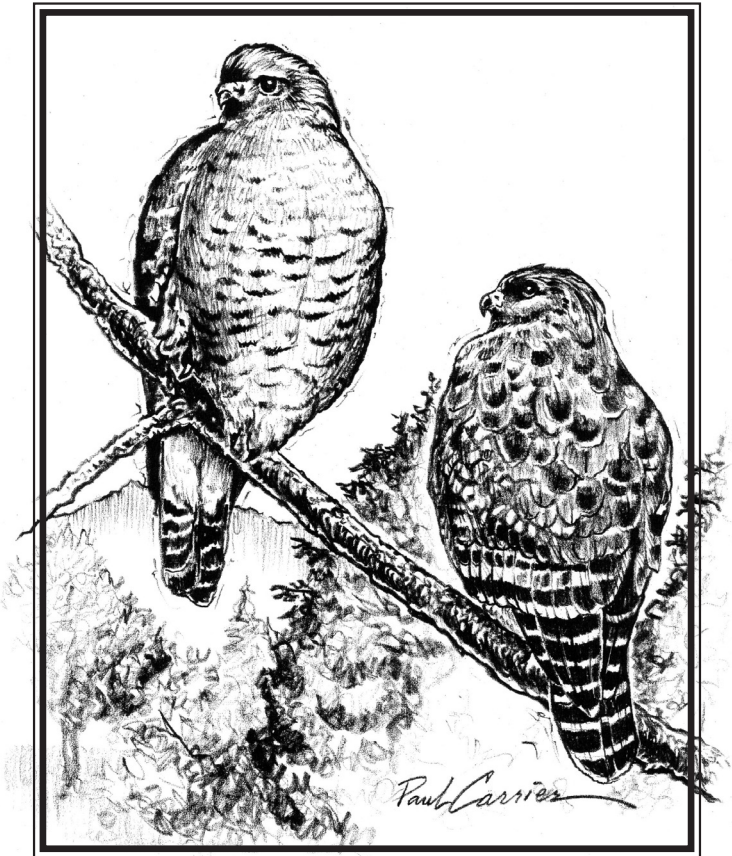


THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

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The Connecticut Warbler

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ON THE COVER

Red-shouldered Hawk

Paul Carrier spent spring and summer 2012 observing a pair of Red-shouldered Hawks that nested near his Harwinton home. He also took time to sketch them, creating an elegant drawing for our cover, a place graced many times by his artwork.

THE 2012 HARTFORD COUNTY GRASSLAND BIRD SURVEY

By Paul Cianfaglione

Throughout New England, grassland birds and their habitats have been in serious decline over the last several decades. Much of this regional decline is due in part to the changes in land use and the loss of habitat as a result of development, fragmentation and reforestation. The same holds true for grassland birds in Hartford County, where two of our state's most notable nesting species, the Upland Sandpiper and Grasshopper Sparrow, are fast disappearing.

Can the loss of grassland ecosystems in Connecticut be reversed? Is there a sustainable management plan in place to maintain grassland bird populations into the future? Will there be a place for our children to visit to hear the unique wolf-whistle call of an Upland Sandpiper or the insect-like trill of a Grasshopper Sparrow?

With help from members of the Hartford Audubon Society, we set out to try to answer some of those questions by conducting a grassland bird survey in early June. The purpose of this survey was to count both the number of individual birds as well as the number of grassland species that occurred in Hartford County during the 2012 nesting season. The results from the survey will provide a "snapshot in time" of the current status of grassland birds and the health of their remaining habitats. This count will also provide the birding public with a possible last look at Rentschler Field in East Hartford, one of two known nesting sites for the state endangered Upland Sandpiper. The development of Rentschler Field is scheduled to begin this year.

Grassland Survey Protocol

The 2012 Hartford County Grassland Bird Survey was conducted from June 2 through 9. Participants were asked to visit grassland habitats within Hartford County and record birds from a list of targeted species. The list of species is provided below along with their present Connecticut status.

Upland Sandpiper	<i>Bartramia longicauda</i>	(endangered)
Horned Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	(threatened)
Eastern Meadowlark	<i>Sturnella magna</i>	(special concern)
Vesper Sparrow	<i>Poocetes gramineus</i>	(endangered)
Savannah Sparrow	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>	(special concern)
Grasshopper Sparrow	<i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>	(endangered)
Bobolink	<i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i>	(special concern)

Participants were also asked to identify threats and disturbances to grassland birds while conducting the survey, i.e. the mowing of grassland before nesting is completed, dog walkers, model airplane activity, etc.

Weather

Daytime temperatures for the eight-day count averaged 72 degrees. The weather conditions were less favorable during the first part of the survey with cooler than normal temperatures and rain. The latter part of the week saw moderating temperatures and clear skies.

Grassland Bird Survey Results

A total of 17 observers counted and reported 305 individual grassland birds of six species. 26 grassland sites in Hartford County were visited during the eight-day count period.

Upland Sandpiper	8
Horned Lark	4
Eastern Meadowlark	18
Vesper Sparrow	0
Savannah Sparrow	83
Grasshopper Sparrow	20
Bobolink	172

Grassland Site Summaries

Bradley International Airport, Windsor Locks

The grasslands surrounding the airstrips at Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks have served as an important nesting site for many of our state-listed species. Despite the lack of access to this highly secured state property, participants were able to gather crucial grassland bird data during the count period. One of the highlights of the Bradley survey was the photographic evidence of young Upland Sandpipers with adults! In all, the airport grounds supported six sandpipers, four Horned Larks, seven Eastern Meadowlarks, 13 Savannah Sparrows, 12 Grasshopper Sparrows and 16 Bobolinks. The future success of Bradley Airport will strongly depend on the state's commitment to grassland bird preservation and proper land management.

Enfield Correctional Institution, Enfield

The grasslands surrounding this state facility cover over 120 acres. They were protected in 2000 for endangered grassland nesting birds as a result of the taking of 56.5 acres of prime habitat at Rentschler Field for a football stadium. The two species that were most affected by the loss are the Grasshopper Sparrow and the Upland Sandpiper. Our surveys at the Enfield Correctional Institution failed to find any evidence of Grasshopper Sparrow or Upland Sandpiper usage, but participants were able to locate one Eastern Meadowlark, eight Bobolinks and a pair of Savannah Sparrows. To this date, the State of Connecticut has been unsuccessful in its efforts to establish nesting habitat for state-listed endangered bird species in Enfield.

Great Meadows of Wethersfield, Rocky Hill and Glastonbury

South of Hartford along the Connecticut River lie the 4500-acres of floodplain known as the Great Meadows of Wethersfield, Rocky Hill and Glastonbury. These three communities share a strong agricultural heritage with farming

still being the main focus of activity in the meadows. The rich farmland and varied habitats within this floodplain also provide excellent nesting opportunities for grassland birds. Survey goers tallied 45 Bobolinks and 16 Savannah Sparrows. Bobolinks were especially attracted to blocks of tall grassland left fallow by local game clubs for fall pheasant hunting season.

Hartford Landfill, Hartford

Located in the North Meadows of Hartford, the 80-acre Hartford Landfill accepted its last delivery of trash in late 2008. The City of Hartford continues to own the property and may plan to develop the site into parkland. This could include walking trails, a bike path and the potential for panoramic views of the surrounding hills and Connecticut River. Some Hartford birders would want nothing more than the top of the landfill to remain as a grassland habitat. The grassland bird survey of the plateau revealed a surprising number of 31 Savannah Sparrows and a single Grasshopper Sparrow. The Savannah Sparrow numbers are likely much higher as observers only walked the periphery of the grassland so as not to damage nests in the grass.

Northwest Park, Windsor

Northwest Park is a 473-acre site located in the Town of Windsor. The park is well known to area birders as Connecticut's only grassland habitat managed specifically for the state endangered Grasshopper Sparrow. In 2002, a partnership between the Town of Windsor and the US Fish and Wildlife Service restored most of the park's grassland by planting warm-season grasses, creating over 50 acres of new habitat. Unfortunately, restored vegetation in northeastern fields dominated by warm-season grasses is generally tall and dense, and often does not provide good structure for most grassland birds (Norment 2002). This may explain why no Grasshopper Sparrows were reported during the count from Northwest Park. The abundance of most northeastern grassland birds is highest in cool-season grasslands with relatively

low, sparse cover dominated by introduced species such as timothy (Norment 2002). Recognizing their mistake, Northwest Park is currently replanting the grassland to better suit the Grasshopper Sparrows needs. The grassland survey at Northwest Park turned up only 2 Eastern Meadowlarks.

Rentschler Field, East Hartford

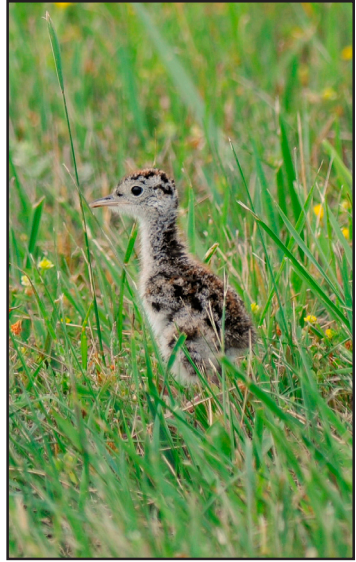
To the dismay of all Connecticut birders, the 2012 nesting season will most likely be the last one at Rentschler Field in East Hartford. Plans to develop the 500-acre grassland site are scheduled to begin this year. Rentschler Field still stands as one of the two known nesting locations in Connecticut for the state endangered Upland Sandpiper. This year's count confirmed the presence of two Upland Sandpipers on the East Hartford property. In addition to the sandpipers, survey goers also tallied four Eastern Meadowlarks, eight Savannah Sparrows, five Grasshopper Sparrows and 14 Bobolinks. It is still unclear whether the development of the remaining habitat at Rentschler Field would be a cause for another round of mitigation talks.

Samuel Wheeler Reed Park, Bloomfield

Tucked inside the middle of suburbia is a 100-acre grassland oasis called Samuel Wheeler Reed Park. This town-owned park in Bloomfield serves as one of the best sites in Hartford County to find nesting Bobolinks, a species of special concern in the state of Connecticut. Our surveys confirmed the Bobolinks' devotion to this remarkably intact site by recording over 35 birds as well as two pairs of Eastern Meadowlarks. The future of this grassland hangs in the balance with outside interests frequently proposing ideas that threaten grassland bird nesting. Further protection will certainly be needed to ensure future nesting success.

Suffield Wildlife Management Area

One of Connecticut's newest grassland preserves, Suffield Wildlife Management Area was created in 2008 by the state to offset the loss of habitat at Bradley International Airport.



Rollin Tebbetts photos

This adult and juvenile Upland Sandpiper on June 6 at Bradley International Airport illustrate this site's importance as a nesting area for grassland birds.



Paul Cianfaglione photo

Two male Bobolinks survey what had been breeding habitat before an early June hay mowing. Early mowing is a significant limiting factor in breeding success of grassland species.

This 450-acre former tobacco property, 254 acres in Southwick, Massachusetts, 196 acres in Suffield, will be jointly managed to enhance habitat for Upland Sandpipers, Grasshopper Sparrows, Eastern Meadowlarks and other species. Connecticut is currently restoring the tobacco fields to open meadows for wildlife. Even with all the hoopla and promise this acquisition has recently received, our grassland bird survey could only come across a pair of Grasshopper Sparrows and a single Savannah Sparrow.

Smaller Grassland Properties

The 2012 grassland bird count also urged participants to survey smaller, less birded places within Hartford County. These sites included Brainard Airport in Hartford, Tulmeadow Farm and Terry's Plain Road in Simsbury, Reservoir No. 3 Recreation Area in Bloomfield, Strong Road in South Windsor, Ferry Road and North Meadow Road in Windsor, Evonsion Farm in Granby, Clay Creek Drive in Suffield and Young Farm in Newington. All of these locations held less significant numbers of grassland birds with the exception of Clay Creek Drive and Ferry Road, which had a good showing of Bobolinks. The Brainard Airport location held a few pairs of nesting Upland Sandpipers as recently as 1989 (Atlas of Breeding Birds of Connecticut, 1994), but no grassland birds were found here during this nesting season.

Grassland Bird Conservation in Hartford County Today

To say that grassland bird conservation in Hartford County is controversial would be a gross understatement. Online archival searches of the Hartford Courant website list an astounding 50 articles linked to Grasshopper Sparrows alone. Many more exist for Upland Sandpipers and other grassland related issues. Unfortunately for the birds themselves, most of these articles cite the presence of grassland birds as being a roadblock to private development and expansion. Recently featured stories titled "Avians vs. Aviation", "Birds Impede Flight of Development" and "Retail Plan a Threat to Endangered Birds" paints a clear picture of what grassland birds

are truly up against today.

Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks is without question the most important location in Connecticut for nesting grassland birds. The grasslands surrounding the runways at Bradley are home to two species of endangered birds, the Upland Sandpiper and Grasshopper Sparrow, plus four other state-listed species. With development at the airport ready to drastically increase in the coming years, the State of Connecticut has been actively purchasing property around Bradley in the anticipation of losing grassland bird habitat onsite.

This same method of alternate site conservation is also taking place at Rentschler Field in East Hartford. Under a 2000 mitigation agreement, the State of Connecticut has protected 126-acres of grassland in Enfield in exchange for over 56-acres of ideal Grasshopper Sparrow and Upland Sandpiper nesting habitat in East Hartford. The replacement habitat in Enfield was deemed suitable by the state for endangered grassland birds. To this date, no Grasshopper Sparrows or Upland Sandpipers have found the Enfield property to be suitable for their nesting needs.

Are land swaps a practicable way of protecting endangered grassland birds? For Connecticut's population of Grasshopper Sparrows and Upland Sandpipers, the answer is almost certainly no. Both of these species need extensive areas of grassland to nest, which Bradley Airport and Rentschler Field currently provide. If land is acquired to specifically protect these birds, it must not only rival Bradley Airport in size, it must be intensely managed toward the needs of each species. Removing or reducing today's existing Grasshopper Sparrow and Upland Sandpiper habitat may threaten their future status as a nesting species in the state. The many small populations of Grasshopper Sparrows at places such as Suffield Wildlife Management Area and Northwest Park depend on immigrants from larger sites, so the larger sites should have high priority for conservation (Askins).

Even the protection and management of our smaller grass-

land habitats is not without controversy. A recent grassland restoration project in Windsor had to be refunded and repeated after the US Fish and Wildlife Service planted the wrong type of grasses for endangered Grasshopper Sparrows. Though I commend the US Fish and Wildlife Service for their efforts, one has to wonder how a mistake like this could ever happen when a perfect example of Grasshopper Sparrow habitat occurs less than three miles north of the restoration project.

Another small grassland site with even bigger concerns is Samuel Wheeler Reed Park in Bloomfield. Just this year alone, two proposals have come before the town council committee seeking permission to use the park's location as a war memorial and for a future land exchange with a local retirement community. Connecticut birders were quick to voice their opinions about both plans and have thus far prevented any such advances.

Threats and Disturbances to Grassland Habitats

Whereas most bird surveys focus solely on the counting of birds, I felt it was also important to identify the threats and disturbances to grassland species while out in the field. Participants reported seeing evidence of ATV tracks and dirt bike riders at the Suffield Wildlife Management Area, dog walkers at almost all of the surveyed sites, model plane flyers in the Rocky Hill Meadows and at Reservoir No. 2 in Bloomfield and day hikers straying from designated trails. But far and away the most serious threat to grassland birds we observed was the early mowing or haying of fields. It wasn't unusual to see many of our agricultural fields with freshly cut hay bales on or even before the count. Some survey goers had to sit and sadly watch as tractors turned over fields with numerous Bobolink and Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) nests in them. The early mowing that takes place in our grasslands has had a significant impact on breeding success. Bird conservation organizations should advocate a delay in mowing until most grassland birds have successfully fledged in August.

What does the future hold for Connecticut's grassland birds?

What does the future hold for Connecticut's grassland birds? That's a great question; one which will be hard to answer. Despite the imminent loss of one of the state's largest and most productive grassland sites, there is still hope that we can prevent further losses and re-establish local grassland populations.

According to this year's survey, Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks hosted an impressive five species of grassland nesting birds. In the face of mounting pressure from private development, the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection continues to promote a responsible mowing schedule at the airport that has allowed most grassland birds to successfully fledge.

Heralded as an important conservation success, the recent acquisition of 450-acres of grassland habitat along the Connecticut and Massachusetts border has the potential of becoming a vital habitat for endangered grassland birds. If managed properly, the Suffield Wildlife Management Area may be a viable nesting place for a small number of Grasshopper Sparrow and Upland Sandpiper. Additional acquisitions of this size and larger are desperately needed to maintain and grow grassland bird populations in the state

One of the most surprising bits of information to come out of the grassland bird survey were the high number of Savannah Sparrow found nesting at the top of the Hartford Landfill. Closed since 2011, the Hartford Landfill offers bird conservationists an already successful and inexpensive way to conserve grassland birds. All area landfills should be considered for grassland bird conservation when they reach their capacity.

Agricultural land in Connecticut also provides an important source of habitat for grassland nesting birds. Farming groups and environmental organizations must work together to find practical ways of increasing and improving nesting bird habi-



*Paul Cianfaglione photo
This productive grassland habitat at Rentschler Field in East Hartford is slated for development.*

tat when fields are not put into use.

Where would tomorrow's grassland birds be without education? They would probably be in a whole lot worse shape than we know right now. Now thanks to the Connecticut Audubon Society in Pomfret, people from around the state can visit and learn about grassland habitats at their new grassland bird conservation center. One of the center's main objectives will be to create an awareness of the need to preserve grassland ecosystems. Of course you can also come to the center to see grassland species such as Bobolinks and Savannah Sparrows at their 250-plus acre grassland bird sanctuary.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following volunteers for their time during the grassland bird count. Their help was very much appreciated.

Bill Asteriades, Mona Cavallero, Kathy Clark, Jan Collins, Paul Desjardins, Patrice Favreau, Denise Jernigan, Jay Kaplan, Zellene Sandler, Mike Stanley, Peter Stephan, Rollin

Tebbetts, Mike and Judy Whittlesey, Sara Zagorski, Roy Zartarian.

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State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management, Rentschler Field Stadium, East Hartford. Application NO. IW-2000-119, February 22, 2001

CONNECTICUT FIELD NOTES

Summer Season, June 1 through July 31, 2012

By Greg Hanisek

The two-month-long summer season is the year's shortest but also its most complex. To do it justice, we divide it into four segments - Northbound Migration, which continues into early June; Southbound Migration, which begins before June has ended; Lingerers, Wanderers and Strays, a catchall that includes some regular phenomena such as summering waterfowl and post-breeding herons; and the Breeding Season, which is really the heart of this report. For more on 2012's breeding birds, see the report on the Hartford County Grassland Bird Survey in this issue and the annual Summer Bird Count summary in the October issue.

Northbound Migration

Shorebird migration was still going strong on June 2, when 14 species, including a Red Knot and six White-rumped Sandpipers, were at Sandy Point In West Haven (JMu). Sandy Point held 17 White-rumped Sandpipers, consistently late migrants, on June 6 (JH). Sandy Point still held 15 on June 8, along with 150 Semipalmated Sandpipers (NB). An alternate plumage Western Sandpiper was a very good find on June 3 at Sandy Point (RPa).

Two Olive-sided Flycatchers were noted, one on June 2 in a North Stonington yard (JKe) and one on June 4 in

Boston Hollow in Ashford (DM). A Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was still northbound on June 1 at Rentschler Field in East Hartford (PCi). A Northern Parula at Greenwich Point was probably still northbound on June 11 (MSa).

Southbound Migration

A Semipalmated Sandpiper, probably southbound, was at Long Beach, Stratford, on June 26 (FM). Likely moving the same way were two Greater Yellowlegs on June 30 at Milford Point (PDe) and a Lesser Yellowlegs on June 27 at Rocky Hill Meadows (PCi). An Upland Sandpiper dropped in at Rocky

Hill Meadows, which is not known as a breeding site, on July 25 (PCo). Two Whimbrels, the only double-figure report, visited Milford Point on July 23 (FM, SZ). The season's best shorebird was a **Marbled Godwit** that made a brief stop at Milford Point on July 27 (FM). A large concentration of shorebirds at Milford Point on July 31 consisted primarily of 5,000 Semipalmated Sandpipers (FM). A Western Sandpiper was there the previous day (FM). The best inland total of Least Sandpipers was 60 on July 31 at Riverside Park sewage pond in Hartford (PCi), and a White-rumped Sandpiper was there on July 24 (JMe, BA). An adult Baird's Sandpiper, an age-class seldom encountered in the state, was at Sandy Point, West Haven, on July 30 (FM, JH et al.). Amid a smattering of single Pectoral Sandpipers were four at the Hockanum River Trail in East Hartford on July 10 (BA) and two at Mansfield Hollow Reservoir in Windham on July 11 (PR). Two Stilt Sandpipers were at Hammonasset Beach State Park in Madison (hereafter HBSP) on July 15 (PW), and singles were at Access Road

in Stratford on July 16-18 (FM et al.) and at HBSP on July 19 (KM). At least 70 Short-billed Dowitchers were at Griswold Point in Old Lyme on July 20 (HG).

By mid-July it was clear a movement of Red-breasted Nuthatches was under way, but looking back, singles in non-breeding habitat on June 4 in Avon (SS) and June 5 in a Sterling yard (RD) may have been the real precursors.

Lingers, Wanderers and Strays

A pair of Northern Pintails was still at HBSP on June 2 (PW). A male and female Greater Scaup lingered at Short Beach, Stratford, to at least June 11 (FM). Avery Point in Groton offered views of 13 Common Eiders in the Thames River mouth on July 22 (FM). Three White-winged Scoters were at Burying Hill Beach in Westport on June 5 (TG). Two Long-tailed Ducks were at both Sandy Point in West Haven on June 6 (JH et al.) and Short Beach in Stratford on June 11 (FM). June 11 also produced one in Greenwich (MSa). Red-breasted Mergansers had been regular sum-



Bryan Saulis photo

These American Coots summered at North Farms Reservoir in Wallingford, but no evidence of breeding was detected.

mer lingerers in Long Island Sound until recently; this summer the only report was of an eclipse male on June 19 at Long Beach, Stratford (FM). Two Ruddy Ducks were out of season and unexpected on July 14 at Battersson Pond, Farmington, (PCi). A lingering Horned Grebe was at Grass I., Guilford, on June 13 (JMh).

Wilson's Storm-Petrels were virtually absent in Long Island Sound this summer with just three reported from the New London-Orient, N.Y., ferry, two on July 15 (JD) and one on July 24 (SZ). The Riverside Park sewage pond in Hartford

held 53 Great Blue Herons on July 16 (PCi), and a good inland total of 28 Great Egrets was there July 31 (PCi). An inland Snowy Egret wandered up the Connecticut River to Wethersfield Cove on June 30 (PCi). At least one heron that appeared to be a hybrid between Tricolored Heron and Little Blue Heron was present this summer at HBSP (m.ob.). At least two were present last year. An article and photos analyzing the points in favor of hybrid origin appeared in the October issue. A **Mississippi Kite** was at Simsbury Farms Golf Course in Simsbury on July 13 (BT, BA et al.). There was no evidence of breeding

this year. Not surprisingly after the big fall flight, two American Coots summered with no evidence of breeding at North Farms Reservoir, Wallingford, (BSa); one was on Little Pond, Litchfield, on July 10 (RPe). Single Merlins were seen July 25 in New Britain (JMe) and July 31 in West Haven (PCo). While there was no evidence of breeding, recent nesting in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania add to the significance of these records.

