 (JF). A late Oldsquaw was in Stratford May 17 (TM et al.). A mixed flock of Surf and White-winged Scoters, numbering 200+, were in Madison May 16-17 (TM et al.).

Five Black Vultures were at the New Milford land fill March 21 (RBA) and three were at nearby Sunny Valley Farm May 6 (CW). Single Black Vultures flew over Route 8, Naugatuck April 5 (JF) and Sherwood Island State Park, Westport April 8 (Rob Winkler fide FM). A pair of Sharp-shinned Hawks, an uncommon breeder, were on territory at White Memorial Foundation, Litchfield May 9-19 (BD et al.). A Bald Eagle at Poquetonuck Cove, Gales Ferry, March 30, may have been the bird sighted there previously (RSCB). A Golden Eagle was at New Milford's Sunny Valley Farm April 27 (CW). An immature Peregrine Falcon was ob-

served stealing fish from an Osprey at Griswold Point, Old Lyme April 20 (DP).

CRANES THROUGH NIGHTJARS

An immature Sandhill Crane was reported at Barn Island Wildlife Management Area May 26 and in Pawcatuck the following day (RSCB). A King and Clapper Rail copulating at Jupiter Point, Branford April 9 (NP) was an interesting observation. A Common Moorhen was in Sharon May 24 (TM). A breeding plumaged Lesser Golden-Plover, uncommon in spring, was at Milford Point May 9 - 23 (RE et al.), and two birds were reported there May 30 (JMo). Purple Sandpipers were last seen at the mouth of the Thames River, New London May 21 (RSCB).

A Little Gull was reported in West Haven March 12 (NC) and 27 and 29 (m.ob.), while at least three Black-headed Gulls were in the West Haven area March 27-29 (m.ob.) and another, an immature bird, was at HBSP March 17 (DP). A second winter Lesser Black-backed Gull was at Merwin Point, Milford March 21 (m.ob.), while others were at Bradley Point Park, West Haven March 22 (SM), in Danbury March 23 (JW) and at Seaside Park, Bridgeport April 25 (CB). A second-year Glaucous Gull was in New Milford March 28 (DP) and another was at Bradley Point, West Haven April 5 (BD,MS). An Iceland Gull was at

Sunny Valley Farm, New Milford May 13 (CW). Tern reports of note included two Caspian Terns at Barn Island WMA, Stonington, May 11 (DP) and a Black Tern at Sherwood Island State Park, Westport May 19 (RS,RW). A Black Skimmer was at Milford Point May 22 (SM).

There were no reports for nesting Barn Owls this spring, but a bird was in Middletown May 19 (DP). The "year of the Snowy Owl" continued with sightings at Fayerweather Island, Bridgeport March 7 (CB), at Milford Point March 27-28 (SM,DP) and a final report from Sandy Point, West Haven April 5 (BD,MS). The previously reported Long-eared Owl in Southport remained through April 5 (CB,PD,BO). Other Long-eared reports included a bird in Fairfield March 22-25 (CB) and one calling at Roaring Brook Nature Center, Canton April 4-6 (FG,JK et al.), in the vicinity of a captive bird. There were at least six Short-eared Owl reports, mostly in Fairfield and Stratford. A bird was at Griswold Point, Old Lyme April 9 (DP) and the latest report came from Milford Point May 13 (JF). There were numerous reports of Saw-whet Owls in western Connecticut including several singing birds that remained through the period.

Nesting Whip-poor-wills continue to hang on in several locations, most notably North Stonington in the southeast (three pair) and Burlington/New Hart-

ford in the northwest (six pair).

SWIFTS THROUGH TANAGERS

Two Chimney Swifts in Woodbury April 21 (RN) were the first reports for the period. Impressive was the sight of 300 swifts funneling into a south Norwalk chimney May 28 (FM). A Red-headed Woodpecker was in New Milford March 29 - April 21 (RN et al.). Olive-sided Flycatchers made a good spring showing with reports from Southport May 17-19 (CB,FM,JF), White Memorial Foundation, Litchfield (BD et al.) May 19, and Ellington May 23 (CE). Two Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were a good find in Litchfield May 19 (BD et al.) and another was in Mohawk State Forest, Cornwall May 26 (DP). Acadian Flycatchers returned to their usual breeding grounds in East Haddam (RSCB) and Kent (m.ob.) and another was in Ashford May 22 (LBe). The six early Tree Swallows in South Windsor March 14 (JK) were likely killed by severe cold temperatures and a late snowstorm several days later. Hundreds of Tree Swallows hawked insects over Nepaug Reservoir, New Hartford/Burlington April 11-18 (BD,JK et al.), perhaps waiting for the weather to moderate.