At some point Ring-billed Gulls are going to be confirmed as breeding. There were 103 on a sandbar in the Connecticut River at Hartford on July 12 (PCi). Two Lesser Black-backed Gulls were at HBSP on June 2 (JMu); singles were at Short Beach, Stratford, on June 25 (FM) and at Milford Point on July 2 (PDe). The best bird of the season was a **Gull-billed Tern** found on July 1 at Milford Point (SM, BM et al.); it got even better when observers searching for that bird a few hours later realized a second one was present (CB et al.). One Caspian Tern was found on June 14 at Milford Point (CB); two were at Menunketesuck Flats,

Westbrook, on July 25 (PCo) and one was at Milford Point on July 27 (FM). It's uncertain what Black Terns are up to in mid-summer but one was at Compo Beach, Westport, on June 24 (TG) and at least one was conspicuous in the Stratford-Milford area on July 10 (CB et al.). The Stratford-Milford area held c. 800 Common Terns on July 12 (FM). The first report of Forster's Terns was three on June 23 off Westport (TG). Two **Royal Terns** were at Penfield Reef, Fairfield, on June 8 (JP, TG), and singles were at Short Beach, Stratford on July 8 (FM) and at Avery Point, Groton, on July 22 (FM). It was a good season for Black Skimmers, but they showed no evidence of breeding. The first was noted on June 6 at the Stratford Greenway (FM), followed by a high count of 13 at Milford Point on June 17 (TG), one on the East River in Guilford on June 13 (JMh), and six at Short Beach, Stratford, on June 25 (FM). One was at HBSP on July 24 (BSc, EB).

Although Black-billed Cuckoos nest in the state, one flying westward along Long Beach in Stratford on June 14 apparently had some

other agenda (GH, BBa). Two female or immature **Summer Tanagers** were reported, one on June 1 at HBSP (GN et al.) and one on July 17 in Woodbury (RN). A singing male **Dickcissel** on June 9 in Greenwich was an unexpected find on the Greenwich-Stamford SBC (JD, MW). Given last winter's lack of northern finches, a Pine Siskin at a Sterling feeder on June 28 (RD) and a flyover on July 8 at Nepaug Reservoir in New Hartford were hard to categorize (DR).

The Breeding Season

Ruffed Grouse reports continue to come almost

exclusively from northern Litchfield County. Females with chicks were seen in June in Hartland (PCa) and Barkhamsted (JW). A Pied-billed Grebe with six juveniles was a surprising find July 4 at the Branford Supply Ponds (NM). An American Bittern, a sparse resident of inland marshes, sang at Hart Pond in Goshen on June 21 (JMa). Away from regular breeding sites in the Connecticut River Valley, two Least Bitterns were at Little Pond in Litchfield on June 6 (GH et al.), with one noted June 21 (JMa). One on June 20 in the Wethersfield Great Meadows was in the Con-



Jim Carr photo
 This photo confirms successful breeding by Virginia Rail at Hammonasset Beach State Park in Madison.

necticut River Valley but not at a well-known breeding site (PCi). A canoe trip through the Nell's Island marsh at Milford Point produced a count of 17 Yellow-crowned Night-Herons on July 19 (FG). Despite its spring and summer presence throughout most of the state, Black Vulture has only been confirmed nesting a few times, so a nesting with one fledged young was a great find in Canton (JKa). An adult Sharp-shinned Hawk, a state-endangered nesting species, was a noteworthy visitor to a Canton yard on June 23 (PCi).

Virginia Rail breeding is best known at inland wetlands, but the species also has been observed in breeding season along the upland margins of coastal wetlands, where Clapper Rail is the dominant breeder. In early June a Virginia Rail was observed in the wetlands restoration area at HBSP, and on June 2 it was accompanied by three downy chicks. On June 3 the adult was seen being chased by a Clapper Rail. This is apparently the first confirmed breeding in the park (JCa et al.). Two Upland Sandpipers on June 30 at Suffield

Wildlife Management Area offered hope that a new breeding site for this state-endangered species might be established (JMa).

A calling Common Night-hawk on June 7 in East Hartford was at a place where breeding is a possibility (DCa). Three over downtown New Haven on July 1 were at the only place that has consistently produced breeding season birds in recent years (MA). The abundance of breeding Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers in northern Litchfield County was illustrated by 13 in Aton Forest in Colebrook on June 30 (FZ) and 10 in Barkhamsted on July 1 (JW). The most significant Empidonax news was the unusually widespread presence of Acadian Flycatchers. Among 30 reports were an unprecedented 10 in the Shepaug Valley area of Washington and Roxbury on the Woodbury-Roxbury Summer Bird Count (FZ). Several reports came from the species' breeding stronghold in the southeastern part of the state, but other reports were scattered from Greenwich, where one spent several days in June in the Greenwich Point holly grove (MSa et al.), to Canton

and Ashford (JKa, DM et al.).

A Horned Lark was noted June 19 at Bradley International Airport, Windsor Locks, one of very few places where the species still breeds (PDe). A Purple Martin colony in the Riverside section of Greenwich held 41 birds and 60+ eggs on June 11 (MSa). A colony in Old Saybrook had about 10 adults and four nests, with a total of 14 to 16 birds after fledging in mid-July (JOG). Three were in the vicinity of nest structures on July 10 at the UConn campus in Storrs (BH). About 10 adult and fledgling Cliff Swallows

were at a nest colony at Black Rock Dam in Thomaston on June 29 (GH). Nesting was also confirmed at a site in Canton (JKa).

Jennings Beach in Fairfield produced a high count of eight Brown Thrashers on June 16 (AB). The season's only Brewster's Warbler was at the Racebrook Tract in Orange on June 9 (CL). A Cerulean Warbler was at an apparent new location June 30 at Benedict Pond in Colebrook (FZ et al.). To illustrate the diversity of breeding warblers in Northwest Connecticut, an early June field trip to Mohawk State Forest



Mark Szantyr photo
A Grasshopper Sparrow at Roberts Field in Bristol

in Cornwall encountered 18 species (GH et al.).

Up to two Vesper Sparrows were seen in appropriate breeding habitat at Rentschler Field in East Hartford in the first half of July, but no nesting activity was noted (BA). The recently established grasslands at Suffield Wildlife Management Area held two Grasshopper Sparrows on June 10 (PDe). One was at the capped Hartford landfill on June 9 (JKa, JCo), one was at Hoskins Road in Simsbury on July 4 (PDe); and a thorough search of the Rentschler Field area on July 14 produced 18, which undoubtedly included both adults and fledglings (BA, JV). Roberts Field in Bristol held at least three breeding pairs in June (GH). The state's thinly scattered breeding population of Dark-eyed Juncos in the northern tier produced three near Mohawk Mountain in Goshen on July 22 (KF). More unexpected was one at Bent of the River Audubon Sanctuary in Southbury on July 3 (PCo).

An excellent nine Eastern Meadowlarks were at Rentschler Field on July 14 (BA, JV), and four were at Wind-

ham Airport, Windham, on July 11 (PR). Two Boat-tailed Grackles, including a singing male, were away from the species' lone New England breeding site in Stratford on July 1 at Great Island, Old Lyme (RAs). Occasionally in recent years this species has been found at other potential breeding sites, but so far no proof of nesting has been found. Purple Finches are regular but uncommon breeders, so an adult feeding two begging juveniles was a nice sighting June 19 in Mohawk State Forest, Cornwall (NB, CS).

Exotics - A pair on Mandarin Ducks were on Holly Pond, Stamford, in mid-July (DW). Two European Goldfinches were flybys July 5 in Hartford (PCi).

Observers - Ralph Amodei (RAm), Mark Aronson, Robert Askins (RAs), Bill Asteriades, Bill Banks (BBa), Eileen Barrett, Bill Batsford (BBt), Ray Belding, Nick Bonomo, Alex Burdo, Joe Cala (JCI), Dana Campbell (DCa), Jim Carr (JCa), Paul Carrier (PCa), Mona Cavalero, Paul Cianfaglione (PCi), Carol Cimino, Jonah Cohen (JCo), Patrick Comins (PCo),

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CORRECTION: Mona Cavalero and Sara Zagorski were participants in the Hartford Summer Bird Count. Their names were listed incorrectly in the count summary published in the October issue of *The Connecticut Warbler*.

NOTES ON BEHAVIOR, STATUS AND DISTRIBUTION

A study of a pair of nesting Red Shouldered Hawks' prey and other observations

All this year, I have had the privilege of observing a pair of Red-shouldered Hawks daily on my property in Harwinton. Being retired, I have the good fortune to do daily observations of these beautiful raptors and their life habits. Here is what I observed with an emphasis on hunting and food preferences.

Early in spring of 2012, I observed a bonded pair of Red-shouldered Hawks frequenting the neighborhood and especially my yard. This pair would often sit together on a tall dead hemlock tree in my yard, and once I observed copulation when the male flew over to the perched female with a stick in its talons. They eventually built a nest in my neighbor's back wooded property and raised young. This pair often utilized my yard and pond area for hunting prey.

As the summer progressed, the female Red shouldered Hawk, unlike the male, began to become more comfortable and familiar with me and the yard. She would often perch in a large open oak tree as I went about my chores, letting me approach very closely, as if I were not a threat. Once, while I grilled outside on the back deck, she flew into the maple tree just 10 feet away, as if to see exactly what I was grilling. She benefited later from the meat scraps deposited on the compost pile. This apparent tameness had another side to it. As she became familiar with me, my presence became an advantage for her in hunting success. As she perched cryptically in a tree looking for prey, my presence became a focal point for other animals as I moved about. The prey's attention was focused on me and my movements. This gave her a much better chance of catching prey unawares.

Here is a list of the prey and foods I observed both hawks catching in my yard and neighborhood throughout the summer.

Live prey taken:

(*) indicates carrying prey off in flight

Numerous chipmunks*

Once a Red Squirrel*

Once a medium sized rabbit

Once a Meadow Vole*

Three times an unidentified rodent*

Twice a Garter Snake – large and small*

Once a Dekay's Snake*

Once a probable small Milk Snake*

Very often frogs from my pond in season:

Green Frog* – often

Wood Frog* – many early season

Once a Bull Frog – ate on the spot

Once observed catching an injured homing pigeon I had. She flew after it when it landed, killing then eating it.

Dead prey (carrion) eaten:

For many years now, this female Red shouldered Hawk has visited my compost pile for table scraps.

Here is a partial list of food items taken and eaten from this source.

Chicken - cooked leftovers, pulling meat off the bone

Chicken - raw scraps such as skin and trimmings

Once a Thanksgiving turkey carcass, pulling meat off the carcass

Meat from a freshly road-killed Gray Squirrel put on compost pile. She pulled the squirrel off the pile and into a weedy area, then ate it there while checking for the absent pesky crows.

Also other meat scraps not recognized at the time

Other sightings:

I once observed her pulling a dead Opossum off the road to the curb, which she then picked at for meat as two crows nearby looked on.

Chipmunks seemed to be a favorite food while supply lasted. I counted 12 chipmunks in the yard early spring to only two left by the end of July. I observed the catching of chipmunks three times. The medium-sized rabbit was killed by her, but not carried off. I presumed the rabbit was too heavy for her to fly off with. In the early months, frogs seemed to be the easy prey of choice. My pond is occupied by several frog species, and even in the early spring days, when some ice was still on the pond, the catching of Wood Frogs was done daily.

I observed several times her hunting technique for catching frogs. She would sit 30 feet up in an overlooking cherry tree, and when she spotted a frog at the water's surface, she would fly down towards the back of the frog, splashing into the water while grasping the frog as she went in. As she floated with prey, she then flapped as an Osprey would out of the water, and flew off toward her nest. She also did a shiver in flight, as Ospreys often do to shake off water. This was repeated many times a day, presumably to feed the hungry young, for she always flew off in that direction. Once, while working in the garden, I stood up as she was flying directly over my head with a frog dangling from her talons, almost hitting me in the face with frog legs.

Another time, I observed her launch from the tree directly at a frog sitting on the mud by the water, catching it in her talons, then taking flight toward the nest.

During the mid breeding season, the harassment from smaller birds began. They would make her life miserable when discovered, as she so cryptically tried to blend in. However, in time, it seemed she just ignored their harassment and went about doing her hunting as usual. Other than the sick pigeon, which I account as an opportunistic moment, I never saw either the male or female ever try to take a bird.

I enjoyed so much, sharing the Red-shouldered Hawks' summer season together in my yard. I learned so much about these hawks, and hope there will be more discoveries in the future.

Paul Carrier, Harwinton

Using technology to identify a Bicknell's Thrush

Before dawn on the morning of October 5, 2012, I arrived at the Norwalk shoreline for a day of fishing. As I stepped out of my car into the dense morning fog, I immediately heard a loudly calling Swainson's Thrush overhead. Then another. And a third just seconds later, soon followed by a Veery and a Gray-cheeked Thrush. That night's gentle northerly winds had resulted in a large movement of nocturnal migrant passerines. Given the call volume and intensity I was hearing, it was clear that these birds were concentrated and rather low in altitude because of this coastal fog bank.

I postponed my fishing plans and continued to listen until the event ceased around dawn. After hearing dozens of thrushes including several Gray-cheeked, one particular call really caught my ear. It was Gray-cheeked-like in pattern but sounded distinctly higher-pitched and a bit wheezy. Having done much listening to recordings of Bicknell's Thrush while preparing for spring Big Days over the years, I tentatively identified the bird as this species. To my ear, it was a perfect match. But having never knowingly heard that species' flight call in life, I was hesitant to trust my ear alone. Luckily the bird called at least three more times as it passed overhead.

While I did not have any formal recording equipment with me, I was able to indirectly capture the bird's call note using the iPhone app called Spectrogram. While this program does not actually record any sound or data for saving, it does display a real-time running spectrogram of all sounds being heard by the phone's internal microphone. For those not familiar with the term, a spectrogram is a visual representation



*Steve Faccio / Vermont Center for Ecostudies
A Bicknell's Thrush, identified through in-hand observation. Nick Bonomo's
Spectrogram technique provided a confirmed observation of a fly-over bird*

of sound, plotted on a graph as frequency (AKA pitch) versus time. Spectrograms can be thought of as the fingerprints of bird vocalizations.

As noted above, this program does not save any of your data, but it does enable you to take a snapshot of a spectrogram at any given time. I was able to do this while the probable Bicknell's Thrush was calling. The resulting spectrogram was not of great quality, but was enough to provide a decent "fingerprint" that matched Bicknell's Thrush. I passed along the spectrogram to Chris Tessaglia-Hymes at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology for further study. He and his colleagues were able to analyze the spectrogram and estimate that the call's frequency peaked at approximately 5.4kHz, which is square in the range of Bicknell's Thrush and higher than any known Gray-cheeked Thrush nocturnal flight call.

Identification of birds by nocturnal flight call is a rapidly growing field of study in ornithology. Currently more and

more casual birders are getting into the act as affordable recording equipment and free computer software have become easily accessible.

Here in Connecticut the status of Bicknell's Thrush is poorly known. The bird certainly passes through (or over!) our state on its way to and from breeding grounds that lie just to our north. However the often cryptic nature of this species during migration combined with the difficulty separating it from the nearly identical Gray-cheeked Thrush have resulted in very few confirmed reports. Detecting Bicknell's Thrush via nocturnal flight call is one of very few ways to reliably identify them, perhaps every bit as good as studying the bird in-hand. A dedicated night flight call study would likely be the most accurate way of understanding just how many Bicknell's Thrush pass through Connecticut each year. At our latitude, Bicknell's Thrushes seem to occur primarily in late May/early June and late September/early October.

Nick Bonomo, Wallingford

Observations of a Sharp-shinned Hawk's feeding behavior

During a mid-morning observation, an immature female Sharp-shinned Hawk took a Mourning Dove and landed on my back deck. It noticed me watching and flew 35 feet to the ground beneath a hemlock tree and was standing on the dove's back. I got my binoculars and began to watch what was happening.

I have always been under the impression that raptors dispatched their prey almost immediately. As I watched, the Sharpie began to pull feathers from the dove. I saw that the dove was still very much alive and even tried to escape, fluttering about a foot. The Sharp-shin did not let go and continued plucking feathers near the head. This was when the dove was killed. I didn't notice the exact moment since the hawk was working quickly.

After some feathers were removed, the hawk began feeding on the dove. It would pull out some feathers, eat and repeat. After eating for perhaps 45 minutes the hawk just sat on the dove looking around. This went on for at least 20 minutes. Then she began pulling all the feathers from the right wing, then the tail and then the left wing, turning slowly on the dove's back as she did so. After this was done she began feeding again near the tail end of the dove. After a while the hawk again stopped feeding and just sat on the carcass looking around.

The crop was getting noticeably larger and I began to wonder just how much the Sharp-shinned could consume. The last time I looked out there wasn't much remaining of the dove, and the Sharp-shinned was still picking at it. After two and one half hours, the hawk grabbed what was left of the dove and disappeared, I assume to sleep off a good meal.

This was the first time I have had the opportunity to observe this entire procedure and study the bird's methods. I wondered why it didn't start on the meatier breast side of the dove first, but maybe it didn't really matter since it seemed the whole dove was eaten. Perhaps it was still learning, being a young bird.

This episode gave me the time to really study the immature Sharpie. I noticed it had a row of white spots running down each side of the back along the shoulders down to the wings. The spots ranged from about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in diameter and of no particular shape. The streaking on the breast and belly were a nice light reddish brown and fairly wide. There was a noticeable superciliary line and the eye was yellow. The terminal tail band was thin and white.

Over all it was a very interesting experience.

Carl Ekroth, Ellington

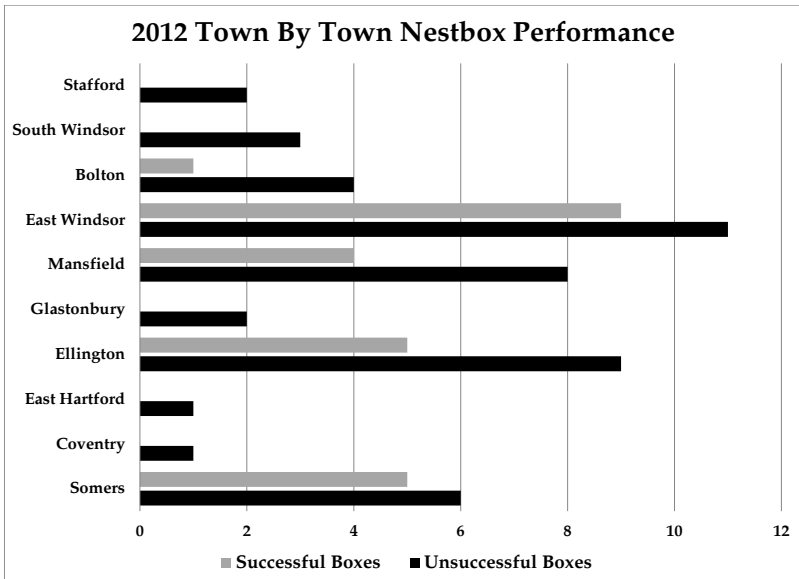
Connecticut's American Kestrel Nest Box Programs - 2012

The colorful and charismatic American Kestrel, our little farmland falcon, has been in decline for more than two decades, but its fortunes are looking up in Connecticut. In large measure this derives from the efforts of two people, Art Gingert of Cornwall in the west and Tom Sayers of Tolland in the east.

Here are some highlights of their 2012 efforts:

Gingert and Mike Dudek of Audubon Sharon worked with 28 pairs (26 successful) in 86 boxes. They fledged 102 young, with four adults and 98 nestlings banded. Successful territories were in Sharon, Lakeville, Suffield, Rocky Hill, Goshen, North Canaan and a new site in Bridgewater.

Sayers, who is beginning to work with telemetry, has graphed his program's data to illustrate a variety of aspects. The following graphs provide a snapshot of 2012.



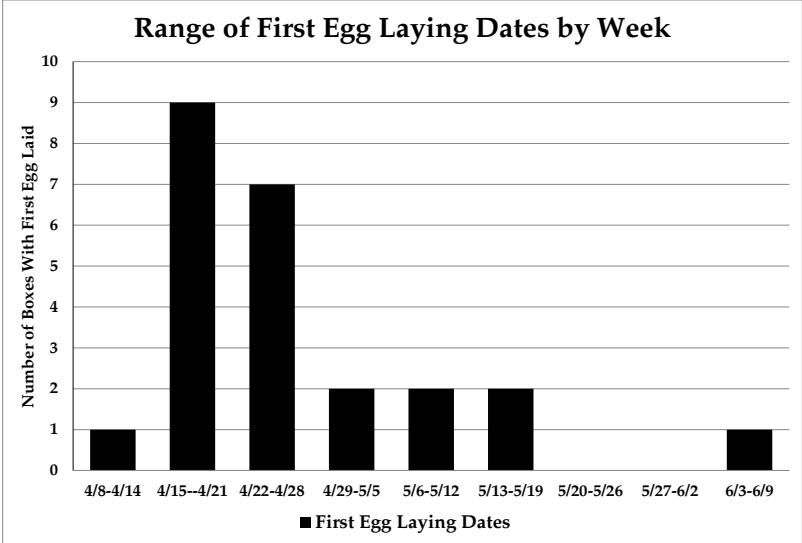
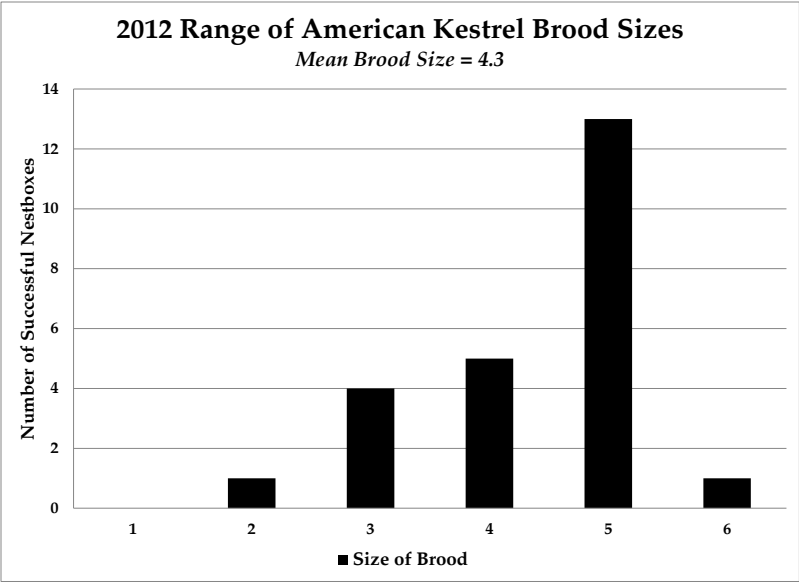


PHOTO CHALLENGE

By Julian Hough

On a fall day we come across a phalarope swimming in the water right off the surf. It spins around in tight circles, frantically pecking at the water's surface... but which species is it?

Wilson's Phalarope, unlike its two congeners, is a non-pelagic bird, favoring inland waters, lakes and brackish lagoons and other similar areas. Both Red-necked and Red Phalaropes are rare migrants in Connecticut, but in fall, any of the three species might occur in these areas, especially if displaced by bad weather. The fact the bird is on the ocean and has a stocky, not needle-like bill rules out Wilson's and leaves us with the expected Red or Red-necked.

Our bird is either a juvenile or non-breeding adult. The easiest way of ageing any phalarope in non-breeding dress is the upper part and tertial pattern – uniformly gray in adults and dark-centered in juveniles/first-winters. Our bird has a mostly gray back with blackish tertial centers, which makes it a juvenile. It has begun its post-juvenile molt into first-basic plumage, evidenced by the large, newer gray scapular feathers visible on the upper parts. The dark, retained juvenile



This juvenile Red Phalarope was photographed by Rick Gravelin on Oct. 7, 2012 at Rocky Hill Meadows in Rocky Hill, Connecticut.

feathers can be seen admixed with these, further reinforcing the age as a juvenile.

The dark ear-covert patch is rather well defined and forms a small "bandit" mask. Bill shape is often a good clue. Red's is quite thicker based and blunter-tipped, while Red-neckeds have more thin, needle-like bills. In full juvenile plumage both Red-necked and Red Phalaropes are almost identical and are best separated by Red-necked's smaller size, slightly longer neck and thinner bill. On our bird the bill is not needle-thin and is a tad bit shorter than Red-necked. Our bird is therefore a molting juvenile Red Phalarope.

In addition, Red-neckeds are earlier migrants and are more likely to be seen in full juvenile plumage unlike Red Phalaropes, which tend to occur later in the autumn, and are less likely to show such retained dark feathering on the upper parts. Red Phalaropes in full juvenile plumage are rarely seen, since they have almost invariably started their molt by the time they are likely to occur here.



Photo Challenge No. 80

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

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Send manuscripts to the Editor. Please type double spaced with ample margins, on one side of a sheet. Submit a copy on a computer disk, if possible. Style should follow usage in recent issues. All manuscripts receive peer review.

Illustrations and photographs are needed and welcome. Line art of Connecticut and regional birds should be submitted as good quality prints or in original form. All submitted materials will be returned. We can use good quality photographs of birds unaccompanied by an article but with caption including species, date, locality, and other pertinent information.

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THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

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ON THE COVER

Yellow-rumped "Audubon's" Warbler

Subspecies often present insurmountable problems in field identification, but a few - such as the two races of Yellow-rumped Warbler - are indentifiable in the field. The Avian Records Committee was presented with photos from several 2012 sightings, as well as Mark Szantyr's elegant painting.

MABEL OSGOOD WRIGHT AWARD

2012: To Florence McBride

COA President Ken Elkins presented the following at the 28th annual meeting of the Connecticut Ornithological Association on March 24, 2012.

Mabel Osgood Wright was a conservationist, nature photographer, prolific author of nature books for adults and young people, and educator. She frequently held nature classes at Birdcraft Sanctuary. She also taught at area schools, hauling along with her, large metal-cased dioramas that contained bird specimens. These were undoubtedly used to explain bird characteristics, adaptations, behavior and habitats. Mabel Osgood Wright believed that educating young people to recognize the beauty and value of nature was the key to conservation.

Most of us at this meeting have introduced others to joys of bird study. Many of us have led field trips and taught more formal seminars. Our recipient of this year's award has done the same. She has led many field trips and provided presentations to bird clubs and other groups, including programs sponsored by the Connecticut DEP and the Yale Peabody Museum. But she has done so much more. She has introduced ornithology to thousands of young people from primary grades through high school, along with hundreds of their teachers

In 1990 she began developing a "Partners in Science" program, working with teachers and their classes to get outdoor observation, with a strong focus on birds, into science programs. In spite of the increased emphasis on standardized tests that public schools are experiencing, the program is still alive, teaching scientific skills and concepts, and making interdisciplinary connections. Through direct, precise, accurate observation this birding program helps students learn science process skills and critical thinking skills. And, it gets students outdoors, where they are more likely to develop more positive attitudes towards nature, science, learning, environmen-

tal stewardship and conservation.

With encouragement from Roger Peterson, she developed a large collection of two-dimensional life-size bird models, to show field marks and other characteristics unique to sex and species. She continued to develop a large body of *Take Flight!* materials of many kinds. These include stand-alone units of study as well as audio and films. These were shared with all Hamden elementary school teachers and with many other teachers through workshops, mostly in Connecticut, but also in New York, New Jersey and Illinois.

She was the recipient of the Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History Nature Educator of the Year. She, along with Dr. Mel Goldstein and a very few others, was presented with a "Lifetime Achievement Distinguished Educator" award by the CT Science Teachers Association. She has received numerous other awards for her service to educators. It is time for the Connecticut birding community to also recognize her 22 years of service.

She is an avid birder, a meticulous and disciplined field observer, an outstanding bird videographer, and a generous teacher. On behalf of the Board of Directors and members of the Connecticut Ornithological Association, I am honored to present the 2012 Mabel Osgood Wright Award to Florence McBride.

EIGHTEENTH REPORT OF THE AVIAN RECORDS COMMITTEE OF CONNECTICUT

By Jay Kaplan and Greg Hanisek

Over the past two years, seven new species have been added to the Connecticut State List (see the Sixteenth Report of the Avian Records Committee of Connecticut, *The Connecticut Warbler*, Volume 31 No. 2 and the Seventeenth Report, *The Connecticut Warbler*, Volume 32 No. 2), bringing the total to 431 species. Several of these were brought to Connecticut courtesy of Tropical Storm Irene in 2011. In late October of 2012, Super Storm Sandy grazed the Connecticut coast, resulting in significant damage to many of our shoreline communities. Sandy sent numerous pelagic birds in our direction, but it did not provide us with any first records.

That is not to say that Connecticut's State List remains static. After careful consideration, and in consultation with wildlife biologists from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), the committee has determined that Northern Bobwhite has now been extirpated from Connecticut with respect to a wild, self-sustaining population. This is the first native species to receive such designation since the extirpation and subsequent extinction of the Passenger Pigeon at the end of the 19th century. Since that time, numerous species have ceased to breed in Connecticut, but continue to appear as occasional migrants or rare vagrants. The Northern Bobwhite, a non-migratory species, is not likely to re-appear in Connecticut in the foreseeable future.

Although it remains on the State List, it joins such birds as the Labrador Duck, Heath Hen and the aforementioned Passenger Pigeon in its unfortunate status. Sadly, unless we are successful at maintaining or, in some cases, expanding the critical habitats that certain species require, the Bobwhite will likely not be the last grassland or shrubland specialist to disappear from our state.

At each meeting, the committee takes a careful look at Connecticut's Review List to determine if certain species might be removed or added. This year, in light of ever increasing reports, Barnacle Goose has been removed from the review list. It seems as though it was only yesterday that any Barnacle Goose sighting in Connecticut was considered to be an escape. An exploding Barnacle Goose population in Greenland has demonstrated how rapidly species status can change within a decade. Following a thorough discussion, the now-annual White-faced Ibis was left on the review list due to questions about potential Glossy X White-faced Ibis hybrids.

Recently, there has been growing discussion of historical records that may be found in old manuscripts, reports or journals. These may include records for which there is some detail, but for which no specimen has been located. One such Connecticut record is a Fieldfare from 1878. A specimen mentioned in the literature had been considered lost until former ARCC member Louis Bevier this year confirmed its presence at the Field Museum in Chicago. Bevier has obtained photos of the specimen and is in the process of writing an account that will appear in a future issue of *The Connecticut Warbler*. Committee members will continue to study this and other historical records. Birders should bring any such record they may uncover in their research to the attention of the committee.

Finally, the committee has determined that it would be of value to consider "identifiable forms" of certain species. Connecticut birders may note that David Sibley has published an online list of identifiable forms, including subspecies. There is already a precedent for such work by the committee, which has in past years deliberated on such forms as "Black" Brant and "Audubon's" Warbler. The committee plans to add a list of such forms to be reviewed in a separate section on the checklist.

Members, in addition to the authors, who voted on records in this report were Nick Bonomo, Frank Gallo, Julian Hough, Frank Mantlik, Janet Mehmel, Dave Provencher, Mark Szan-

tyr, Dave Tripp and Glenn Williams. The committee thanks Janet Mehmel, who resigned because of a change in residence, for her service.

STATE LIST AND REVIEW LIST

The state list remains at 431. The committee depends on observers to submit their reports of species on the Review List (they are species marked with an asterisk on the COA Checklist plus any species new to the state). The most recent State List and Review List can be viewed on the COA Website at www.ctbirding.org. Submit written reports along with documentary material to Jay Kaplan, ARCC chairman (address below).

FORMAT

This report continues the format of previous reports. In the case of accepted records, only observers who submitted reports are listed, with the original finder listed first followed by an asterisk. Observers who submitted a photo are acknowledged with ‡ following their names. Hyphenated numbers (e.g. 02-01) preceding the observers are the ARCC file numbers. For reopened files, an "R" follows the numbers. The species are listed in order according to the AOU Checklist. Multiple records of a particular species are listed chronologically. Months of the year are shortened to their first three letters.

ACCEPTED RECORDS

CORY'S SHEARWATER (*Calonectris diomedea*) In the wake of Super Storm Sandy, several reports emerged on 30 Oct 2012 from Cornfield Point in Old Saybrook: One, likely subspecies *diomedea* (12-33 Nick Bonomo*‡, Frank Gallo); one, likely subspecies *borealis* (12-34 Nick Bonomo*‡, Frank Gallo); two that were not identified as to subspecies (12-35 Nick Bonomo*, Frank Gallo). The first observer offered the following in his report: "Cory's Shearwater consists of two subspecies, *borealis* and *diomedea* (so-called "Scopoli's"), both of which breed in the eastern North Atlantic region but disperse

to our offshore waters. ... The most solid feature used to separate the very similar taxa is underwing pattern." The photos of 12-33 are indicative of a diomedea pattern. Photos also indicated a borealis pattern on 12-34. The observer noted that recognizing these distinctions "could be of greater significance to the ARCC in the future if these two forms are split by the AOU, which is possible."

GREAT SHEARWATER (*Puffinus gravis*) Two were reported from Cornfield Point in Old Saybrook on 30 Oct 2012 in connection with Super Storm Sandy (12-36 and 12-37 Nick Bonomo*, Frank Gallo). This location proved to be ground zero for pelagic sightings during the 2012 storm, with a series of records in this report provided by Bonomo and Gallo. A Great Shearwater was also seen here during Hurricane Irene in August 2011 when Griswold pioneered this site as a prime hurricane watch point.

MANX SHEARWATER (*Puffinus puffinus*) One was seen on 28 Aug 2011 at Cornfield Point in Old Saybrook (11-35 Andy Griswold*). This observation during the surge of pelagic species produced by Hurricane Irene was part of the discovery of this location as a prime hurricane site. The positioning of this site allowed the experienced observer to study the Manx Shearwater at close range. He noted features separating it from the similar Audubon's Shearwater.

LEACH'S STORM-PETREL (*Oceanodroma leucorhoa*) The group conducting the Sandy seawatch on 30 Oct 2012 at Cornfield Point in Old Saybrook recorded a total of seven (12-45 Frank Gallo*). The experienced observer provided descriptions that eliminated similar species such as Wilson's Storm-Petrel and Band-rumped Storm-Petrel. (Hurricane Irene added the latter to the State List).

BROWN PELICAN (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) An immature was in flight on 1 Nov 2012 at Sandy Point in West Haven (12-27 Frank Mantlik*†). An immature was in flight at Stratford Point in Stratford on 2 Nov 2012 (12-17 Scott Kruitbosch*†). It is impossible to determine if one or two birds were involved.

The two hurricanes offered Connecticut birders ample opportunity to see this species, with multiple sightings (of an unknown number of immature birds) in the wake of Irene from 29 Aug to 14 Nov 2011 spanning Old Lyme to Greenwich.

WHITE IBIS (*Eudocimus albus*) A juvenile was seen and photographed on 6 Sep 2012 at Sandy Point in West Haven and on 17 Sep 2012 in Stratford (12-29 John Oshlick*, Frank Mantlik‡, Ross Allen‡). A juvenile was seen on 29 Sep 2012 in the East River marshes in Guilford (11-31 Samantha Robinson*‡). A juvenile was seen from 13 Dec 2012 through at least 20 Jan 2013, primarily at McKinney National Wildlife Refuge in Stratford (12-30 Frank Mantlik*‡, Mark Szantyr‡, Frank Gallo‡). The exact number of birds involved in these sightings is impossible to determine, but plumage differences indicate at least two and timing suggests three. Although all were juveniles, the Guilford bird showed more white plumage molting in on its mantle than the other two. The idea that a bird seen earlier in September could have molted in more white by late September was discussed, but it seemed most likely this was a different bird. The long-staying bird in December-January looked very much like the one seen in early September, meaning it could not have been the more heavily molted Guilford bird. Nothing about its plumage could rule out its being the same bird seen in early September, but the almost three-month gap before its December appearance suggests it was a different individual.

WHITE-FACED IBIS (*Plegadis chihi*) One was found on 15 May 2012 at Sherwood Island State Park in Westport (12-41 Tina Green*, Frank Mantlik‡). The date corresponded with the late spring-early summer period that has produced most sightings. The photographer wrote "...this bird is an adult, based on the brightness and iridescence of the body feathers and the red-wine colored legs. It is even brighter than the nearby Glossy Ibis. It very much fits the illustration by Sibley (p. 66) of a 'drab adult'." It lacked intermediate features in either plumage or body parts that would suggest hybridization with Glossy Ibis..



Frank Gallo photo
Ash-throated Flycatcher, 12 Nov 2012 in Nw Haven



Richard Jenkins photo
Varied Thrush, 20 Feb 2013 in Milford



Mark Szantyr photo
White Ibis, 28 Dec 2012 in Stratford



Bullock's Oriole, 18 Nov 2012 in Ellington

Deborah McTigue photo



Le Conte's Sparrow, 15 Dec 2012 in Bloomfield

Joseph Cala photo

CURLEW SANDPIPER (*Calidris ferruginea*) A bird in almost full alternate plumage was found on 15 May 2012 at Hammonasset Beach State Park in Madison (12-13 Tina Green*). The bird was seen briefly but described well in its distinctive plumage. The date was typical for appearances by this Eurasian species in the Northeast.

RED PHALAROPE (*Phalaropus fulicarius*) A molting juvenile was seen and well-photographed on 7 Oct 2012 at Rocky Hill Meadows, Rocky Hill (12-21 Richard Gravlin*†). Hurricane Sandy brought a major fallout on 30 Oct 2012. At Cornfield Point in Old Saybrook, at least 34 were seen in passage by a group of experienced observers (12-44 Frank Gallo†). At Stratford Point another experienced group saw at least six (12-22 Scott Kruitbosch*). At Great Pond in Simsbury a single bird represented the only significant inland report of a pelagic species delivered by Sandy (12-23 Douglas Beach*†, Roger Preston*).

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE (*Rissa tridactyla*) Super Storm Sandy produced three documented reports on 30 Oct 2012: an adult at Stratford Point in Stratford (12-26 Greg Hanisek*, Scott Kruitbosch, Frank Mantlik); an immature from Cornfield Point in Old Saybrook (12-38 Nick Bonomo*,



Frank Gallo photo

Red Phalarope, 30 Oct 2012 in Old Saybrook



Dovekie, 1 Dec 2012 in Stonington

Russ Smiley photo

Frank Gallo); and an adult from Cornfield Point in Old Saybrook (12-39 Nick Bonomo*). Another adult was seen from the New London-Orient, N.Y., ferry on 27 Dec 2012 (12-28 Frank Mantlik*‡).

GULL-BILLED TERN (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) Two were seen by multiple observers on 1 July 2012 at the Connecticut Audubon Coastal Center at Milford Point (12-15 Sean Murtha*, Charles Barnard, James Dugan‡). This is the first time that multiple individuals of this species have been seen together in Connecticut.

SANDWICH TERN (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) One was found 26 Aug 2012 at Short Beach in Stratford (12-32 Charles Barnard Jr.*‡). This was a sixth state record but the fourth since 2007. The four recent ones have all been at the mouth of the Housatonic River. An observer familiar with the species first heard and then saw the bird, which was photographed. The photos were not of good quality, but the observer provided an excellent written description that covered all of the key features. With the increasing effective use of digital photography to identify birds, it pays to bear in mind that good notes taken at the time of observation in some cases will prove equally or more useful.

DOVEKIE (*Alle alle*) One was seen sitting close to shore on 1 Dec 2012 at Stonington Point, Stonington (12-19 Russ Smiley*‡, Nick Bonomo, Frank Gallo). When additional birders arrived to look for this rare visitor to Long Island Sound, a Great Black-backed Gull was observed eating what no doubt was the same Dovekie. It had been seen in proximity to Great Black-backed when the original observer left.

COMMON MURRE (*Uria aalge*) One was seen and photographed 5 Jan 2013 on a ferry crossing from New London to Orient, N.Y. (13-01 Bill Asteriades‡). After first being documented in the state in January 2011, this species has shown a willingness to enter the eastern end of Long Island Sound. This record followed several sightings in winter 2011-12 on the same ferry route.

CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW (*Antrostomus carolinensis*) One was flushed during daylight on 4 May 2012 at Stratford Point in Stratford (12-14 Scott Kruitbosch*, Frank Mantlik, Frank Gallo). The bird was refound at 8:15 p.m., when it was observed sitting on a fence. It was then seen both sitting and in flight. It did not sing but repeatedly gave grunting calls typical of this species. Lack of white in the tail, along with the fact it did not sing, suggested it was a female.

SAY'S PHOEBE (*Sayornis saya*) One was found on 12 Oct 2012 on private property with restricted access in Shelton (12-24 Anthony Zemba*). This represents the first state record since a specimen was collected on 15 Dec 1916 in the Gaylordsville section of New Milford.

ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus cinerascens*) One was found on 12 Nov 2012 during the hawk watch at Lighthouse Point Park in New Haven (12-16 Greg Hanisek*, Frank Mantlik‡, Frank Gallo‡, Tim Antanaitis‡). This bird, a fourth state record, appeared during the tight November-December window typical of appearances at our latitude in the East. It spent the afternoon cooperatively posing and flycatching. This allowed for close study and produced excellent photographs that helped eliminate other members of this

look-alike genus. The photos show retained rufous rectrices that indicate a bird in its first fall.

VARIED THRUSH (*Ixoreus naevius*) One visited a feeder in Milford on 20-22 Feb 2013 (13-02 Richard Jenkins*†). All previous records of this handsome thrush from the Pacific Northwest have occurred at feeders.

YELLOW-RUMPED "AUDUBON'S" WARBLER (*Setophaga coronata auduboni*) One was seen by several birders on 11 Nov 2012 at Long Beach in Stratford (12-47 Charles Barnard*, Frank Gallo‡, Nick Bonomo‡); one was seen on 12-13 Nov 2012 at Silver Sands State Park in Milford (12-48 John Oslick*, Frank Gallo‡); and one was seen at East Shore Park in New Haven on 17-23 Nov 2012 (12-49 Frank Gallo‡, Greg Hanisek, Mark Szantyr). This western counterpart of our common Yellow-rumped "Myrtle" Warbler is separable in the field on both appearance and call note. Examination of photos suggests three separate birds were involved in this unprecedented incursion.

WESTERN TANAGER (*Piranga ludoviciana*) One was photographed on 13 Feb 2012 at a feeder in front of the Connecticut Audubon Center in Fairfield (12-11 Mike Carretta*†). One was photographed on 7 April 2012 along the Far Mill River in Stratford (12-43 Donna Caporaso*†). In both cases the bird were not immediately identified as to species but the photos allowed for positive identification. This makes four confirmed reports over the past year.

Le CONTE'S SPARROW (*Ammodramus leconteii*) One was found on 16 Oct 2012 in weedy growth around a town skating pond at Durham Meadows in Durham (12-46 Anthony Zemba*, Julian Hough). Hough provided a detailed sketch. One was a star attraction on the Hartford Christmas Bird Count on 15 Dec 2012 at Bloomfield Community Gardens in Bloomfield (21-20 Jamie Meyers*, David Lawton*, Joseph Cala‡). This brings the number of confirmed state records to eight.

BULLOCK'S ORIOLE (*Icterus bullockii*) A female/immature male visited a feeder in Ellington from 18 Nov 2012 to 21 March 2013 (12-18 Deborah McTigue*‡, Mark Szantyr‡, Greg Hanisek). On 21 March 2013, when the bird appeared to be injured, McTigue was able to capture and deliver it into care by rehabilitator Jayne Neville in Southington.

HOARY REDPOLL (*Acanthis hornemanni*) One was reported from a feeder in Winchester on 1 Jan 2013 (13-05 Bill Asteriades*‡, Jim Dugan‡, Jamie Meyers‡). One was reported from the same Winchester feeder on 13 Jan 2012 (13-08 Frank Gallo*). One was reported from a feeder in Goshen on 7 Feb 2013 (13-03 Nick Bonomo*‡). All of these birds were believed to belong to the more widespread subspecies *A. h. exilipes* rather than the larger and generally paler *A. h. hornemanni*, sometimes known as "Greenland" Redpoll. Redpoll identification is fraught with difficulty and uncertainty, so much so that talk of "lumping" the two species is often in the air. The difficulties hit home with the many birders who were welcomed to visit the Rosgen feeder in Winsted, where at least two Hoary Redpolls were reported over a period of more than a month. Many expressed frustration with the difficult process of getting satisfactory looks at features consistent with a Hoary Redpoll, and few provided documentation to ARCC. The three accepted by the committee came with detailed descriptions and/or photos (See the Photo Challenge on Page 75 and additional discussion below under Records Not Accepted.).

RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED – origin questionable

TRUMPETER SWAN (*Cygnus buccinator*) One was seen on 11 Jan 2013 at Konold's Pond in Woodbridge, with some sightings before and after that date (13-06 Frank Gallo*‡). Three, an adult and two immatures, were seen in a field on River Road in Southbury on 10 March 2013 (13-07 Barbara Rzasa*‡, Peter Rzasa). The status of the now-annual Trumpeter Swans visiting Connecticut, primarily in early spring, has been addressed in several recent ARCC reports. Essentially, the birds are the product of introduced populations east of their native range, and answers are still being sought



Mike Carretta photo
Western Tanager, 13 Feb 2012 in Fairfield.

on whether they've become established sufficiently to be considered self-sustaining.

RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED

SOOTY TERN (*Onychoprion fuscatus*) One was reported on 2 Sep 2011 at Stratford Point in Stratford (11-30). The sighting came under closer scrutiny than the many Sooty Terns reported during the main surge of Hurricane Irene on 28 Aug 2011 because it was five days after the storm's passage. The timing, the quick fly-by nature of the observation and lack of some key features in the description contributed to the committee's decision.

LARK BUNTING (*Calamospiza melanocorys*) One was reported on 18 Aug 2012 at Rocky Hill Meadows in Rocky Hill (12-40). Two observers saw the bird in a mixed flock of icterids, but it was somewhat elusive and did not afford extended views. Some features consistent with Lark Bunting were noted but some key points of identification, such as the heavy, triangular bill, were not viewable as the bird moved about, never offering an extended or complete view. There

are only two previous records, one of a banded bird and both documented with photographs.

WESTERN TANAGER (*Piranga ludoviciana*) One was reported from Hammonasset Beach State Park in Madison on 21 Sep 2012 (12-12). The bird was elusive and hard to observe. The observer was able to get a series of photos of marginal quality but they proved sufficient to allow the committee to make a decision. Under magnification they showed several features that were inconsistent with Western Tanager.

HOARY REDPOLL (*Acanthis hornemanni*) One was reported on 2 Jan 2013 from a Winchester feeder where one or two of this species drew crowds of birders throughout the month. (13-04). The observer provided a thorough report that noted his ability to see some but not all of the features considered in total to provide a sufficient identification of this species. The observer noted that a companion wanted to see additional features before committing to an identification. A large and exceptionally pink bird was well-photographed at the Winchester feeder on 13 Jan 2013 (13-09). The observer was uncertain of its identity, either to species or subspecies. In seeking expert opinions, it became clear that the identification of this bird should probably remain unresolved, a valid and probably necessary conclusion in the case of many difficult redpolls. David Sibley, responding to a query from the observer, wrote: "This is a really interesting redpoll and it fits a pattern. The large size is outside the range of variation of normal Common Redpoll (*Acanthis flammea*) so it must be a 'Greater' Common Redpoll (*Acanthis flammea rostrata*) or a 'Hornemann's' (aka Greenland) Hoary Redpoll (*Acanthis hornemanni hornemanni*) but it's intermediate in color." Sibley provided a link to photos of similar birds he's seen and wrote: "I still don't know what they are – maybe those Greenland subspecies are more variable than southern ones or maybe these are hybrid Hoary X Common from the Greenland/Baffin area."

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2012 FALL HAWK WATCH

By Steve Mayo and Neil Currie

Our Connecticut Fall season starts in late August. Hawks are relatively few, and it is sometimes difficult to determine whether the hawks, especially Osprey, are actually migrating. There was some coverage at Poquonock, Boothe Memorial Park, Stratford, (Boothe), and Lighthouse Point Park (Lighthouse), but the majority of the 119 hours were logged at Quaker Ridge, Greenwich. The only real highlight occurred on a clear Aug. 29 day at Quaker Ridge, when 48 hawks, including nine Broad-winged hawks and 15 Osprey, were seen going in the "right direction."