Common Ravens continue to expand with four birds in Watertown through the entire

period (RN), although there was no confirmation of breeding. Adults and what appeared to be recently fledged young were on rock ledges in Thomaston May 13 and 16 (BD). Three adults in Ashford through May were reported to be nesting (LBe). Additional Raven sightings came from Canton March 9 (JK), and pairs of birds in Plainfield (JK) and Bloomfield April 23 (fide SD). A high of 23 Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were seen along River Road, Kent May 11 (SK).

It was a mixed spring for thrushes. A Gray-cheeked Thrush was at East Rock Park, New Haven May 22 (DP), but several observers commented on the scarcity of Swainson's Thrush this spring. Meanwhile, Veery, Hermit and Wood Thrush seemed more common than usual in certain sections of the state. The previously reported Northern Shrike at Simsbury's Nod Brook Wildlife Management Area remained until at least March 24 (BKr,LT). Another individual was in northern Simsbury March 26 (BKr,LK). Details of a Loggerhead Shrike at Pine Creek, Fairfield May 18 (CB) have been forwarded to the Connecticut Rare Records Committee.

Kent's River Road harbored 15 Warbling Vireos May 11 (SK). A Philadelphia Vireo, rare in spring, was reported at East Rock Park, New Haven May 12 (JF). There were no "big" warbler waves this spring, although most species

were noted by various observers if not in large numbers. In addition to probable breeding birds in Kent (m.ob.), Golden-winged Warblers were reported from Woodbury May 3 (RN), East Rock Park, New Haven, May 11 (RE) and Cromwell Meadows Wildlife Management Area, Cromwell May 17 (DT). A "Brewster's" hybrid Golden-winged/Blue-winged Warbler was in South Britain May 10 (RN). Among the more unusual warbler sightings were a male Yellow-throated Warbler in Kent May 5 through the period (m.ob.), a Prothonotary Warbler in East Rock Park, Hamden April 25 - May 6 (m.ob.), male Kentucky Warblers in East Rock Park May 14 (JF) and in Kent May 17 (JK) and a Mourning Warbler in Southport May 18 (CB). A trip along Kent's River Road May 11 provided some interesting data on warbler numbers: seven Black-throated Blue, eight Black-throated Green, 10 Cerulean, 16 Black-and-White, 24 American Redstart and six Canada (SK). Yellow-breasted Chats were at East Rock Park March 23 (RE) and in Milford May 17-24 (RB,BD,FM) et al). A male **Summer Tanager** was well seen at the New Canaan Nature Center May 1 (Frank Gallo et al. fide FM).

SPARROWS THROUGH GROSBEAKS

A Dark-eyed Junco, "Oregon" type, was in Watertown March

22 (RN). Late Snow Bunting reports included two birds in Stratford March 25 (BKr et al.) and an all-time late record in Storrs April 2 (LBe). An immature Orchard Oriole, uncommon in the area, was in Storrs May 3, the earliest area spring record for this species (GC). Purple Finches were reported through much of the period in many parts of the state. Among the more interesting observations were 44 birds in Preston March 15 (DP), with one pair remaining through the period. Six birds at a Stonington feeder through the period may also be an indication of possible nesting activity in southeast Connecticut (RSCB). A Red Crossbill at Litchfield's White Memorial Foundation April 19 (BD) was a good find in a year with few "winter finch" reports. Pine Siskins were scarce this spring with sporadic feeder reports through early May in northwestern areas (m.ob.). An Evening Grosbeak in Ashford May 9 was the only report this spring (TM)!