Early September lacked favorable winds, but Broad-winged Hawks started pouring through our state on Sept. 10, a full day after a passing front. For the next two days as high pressure moved in, Johnnycake Mountain, Burlington (Johnnycake), Chestnut Hill, Litchfield, and Botsford Hill, Bridgewater, all had good flights. The sites closer to the coast did even better. On Sept. 11, Boothe, Lighthouse and Quaker Ridge all passed the thousand-mark for Broadwings.

Another low passed during the very early morning hours of Sept. 15, leaving clear skies with a few fair weather cumulus clouds. Booth Hill, West Hartland, tallied 233 Broad-winged Hawks, an impressive 15 Bald Eagles and even an early season Golden Eagle. Johnnycake counted 1,026 Broadwings and Waveny Park (New Canaan) tallied 821. Quaker Ridge had 3,116, including 1,100 at treetop level during the last hour of coverage! The next day, twice as many Broad-winged Hawks were counted throughout Connecticut sites. The major inland sites were still counting daily totals well into the hundreds. These mostly comprised large nonsocial flocks called kettles. For example, Botsford Hill tallied 925. Chestnut Hill, Litchfield, had 713, contributing to their best season total since 2009. Boothe had their best flight of the season (1,961) and Quaker Ridge took first prize with 5,432 Broadwings, before the winds shifted southerly. During

all this excitement, Lighthouse had a good push of Sharp-shinned Hawks - and virtually no Broadwings.

A third and final push of Broad-winged Hawks occurred after a passing front dumped rain throughout the state on Sept.18. The next day Heritage Village, Southbury, and Boothe each passed the 500 mark, Johnnycake had 1,297, and Quaker Ridged ticked 3,665, including 900 in a single kettle. On the 20th, things quieted down toward the coast, but Chestnut Ridge counted 1,305 (including 1,244 in a single hour) and Johnnycake had 1,892. Quaker Ridge had 508 Broadwings after the next passing front on Sept. 27. After that, the flight slowed to a trickle. But Broad-winged Hawks do linger. The seasons' last sightings were at Boothe (10/17), Quaker Ridge (11/1) and Lighthouse (11/14).

These September fronts brought good numbers of other raptors. Good site totals for Osprey included 25 at Botsford Hill (9/12), 48 at Quaker Ridge (9/16), 64 at Lighthouse (9/10) and 67 at Boothe (9/16). While Osprey are holding steady or decreasing, Bald Eagle counts continue to rise. September 15 was a great day for this species. In addition to the Booth Hill flight previously mentioned, there were 21 at Quaker Ridge and 27 at Lighthouse. Sharp-shinned hawks also began their migration with 86 at Boothe (9/11), 212 at Quaker Ridge (9/27) and 346 at Lighthouse (9/10). American Kestrels continue their downward slide, but good September flights included 72 at Quaker Ridge (9/27) and 115 throughout the afternoon of 9/23 at Lighthouse.

Rain, fog and southwest winds predominated the early days of October. So when the weather cleared, and some light northerly winds materialized, hawks started really moving. Lighthouse had a daily average of 426 from Octo. 5-9, which included a late 10/8 flight of 117 low, westbound Broadwings, and 30 Bald Eagles that same day. On Oct. 6, an impressive 66 Peregrine Falcons bolted from the north-east tree line of the park to the southwest, over long Island Sound. This helped to set a Lighthouse season record for this large falcon. Cooper's Hawks still tend to peak a bit later

than Sharp-shinned Hawks. Some of the high daily Cooper's Hawk totals included 54 at Quaker Ridge 10/17 and 61 at Boothe on 10/8. There were 173 at Lighthouse on 10/16, along with 298 "Sharpies" and a season-record 151 American Kestrels.

Quaker Ridge counted an impressive 285 Turkey Vultures as part of a 511-hawk day on Oct. 13. Quaker Ridge also had a remarkable flight of 119 Red-shouldered Hawks on 10/17. On Oct. 21, 14 Bald Eagles were counted at Greenwich, including five in one kettle. Both Quaker Ridge and Lighthouse posted season records for this majestic species. On Oct. 22, Lighthouse had a late-season push of 227 Sharp-shinned hawks, but this didn't prevent 2013 from being the worst Sharpie year since the site went to full daily coverage in the early 1980s. Quaker Ridge had another good flight of Turkey Vultures on 10/26, before Hurricane Sandy temporarily shut down the watches. Lighthouse had its worst season for Turkey Vulture since 2001.

Early November was a great time to observe Buteos. Quaker Ridge added another 100 Red-shouldered Hawks on 11/4 which helped to set a seasonal record for that site. Daily records for Red-tailed Hawks included 154 on 11/3 and 145 on 11/4. Quaker Ridge had its best season for Red-tailed Hawk since 1995. The latter half of the month had some good northerly winds, resulting in massive dawn blackbird flights, but few hawks. And in spite of a couple hours at Lighthouse, there were no migrating hawks logged for December.

Additional data, including daily summary reports for 2012 and those of previous years, may be obtained from the Hawk Migration of North America website, hawkcount.org.

Volunteers who counted at our Connecticut sites in 2012 included: Renee Baade, David Babington, James Bair, Bill Banks, Tom Baptist, Tom Barker, Charlie Barnard, Dan Barvir, Bill Batsford, Steve Beal, Eileen Becker-Dunn, Gail Benson, Ray Belding, Debbie Bishop, Nick Bonomo, Belinda Boone, Polly Brody, Dana Campbell, Paul Carrier, Erin

Caruso, Paul Cashman, Al Collins, Annette Cunniffe, Neil Currie, Paul Desjardins, Cindy DiMattia, Randy Domina, Diane Edwards, Cindy Ehrlinger, James Fischer, Steve Foisey, Frank Gallo, Ted Gilman, Tina Green, Joyce Grohoski, Norbert Grohoski, Frank Guida, Tony Hager, Nicki Hall, Greg Hanisek, Carol Hannon, Dennis Hannon, Tom Hanrahan, Roy Harvey, Tom Hook, Julian Hough, Lynn James, Elsbeth Johnson, Lynn Jones, Anne Kehmna, Sulmaan Khan, Scott Kruitbosch, Jane Low, Frank Mantlik, Jerry Marcellano, John Marshall, Jeff Martin, Shaun Martin, Steve Mayo, Robin McAllister, Ken Merman, Ken Merrifield, Nancy Meyer-Lustman, Pam Miller, Don Morgan, Judy Moore, Marty Moore, Tom Murray, Ben Oko, Bob Pearson, Pattie Pickard, Art Potwin, Donna Potwin, Mike Reese, Paul Roberts, David Salmon, Meredith Sampson, Ronnie Santo, Sol Satin, Penny Slocum, Dori Sosensky, Maria Stockmal, Luke Tiller, Carol Titus, Tony Tortora, Mike Usai, Lisa Wahle, Bill Wallace, Steve Walter, Paul Wolter, Mike Warner, Joe Wojtanowski, Sara Zagorski, Joe Zeranski.



Bruce Finnan photo

A kettle of Broad-winged Hawks.

Connecticut - All Lookouts - Fall 2012

Lookout	Town	Hours	BV	TV	OS	BE	NH	SS	CH	NG	RS	BW
INLAND GROUP												
Booth Hill	West Hartland	10		2	6	17	1	39	1	1		1113
Botsford Hill	Bridgewater	68			67	12	7	176	2			2827
Chestnut Hill	Litchfield	61			31	21		48	12			4048
Heritage Village	Southernbury	6			4	2		3				507
Johnnycake Mt.	Burlington	50	5		86	30		146	12		1	5905
MiddleSchool	Torrington	63			23	9		28	5			2009
White Memorial	Litchfield	49			9	9	5	2	7	2	21	155
Poquonock	South Windsor	19			2							107
INLAND TOTAL		326	5	2	228	100	13	442	39	3	22	16671

Connecticut - All Lookouts - Fall 2012

Lookout	Town	Hours	BV	TV	OS	BE	NH	SS	CH	NG	RS	BW
COASTAL GROUP												
Boothe Memorial	Stratford	141	16	135	372	134	68	1242	167	2	41	3404
Lighthouse Point	New Haven	593	3	297	1056	226	343	4105	1724	9	154	1724
Quaker Ridge	Greenwich	579	20	1138	557	239	159	3316	502	3	437	18347
Waveny Park	New Canaan	37			10	8	2	51	7			1581
COASTAL TOTAL		1350	39	1570	1995	607	572	8714	2400	14	632	25056
Lighthouse Point	New Haven	593	3	297	1056	226	343	4105	1724	9	154	1724
Quaker Ridge	Greenwich	579	20	1138	557	239	159	3316	502	3	437	18347
All Other Lookouts		504	21	137	610	242	83	1735	213	5	63	21656
Total		1676	44	1572	2223	707	585	9156	2439	17	654	41727

Connecticut - All Lookouts - Fall 2012

Lookout	Town	Hours	RT	RL	GE	AK	ML	PG	uR	TOTAL
INLAND GROUP										
Booth Hill	W. Hartland	10			1	6	3			1190
Botsford Hill	Bridgewater	68				22	2		10	3125
Chestnut Hill	Litchfield	61				18	1		8	4187
Heritage Village	Southbury	6								516
Johnnycake Mt.	Burlington	50			1	47	2	2		6242
MiddleSchool	Torrington	63				15	4		19	2113
White Memorial	Litchfield	49	15		1	13	3	2	11	322
Poquonock	South Windsor	19				1	1			111
INLAND TOTAL		326	15	0	3	122	16	4	48	17806

Connecticut - All Lookouts - Fall 2012

Lookout	Town	Hours	RT	RL	GE	AK	ML	PG	uR	TOTAL
COASTAL GROUP										
Boothe Memorial	Stratford	141	203			120	23	11	68	6763
Lighthouse Point	New Haven	593	449	2	4	1267	286	244	328	11936
Quaker Ridge	Greenwich	579	433		5	474	82	24	9	25745
Waveny Park	New Canaan	37				30	3	3	8	1704
COASTAL TOTAL		1350	1085	2	9	1891	394	282	413	46148
Lighthouse Point		593	449	2	4	1267	286	244	328	11936
Quaker Ridge		579	433		5	474	82	24	9	25745
All Other Lookouts		504	218		3	272	41	18	124	17044
Total		1676	1100	2	12	2013	409	286	461	54725

Broadwing Flight - Connecticut - Fall 2012

INLAND GROUP														
	September												October	
Lookout	thru 10	11	thru 14	15	16	thru 18	19	thru 22	23	24	thru 27	thru 30		Total
Booth Hill				233				880						1113
Botsford Hill	101	185	527	167	925	473	296	41	96	16				2827
Chestnut Hill	321	376	466	312	713	294	46	1308	156		56			4048
Heritage Village							507							507
Johnnycake Mt.	106	575	20	1026	870	0	1297	1905	106					5905
Middle School	26	132	11	153	541	345	157	632	12	0				2009
White Memorial	79	39			29		3	2			3			155
Poquonock	102		5											107
	735	1307	1029	1891	3078	1112	2306	4768	370	16	59			

Broadwing Flight - Connecticut - Fall 2012

COASTAL GROUP															
	Aug	Sept												Oct/ Nov	
Lookout		thru 10	11	thru 14	15	16	thru 18	19	thru 22	23	24	thru 27	thru 30		Total
Boothe Memorial	5	435	1319	1	160	1961		543		49		37		35	4545
Lighthouse Point	0	271	1123	1	4	6	0	24	4	21	2	2	43	223	1724
Quaker Ridge	18	921	1318	190	3116	5432	584	3665	81	1366	780	581	169	128	18349
Waveny Park		40	17		821	636		67							1581
TOTAL All Sites	23	3058	5084	1221	5992	11113	1696	6605	4853	1152	798	679	212	383	42869

BV-Black Vulture	SS-Sharp-shinned Hawk	BW-Broad-winged Hawk	AK-American Kestrel
TV-Turkey Vulture	CH-Cooper's Hawk	RT-Red-tailed Hawk	ML-Merlin
OS-Osprey	NG-Northern Goshawk	RL-Rough-legged Hawk	PG-Peregrine Falcon
BE-Bald Eagle	RS-Red-shouldered Hawk	GE-Golden Eagle	uR- Unidentified Raptor
NH-Northern Harrier			

Hawk Watch - Lighthouse Point, New Haven - Fall 2012

	Hours	BV	TV	OS	BE	NH	SS	CH	NG	RS	BW	RT	RL	GE	AK	ML	PF	uR	Total
August	24			9		4	5								1	2			21
September	209		19	463	96	127	1612	247	0	13	1501	8	0	0	503	79	39	122	4829
October	201	1	205	572	116	186	2163	985	3	47	221	103	0	1	751	196	168	141	5859
November	155	2	73	11	14	26	325	208	6	94	2	338	2	3	12	9	37	65	1227
December	4																		0
Total	593	3	297	1055	226	343	4105	1440	9	154	1724	449	2	4	1267	286	244	328	11936

Hawk Watch - Quaker Ridge, Greenwich - Fall 2012

	Hours	BV	TV	OS	BE	NH	SS	CH	NG	RS	BW	RT	RL	GE	AK	ML	PF	uR	Total
August	87			35	5	2	4	1			18				9	1	1		76
September	197		1	311	137	95	1446	95		6	18203	7		1	269	35	4	4	20614
October	186	12	982	211	84	59	1786	360	1	244	125	46		3	191	44	19	2	4169
November	109	8	155	0	13	3	80	46	2	187	1	380		1	5	2		3	886
December																			
Total	579	20	1138	557	239	159	3316	502	3	437	18347	433	0	5	474	82	24	9	25745

CONNECTICUT FIELD NOTES

Fall Season, Aug. 1 through Nov 30, 2012

By Greg Hanisek

Autumn is our longest and consistently our most productive season. When you throw in a monumental "superstorm," it becomes memorable in a variety of ways, some of them unpleasant. From the narrow perspective of birders who managed to weather the onslaught at least relatively unscathed, it was a season that produced an exciting array of avian activity. In addition to storm birds, autumn 2012 brought a much-anticipated flight of northern finches, the now-expected array of rare geese, the start of another good alcid flight and plenty of general rarities, both cooperative and elusive. Because Sandy made such a mark on the season, this report begins with a section devoted to the three-day period centered on the storm's major impact on Oct. 30.

The Sandy Vigil

Just ahead of Sandy's violent arrival, observers at Shippan Point, Stamford, noted two **Red Phalaropes** and two **Dovekies** on Oct. 29 (PDu, JD). The only other reports of note that day were of a **Sooty/Bridled Tern** at Old Saybrook (NB, JMu), plus two **Razorbills** and a **Royal Tern** at Stratford (FMa).

Oct. 30 was ground zero. A group of observers at Old Saybrook saw: four **Cory's Shearwaters**, two **Great Shearwaters**, two large shearwater sp., seven **Leach's Storm-Petrels**, 34 **Red Phala-**

ropes, two **Black-legged Kittiwakes**, 100+ **Forster's Terns**, five **Royal Terns** and one **Parasitic Jaeger** (AG, NB, FG, JMu).

A group in Stratford saw six **Red Phalaropes** and one **Black-legged Kittiwake** (SK et al.). In Stamford, the Dugans returned to Shippan and saw three **Leach's Storm-Petrels**, one **Sooty/Bridled Tern** and one **Pomarine Jaeger** (PDu, JD, JHo).

In Madison, there were reports of one **Great Shearwater** (MA), a **Brown Pelican** (TAn) and c. 30 unidentified large shearwaters streaming

east along with two large dark terns and three **Black-legged Kittiwakes** (KM). In Fairfield, a group (AB et al.) saw one **Leach's Storm-Petrel**, one storm-petrel sp, one **Black-legged Kittiwake** and one **Sooty/Bridled Tern**. Waterford produced one **Black-legged Kittiwake** (DP), and at Stonington Point, a non-breeding plumaged **Pacific Loon** was reported flying by at approximately 30 yards (TAu). The only inland report was of a **Red Phalarope** at Great Pond in Simsbury (RPr, PB).

Oct. 31 was quiet but did produce a report of a stunning light adult **Pomarine Jaeger** seen flying over Interstate 95 in Bridgeport

(TJn). A jaeger sp. was off Old Saybrook (GH, AG), and an immature Black Skimmer was at Sandy Point, West Haven (NB).

The Fall Season

Single **Greater White-fronted Geese** arrived Oct. 25 at Mackenzie Reservoir in Wallingford (JOs) and Ram Pasture in Newtown (RBa); there were numerous reports of multiples of this species through the end of the period at Broad Brook Pond in East Windsor, topped by seven (four adults and three juveniles) on Nov. 11 (TJo). There were at least 10 reports of **Cackling Geese** for the season, including three on Nov. 21 at Broad Brook Pond



Paul Fusco photo

The Black-headed Gull was an unusually cooperative and long-staying fall visitor to Hammonasset Beach State Park in Madison.

(FMA et al.). In what is now becoming an annual event, this year's **Barnacle Goose** appeared at Broad Brook Pond on Oct. 21 through end of period (CEk et al.). A bird that on size appeared to be a **Ross's Goose** flew over the Quaker Ridge hawk watch in Greenwich on Oct. 13 with two Snow Geese and three Canada Geese (LTi). It was also seen as a flyover the next day. Eight Tundra Swans flew east past Cove Island Wildlife Sanctuary in Stamford on Oct 13 (PDu).

An extraordinary count of 49 Blue-winged Teal were at the Riverside Park Pond in Hartford on Oct. 1 (PCi) during a good season for the species. The season's first was at the same location on Aug. 10 (PCi), and Aug. 29 produced flocks of 14 at Milford Point (FMA) and 12 at Tracy Pond, Waterbury (GH). The first Northern Shoveler, a female, was at McKinney National Wildlife Refuge, Stratford, on Aug. 30 (FMA).

A male White-winged Scoter was out of season Aug. 10 at Milford Point (FMA), and another was off Faulkner Island, Guilford, on Sept. 9 (CL). A major flight of Black

Scoters on Oct. 25 deposited a flock of 12 on the Connecticut River at Wethersfield (PCi); 24 at Staffordville Reservoir (MO, CEk); and c. 50 on Snipsic Lake in Tolland (CEk). The movement continued to Oct. 29 with 17 at Batterson Pond, Farmington (PCi), 20 at Nepaug Reservoir in Canton (JK et al.) and mixed flock of 30 Black and White-winged Scoters at Broad Brook Reservoir in Cheshire (CF). On Nov. 5 another 50 were on the lower Connecticut River at the north end of Brockway Island (AG). A female Bufflehead that summered at Long Wharf in New Haven remained into early fall (DT, MSz et al.), and a Common Goldeneye was out of season on Sept. 3 at Long Beach in Stratford (RS). Ruddy Ducks peaked at 240 in South Cove, Old Saybrook, on Nov. 15 (JOg).

During a slow season for **Wilson's Storm-Petrels**, seven off Waterford on Aug. 2 was the high count (PCo et al.). Quite a flurry of **American White Pelicans** included a flyover on Oct. 17 at Lighthouse Point in New Haven (SSa); a very cooperative one on Nov. 1-3 at Rocky Neck



*Jim Carr photo
In a good season for American
White Pelicans, this one soared
over Hammonasset Beach
State Park in Madison on
Nov. 6.*

State Park in East Lyme (AP et al.); three flying high over Hammonasset Beach State Park in Madison (hereafter HBSP) on Nov. 4 (NB); and one over HBSP on Nov. 6 (JCo). After one **Brown Pelican** arrived with Hurricane Sandy (see above), one was reported from New London on Nov. 1 (fide PCo) and one was at Sandy Point, West Haven, the same day (FMa et al.), raising questions about how many individuals were involved. There were additional sightings on Nov. 2 at Old Lyme (HG) and Stratford (SK).

A Least Bittern was away

from known breeding spots on Aug. 19 at Rocky Hill Meadows (CEk). A juvenile Snowy Egret, a difficult species to find in Litchfield County, was at Bantam Lake, Litchfield, on Sept. 27 (GH). An adult Little Blue Heron was in the Farmington River in Avon on Aug. 31, a good inland record (fide DL). Cattle Egrets were more widespread than usual: one on Oct 24 at HBSP (PA); one in Fairfield on Oct. 31 (AB); singles on Nov. 1 at Harkness Memorial State Park in Waterford (RS) and at Lighthouse Point (FMa); one on Nov. 2 in East Haven (NB); one on Nov. 5 in Avon (SG),

and two in Milford on Nov. 6 (CW). A calling fly-over Black-crowned Night-Heron was unexpected far inland in Goshen on Aug. 29 (KF). A post-breeding roost in Stratford held 26 Yellow-crowned Night-Herons on Sept. 28 (FMa).

An unconfirmed report of a **White Ibis** on Sept. 1 at Milford Point (fide FMa) was followed by discovery of a juvenile at Sandy Point, West Haven, on Sept. 6 (JOs). Presumably the same bird was photographed on Sept. 17 at Short Beach, Stratford (RAL). Farther afield, one was seen in the East River marshes of Madison-Guilford on Sept. 29 (SR). A Glossy Ibis was inland at Haddam Meadows State Park in Haddam on Aug. 5 (MM), followed by four at Rocky Hill Meadows on Aug. 11 (BA). Late Plegadis ibises, probably Glossys, were at Short Beach in Stratford on Oct. 23 (FMa) and at Milford Point on Nov. 15 (FMa).

The season's only **Mississippi Kite** was seen on Sept. 1 in Chester (AL). For details on the autumn hawk flight, please see an article and charts on Pages 50-60. Three

flyover **Sandhill Cranes** on Aug. 24 at Lighthouse Point (BBa) set the stage for a big season: a flyover Aug. 29 at HBSP (LTu); one Oct. 11-17 in Voluntown (RM); two on Oct. 12 over Quaker Ridge, Greenwich (LTi); four in fields in Canaan on Oct. 25 (MK); and one flying over Barkhamsted on Oct. 28 (FZ). A **Common Gallinule** was reliable at Little Pond in Litchfield Sept. 26-Oct. 6 (MDo et. al.); one was at Bishop's Pond, Meriden, on Oct. 12-18 (AZ et al.); and one was picked up dead Oct. 5 in Durham (AZ). All were juveniles.

The first American Golden-Plover reports were on Aug. 18 with one in Stratford (PA) and seven at Rocky Hill Meadows (BA, PCo). A staging group of 16 American Oystercatchers was off Compo Beach, Westport, on Aug. 20 (TG); and Menunketesuck flats in Westbrook held 19 on Oct. 5 (PCo). An **American Avocet** was a great find near the Housatonic River mouth in Stratford, where it was present Sept. 3-9 (DCp). Two migrant Upland Sandpipers dropped in at Rocky Hill Meadows on Aug. 4 (PCi). Among scattered reports of

mostly singles, four Whimbrels were at HBSP on Sept. 23 (JMu). The only report of **Marbled Godwit** came from Milford Point on Sept. 11 (MT). A Red Knot was a bit late on Oct. 1 in Stratford (FMa). A Sanderling was a good inland find on Aug. 25 on a Connecticut River sandbar in Windsor Locks (PCi), as were two juveniles at Candlewood Lake in New Milford on Aug. 30 (JD).

An excellent inland count of 171 Least Sandpipers was made Aug. 3 at Riverside Park Pond in Hartford (PCi). Baird's Sandpipers were at Sandy Point, West Haven, on Aug. 20 (LC); Rocky Hill Meadows on Aug. 22 (PCo); and Milford Point on Aug. 30 (JOs). The first Buff-breasted Sandpiper was at Griswold Point, Old Lyme, on Aug. 18 (HG), followed by two at Sikorsky Airport, Stratford, on Aug. 30 (FMa). The only other reports were of two at Rocky Hill Meadows on Sept. 1-5 (BA, PCi et al.) with the count building to five on Sept. 9 (PCo et al.). One was still present Sept. 19 (PCo). Although the great majority of Short-billed Dowitchers seen in the state are of the nominate subspecies *griseus*,

the "prairie" subspecies *hendersonii* sometimes occurs. One was noted with 11 Short-billeds on Aug. 3 in Stratford (FMa). A Long-billed Dowitcher joined the group on Aug. 7 (NB) and remained for several weeks. Another was at Lake Whitney in Hamden in late November (FMc). A **Red Phalarope** was an excellent and unexpected find Oct. 7 at a flooded section of Rocky Hill Meadows (RG).

An adult Bonaparte's Gull in full breeding plumage was an unexpected find on Aug. 7 at Stratford Point (FMa). Most of the few seen at that time are juveniles. An adult **Black-headed Gull** was unexpected inland at North Farms Reservoir in Wallingford on Nov. 1 (KM); a very cooperative one was at HBSP Nov. 10-18 (JCo et al).

A first-year **Gull-billed Tern** was at Cove Island Wildlife Sanctuary, Stamford, on Sept. 4 in a movement of 3200 terns (PDu). Two Caspian Terns were at Seaside Park, Bridgeport, on Sept. 29 (GH), followed by two on Oct. 4 at Silver Sands State Park in Milford (FMa). A group of at least 10 Black Terns at

Stonington Point on Aug 23 was a good count for the state (GW). The first significant showing of Forster's Terns brought 27 to Penfield Reef, Fairfield, on Sept. 13 (JP). Two Royal Terns were off Old Saybrook on Oct. 28 (AG), with possibly the same two the next day off Stratford (FMa). Appearances continued unusually late in the season with one at HBSP on Nov. 14 (PDe) and two off HBSP on Nov. 17 (TAn et al.). A **Sandwich Tern** was a great find on Aug. 26 at Short Beach, Stratford (CB). A Black Skimmer was off Greenway Island in Darien on Aug. 29 (CF). Two were at Great Island in Old Lyme on Sept. 2 (HG), followed by two on Sept. 8 at Milford Point/Stratford Point (CB et al.) and two immatures on Sept. 25 at HBSP (FMa). The numbers built to five immatures Oct. 3-5 at Milford Point (CB, FMa).

A juvenile **Parasitic Jaeger** was harassing gulls before sunrise on Aug. 30 off Cove Island Wildlife Sanctuary in Stamford (PDU). The first two **Razorbills** were seen off Stratford Point on Oct. 29 (FMa), precursors to a record flight into Long Island

Sound.

Cuckoos were scarce with just three reports of Black-billed Cuckoo and five of Yellow-billed Cuckoo, including a late one on Oct. 26 in a Milford yard (SSp). A Short-eared Owl was moving southeast high over Watertown in mid-morning on Oct. 25 (GH). The best movements of Common Nighthawks were 350, apparently leaving a roost in a white cedar bog, at 5:45 p.m. Aug. 21 in Windham (PR); 255 over Barkhamsted on Aug. 22 (DRo); and more than 300 over Barkhamsted on Aug. 25 (DRo). A strong northwest wind on Sept. 10 brought 330 Chimney Swifts past the Lighthouse Point hawk watch in New Haven (GH). An adult male **Rufous Hummingbird** was an exciting visitor at a feeder in Sherman on Sept. 14 (VD). Three others were banded at feeders, and all proved to be hatch-year females (fide MSz, AHi): in Ellington from early October through the period (CEk); on Oct. 18 in Chaplin; and into December in Madison. **Selasphorus sp.** were at a Wallingford feeder in mid-September (fide JZ); at a Westport feeder in October



A.J. Hand photo
*Among several Selasphorus hummingbirds was this probable
 Rufous Hummingbird on Oct. 30 in Westport.*

(AHa); and into December at a feeder in Middlebury (LK). Red-headed Woodpeckers were reported on Oct. 23 at a Watertown feeder (GS); on Nov. 3 at HBSP (MBa); at Lighthouse Point on Nov. 9 (SMa); and in Chaplin on Nov. 12 (PR).

Reports of about 10 Olive-sided Flycatchers began with one on Aug. 20 at Quaker Ridge in Greenwich (LTi). Two Yellow-bellied Flycatchers on Aug. 19 at Pine Creek in Fairfield were the first of five reported for the season (AB, JP). The bird of the season was a **Say's Phoebe** on private property in Shelton on Oct. 12 (AZ). It represents a second state record, follow-

ing a bird collected almost a century ago on Dec. 15, 1916, in Gaylordsville. Almost as good and much more cooperative was an **Ash-throated Flycatcher**, a fourth state record, that spent most of the day at Lighthouse Point on Nov 12 (GH m.ob.). **Western Kingbirds** made a decent showing with singles at Lighthouse Point on Oct. 8 and Oct. 9 (SZ, SMa) and one on Oct. 15-16 at the H. Smith Richardson Preserve in Westport (TG et al.).

Four Northern Shrikes were reported: Nov. 3 in Southington (JN); Nov. 14 in Winsted (PCa); Nov. 19 at Lighthouse Point (FMa et al.); and Nov. 27 in Goshen (JMu, NB). A

White-eyed Vireo was late Nov. 13-16 at Sherwood Island State Park in Westport (FMa et al.). Common Ravens are now expected along the coast, but 13 at Millstone Point in Waterford on Oct. 14 was certainly an unexpected number (DP). A juvenile Horned Lark, one of the state's rarest breeding species, was a welcome find at Rocky Hill Meadows on Aug. 3 (PDe).

Less well known than the mega Tree Swallow roost on the lower Connecticut River is the presence of large numbers of Purple Martins in the early part of the staging period. Up to 1500 were present between Old Lyme and Essex on Aug. 2 (HG, The). The Farmington River in the Poquonock section of Windsor held c. 100 Northern Rough-winged Swallows on Oct. 3 (PDe). Up to four were at the East Shore Park sewer plant in New Haven from Nov. 21 through the end of the season (m.ob.). The first two **Cave Swallows** were singles seen Oct. 31 at Stratford Point (SK) and Old Saybrook (NB). They signaled a major flight that produced between 100 and 150 depending on how many individuals were pres-

ent Nov. 16 at Lighthouse Point, when c 80 sightings (maximum 25 at one time) were logged (THa, JZ m.ob.). Barn Swallows move early, as exemplified by 850 heading down the Housatonic River in a one-species flight at Stratford from 6:50 to 8:06 p.m. on Aug. 10 (CB).

The big American Robin fights at Lighthouse Point peaked with 10,600 on Oct. 21 (Sma). The first report of a Swainson's Thrush was one banded Aug. 29 at Birdcraft Sanctuary in Fairfield (KV). A late one was in a Pomfret yard on Nov. 16 (BBi). A Bicknell's Thrush was confirmed on Oct. 5 in Norwalk when the observer used a program on his smartphone to make an image of its pre-dawn flight calls. He sent them to Cornell University for confirmation. (NB). An article explaining the process appeared in the January 2013 Connecticut Warbler. One or possibly two American Pipits were early arrivals Aug. 10 at Rocky Hill Meadows (BA, SZ). A massive flock of 540 was in farm fields in Somers on Nov. 16 (FMa). The first Lapland Longspur was a bit early on Oct. 12 at Milford Point (FMa, JB).

An Ovenbird was picked up as a window strike on the late date of Nov. 4 in Norwalk (SMu), and one visited a Stamford yard on Nov. 26 (RAM). Late Black-and-White Warblers were seen on Nov 25 in Enfield (PDe) and Nov. 29-30 at East Shore Park (CL, BI). A **Prothonotary Warbler** was in a Pawcatuck yard on Aug. 10 (BDw), and one was in a big Bluff Point flight on Sept. 16 (DP). A Connecticut Warbler on Sept. 8 in West Hartford was the first of 14 reports (JMa, BT). The first of five reports of Mourning Warblers came from a Meriden yard's butterfly garden on Aug. 13 (PCo). The often-elusive Cape May Warbler put on a good showing with

at least 16 reports, including four on Sept. 11 in Winchester (DRo). A late Magnolia Warbler was near Shippan Point in Stamford on Nov. 2 (BI), followed by one Nov. 3 in an Ivoryton yard (AG). The first Palm Warbler was early Sept. 2 in Westport (TG).

Perhaps the most unexpected event of the season (given that Sandy was predicted) was an amazing flurry of "**Audubon's**" **Yellow-rumped Warbler** sightings. The first was found at Long Beach in Stratford on Nov. 11 (CB et al.), followed by another on Nov. 12-13 at Silver Sands State Park in Milford (JOs et al.). From



Russ Smiley photo
Clay-colored Sparrows continued their surge in numbers. This one was at Hammonasset Beach State Park in Madison on Oct. 7.

Nov. 17-23 one at East Shore Park in New Haven offered catch-up opportunities for those not quick enough to see the first two (m.ob.). Photos show that three different birds were involved in this event. A late Prairie Warbler was found on Nov. 30 at East Shore Park (CL). The first of 11 reports of Yellow-breasted Chats came from Cove Island Wildlife Sanctuary in Stamford on Aug. 14 (PDU).

Following is a summary of flights at Bluff Point in Groton: Aug. 29 - 90 warblers of seven species (GW); Sept. 11 - 400 warblers of nine species; Sept. 16 - 5000 warblers of 26 species including 400 Am Redstart, 200 Black-throated Green, 200 "Baypolls" and 100 Blackpolls (DP); Sept. 24 - 1900 warblers of 13 species (DP); Oct 7 - 6000 birds including 16 species of warblers and eight species of sparrows headed by 2000+ White-throated and at least 80 species total (DP); Oct. 13 - about 7000 birds (CEI).

The first report of an American Tree Sparrow came a bit early on Oct. 23 in Hamden (JZ). The first **Clay-colored Sparrow** report on Sept. 7 at Stratford Point (FMA) began

a run of 25 for the season, as this species continues its increased presence. Allen's Meadows in Wilton held at least eight Vesper Sparrows on Oct. 23 (LTI et al.), an excellent total for a single location. A good season for **Lark Sparrows** produced reports on Aug. 20 at Stratford Point (FMA); on Sept. 19 in West Haven (LJo); and on Oct. 13 in Glastonbury (BA). The usually elusive Grasshopper Sparrow put on a good showing, with at least six reports starting with one on Sept. 15 at Rocky Hill Meadows (PCi). One of the season's terrific finds was a **LeConte's Sparrow** on Oct. 16 at a skating pond in Durham (AZ et al.). Diligent work in good habitat can turn up good numbers of Nelson's Sparrows, such as 22 at Milford Point on Oct. 18 along with two Saltmarsh Sparrows (FMA). A nice peak count of 30 White-crowned Sparrows was made at Silver Sands State Park in Milford on Oct. 16 (JOs).

Reports of at least 16 **Blue Grosbeaks** for the season was a record by a large margin, with the first checking in on Aug. 24 at Cove Island in Stamford (PDU). The last

reports came from Osbornedale State Park in Derby on Nov. 4 (PFu) and on the very late date of Nov. 18 in Wilton (JSp). Late Indigo Buntings were at H. Smith Richardson Sanctuary in Westport on Nov. 5 (FMa); at Lighthouse Point on Nov. 12 (GH); and on Nov. 26-29 at Fort Hale Park, New Haven (JOs et al.). An adult male **Painted Bunting** on Oct. 27 at Cove Island marked the second year in a row for that species at that location (PDu et al.). A Dickcissel on Aug. 19 at Rocky Hill Meadows was the first of c. 40 for the season (JMa et al.).

Lighthouse Point harbored a late Bobolink Nov. 22 (SMA). A female **Yellow-headed Blackbird** on Oct. 5 at Sherwood Island State Park in Westport represented the season's lone report (NB). A flock of up to 22 Boat-tailed Grackles was in the Stratford Great Meadows area through the end of November (FMa et al.). An Orchard Oriole was late Aug. 29 at Northwest Park in Windsor, a reliable breeding site (PDe). Another top echelon bird for the season was a non-adult male **Bullock's Oriole** at a feeder in Ellington from Nov. 18

through end of season (DM).

The first report of a **Pine Grosbeak** was a female on Nov. 14 in Farmington (SJ); there were more to come in December. A major flight of Pine Siskins brought good numbers to feeders around the state, as well as high counts of 600 at Lighthouse Point Oct. 9 (BBa) and 1650 there on Oct. 21 (SMA). The first report of one Common Redpoll came on Oct. 24 at Cove Island Wildlife Sanctuary in Stamford (PDu), with numbers building in late November toward a major winter flight. The first sign of things to come were single flyover **Red Crossbills** Aug. 24 in Meriden (PCo) and Aug. 25 at Rocky Hill Meadows (BA). They were followed by a push that generated reports of c. 15 birds, mostly flyovers, Sept. 1-12. About a month later a few more reports trickled in, soon to be joined by a few **White-winged Crossbills**. White-wings then comprised the bulk of the crossbill reports through Nov. 10, with flocks of 10 to 15 becoming regular at HBSP (m.ob.). On Nov 11 counts of 20 Red Crossbills and 45 White-winged Crossbills were reported from

HBSP, and through the end of the month both species were seen regularly, primarily along the coast with HBSP as the hot spot. The precursors to a decent flight of Evening Grosbeaks, at least by recent standards, were two on Sept. 29 in Avon (JG). The movement produced reports for about 80 birds in October, including flocks of 16 and 20 at Lighthouse Point on Oct. 21 & 22, respectively. November produced reports of another 35 birds.

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PHOTO CHALLENGE



Jim Dugan photo

Figure 1 – This Hoary Redpoll, referred to and accepted in ARCC file 13-05, is one of two or more observed at the Rosgen feeder at 121 Laurel Way in Winchester periodically through January 2013. It was photographed on 1 Jan 2013. It showed a suite of characters consistent with the species, including (visible in this photo) an overall pale tone, weak flank streaking, unmarked undertail coverts, prominent white greater wing coverts and a short, stubby bill. Observers of this bird also noted an unstreaked rump.

Figure 2 – This Hoary Redpoll, referred to and accepted in ARCC file 13-03, was observed on 7 Feb 2013 at a feeder in Goshen. In his report the observer noted the following: Frosty gray overall. Pale face with faint butterscotch wash. Back frosty brownish-gray with paler rear scapulars. Broad white wing bars. Very short bill with little projection beyond facial feathers. White below with moderate wispy side and flank streaking. Undertail coverts lightly marked with two or three very thin streaks. Rump with unstreaked portion (not terribly wide, but present). Small red "poll."



Nick Bonomo photo



Photo Challenge No. 81

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

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THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

A Journal of Connecticut Ornithology



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The Connecticut Warbler

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ON THE COVER

White Ibis

One of the real surprises of the winter season was a long-staying immature White Ibis in Stratford and Milford. Mark Szantyr captured it in our cover drawing.

THE 2012-13 CONNECTICUT CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

By **Stephen P. Broker**

What a great year this was for the 2012-13 Connecticut Christmas Bird Count! We came out in force for the 18 CBCs. (Three of these are centered in or extend into neighboring New York or Rhode Island). We recorded four species new to the statewide count, and we located a significant number of species that are rare here in early winter. We added another year of data to our understanding of changing avian populations in the state, including species increasing their early winter numbers and species in apparent decline.

Equally importantly, we had a lot of fun. The 786 birders on this year's 18 counts included 711 field observers and 75 feeder watchers, our greatest level of participation in 10 years. Together, we logged some 2,000 total party hours and covered more than 8,000 miles by foot, car and boat. This extensive effort resulted in the observation of 173 species on count days and an additional seven species during respective count weeks (CW). The combined 180 species recorded in our six northern, five mid-state, and seven coastal count circles is a record high total for the past 30 years.

Count Week, also called Count Period, is defined as the three days preceding and the three days following the count day for any given count circle. Count Week species represent those birds known to be present within a few days of the scheduled CBC but that were not located on count day. The seven Count Week species this year are: Redhead at Greenwich-Stamford; Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at Stratford-Milford; Osprey at Hartford; Black-legged Kittiwake at New London; Dovekie at Napatree; Tree Swallow at New Haven; House Wren at Greenwich-Stamford. Each is uncommon to rare in Connecticut in early winter and well worth documenting.

Among northern counts, Hartford led with a record high 105 count day (plus three count week) species. Hartford's previous high total was 102 count day species (plus three count week species) in 1999-2000. Litchfield Hills had a very respectable 86 count day species for the second highest species count in northern Connecticut. The Storrs and Edwin Way Teale, Trail Wood CBCs each recorded new 30-year high species totals in their count circles, with 77 species and 73 species, respectively. No record high species totals were achieved on mid-state counts, but Woodbury-Roxbury reported 87 species on count day, while Pawling, NY/Hidden Valley, CT had 83 species and Quinnipiac Valley tallied 82 species. Among coastal counts, New Haven reached the 130+ species level for the fifth time in the last ten years, this year recording 132 count day species and three species during count week. Napatree, RI/NY/CT equaled its record high of 130 count day species, first achieved in 2007-08.

Interestingly, the 290,651 individual birds tallied represent the lowest total in 30 years. What accounts for this apparent discrepancy between high species count and very low individual count? The answer hinges almost entirely on the changing status of just one species over the last three decades, but more on this later.

We entered this Christmas Bird Count season aware that the 2011-12 statewide count yielded a remarkable three new species to the all-time statewide list. Those additions were Thayer's Gull and Common Murre, each found in the New London count circle, and Yellow Warbler at Old Lyme-Saybrook. Few would expect to equal such a feat in 2012-13, yet four new species were added due to our most recent efforts. They are White Ibis at Stratford (the Stratford-Milford count circle), Cave Swallows at East Haven and New Haven in the New Haven count circle, Northern Parula at Napatree, and Blue Grosbeak at Hansen Farm Park, North Haven (New Haven count circle). New Haven previously recorded Cave Swallows during count week in 2008-09. The list of statewide rarities also is impressive, including Yellow-crowned Night-Heron CW at Stratford-Milford, Black-legged Kittiwake CW



*Mark Szantyr photo
Northern Rough-winged Swallows made their third Connecticut CBC
appearances in 2012-13.*

at New London, Dovekie CW at Napatree, Northern Rough-winged Swallow at Hartford (six individuals) and New Haven (two), Black-and-white Warbler at East Shore Park Water Treatment Plant (New Haven), Le Conte's Sparrow at Bloomfield (Hartford CBC), Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Westport, and Yellow-headed Blackbird at Edwin Way Teale, Trail Wood.

Most Christmas Bird Counts in Connecticut adhere to a set schedule during the Dec. 14 through Jan. 5 window stipulated by National Audubon Society. This 23-day period always encompasses three weekends. Typically, 11 counts are held on the first weekend, with four on Saturday and seven on Sunday. Three counts take place on the last weekend, floating from year to year between latest December and early January as the calendar changes synchrony with days of the week. The Pawling, NY/Hidden Valley, CT count has been scheduled on January 1 for each of the last 18 years. Barkhamsted, Stratford-Milford, and Napatree have more flexible schedules, their compilers usually selecting dates in the middle of the count window, just before, just after, or on

Christmas Day. The several compiler comments that follow paint a changing picture of weather and birding conditions through the course of the statewide count.

On Saturday, Dec. 15, Hartford, New Haven, Storrs, and Woodbury-Roxbury experienced unseasonably warm temperatures ranging from the mid-20s to the mid-40s F. Prevailing north or northwest winds were negligible or with occasional gusts. There was no snow cover, no rain or snow during the day, and partly cloudy or, in the case of Hartford, clear skies. Moving water was open everywhere, and still water was partly frozen away from the coast. Jay Kaplan, compiler of the Hartford CBC, provided an excellent overview of the birding conditions at the outset of our CBC season. "It didn't feel like a Christmas Bird Count. Although it wasn't as warm as some counts have been, it certainly wasn't cold. There was a mild feeling in the air, perhaps due to lack of any wind. By mid-afternoon, there were small insects on the wing as temperatures climbed into the mid-40s. The lack of cold weather in the weeks preceding the count kept most water open, and there had been no substantial periods below freezing that would have eliminated lingering insectivores."

Chris Loscalzo, New Haven's compiler, shared the following comments: "This was a very interesting and successful count. A great number of rare and unusual species were found, and several species were seen in unusually high numbers while others were seen in low numbers. The most remarkable aspect of the count, though, was the number of swallow and warbler species observed on count day or in the count week. We found a total of six warbler and three swallow species. Several were found at East Shore Park and the nearby sewage treatment plant in New Haven. This is a microhabitat that supports populations of insects through the late fall and into the early winter, enabling these insectivorous birds to stay in our area later into the year than they otherwise would."

Sunday, Dec. 15, brought somewhat cooler conditions, with the expected gradient of somewhat higher temperatures on

the coast (Greenwich-Stamford, Westport), temperatures straddling the freezing point mid-state (Oxford, Quinnipiac Valley, Salmon River), and mostly below freezing temperatures in the north (Litchfield Hills, Lakeville-Sharon). The majority of these counts had cloudy conditions in morning and afternoon, and several had light rain during the day. Most still and moving water bodies were open. Greenwich-Stamford compiler Gary Palmer wrote, "Weather conditions were not good on count day with morning off-and-on drizzle and heavier rain showers by early afternoon, making it more difficult to find birds, as they were prone to hunker down and not readily respond. Thus, we had a larger than usual number of count week birds." At mid-state, co-compilers Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe and Melissa Baston noted, "While the 2012 Quinnipiac Valley Christmas Bird Count will probably not be remembered for its beginning or end, the hours in between turned out to be quite productive. Count day started out slowly for those of us searching for owls. With rain in the forecast for early afternoon, the morning was particu-



*Julian Hough photo
Both crossbills, including Red Crossbill shown here,
appeared in record numbers.*



Bruce Finnan photo

Hooded Mergansers have seen a long-term upswing in numbers.

larly important for locating bird species. Around 11 A.M., a light rain began to fall. Most participants noticed a drop in bird activity at this time. Potentially a result of declining field conditions, some species were recorded infrequently or missed entirely on the count." These included Turkey Vulture, Great Black-backed Gull, Common Grackle, and House Finch all in short supply and Northern Harrier, Savannah Sparrow and Brown-headed Cowbird found not at all.

Cloudy conditions continued for Barkhamsted and Stratford-Milford on Dec. 22, with temperatures in the low to mid 30s in the north and mid to high 30s on the coast. There was no rain or snow for these counts, but the cooler temperatures of the preceding week produced some ice on lakes and ponds. At Stratford-Milford, compiler Steve Mayo wrote, "Strong, steady winds with gusts up to 30 mph, brief morning flurries, and virtually no (available) food resulted in low numbers of passerines and several missed 'half-hardies,' including warblers. Wind gusts at times exceeded 20 miles per hour." Conditions at Napatree a day later were fairly similar. The New London count, held on Saturday, Dec. 29, continued the pattern of cloudy skies and falling temperatures, and bird-

ers there endured some light rain and snow in the afternoon. That night, a blizzard dumped a substantial amount of snow throughout the state, and at least one birder driving from near the coast to participate in the Edwin Way Teale, Trail Wood count in northeastern Connecticut had to await the work of very busy plowmen as they cleared driveways and roads. The late start and hour-and-a-half commute to Trail Wood's Killingly area resulted in little more than afternoon birding. Side roads in Killingly afforded few pull-off areas, and most birds located were at feeders.

The Old Lyme-Saybrook CBC on Sunday, Dec.30 was held in temperatures ranging from 20°F to 35°F and northeasterly winds blasting up to an estimated 50 mph. By this date, snow cover throughout the state ranged from 1 to 4 inches. Skies had become partly clear, and there was no new rain or snowfall to deal with during the day. New Year's Day was quite a bit less windy at Pawling/Hidden Valley, which apparently missed the snowfall earlier in the week.



Mark Szantyr photo

The long-term drop in European Starling numbers has had a major impact on total numbers of birds seen on CBCs.



Mark Szantyr photo
Field Sparrows, like a number of scrubland birds, are in long-term decline.