Observers; Contributors (boldface):

David Anderson, Robert Barbieri, Charles Barnard, Louis Bevier (LBe), Andrew Brand, Lyle Brinker (LBr), Diana Carroll, George Clark, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Neil Currie, Steve Davis, Buzz Devine, P. Dugan, Carl Ekroth, Richard English, Jeff Fengler, Merion Frolich, Frank Gallo, Kenneth Hannan, Jay Kaplan, Len Kendall, Betty Kleiner (BKr), Gil Kleiner, Brian Kleinman (BKn), Ken Koper, Steve Kotchko, Frank Mantlik, many observers (m.ob.), Joyce Marshall (JMa), Steve Mayo, John McDonald (JMc), Todd McGrath, Joe Morin (JMo), Russ Naylor, Brian O'Toole, Noble Proctor, David Provencher, Rare Bird Alert, Dwight Smith, Records of Southeast Connecticut Birds, Tom Schaeffer, Richard Soffer, Eric Sullivan, Mark Szantyr, David Titus, Louise Tucker, Rob Winkler, Chris Wood, Judy Wood.

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INTERLUDE IN FOG

Roland C. Clement

The salt marsh sparrows—the Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammodramus caudacutus*) and its congener, the Seaside Sparrow (*Ammodramus maritimus*)—are not “backyard” species for most of us. They are obligate salt meadow nesters and this habitat is regionally restricted, the victim of much unwise land speculation, especially in this century. Getting to know these birds thus requires a special effort and, for most of us, they remain infrequently listed. Experiences to the contrary are thus scarce, pleasant, even exciting.

Four of us enjoyed getting to know these two species under unusual circumstances at Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison on August 27, 1992. We met, fortuitously, at the edge of the salt marsh east of the park's nature center, a favorite shorebird observation spot. John Gaskell was there as soon as the park gate opened at 8:00 am. Robin Chrostosky, naturalist at the nature center, and I soon joined him; Sally Ranti came a bit later.

The fog was so dense that the light southerly wind precipitated it as fine drizzle. Crazy weather in which to be out, but we were hopeful that the weather had precipitated new shorebird migrants. We could see only a few feet, but were able to observe dowitchers, Pectoral Sandpipers, yellowlegs and “peeps.” An hour or so later a “mystery peep” appeared. John photographed it and we all compared observations and made notes to help decide whether it might be a stint, as one had been reported at Milford Point earlier that week.

Meanwhile, we became aware of a busy traffic of sparrows in the twelve-foot fringe of Panic Grass and Marsh Elder (the high tide bush) that forms the marsh border. The combination of a very high tide, thanks to the new moon, and hours of drizzle had apparently caused the birds of this fifty-acre marsh to concentrate here. Obviously soaked, they fluttered noisily to the tops of the bushes and shook off the excess, sometimes merely to spray one another, as they were in a loose flock. Up and down they went, hunting invertebrates in the straw mat of the marsh border or among the open clumps of Salicornia and Spike Grass, then up to the bushes or the low roadside fence to flick their wings and otherwise try to fluff wet plumage. Seldom had any of us, salt marsh buffs that we are, seen these little marsh dwellers at such close range, and never had we been so trustingly accepted by the birds, who, though they kept an eye on us, seemed to consider us as just another vague mass in the fog-enshrouded scene. There were

at least fifteen Sharp-tails and five or more Seasides within twenty-five feet of us during that intimate session, including several young of the year.

I saw one Sharp-tail dominate a Seaside in a brief territorial contest. We were struck by the individual variation in color and markings among these birds, a reminder that our field guides provide us only one "snapshot" to serve as clues to the identification of variable populations of birds. The Sharp-tails were often conspicuously more burnt-orange than any bird artist has pictured them. The young Seasides showed no hint of the yellow lore spot one usually uses as a field mark, though the malar streak, or mustache, was prominent. Both species are also much more "leggy" than usually pictured.

To add spice to the occasion, a lovely brown, long-tailed weasel came to assess the area and stared at us quite unafraid as it wove swiftly and sinuously in and out of the debris at this high tide line. But who should fear such appreciative birders?

Evergreen Woods #122, 88 Notch Hill Rd., Branford, CT 06471

PHOTO CHALLENGE 2

Frederick Purnell, Jr.

Despite the old saying, a bird in the hand is not always to be preferred to one in the bush, at least where field identification is concerned. This is well illustrated by last issue's photo challenge, in which our subject is loudly protesting the presence of those confining fingers which also serve to conceal its feet, legs and lower belly from our view. In spite of this, it is pretty clear that our mystery bird is one of those streaky little brown jobs ("LBJs") that can cause so much confusion. The sharp, heavy bill suggests a sparrow (*Emberizzidae*) or finch (*Fringillidae*), the two groups which account for most of the difficulty in identifying LBJs. But which is it? Let's take a closer look.