As has been the case in recent years, this analysis of the Christmas Bird Count is based on a review of the past 30 years of CBC data. An Excel spreadsheet is maintained for each of the 18 counts, and it extends back for most counts to the 1950-51 CBC season. Only the last 30 years of Christmas Bird Counts are reviewed here, beginning with the 1983-84 CBC. The inaugural count for Barkhamsted was in 1984-85, and 29 years of data are reviewed. The Edwin Way Teale, Trail Wood count was held first in 1986-87. Twenty-six Trail Wood counts have published data during this 27-year time period. Napatree's count circle was defined in 2002-03 to include portions of Rhode Island, New York and Connecticut, and Napatree now has held its eleventh consecutive CBC. The spreadsheet that accompanies this narrative shows state-wide totals for these 18 counts. Unpublished spreadsheets document sub-totals for the northern, mid-state, and coastal counts, and they give more evidence of changing population trends seen in the state's regions, namely the count circles

that extend into Long Island Sound, those in the central part of the state, and those in our northern towns.

The statewide 30-year high counts and 30-year low counts achieved this year are of fairly equal length. Record high numbers include nine species: Harlequin Duck (2, tying the previous high); Hooded Merganser (3,345, a 40% increase over the previous high of 2,385); Red-necked Grebe (12, up from nine); Peregrine Falcon (26, tying the previous high of two years ago); Fish Crow (8,212, a mega-jump from the previous high of 566 – see further comments in the check-list portion of this narrative); Winter Wren (189, an 82% increase over the previous high of 104); American Pipit (295, 72% higher than the 172 of 2007-08, due to a remarkable 175 at Quinnipiac Valley); Red Crossbill (180, a 374% increase from the previous high of 38); White-winged Crossbill (459, an 818% increase over the previous high of 50). The 30-year low counts involve 11 species and one subspecies: Mute Swan (901, down from 912); Ruffed Grouse (1, tying the previous low count of three years ago); Ring-billed Gull (12,193, down from 12,626); Iceland Gull (1, down from 2); Rock Pigeon (5,040, just 78% of the previous low, 6,471); Blue Jay (2,978, recorded at 79% of the previous low, 3,782); Gray Catbird (26,



Mark Szantyr photo

A documented decline in Purple Finches as breeders to our north is reflected in falling CBC numbers.



Mark Szantyr photo
Dark-eyed Junco, a common wintering
bird, produced high counts in several
CBC circles.

down from 39); European Starling (a mere 29,541, making for a 6% reduction from the previous low of 31,537); Field Sparrow (79, down from 90); Savannah 'Ipswich' Sparrow (1, tying the lowest recorded previously for this pale coastal form); Brown-headed Cowbird (1,032, down from 1,154); Purple Finch (50, down from 57).

Two of the species counted at record high numbers this year have experienced steadily increasing populations over the past one, two, or three decades. These are Hooded Merganser and Peregrine Falcon. Similarly, some of the species counted at record low numbers are continuing the trend of falling populations, most notably Ruffed Grouse, Ring-billed Gull, European Starling, Field Sparrow, and Purple Finch. Further comments about these species are found below. The ten most abundant species in order of decreasing abundance are: Canada Goose, American Crow, European Starling, Dark-eyed Junco, Herring Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Mallard, House Sparrow, Black-capped Chickadee, and Fish Crow with Hooded Merganser at number 11. Interestingly, only three of these species, European Starling, House Sparrow, and Canada Goose, make the top ten on the Summer Bird Count. Let's now consider a few selected groups of birds

from the 2012-2013 CBC results and see how they have fared in relation to previous years.

Waterfowl

Greater White-fronted Goose was reported on three northern counts. This species now is expected to make annual appearances on Connecticut CBCs. Fourteen have been recorded on northern counts, eight on mid-state counts, and ten along the coast, so they may be found anywhere in the state where there is favored habitat. This was not a big Snow Goose count year, although Woodbury-Roxbury managed to find seven individuals. Brant continue to be found in high numbers with Greenwich-Stamford and New Haven being the best areas to observe flocks of these coastal geese. Since "Canada Goose, small forms" was recognized as a separate species, we have continued to record them on Christmas Bird Counts, this year with two at Hartford and two at New Haven. Migratory and non-migratory Canada Geese remain stable at 45,000. Near record low numbers of Mute Swans in most count circles led to a statewide 30-year low. Two Eurasian Wigeon at Stratford-Milford and one at Westport made for a good showing. Approximately three times as many Mallards are counted as are American Black Ducks in recent years, with a slight drop in Mallard numbers in 2012-13. Two Blue-winged Teal at Lakeville-Sharon and one at Quinnipiac Valley produced the highest total of this species in 24 years. The statewide decline in Canvasbacks since 2001-02 has accelerated, with just 17 being reported this year, most of these at Old Lyme-Saybrook and Stratford-Milford. Woodbury-Roxbury recorded one Canvasback, a new species for this mid-state count. Common Eider is a rarity in Connecticut waters during early winter, but this diving duck is seen on the Napatree CBC in Rhode Island and New York waters in numbers that can range each CBC season from 400 to 2,400 individuals. Napatree had its second lowest eider count this year but made up for it by producing two Harlequin Ducks, a specialty species for Rhode Island's rocky coastline. Common Goldeneye was in very short supply this year. Hooded Merganser continues its remarkable increase in numbers of



*Mark Szantyr photo
Red-shouldered Hawks are doing well based on
CBC results.*

the last 16 years or so. Ruddy Duck tends to fluctuate widely in numbers, but this year more than 1,000 individuals were counted for the fourth time in 30 years.

Phasianids

Ring-necked Pheasant is a species that is dependent on re-stocking primarily by hunting organizations. The majority of the 18 pheasants found this year were in northern count circles, and this is the second lowest total in the last three decades. Ruffed Grouse has all but disappeared from the landscape, the only individual being sighted at Lakeville-Sharon on Dec.16. This ties the previous low recorded in 2009-10. Through the mid- to late-1980s, between 100 and 200 grouse were counted on our CBCs. What a come-down! No Northern Bobwhites were seen this year, and this species is regarded as no longer breeding in the state. Wild Turkey has experienced an explosive surge in numbers since the mid-1980s, with some leveling off or decline in the last six

years or so.

Loons and Grebes

Red-throated Loon and Common Loon each have enjoyed significant increases in numbers since the early- to mid-1990s, each species reaching second highest totals this year. In the first part of the current 30-year data set, the annual pattern was to count about 100 loons combined along the coast with a few scattered sightings inland. Now, we are approaching 1,000 loons counted along the coast and a small handful of Common Loons on inland water bodies. Ten Red-necked Grebes at Napatree and 2 at New London are worthy of note.

Wading Birds

An American Bittern at Storrs was new to this northern count. One at Napatree was to be expected. Great Blue Herons tend to migrate from inland freshwater colonial nesting sites to the coast in fall and winter. High early winter numbers at Hartford, Quinnipiac Valley, and several coastal counts most likely reflect good rates of nesting success statewide. Although much less common on Christmas Bird Counts, Great Egret has enjoyed double-digit numbers each of the last two years. A Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at



*Hank Golet photo
Common Loons and Red-throated Loons (shown here) are
now found more often on CBCs.*

Stratford-Milford is a rare find for the state. The most significant discovery of a wading bird this year was an immature White Ibis in Stratford. This is a review list species that has previous state records in May, June, and July but is fairly unprecedented for December.

Diurnal Raptors

Osprey is nearly annual in its occurrence on Christmas Bird Counts. The only one seen this year was an individual Count Week at Hartford. Bald Eagles expand on their post-DDT era resurgence in Connecticut (and New York), topping 100 for the second consecutive year. Sharp-shinned Hawk and Cooper's Hawk continue their topsy-turvy relationship, with Sharpies on the low side and Coops on the high side, very much the reverse of the 80s, 90s, and early 2000s. Among buteos, Red-shouldered Hawk populations are experiencing on-going growth and expansion statewide. American Kestrel has a very different 30-year trajectory than do Merlins and Peregrine Falcons, with just six being seen in the north, five mid-state, and three along the coast. Merlin now outnumber American Kestrel 3:2, and Peregrines tied their 30-year high of 26. (The Connecticut CBC table will acknowledge the reclassification of falcons to a position adjacent to parrots in the next year or two – no rush on this.)

Shorebirds

Black-bellied Plovers were fairly hard to find along the coast. Hartford and Storrs racked up record numbers of Killdeer, contributing to generally good counts along the coast. Ruddy Turnstones and Purple Sandpipers were less visible than in most previous years. An eye-popping 22 Wilson's Snipes at Storrs and another 10 at Old Lyme-Saybrook helped produce a nice statewide total.

Gulls

The three abundant species are down significantly in numbers, as was Bonaparte's Gull. Among the white-winged gulls, there was one Iceland at Hartford and there were no



Bruce Finnan photo

Wilson's Snipe, often elusive, were found in good numbers in 2012-13.

Glaucous Gulls reported. A Black-legged Kittiwake seen Count Week at New London was the notable exception to an otherwise grim report on gulls.

Nocturnal Raptors

It was a mixed bag of news about owls this year, with Eastern Screech-Owl and Great Horned Owl found less frequently than usual but Barred Owl and Long-eared Owl in uncommonly high numbers. The prevailing view is that Barred Owls have been stressed with a shortage of food sources this fall and winter, supported by various reports of *Strix varia* seen during the day in unlikely urban settings. It could be that field observers just got lucky in locating higher than usual numbers of *Asio otus*. Northern Saw-whet Owls were distributed fairly evenly throughout the state's count circles.

Woodpeckers

Northern Flicker has been less prevalent in the last five years than earlier. It remains to be seen if this is part of a cyclical pattern or indicative of larger issues. Other woodpecker species were present in numbers representative of recent years.

Corvids

Where were all the Blue Jays? In several previous years, we counted three times as many as we did this year. On the other hand, we recorded highest numbers of American Crow in ten years. Did avian outbreaks of West Nile Virus in the late 1990s reduce their CBC numbers appreciably or for the long term? And what's going on with Fish Crow? New Haven reported more than 8,000 of this "coastal" species, primarily from one coastal area's evening flight and roost. The report is based on the abundance of cah-cah (as opposed to caw-caw-caw) vocalizations from the roost. Is this an unwarranted extrapolation to the entire murder of crows (there's a term!), or is it the most accurate count of Fish Crow versus American Crow that we've come up with on the coast? We may need some DNA discrimination to answer this question. Identification, thy name is technology. Fully six of 18 CBCs reported record high numbers of Common Raven this year. Now, that's explosive increase. Raven lovers, your time has come.

Swallows

The CBC story for this year is incomplete without mention of the remarkable occurrence of three species of swallow in New Haven and the six Northern Rough-winged Swallows seen on the Hartford CBC. This is unprecedented. Tree Swallows have been tallied on six previous counts, beginning with one at New Haven in 1993-94. New Haven identified one again this year during Count Week. The six Northern Rough-winged Swallows at Hartford and two at New Haven were the third time this species has lingered into early winter and been noted on a CBC. One of the most significant discoveries of the last decade concerning the Connecticut avifauna (apologies to Brown-chested Martin) is that Cave Swallow occurs in the state during November and into December as a reverse migration phenomenon. Cave Swallow was reported first on a Connecticut CBC in 2008-09 as a Count Week species. This year, as noted earlier, two individuals were observed on the New Haven count during Count

Day. One individual was seen cruising around the open field of a condominium complex at the mouth of the Farm River in East Haven. This bird had been staked out prior to the count day. The second sighting was of an individual hawking insects at Lighthouse Point Park.

Wrens

The widespread prevalence of Winter Wren throughout the state was commented on at the ctbirds listserv this season. Four mid-state counts and five coastal counts achieved record high numbers of Winter Wren this year. Every region of the state reported them in record high or near record numbers.

Mockingthrushes

Eastern Bluebird was fairly well represented this year. Hermit Thrushes were in short supply. It was not a big season for American Robins on the move. This species has one of the largest standard deviations of all Connecticut birds. Try to find a Gray Catbird! They all moved south prior to the start of the CBC season.

Sturnids

The European Starling population recorded on the Connecticut CBC has nose-dived during the past two decades to a 30-year low in 2012-13 of fewer than 30,000 individuals. During the count years 1983-84 through 1992-93, starlings numbered from 115,000 to just short of 250,000 individuals. This one species accounted for between 30% and 40% of all birds seen on the statewide CBC, and for an incredible 45% 30 years ago, in 1983-84. Now, starlings account for just 10% of all birds observed. That's still a huge percentage for an introduced species from Europe, but it represents an average drop-off of 125,000 starlings seen each year in this decade as compared with two to three decades ago. Their numbers certainly appear to be resetting to new, lower levels.

Wood Warblers

What a year! There were 9 species recorded, including Black-and-white Warbler, two Orange-crowned Warblers, and Nashville Warbler all at New Haven; Common Yellowthroat at Hartford, Quinnipiac Valley and Woodbury-Roxbury; Northern Parula at Napatree (new to the all-time list!); Palm Warbler at Pawling/Hidden Valley, Quinnipiac Valley CW, New Haven and New London; Pine Warbler at Barkhamsted, Edwin Way Teale – Trail Wood (new), Salmon River (new) and Napatree; low numbers of Yellow-rumped Warbler statewide; and Yellow-breasted Chat at Napatree (2), New Haven CW, New London (3).

Sparrows

Eastern Towhee was in short supply. The open habitat/grassland species American Tree Sparrow and Field Sparrow appear to be in trouble due to habitat loss. One Clay-colored Sparrow at New Haven was a bright note. Single Vesper Sparrows were sighted at Stratford-Milford and Westport. Savannah 'Ipswich' Sparrows paled in comparison with previous years. A Nelson's Sparrow was distinguished at Napatree. Jay Kaplan noted, "Without question, the bird of the (Hartford) Count was a Le Conte's Sparrow seen on the northern edge of our Count Circle in the Bloomfield Community Gardens. The bird marks only the seventh record for this species in the state. It was well photographed on Count Day, but could not be relocated. It might be interesting to note that the first record for this species was also found on a northern Connecticut Christmas Bird Count (Barkhamsted) in 1987 – 25 years ago!" Lincoln Sparrows surfaced at Pawling/Hidden Valley, New Haven (2), and Greenwich-Stamford (CW). Dark-eyed Junco achieved new high counts in two mid-state and two coastal count circles.

Cardinals, Grosbeaks, and Allies

Northern Cardinal has been remarkably stable in numbers over the past 25 or so years. Rose-breasted Grosbeak is one of our more colorful rarities on a Christmas Bird Count, and

one found at Westport was a new species for that count. Blue Grosbeak is a southern species that is known to occur in Connecticut during spring migration and in fall as a reverse migrant, when it makes rare but regular appearances. The occurrence of one at North Haven (New Haven count circle) is unprecedented for this species.

Icterids

The Yellow-headed Blackbird seen at Edwin Way Teale – Trail Wood is one of the special sightings of the current CBC season. This is the fourth time that the species has appeared on a Connecticut CBC in 30 years. Previous sightings were in 1984-85 at Hartford, 1994-95 at Quinnipiac Valley, and 2007-08 at Pawling/Hidden Valley. Rusty Blackbirds have returned to very low numbers following a surprise burst of energy in 2010-11. Common Grackles were not to be found in appreciable numbers. The 20 Boat-tailed Grackles at Stratford-Milford have come from the only known breeding site in New England, but look out for Hammonasset State Park in the future! Have Brown-headed Cowbirds started to lose their effectiveness as nest parasites? Few were seen this season. Surely we can do better at forest fragmentation in the future. Napatree produced the only Baltimore Oriole this year.

Winter Finches

Single Pine Grosbeaks were sighted at Barkhamsted, Hartford and Salmon River. Purple Finches reached a new 30-year low total, which is completely consistent with their decline as a breeding species in neighboring Massachusetts, based on the recently completed Mass Breeding Bird Atlas 2 (2007-2011). House Finches were at near record low totals. This was a big winter for crossbills, however, as both Red Crossbill and White-winged Crossbill established new 30-year high totals, due almost entirely to a major irruption into the Napatree count circle. Common Redpoll also enjoyed a banner year in large part because of high numbers on the Hartford CBC. Pine Siskins tend to be highly variable in their

numbers, and there were good numbers counted this year, though it cannot be characterized as a major irruptive flight during CBC season. American Goldfinch numbers were depressed, and Evening Grosbeak long since has moved on apparently greener winter pastures.

Final Comments:

All observers are to be commended for their efforts in the field and at feeders, but let's not rest on our laurels. Next year, share the wealth by making an effort to introduce a friend, a family member, or a young birder to the CBC experience. This longest running wildlife census in the world is dependent on the field skills of a core group of veteran birders, knowledgeable in the identification of species and habitat use, but also willing to impart their knowledge to others.

A perusal of the spreadsheet of this year's results indicates that there is a considerable range in the numbers of field observers and feeder watchers participating on our counts. Hartford annually outshines all other Connecticut counts in effort, this year sending out 120 observers who racked up 238 total party hours in woodlands, fields, water bodies, and feeders. Most remarkably, Hartford had 200 or more participants on seven successive CBCs in the 1990s. Quinnipiac Valley receives kudos for setting a record high of 34 observers, including 30 in the field and 4 at feeders. High numbers of participants and extensive party hours in the field are important for adequate censusing of these 15-mile diameter (176 square mile) count circles. All counts can benefit from more eyes on the sky, but birders should take particular note of the several counts that are in greater need of recruits and perhaps sign up for a count area in these circles in the coming, 2013-2014 Christmas Bird Count season.

List of Compilers:

Once again, thanks go to the compilers of our 18 Christmas Bird Counts, for they are responsible for assigning area captains within their count circles, assuring adequate coverage in the field and at feeders, collating all data on count

day conditions and species observed, providing supporting details for rare species, and posting count results on the National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count website. Those compilers who provide additional information about their counts and interpretation of data are especially thanked for their contributions. Our compilers and their sponsoring organizations are: David Tripp, Jr. (Barkhamsted CBC, Litchfield Hills Audubon Society), Susan Harrington (Edwin Way Teale – Trail Wood CBC, Connecticut Audubon Society at Trail Wood), Jay Kaplan and Stephen Davis, (Hartford CBC, Hartford Audubon Society), Raymond Belding (Litchfield Hills CBC, Litchfield Hills Audubon Society), Robert Moeller (Lakeville-Sharon CBC, Audubon Sharon), Steve Morytko (Storrs CBC, Natchaug Ornithological Society), Roy Harvey (Oxford CBC, Naugatuck Valley Audubon Society), Carena Pooth and Angela Dimmitt (Pawling, NY-Hidden Valley, CT CBC), Corrie Folsom-O’Keefe and Melissa Baston (Quinnipiac Valley CBC, Quinnipiac Valley Audubon Society), Joseph Morin (Salmon River CBC, Mattabesek Audubon Society), Ken Elkins and Renee Baade (Woodbury-Roxbury CBC, Western Connecticut Bird Club), Gary Palmer (Greenwich-Stamford CBC, Greenwich Audubon Society), Shai Mitra and Glenn Williams (Napatree RI-CT-NY CBC), Christopher Loscalzo (New Haven CBC, New Haven Bird Club), Robert Dewire (New London CBC), Barbara Hawes (Old Lyme-Saybrook CBC, Potapaug Audubon Society), Steve Mayo (Stratford-Milford CBC, an erudite collection of dedicated birders), Mardi Dickinson and Townsend Dickinson (Westport CBC, Connecticut Audubon Society/Birdcraft Museum).

Stephen P. Broker

Cheshire, Connecticut

SPECIES	NORTHERN COUNTS						MIDSTATE COUNTS						COASTAL COUNTS						STATE TOTAL
	BA 12/22	EW 12/30	HA 12/15	LH 12/16	LS 12/16	ST 12/15	OX 12/16	PA 1/1	QV 12/16	SR 12/16	WR 12/15	GS 12/16	NA 12/23	NH 12/15	NL 12/29	OL 12/30	SM 12/22	WE 12/16	
Greater White-fronted Goose		1	1		1														3
Snow Goose			2		1						7	CW			2	CW			12
Brant			1									758	62	774	325	27	241	343	2531
Cackling Goose			2											2				4	
Canada Goose	770	415	8201	1260	5737	2305	900	2075	4086	426	2988	3094	1503	4127	2212	866	3003	1112	45080
Mute Swan			9	15	4	3	32	36	109	62	5	45	168	108	131	137	15	22	901
Wood Duck			7	7					6	1	1	2		3	1	CW	2	3	34
Gadwall			2	8						7	1	62	37	250	6	8	108	45	534
Eurasian Wigeon																2	1	3	
American Wigeon			1			1				2		52	1	62	26	4	253	101	503
American Black Duck	167	4	278	108	54	65	39	84	71	103	86	409	273	398	252	140	811	393	3735
Mallard	451	195	887	600	280	161	331	465	675	258	436	1101	451	1552	745	402	994	507	10491
Mallard Hybrid				3										3			2		8
Blue-winged Teal					2					1									3
Northern Shoveler										4				4					8
Northern Pintail				1		4	1			1	1				1	2	2	1	15
Green-winged Teal (Amer.)			8	2		1				CW	3	5	11	58		20	11		119
Canvasback											1			1		9			17
Redhead												CW			6				CW
Ring-necked Duck	142	1	2	64		118	166	5	98	4	36	107	3	110	83	247	46	105	1337
Greater Scaup	1		2		2							23	64	1350	12	115	1088	34	2691
Lesser Scaup	11	1		5	1		1	2	43			7	3	30	2	CW	4	42	152
scaup, sp.						1									1	140			142
Common Eider														382	132		1		515
Harlequin Duck														2					2
Surf Scoter												18	32	2	83	CW	3	1	139
White-winged Scoter												20	17	26	5	8	14		90
Black Scoter			CW											16	8	CW	1		25
scoter, species															4	2			6
Long-tailed Duck												121	42	130	42	5	79	269	688
Bufflehead	33	1		57	1	12		4	43	30	4	429	86	349	387	25	83	168	1712
Common Goldeneye		CW		14	3				3	17	1	138	34	178	165	22	190	133	898
Hooded Merganser	226	14	15	224	357	25	52	79	130	129	33	258	112	663	620	157	115	136	3345
Common Merganser	180	1	111	1061	47	4	39	131	62	120	168	982	2	14	22	39	2	43	3028
Red-breasted Merganser	CW			1					1			219	404	291	536	58	439	157	2106
Ruddy Duck	23		16	143	50	CW	1	36	40	43		141	157	13	103	258	36	23	1083
duck, sp.							3												3
Ring-necked Pheasant	3		4	3	3			CW	1		3			1					18
Ruffed Grouse					1														1
Wild Turkey	107		83	150	45	21	51	47	40	63	123	74	23	63	66		12	28	996
Red-throated Loon												32	70	83	72	24	94	20	395