Size is difficult to judge when dealing with an isolated bird, but comparison with its handy perch (!) would seem to indicate we are dealing with a bird in the medium-sized sparrow range. It is a fairly robust, long-tailed bird, the tail feathers extending well beyond the primaries. It has a flat-crowned look, though this may be due in part to its open-gaped attitude.

What about its plumage? It is prominently marked on the breast and flanks, and on what we can see of the belly, with fairly uniform broad, broken dark streaks on a whitish or very pale ground. The undertail coverts, though not clearly visible, appear to show a few short streaks. The back shows patterning as well, thin dark lines alternating with wider paler streaks. The wings exhibit paler lesser and median coverts concolor with the mantle and sharply contrasting with dark greater coverts and flight feathers. There are no well-defined wing bars, although the tips of some of the greater coverts show pale feather edging. The tail appears dark. The facial pattern is dominated by a broad, fairly uniform ear patch set off by a distinct pale supercilium extending from the base of the upper mandible to the nape and connecting behind the ear coverts with a prominent pale submoustachial stripe. The pale facial markings show some fine darker streaking yet still contrast noticeably with the darker crown and a prominent dark malar stripe. There is no apparent eye ring.

Do any sparrows show such a combination of features? Of the more familiar species, both Song and Savannah Sparrows normally show heavy breast streaking a distinct facial pattern. In both birds the breast markings frequently coalesce to form a central spot, though this is by no means always the case. Both species also show distinct dark borders to the auricular patch, formed by prominent dark postocular and moustachial stripes. Our local Song Sparrows also sport a very strong malar stripe which widens into a distinctive broad base so as to appear triangular in shape. Vesper Sparrow is also streaked and patterned, but can be eliminated by the lack of a prominent eye ring on our mystery bird and the apparent absence of white in the tail. Though some of our so-called "unstreaked" sparrows (e.g., Grasshopper, Swamp) do exhibit breast streaking in some plumages, it is never as heavy and well-defined as this.

Could we be dealing with something unusual? Lark Bunting comes to mind, but even a female would show prominent white in the wing coverts, much more than in our bird. Besides, no need to think of rarities until we've eliminated all the more obvious candidates. If our bird isn't a sparrow, it's probably a finch.

Given our bird's size and markings, we can come to focus fairly quickly on the finches of the genus *Carpodacus*, three of whose members — House Finch (*C. mexicanus*), Purple Finch (*C. purpureus*) and Cassin's Finch (*C. cassinii*) — regularly occur in North America. All can exhibit heavy streaking, particularly in female and immature plumages. How does our bird fit within this group?

We can eliminate House Finch fairly easily. The breast streaking on a female or immature House Finch can be extensive, but never as

sharply contrasting and bold as on our bird. The face pattern moreover, is far more striking than that of House Finch, which usually appears quite plain-faced. The mystery bird's strong pattern reminds us of a miniature female Rose-breasted Grosbeak. This is typical of female and immature Purple Finch, But what about Cassin's? Here the differences are a bit more subtle. Cassin's tends to be a bit larger and longer-billed than Purple Finch, although individual and geographical variation suggest caution in the



use of these features for identification purposes. Female and young Cassin's Finches are generally more finely streaked below than corresponding plumages of Purple Finch, and usually lack the sharply-defined dark malar stripe characteristic of Purple. In addition, Cassin's frequently displays a narrow pale eye ring.

The bold, rough streaking below, the strong malar stripe and lack of an eye ring all effectively eliminate Cassin's Finch. Our bird-in-hand is therefore a Purple Finch. The fine dark streaking in the supercilium, the pale tips to the greater coverts, and the scattered streaks on the undertail coverts indicate that this is a juvenile bird. The Purple Finch is an uncommon nester in Connecticut, more frequent in northerly portions of the state. This youngster was photographed by Louis Bevier in Storrs in July 1992.

73 West Ave., Darien, CT 06820

PHOTO CHALLENGE

Louis R. Bevier

Below is an unidentified photograph of a bird species that has occurred in northeastern North America. An emphasis is placed on species of regular occurrence in Connecticut and on confusing species or plumages which create as identification challenge. A detailed explanation of this Photo Challenge will appear in the next issue.



Photo Challenge 3. Identify the species. Answer next issue.

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

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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 PC 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. Good quality photographs of particular interest will also be considered. 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.

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