SPECIES	NORTHERN COUNTS						MIDSTATE COUNTS						COASTAL COUNTS						STATE TOTAL
	BA 12/22	EW 12/30	HA 12/15	LH 12/16	LS 12/16	ST 12/15	OX 12/16	PA 1/1	QV 12/16	SR 12/16	WR 12/15	GS 12/16	NA 12/23	NH 12/15	NL 12/29	OL 12/30	SM 12/22	WE 12/16	
Ring-billed Gull	363	26	703	156	494	366	521	721	727	235	658	817	366	1871	395	578	2462	734	12193
Herring Gull	2	5	669	12	13	18	22	26	40	56	234	1084	658	1784	3844	437	1748	1524	12176
Iceland Gull			1																1
Lesser Black-backed Gull																			3
Great Black-backed Gull	2	1	101			CW	2	3	2	1	48	97	115	76	195	27	89	51	810
Dovekie													CW						CW
Razorbill												6	23	2	8		6	CW	45
alcid, sp.																			1
Rock Pigeon	76	161	1125	189	239	247	129	58	349	170	80	305	38	1045	260	96	345	128	5040
Mourning Dove	215	104	1259	228	79	210	87	313	225	128	398	291	191	476	439	87	172	89	4991
Monk Parakeet												8		174		10	89	10	291
Eastern Screech-Owl	5	7	18	8		10	3	11	10	7	17	15	2	28	1	3		4	149
Great Horned Owl	CW	2	7	6	5	6	2	7	9	6	9	11	3	12	2	0	2	2	91
Snowy Owl													1						1
Barred Owl	1		7	9	5	6	2	2	4	3	6	2	4	7	3	1	2	3	67
Long-eared Owl	1		2	1						1	2	2	1	1					11
Northern Saw-whet Owl	2		2	6				2	1		8	4	5					1	33
Belted Kingfisher	3	1	39	6	9	5	6	8	6	6	20	22	6	39	24	11	10	15	236
Red-headed Woodpecker													1						1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	35	29	102	60	32	52	27	72	34	64	52	69	28	71	51	26	19	16	839
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	5	2	14	3	1		2	6	3	7	17	5	5	8	10	5	1	3	97
Downy Woodpecker	84	45	203	150	70	122	69	168	103	130	119	135	63	225	131	44	54	42	1957
Hairy Woodpecker	24	7	43	38	10	19	12	30	16	18	29	36	5	36	10	5	8	5	351
Northern Flicker	2	9	68	5	3	15	5	13	18	17	17	12	30	34	33	6	10	11	308
Pileated Woodpecker	10	1	4	7	4	6	4	24	4	1	11	7		4		3	CW	0	90
Eastern Phoebe		1	1																4
Northern Shrike			1	2										CW		1			3
Blue Jay	85	97	239	238	132	198	75	291	146	255	201	156	90	330	223	133	56	33	2978
American Crow	624	68	28000	1102	550	302	252	827	498	246	2468	275	68	5097	373	94	146	180	41170
Fish Crow			7			21		3	14		2	67		8074	5		11	8	8212
crow, sp.														234					234
Common Raven	25	7	8	22	11	1	3	14	12	2	7	2	3	9	4	7	2	2	141
Horned Lark		19	234	39	30	159		30			100		38	120	51	42	73	CW	935
Tree Swallow														CW					CW
Northern Rough-winged Swallow			6											2					8
Cave Swallow														2					2
Black-capped Chickadee	872	125	619	1044	487	458	337	576	337	369	622	487	352	565	663	199	232	85	8429
Tufted Titmouse	260	94	427	317	146	272	201	352	193	312	358	316	85	344	342	126	96	54	4295
Red-breasted Nuthatch	67	7	22	30	9	9	10	14	1	1	7	47	127	41	21	3	4	9	429
White-breasted Nuthatch	137	38	240	216	96	142	73	163	80	168	207	137	58	176	122	60	35	25	2173
Brown Creeper	11	1	19	9	3	5	5	10	10	5	15	11	2	15	8	2	4	5	140
Carolina Wren	29	15	102	15	1	44	18	44	30	52	69	81	89	126	131	27	35	34	942
House Wren												CW							CW

Ring-billed Gull	363	26	703	156	494	366	521	721	727	235	658	817	366	1871	395	578	2462	734	12193
Herring Gull	2	5	669	12	13	18	22	26	40	56	234	1084	658	1784	3844	437	1748	1524	12176
Iceland Gull			1											1	2				1
Lesser Black-backed Gull														1	2				3
Great Black-backed Gull	2	1	101				CW	2	3	2	1	48	97	115	76	195	27	89	51
Dovekie														CW					CW
Razorbill													6	23	2	8		6	CW
alcid, sp.																			45
Rock Pigeon	76	161	1125	189	239	247	129	58	349	170	80	305	38	1045	260	96	345	128	5040
Mourning Dove	215	104	1259	228	79	210	87	313	225	128	398	291	191	476	439	87	172	89	4991
Monk Parakeet												8		174		10	89	10	291
Eastern Screech-Owl	5	7	18	8		10	3	11	10	7	17	15	2	28	1	3	4		149
Great Horned Owl	CW	2	7	6	5	6	2	7	9	6	9	11	3	12	2	0	2	2	91
Snowy Owl														1					1
Barred Owl	1		7	9	5	6	2	2	4	3	6	2	4	7	3	1	2	3	67
Long-eared Owl	1		2	1						1	2		2	1	1				11
Northern Saw-whet Owl	2		2	6				2	1		8	4	5		2				33
Belted Kingfisher	3	1	39	6	9	5	6	8	6	6	20	22	6	39	24	11	10	15	236
Red-headed Woodpecker														1					1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	35	29	102	60	32	52	27	72	34	64	52	69	28	71	51	26	19	16	839
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	5	2	14	3	1		2	6	3	7	17	5	5	8	10	5	1	3	97
Downy Woodpecker	84	45	203	150	70	122	69	168	103	130	119	135	63	225	131	44	54	42	1957
Hairy Woodpecker	24	7	43	38	10	19	12	30	16	18	29	36	5	36	10	5	8	5	351
Northern Flicker	2	9	68	5	3	15	5	13	18	17	17	12	30	34	33	6	10	11	308
Pileated Woodpecker	10	1	4	7	4	6	4	24	4	1	11	7		4		3	CW	0	90
Eastern Phoebe		1	1										1	CW		1			4
Northern Shrike			1	2															3
Blue Jay	85	97	239	238	132	198	75	291	146	255	201	156	90	330	223	133	56	33	2978
American Crow	624	68	28000	1102	550	302	252	827	498	246	2468	275	68	5097	373	94	146	180	41170
Fish Crow			7			21		3	14		2	67		8074	5		11	8	8212
crow, sp.														234					234
Common Raven	25	7	8	22	11	1	3	14	12	2	7	2	3	9	4	7	2	2	141
Horned Lark		19	234	39	30	159		30			100		38	120	51	42	73	CW	935
Tree Swallow														CW					CW
Northern Rough-winged Swallow			6											2					8
Cave Swallow														2					2
Black-capped Chickadee	872	125	619	1044	487	458	337	576	337	369	622	487	352	565	663	199	232	85	8429
Tufted Titmouse	260	94	427	317	146	272	201	352	193	312	358	316	85	344	342	126	96	54	4295
Red-breasted Nuthatch	67	7	22	30	9	9	10	14	1	1	7	47	127	41	21	3	4	9	429
White-breasted Nuthatch	137	38	240	216	96	142	73	163	80	168	207	137	58	176	122	60	35	25	2173
Brown Creeper	11	1	19	9	3	5	5	10	10	5	15	11	2	15	8	2	4	5	140
Carolina Wren	29	15	102	15	1	44	18	44	30	52	69	81	89	126	131	27	35	34	942
House Wren													CW						CW
Winter Wren	6		12	7	2	4	10	10	5	7	24	39	11	27	5	1	9	10	189
Marsh Wren			1									1	2	3	1				8
Golden-crowned Kinglet	66	1	43	40	13	33	38	24	14	17	47	21	35	37	46	2	16	10	503

SPECIES	NORTHERN COUNTS						MIDSTATE COUNTS					COASTAL COUNTS						STATE TOTAL	
	BA 12/22	EW 12/30	HA 12/15	LH 12/16	LS 12/16	ST 12/15	OX 12/16	PA 1/1	QV 12/16	SR 12/16	WR 12/15	GS 12/16	NA 12/23	NH 12/15	NL 12/29	OL 12/30	SM 12/22	WE 12/16	TOTAL
Ruby-crowned Kinglet			4	1			3	1		1	1	8	7	2	CW			CW	28
Eastern Bluebird	86	59	108	147	93	122	93	119	103	105	255	40	40	39	30	89	4	15	1547
Hermit Thrush	2	1	2	4	4	2	3	2	3	5	15	4	14	4	8	2	5		80
American Robin	674	215	576	395	624	322	49	327	146	420	288	511	325	263	680	362	181	48	6406
Gray Catbird			1	6				CW		3		3	6	5	4	CW			26
Northern Mockingbird	8	6	92	6	5	20	16	19	28	9	37	37	44	114	90	9	35	15	590
Brown Thrasher			1										4	3					12
European Starling	527	1342	2044	1358	3194	1583	780	942	2043	605	798	1829	2963	5065	1984	488	1579	417	29541
American Pipit		3	52					9	175		CW	CW	1	3	6	45	1		295
Cedar Waxwing	12	18	37	57	6	26	137	42	42	49	33	106	145	79	48	23		4	864
Snow Bunting		5								16		3	2				25		51
Black-and-white Warbler													1						1
Orange-crowned Warbler													2						2
Nashville Warbler													1						1
Common Yellowthroat			1					1		1			1						3
Northern Parula													1						1
Palm Warbler								1	CW				1	1					3
Pine Warbler	1	1								1		1							4
Yellow-rumped Warbler	CW			1			2		CW	7	1	33	5	7	1			1	58
Yellow-breasted Chat													CW	3					5
Eastern Towhee						1		2		3	CW	16	1	7					30
American Tree Sparrow	20	31	529	146	79	32	21	251	27	17	116	15	36	102	143	29	47	16	1657
Chipping Sparrow										1	4	2	4	1	3	1		CW	16
Clay-colored Sparrow													1						1
Field Sparrow		1	5	1			7	1		4	1	5	4	26	16	1	1	6	79
Vesper Sparrow																	1	1	2
Savannah Sparrow		6	24					5		9	47	6	14	9	7		31	7	165
Savannah 'Ipswich' Sparrow													1						1
Nelson's Sparrow													1						1
Le Conte's Sparrow			1																1
Fox Sparrow	2	2	5	3		1	1	1	3	2		16	18	14	18	1	3	7	97
Song Sparrow	36	51	374	74	20	98	198	190	121	78	?	243	251	451	296	92	85	174	2832
Lincoln's Sparrow								1				CW		2					3
Swamp Sparrow	1	2	10	10		9	13	18		5	13	6	13	27	13	3	4	5	152
White-throated Sparrow	81	154	600	154	99	160	355	519	184	397	418	837	393	952	580	273	184	241	6581
White-crowned Sparrow		2	13	1				2	1		16		2	7					44
sparrow, sp.							3												3
Dark-eyed Junco	947	886	1408	1040	547	868	1220	1357	710	933	1287	1164	374	1051	693	396	188	415	15484
Northern Cardinal	163	99	552	176	67	175	141	291	159	146	268	262	224	318	264	105	89	73	3572
Rose-breasted Grosbeak																		1	1
Blue Grosbeak													1						1
Red-winged Blackbird	3	68	732	20	945	816	3	1	10	42	426	2	8	92	18	350	17	6	3559
Eastern Meadowlark														3	26	2			31

CONNECTICUT FIELD NOTES

Winter 2012-13 - December 1, 2012, through Feb. 28, 2013

By Greg Hanisek and Frank Mantlik

A strong flight of northern finches qualifies as the season's signature event, strengthened by the presence of the rarest of this group, the Hoary Redpoll. Unseasonable and lingering half-hardy species were down by recent standards, but the presence of a White Ibis and swallows into mid-January says a lot about how much those standards have changed over the past decade.

Geese once considered rare are now regular in modest numbers. This season produced reports of seven **Greater White-fronted Geese** and six **Cackling Geese**. Single Brant were unusual inland winter finds on Dec. 5-13 at Goodwin Park, Hartford (PCi) and in Somers on Dec. 7 (JOs). A pair of Trumpeter Swans of unknown origin were first noted on Jan. 6 at Konold's Pond, Woodbridge, where they have made extended stays for several years (WBr, et al.). The season's only **Tundra Swan** slipped in among Mute Swans on Frash Pond in Stratford on Dec. 27 (RS).

Four **Eurasian Wigeons** for the season were typical. A

Blue-winged Teal was a good mid-winter find on Jan. 29 at the Sherwood Island mill pond in Westport (TG et al.). A male Mallard X Northern Pintail hybrid wintered again in Stratford (FM). A **Eurasian Green-winged Teal** found Feb. 6 at Binney Park, Greenwich, was seen through the season (MSa). Redheads have become perhaps the scarcest of our regularly occurring ducks. This season produced only two reports, singles at Old Saybrook on Dec. 27 (FM) and at Laurel Reservoir, Stamford, on Dec. 19 (PDu). **Harlequin Duck**, historically much rarer, did just as well with an adult male Dec. 2 at Greenwich Point (MSa) and a female at the Thames River mouth, New London,

on Jan. 27 (PR). A flock of 10 Black Scoters on Bantam Lake in Litchfield on Dec. 15 was a nice inland find (JMa). The massive staging flock of Common Mergansers on Lake Waramaug in New Preston peaked at 4,000 on Dec. 28 (RBe).

American Bittern, which winters regularly in our coastal marshes, was an unexpected inland find Dec. 15 in Coventry on the Storrs CBC. Great Egrets now linger late into winter. The high count was seven on Dec. 20 at Barn Island, Stonington (CC); three were present to Jan. 5 in Stratford (FM) with the latest report of one on Jan. 31 from Barn I. (FM). Late Snowy Egrets were at Greenwich Point Jan. 3-5 (MA) and (probably the same) on Jan. 4 in Stamford (PDu). A late Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was photographed on Dec 24 in Stratford (FM) and was seen again on Dec. 30 (DCa). One of the season's best and most unexpected birds was an immature **White Ibis** present in Stratford and occasionally nearby Milford from Dec 13 through at least Jan. 20 (FM, et al.).

The latest report of an Osprey came on Dec. 16 in Wethersfield (RAC); the first returning bird was an early one on Feb. 28 in Darien (LF). Single Golden Eagles were in Voluntown on Jan. 26 (RD) and on Jan. 27 at the Bald Eagle viewing area at Shepaug Dam in Southbury (JS), but there were no reports from the traditional area on the lower Connecticut River. Twelve Rough-legged Hawks for the season was a respectable showing.

A very late Semipalmated Plover was at Greenwich Point Jan 3 (MA, JZ). A probable wintering American Oystercatcher was at Stratford Jan. 5 (PW), with the same bird or a new arrival on Feb. 17 in Milford (JMa). A single Red Knot wintering at Hammonasset Beach State Park in Madison (hereafter HBSP) was a welcome find (PH, JOs, et al.). This species' winter presence has dwindled to almost nothing along with its well-publicized overall population decline. Eight American Woodcock were reported from Feb. 16 through season's end. An adult **Black-legged Kittiwake** was seen from the New London-Orient, N.Y., ferry

on Dec. 27 (FM), and another was added on Jan. 20 (SM). Three **Black-headed Gulls** for the season were singles found at Barn I., Stonington, on Dec. 3 and into January (BDw), at Long Wharf, New Haven, on Jan. 7-8 (JOs), and an all-white, leucistic individual photographed at Long Beach, Stratford Feb. 20 (FM). The season produced approximate totals of 12 Lesser Black-backed Gulls and 25 Iceland Gulls, including seven at the Windsor-Bloomfield landfill on Feb. 7 (KM).

A **Dovekie** close to shore at Stonington Point on Dec. 1 was killed by a Great Black-backed Gull (RS). Another was a storm-related fly-by off Old Saybrook on Dec. 27 (AG). Noteworthy were two "small alcids" seen briefly before diving at Mansfield Hollow Reservoir, Mansfield Dec. 4 (MSz). A **Common Murre** was seen from the New London-Orient, N.Y., ferry on Jan. 5 (JK et al.), and a **Thick-billed Murre** was a great find on the same ferry route on Jan. 20 (PL). Razor-bills were present in good numbers throughout Long Island Sound all winter. At Shippan Point, Stamford, from Dec. 12 to to Feb. 11

there were sightings totaling 73 birds, including 10 on Dec. 25 (PDu et al.). Rare this season, one or two Short-eared Owls were in Stratford/Milford Jan. 1 (DJ, FM, et al).

A hatch-year female **Rufous Hummingbird** present since Oct. 1 remained at an Ellington feeder until Dec. 18 (CEk). Other *Selasphorus* hummingbirds, likely Rufous, were at a Middlebury feeder to at least Dec. 12 (LK) and at a Groton feeder from mid-January through the end of the period (MRa). A Red-headed Woodpecker visited a feeder in East Litchfield on Dec. 24 (AM).

An Eastern Phoebe managed to hang on at Quinebaug Fish Hatchery in Plainfield to at least Jan. 27 (RD). There were six Northern Shrikes for the season: one in Goshen on Dec. 1 (SZ); two on the Litchfield Hills CBC; one in South Windsor Jan. 25-27 (PW); one in Cornwall on Jan. 27 (PCa); and one in Enfield on Feb. 15 (PY). In keeping with a rather amazing recent trend, two Northern Rough-winged Swallows remained at the New Haven sewer plant at East Shore Park through at least Jan. 20 (m.ob.); six were

at the East Hartford sewage treatment plant, also until at least Jan. 20 (BA). After an excellent fall showing, the following lingering **Cave Swallows** were reported: three at Silvers Sands State Park, Milford, on Dec. 6 (SS); two at Penfield Reef, Fairfield, on Dec. 9 (JP); one on Dec. 14-15 in East Haven (CLO); and one on Dec. 15 in New Haven.

A wintering Ovenbird was discovered Jan. 1 in a Danbury yard (JL); it was last seen Jan. 16. A Black-and-White Warbler lingered to Dec. 15 at East Shore Park

in New Haven (JOs). Two Orange-crowned Warblers for the season were down from recent winters. Other late warblers included a Nashville Warbler on Dec. 15 on the New Haven CBC; a Common Yellowthroat on Dec. 15 in New Milford on the Woodbury-Roxbury CBC (GH); four each of Palm Warblers and Pine Warblers for the season; and a Wilson's Warbler Dec. 17 in a New Milford yard (JD). Yellow-breasted Chats were found Dec. 2 at East Shore Park (PW); in a Branford yard on Dec. 10 (MRi); at Groton-New London Airport on Dec.



Jim Dugan photo
This Lark Sparrow was a bonus for birders visiting Windsor-Bloomfield landfill in search of rare gulls.

29 on the New London CBC; in Fairfield on Jan. 6 (AB, CB); and in Hamden on Feb. 16 (fide PCo).

One **Clay-colored Sparrow** for the season, on the New Haven CBC on Dec. 15 (LB, WBa), was below the increased levels of recent years. A flock of at least five Vesper Sparrows wintered along a rural roadside in Wallingford (GH et al.). A **Lark Sparrow** was present Dec. 27-29 at Windsor-Bloomfield landfill (JD et al.). A **LeConte's Sparrow** found Dec. 15 in Bloomfield on the Hartford CBC was a highlight of the counts and the season overall (DL, JMe). Their secretive nature makes the winter status of Nelson's Sparrow hard to assess, but one was reported Jan. 14 at Great I., Old Lyme (HG). Identification problems also come into play, resulting in four birds found and photographed Jan. 12 in the East River Marshes in Madison/Guilford being labeled as Saltmarsh/Nelson's (BA). Three reports of Lincoln's Sparrow represent a change from the recent past, when it was usual for this species to go unreported throughout the winter.

A record late **Blue Grosbeak** was found Dec 15 in North Haven on the New Haven CBC. An **Indigo Bunting** appeared at a feeder in Woodbridge on the record late date of Jan. 19 and stayed through the period and beyond as it molted into adult male plumage (CLO). A **Dickcissel** wintered in a Ledyard yard (RAs).

An unusually large flock of 10 Eastern Meadowlarks was at an old landfill opposite the Meriden Airport to at least Jan. 10 (SG). An adult female **Yellow-headed Blackbird** visited the Dixon feeders in Sterling on Dec. 22, followed by an immature male the next day (RD). This yard at that point had five records for the species, but there were even more to come in the spring. An adult male visited a feeder in Salem on Feb. 16 (PT), and an adult male was seen the next day in a yard in New London (RAs). A wintering flock of Rusty Blackbirds at feeders in Hamden peaked at 155 on Jan. 28 (CZ, JZ). A flock of 20 Boat-tailed Grackles wintered in the traditional Stratford area (FM), although unlike recent years, their exact roosting site was never



Mark Szantyr photo

One of the Pine Grosbeaks enjoyed by many birder during their visit to Marlborough in January.

found. An immature male **Bullock's Oriole** that appeared at an Ellington feeder in November remained through the season (DM). Baltimore Orioles were reported from East Shore Park in New Haven on Dec. 4 (FG) and from North Stonington on Dec. 27 (CC).

A small flight of **Pine Grosbeaks** was unusual in that the birds centered on the upper Connecticut River valley rather than the Northwest Corner: one Dec. 1 at Buckland Hills Mall, Manchester (MBa); up to five in Marlborough Dec. 13 – 19 (MBr et al.); three in Collinsville on Dec. 27 (SF); up to six in Simsbury Jan. 4-11 (SZ et al.); and one in Canton on Jan. 15

(DT). The exceptions were up to four in a more traditional Norfolk Village location on Dec. 7-9 (JD) and four flyovers on Dec. 12 in West Hartland (PCa). A significant flight of crossbills centered on HBSP, where peak counts were 45 **Red Crossbills** on Dec. 9 & 13 (FG, MSz), and 25 **White-winged Crossbills** on Dec. 8 (JF). A highlight of the season, but frustrating because of identification difficulty at times, were **Hoary Redpolls** stationed at feeders. The first report came Dec 31 at a feeder in Winchester (DRo), where at least two were seen there over the following month. A feeder in Barkhamsted hosted up to two through the season

(FZ), and one was at a feeder in Goshen on Feb. 7 (NB). A small presence of Evening Grosbeaks early in the season included singles in Ellington on Dec. 8 (DRt), in Branford on Dec. 3 (CW) and in Harwinton on Dec. 14 (PCa).

EXOTICS – A young male Mandarin Duck was at Raven Pond, Stratford Jan. 3 (FM). Two male European Goldfinches were at Riverside Park, Hartford, on Feb. 26 (PCi); the observer has seen the species at this site for three consecutive years.

Observers – Ray Acker (RAc), Robert Askins (RA), Bill Asteriades, Michael Aurelia, Charles Barnard, Mark Barriger (MBa), Wayne Bartholomew (WBr), William Batsford (WBa), Larry Bausher, Ray Belding (RBe), Nick Bonomo, Mike Brezinski (MBr), Alex Burdo, Donna Caporaso (DDa), Paul Carrier (PCa), Mona Cavallo, Paul Cianfaglione (PCi), Carolyn Cimino, Patrick Comins (PCo), Bob Dewire (BDw), Robert Dixon, Jim Dugan, Patrick Dugan (PDu), Carl Ekroth (CEk), Chris

Elphick (CEl), Jack Faller, Sarah Faulkner, Larry Flynn, Frank Gallo, Hank Golet, Tina Green, Andy Griswold, Shari Guarino, Greg Hanisek, Patti Haynes, Richard Jenkins, Denise Jernigan, Jay Kaplan, Leslie Kruse, David Lawton, Patricia Lindsay, Chris Loscalzo (CLo), Joey Lounsbury, Frank Mantlik, John Marshall (JMa), Deborah McTigue, Jamie Meyers (JMe), Shai Mitra, Keith Mueller, Albert Mortensen, many observers (m.ob.), John Oshlick (JOs), James Purcell, Maureen Ramonas (MRa), Martha Rice (MRi), Dave Rosgen (DRo), Dan Rottino (DRt), Phil Rusch, Meredith Sampson (MSa), Steve Spector, Mark Szantyr (MSz), Maureen Ramonas (MRa), Martha Rice (MRi), Phil Rusch, Russ Smiley, Judith Stevens, Pat Tamborra, Jonathan Trouern-Trend, Dave Tripp, Chris Woerner, Paul Wolter, Paul Young, Sara Zagorski, Joe Zeranski, Carol Zipp, Jim Zipp, Fran Zygmunt.

PHOTO CHALLENGE



Our quiz bird was the subject of a long investigation by the Avian Records Committee of Connecticut. The quiz answer, below, was written by Mark Szantyr, who also took the quiz photo. It appeared as an account in the 14th Report of ARCC.

BULLOCK'S ORIOLE (*Icterus bullockii*) One cooperated for many observers 25 Mar-7 May 2008 at the feeders of the Schaefer residence in Cannan village, North Canaan (08-09 Ingrid Schaefer*, Tom Schaefer*, Mark Szantyr‡, Jim Dugan‡, Nick Bonomo‡). Bullock's Oriole is once again on the increase in the East. This oriole, a beautiful bright-plumaged bird, was thought by many West Coast birders to be too orange over most of its plumage to be a normal Bullock's. While the bird appeared to be a young male, this extreme amount of orange led some to consider that it might be an older female of the species, as this age/sex class often takes on male characters

as estrogen levels fall. The plumage anomalies and the lack of conclusive age/sex determination gave rise to speculation that the bird was a hybrid. The next question was a hybrid with what. Observers from the mid-continent contact zone between Bullock's and Baltimore Oriole advised the committee that the Canaan oriole looked similar to some adult female hybrids between these two species. The closest species to Bullock's Oriole is not Baltimore Oriole, however, but Streak-backed Oriole, *Icterus pustulatus*, a bird from the extreme Southwest and Mexico that has been recorded in several Western states and as far east as Wisconsin. Several characters on the Canaan bird, including dorsal streaking that to some appeared extreme for Bullock's and similar to the symmetrical, orderly streaking of Streak-backed, were not inconsistent with Streak-backed Oriole. This bird caused extensive discussion from coast to coast. Ultimately, after conferring with several experts including plumage authority Peter Pyle, and critically analyzing all aspects of the bird's structure and plumage, the committee judged the bird to be within the range of Bullock's Oriole, and likely a young male, though age / sex is still in question.

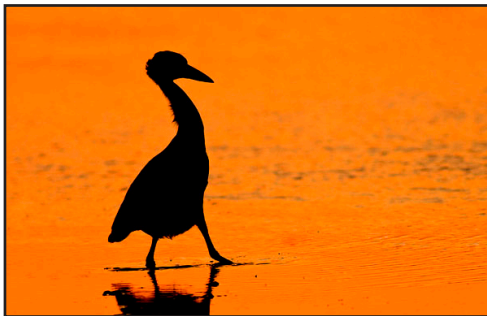


Photo Challenge No. 82

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

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Send manuscripts to the Editor. Please type double spaced with ample margins, on one side of a sheet. Submit a copy on a computer disk, if possible. Style should follow usage in recent issues. All manuscripts receive peer review.

Illustrations and photographs are needed and welcome. Line art of Connecticut and regional birds should be submitted as good quality prints or in original form. All submitted materials will be returned. We can use good quality photographs of birds unaccompanied by an article but with caption including species, date, locality, and other pertinent information.

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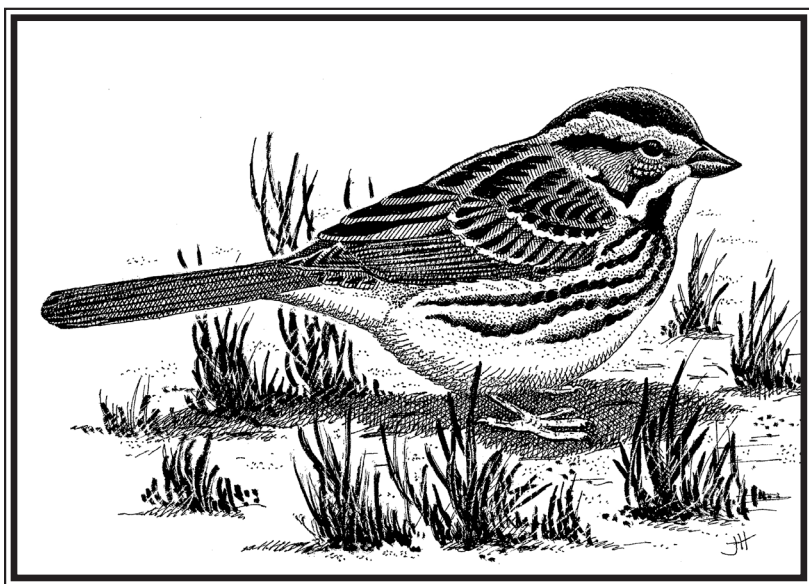
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ON THE COVER

Song Sparrow

The Song Sparrow was one of the ten most abundant species on the 2013 Summer Bird Count, ranking ninth. Our cover Song Sparrow was executed with amazing detail by Julian Hough.

THE 2013 SUMMER BIRD COUNT

By Joe Zeranski and Patrick Comins

Introduction

The Summer Bird Count, now in its 22nd year, is our largest summer citizen science effort and provides valuable insight to changes (or stability) in the status of our breeding bird species in Connecticut. We are thankful for the efforts and dedication of the volunteer observers, compilers and captains who make this analysis possible.

Results

This year 184 count day species were recorded. This is just about average and equal to last year's total species count. One additional species was recorded in the count period, a **Nelson's Sparrow** in Greenwich/Stamford. There were 249 observers, in 149 parties. The number of parties is an all time high, and the number of observers was two more than last year and very close to the record number of 250 observers from 2007 and 2008. Volunteers tallied 1334.75 party hours, with 1303.25 being daylight hours and 31.5 night hours; an all-time low for night hours.

There were 97,520 individual birds recorded, which is average despite a decline of more than 15,000 from last year's record total. The ten most abundant species were, in descending order: **American Robin, European Starling, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Gray Catbird, Canada Goose, Red-eyed Vireo, Cedar Waxwing, Song Sparrow** and **House Sparrow**. This is nearly identical to last year's list, with **Cedar Waxwing** replacing **Morning Dove** this year.

Seventeen species were represented by a single individual:

Northern Shoveler, Bufflehead, Red-breasted Merganser, Ring-necked Pheasant, King Rail (E), Semipalmated Plover, Greater Yellowlegs, Upland Sandpiper (E), Bonaparte's



Mark Szantyr photo
A record 3,039 Cedar Waxwings pushed that species into the Top Ten most abundant species for 2013.

Gull, Black Skimmer, Northern Saw-whet Owl (SC), Common Nighthawk (E), Eastern Whip-poor-will (SC), Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Mourning Warbler, Seaside Sparrow (T) and White-throated Sparrow.

There were 21 species recorded on the count days that do not regularly breed in Connecticut and can be considered either late migrants or non-nesting visitors: **Brant**, Northern Shoveler, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, Red-breasted Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Common Loon (SC), American Coot, Semipalmated Plover, Greater Yellowlegs, Ruddy Turnstone, Laughing Gull, Bonaparte's Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Forster's Tern, Black Skimmer, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Swainson's Thrush, Blackpoll Warbler, Mourning Warbler and Nelson's Sparrow (CP). The underlined species are potential nesters, but in the absence of additional supporting evidence they will be considered non-nesting visitors.

Several of these were noteworthy. The **Northern Shoveler** from New Haven was observed in the Quinnipiac River Marsh and was a first for that area and first SBC record

since a count period bird in 2002. **Ring-necked Ducks** were observed from New Haven and New Milford/Pawling, a first for the latter area and 4th occurrence overall in the last ten years. Both areas had a good year for waterfowl, with New Haven contributing a **Bufflehead** and the only **Red-breasted Merganser** for this year and New Milford/Pawling contributing three **Ruddy Ducks**. New Haven's five **American Coots** were a first for this area and made for an all-time statewide high count. It was a notably lean year for lingering migrant shorebirds with only three species recorded, New Haven's **Semipalmated Plover** and **Greater Yellowlegs**, and Greenwich/Stamford's three **Ruddy Turnstones**.

A **Bonaparte's Gull** from Litchfield Hills was the first SBC occurrence since 2000 and only the fifth SBC record. **Forster's Terns** are getting to be hardly notable, with their 7th SBC occurrence of the last 10, but there were only two additional records prior to that. It was also a pretty lean year for late migrant landbirds, with the best sighting being the **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** and the first **Mourning Warbler** since 2008; both from Litchfield Hills.



Bruce Finnan photo

Bonaparte's Gull was one of 21 non-breeding species recorded on the 2013 count.



Paul Fusco photo

The state-endangered Upland Sandpiper was represented by a single individual on the SBC.

Notable Nesting Species

Two **American Bitterns** (E) and a **Least Bittern** (T) were logged on the Litchfield Hills Count and Hartford added another **Least Bittern**. Litchfield Hills had a great year for secretive marsh birds, also contributing a **King Rail** (E), a first for their area, and two **Soras**. Their **Northern Saw-whet Owl** (SC) perhaps fits into this category as well, as they often frequent open shrub/herbaceous wetlands for their hunting grounds and are always a tough species to find nesting in Connecticut. New Haven located the only two **Glossy Ibis** (SC) for the count, and their annual **Common Nighthawk** (E). Barkhamstead had the only **Whip-Poor-Will** (SC) and Hartford the only **Upland Sandpiper** (E) and added another rare grassland nesting bird with six **Grasshopper Sparrows** (E). Greenwich/Stamford did their part by finding a **Sea-side** (T) and three **Saltmarsh Sparrows** (SC), with one more **Saltmarsh** in New Haven. Barkhamsted turned up two **Pine Siskins** and one was found by Litchfield Hills.

Species Recorded in Above Average Numbers

Vultures and raptors are well represented this year. **Black Vulture** again came in at an all-time high, with 51, as did **Turkey Vulture** with 463, both breaking last year's records. **Osprey** eclipsed their all-time high with 184. Only six were recorded statewide on the 1992 count. **Broad-winged Hawk** rounds out this group, with a new ten-year high of 66, tying with 2002 for an all-time high. Nearly half of them (29) were from Litchfield Hills, while Greenwich had a low count of only three.

Willetts beat last year's record by one with 26 recorded, ten of which were from Greenwich/Stamford and 16 from New Haven. **Chimney Swift** came in at an all-time high of 1,109, shattering last year's record by more than 130 individuals. This is encouraging for a species that is considered globally "near threatened". **Winter Wren** came in with an all-time high of 93, up from just 26 in 2011. **Cedar Waxwings** round out the category with a new all-time high of 3,039. We suspect this may be related to the outbreak of periodical 17-year cicadas, as there were abundant waxwings in all areas with cicada brood activity. Being late migrants and naturally nomadic, waxwings may be among the best adapted to take advantage of this irregular feast. The 60 **Dark-eyed Juncos** were the most since 1995 when 66 were recorded.

Species Recorded in Below Average Numbers

Twenty-four species came in at 10-year or all-time low counts. **Mute Swans** had an all-time low of 142, only the 4th time that fewer than 200 were counted. Only one **Ring-necked Pheasant** was found (Greenwich/Stamford). Pheasants haven't been missed yet on the 22 counts and the high count of 93 occurred in 1998. **Wild Turkeys** put in a new 10-year low of 447, but there were more turkeys than in any year prior to 1999 and only 43 were found on the first statewide count in 1992. **Black-crowned Night-Herons** came in at an all-time low of 111, lowering the previous record by more than 50. One has to wonder if the record low level of nighttime effort played any role, but most of these birds are counted on their nesting colonies during the day. **Northern**



Mark Szantyr photo
The 60 Dark-eyed Juncos on the
count were the most since 1995,
when 66 were tallied.

Goshawk was missed for the first time ever; the all-time high was 18 in 1994. **Virginia Rails** were at a 10-year low with 13, the lowest count since 1992 (8) and 1993 (11)...again the low level of nighttime effort may have played a role in this. **Piping Plovers** (T) had an all-time low of only five. By early accounts, it seems they had a bad year nesting in Connecticut, but much effort is put into tracking their distribution and productivity of this federally threatened species. The results from those efforts will be released by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection in the late fall or early winter and will provide much greater insight into their status this year. **Mourning Dove** had an all-time low of 2072, but are still the 12th most abundant species. Dove numbers have been fairly consistent in the mid-2,000s, ranging between this low and the high count of 2,896 in 2002. **Monk Parakeets** had a 10-year low count of 20, but still more than any year prior to 1999. **Eastern Screech-Owls** (26) and **Whip-Poor-Wills** (SC) (1) both came in at all-time low counts, but this is perhaps an artifact of the low level of nighttime effort. **Whip-Poor-Wills** (SC) are of conservation concern regionally because of long-term declines.

Three flycatchers were found in low numbers with **Alder Flycatcher** (62) (SC) and **Willow Flycatcher** (224) at 10-year

lows and **Eastern Kingbird** (456) at an all-time low. Two of our corvids also lagged, with **Blue Jay** (1,227) and **American Crow** (1,993) at all-time lows. This was the first time that fewer than 2,000 **American Crows** were recorded, but still good enough to be the 14th most abundant species on the count. **Black-capped Chickadees** were at a 10-year low of 1,570. Only 1992 (1,209) and 1994 (1,566) had fewer. **Marsh Wrens** were at a 10-year low with 46, only surpassed by 1993 (37). Only 943 **Wood Thrushes** were recorded, an all-time low and the first time that less than 1,000 were found. There is great concern about the sharp declines in this species. They were proposed as globally “near-threatened” by BirdLife International, but were instead classified as “data deficient”.

Four of our northern species came in with all-time or 10-year lows, 75 **Magnolia Warblers** were the fewest since 1999 (67), 90 **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were the fewest since 1993 (77), the one **White-throated Sparrow** ties 1992 for the fewest ever, and the 102 **Purple Finches** was the lowest number since 1998 (101). Two abundant species round out the category. The 3,786 **Common Grackles** were the fewest since 1992 (3,276), but still good enough to be the 4th most abundant species on the count and the 1,737 **American Goldfinches** was the lowest total since 1996 (1,736), but good enough for the top 20 most abundant species at 19th place.

Note: Any evidence of nesting by state-endangered (E), threatened (T) or special concern (SC) species should be reported to the COA Natural Diversity Database (NDDB) Project. This will ensure that the best available information can be taken into account in land-use decisions.

Thank you

In conclusion, on behalf of the Connecticut Ornithological Association, we would like to thank all of the volunteer observers, captains and compilers. The data that you provide is critical for understanding our ever-changing breeding bird populations!

2013 Connecticut Summer Bird Count Totals

Species known to nest recently within Connecticut are shown in italics. The stats under State Totals pertain to the prior 10 SBCs unless double underlined when they pertain to the all-time results.

Rare - noted on fewer than five years during previous 10 years [outlined box]	=	XX
New Count Day[CD] species - not recorded on previous 10 years [darkened outlined box]	=	XX
Higher numbers were tallied than were on any of the previous 10 years [underlined number]	=	<u>XX</u>
Fewer numbers were tallied than recorded on any of the previous 10 year [boldfaced number]	=	XX
Not recorded in [CD] 2013, but recorded on all the previous 10 years [underlined, boldfaced zero]	=	<u>0.0</u>
All-time SBC record - surpassing all previous SBCs [double underline]	=	<u><u>0.0</u></u>

SPECIES	<i>Coastal SBCs</i>		<i>CT</i>	<i>Upland SBCs:</i>					2013 State Totals	% of 2003-12 Average	# yrs obs.	2003-2012		
	GS	NH	Valley	Mid-state		Northern						Ave	Low	High
			Hfd	WR	NM/P	Ba	LH	St						
Snow Goose											3	0.4	1	2
<i>Canada Goose</i>	1129	568	<u>535</u>	226	210	<u>319</u>	305	63	3355	90%	10	3733	2988	4153
Brant	28	6							34	77%	10	44	6	235
<i>Mute Swan</i>	54	47	3	8	22		6	2	142	59%	10	242	165	306
<i>Wood Duck</i>	53	19	37	56	26	22	66	6	285	67%	10	425	272	607
<i>Gadwall</i>		2							2	39%	8	5.1	2	15
American Wigeon										0%	2	0.2	1	1
<i>American Black Duck</i>	23	17	1			4	2		47	89%	10	53	30	86
<i>Mallard</i>	427	181	321	70	80	92	<u>37</u>	27	1235	68%	10	1821	1228	2325
<i>Mallard/Black Duck</i>				1					1					

Blue-winged Teal										0%	1	0.3	3	3
Northern Shoveler	1									0%	0	0.0	0	0
<i>Green-winged Teal</i>										0%	4	0.5	1	2
Ring-necked Duck	1			1						400%	4	0.5	1	2
Greater Scaup										0%	6	1.4	1	7
Lesser Scaup										0%	3	0.3	1	1
King Eider										cp	0.0	0	0	0
Surf Scoter										0%	1	0.1	1	1
White-winged Scoter										0%	3	0.7	1	5
Long-tailed Duck										0%	8	2.3	1	6
Bufflehead	1								1	125%	5	0.8	1	2
Common Goldeneye										0%	2	0.3	1	2
<i>Hooded Merganser</i>						2	5		7	25%	10	28	11	72
<i>Common Merganser</i>			26		87	3			116	92%	10	126	86	234
Red-breasted Merganser	1								1	67%	10	1.5	1	4
Ruddy Duck				3					3	176%	5	1.7	1	6
<i>Ring-necked Pheasant</i>	1								1	16%	10	6.1	3	9
<i>Ruffed Grouse</i>							2		2	14%	10	14	1	26
<i>Wild Turkey</i>	40	29	30	56	29	131	86	46	447	87%	10	516	461	582
<i>Northern Bobwhite</i>										0%	8	1.8	1	5
Red-throated Loon										0%	2	0.4	1	3
Common Loon	8								8	200%	9	4.0	1	9
<i>Pied-billed Grebe</i>										0%	7	2.2	1	7
Horned Grebe										0%	2	0.2	1	1
Wilson's Storm-petrel										0%	1	0.3	3	3
<i>Double-crested Cormorant</i>	439	264	4	25	20	6	5	4	767	90%	10	850	598	1025
Anhinga										0%	1	0.1	1	1
<i>American Bittern</i>							2		2	74%	9	2.7	1	6
<i>Least Bittern</i>			1				1		2	105%	9	1.9	1	4

SPECIES	Coastal SBCs		CT	Upland SBCs:					2013 State Totals	% of 2003-12 Average	# yrs obs.	2003-2012		
	GS	NH	Valley	Mid-state		Northern						Ave	Low	High
			Hfd	WR	NM/P	Ba	LH	St						
<i>Great Blue Heron</i>	29	21	44	24	52	45	24	23	262	98%	10	267	186	375
<i>Great Egret</i>	132	48	1		3				184	72%	10	255	163	345
<i>Snowy Egret</i>	62	21							83	92%	10	91	66	135
<i>Little Blue Heron</i>										0%	6	0.7	1	2
<i>Tricolored Heron</i>										0%	1	0.1	1	1
<i>Cattle Egret</i>										0%	1	0.1	1	1
<i>Green Heron</i>	25	13	7	12	7	1	3	6	74	94%	10	79	59	113
<i>Black-cr Night-Heron</i>	102	8		1					111	43%	10	256	161	449
<i>Yellow-cr Night-Heron</i>	2								2	32%	10	6.2	1	21
<i>Glossy Ibis</i>		2							2	56%	8	3.6	1	8
<i>Black Vulture</i>	3	12	1	2	11	6	10	6	51	193%	10	26	16	47
<i>Turkey Vulture</i>	41	57	30	50	96	71	98	20	463	133%	10	349	270	454
<i>Osprey</i>	57	107	5	1		3	7	4	184	159%	10	115	75	176
<i>Mississippi Kite</i>										0%	1	0.1	1	1
<i>Bald Eagle</i>	4	1	4	3		11	3		26	116%	10	23	10	35
<i>Northern Harrier</i>										0%	4	0.6	1	2
<i>Sharp-shinned Hawk</i>	1	2			1	3	2	2	11	98%	10	11	7	18
<i>Cooper's Hawk</i>	6		1	3	2	8	3		23	61%	10	38	21	49
<i>accipiter species</i>					1			1	2					
<i>Northern Goshawk</i>									0		10	4.2	3	7
<i>Red-shouldered Hawk</i>	10	7	8	24	8	19	17	5	98	151%	10	65	32	120
<i>Broad-winged Hawk</i>	3			6	9	16	29	3	66	118%	10	56	45	64
<i>Red-tailed Hawk</i>	101	32	60	36	34	27	39	8	337	120%	10	281	217	360
<i>American Kestrel</i>				2	3		4	2	11	87%	10	13	3	21

Merlin									0%	2	0.2	1	1	
<i>Peregrine Falcon</i>	2	<u>5</u>	2						9	153%	10	5.9	2	9
<i>Clapper Rail</i>	2	2							4	40%	10	10	2	18
<i>King Rail</i>									<u>1</u>	1000%	1	0.1	1	1
<i>Virginia Rail</i>			1			<u>3</u>			<u>9</u>	50%	10	26	15	38
<i>Sora</i>									2	500%	7	1.0	1	3
American Coot		<u>5</u>							<u>2</u>	833%	5	0.6	1	2
Black-bellied Plover									<u>5</u>	0%	8	3.5	1	9
American Golden-Plover										0%	1	0.1	1	1
Semipalmated Plover		1							1	17%	8	5.8	1	15
<i>Piping Plover</i>		<u>5</u>							<u>5</u>	34%	10	15	8	24
<i>Killdeer</i>	42	18	82	16	5	17	15	38	<u>233</u>	96%	10	242	158	297
<i>American Oystercatcher</i>	50	11							61	119%	10	51	29	78
<i>Spotted Sandpiper</i>	4	<u>9</u>	30	3		5	2	9	62	143%	10	43	26	65
Solitary Sandpiper										0%	4	0.5	1	2
Greater Yellowlegs		<u>1</u>							1	56%	7	1.8	1	5
<i>Willet</i>	10	16							<u>26</u>	200%	9	13	4	24
<i>Upland Sandpiper</i>			1						<u>1</u>	167%	2	0.6	3	3
Ruddy Turnstone	3								3	73%	8	4.1	1	11
Red Knot										0%	4	2.7	1	22
Sanderling										0%	6	3.8	1	21
Semipalmated Sandpiper										0%	8	31	2	215
Least Sandpiper										0%	5	20	1	73
White-rumped Sandpiper										0%	8	2.3	1	6
Pectoral Sandpiper										0%	2	0.3	1	2
Purple Sandpiper										0%	1	0.1	1	1
Dunlin										0%	3	1.6	1	11
Short-billed Dowitcher										0%	1	0.3	3	3
Wilson's Snipe										0%	1	0.1	1	1

SPECIES	Coastal SBCs		CT	Upland SBCs:					2013 State	% of 2003-12 Average	# yrs obs.	2003-2012		
	GS	NH	Valley	Mid-state		Northern						Totals	Ave	Low
			Hfd	WR	NMP	Ba	LH	St						
<i>American Woodcock</i>	1	1		6			5	1	14	99%	10	14	8	24
Laughing Gull	6	1							7	19%	9	37	6	111
Bonaparte's Gull							1		1	0%	0	0	0	0
Ring-billed Gull	50	296	1						347	93%	10	375	190	530
Herring Gull	231	189	1						421	57%	10	742	413	975
Glaucous Gull										0%	2	0.2	1	1
<i>Great Black-backed Gull</i>	100	33			1				134	56%	10	241	107	373
<i>Least Tern</i>		67							67	37%	10	184	13	334
Gull-billed Tern										0%	1	0.2	2	2
Caspian Tern										0%	2	0.5	2	3
<i>Black Tern</i>										0%	2	0.2	1	1
<i>Common Tern</i>	317	17							334	96%	10	350	217	547
Forster's Tern	4								4	160%	7	2.5	1	7
Black Skimmer	cp	1							1	15%	7	6.5	2	26
<i>Rock Pigeon</i>	279	229	76	42	18	77	58	41	820	81%	10	1012	759	1154
<i>Mourning Dove</i>	464	228	287	242	142	269	285	155	2072	80%	10	2593	2273	2897
<i>Monk Parakeet</i>	5	15							20	19%	10	103	50	288
<i>Black-billed Cuckoo</i>	4	4	1	5	4	2	6	1	27	128%	10	21	10	69
<i>Yellow-billed Cuckoo</i>	12	7		6	2	2	4	4	37	95%	10	39	11	144
<i>cuckoo species</i>	1				1				2					
<i>Eastern Screech-Owl</i>	7	1	1	3	4		2	8	26	59%	10	44	29	59
<i>Great Horned Owl</i>	5	2	3	5		1	1	3	20	80%	10	25	10	36
<i>Barred Owl</i>	11	3	4	8		30	10	4	70	76%	10	93	61	132
<i>Northern Saw-whet Owl</i>							1		1	56%	8	1.8	1	4

<i>Nighthawk, Common</i>		1							1	10%	10	10	1	77
<i>Whip-poor-will</i>									1	9%	10	11	3	22
<i>Chimney Swift</i>	<u>230</u>	128	<u>172</u>	106	52	<u>290</u>	75	56	<u>1109</u>	151%	10	736	554	973
<i>Ruby-throated Hummingbird</i>	29	11	9	17	<u>35</u>	67	44	24	236	130%	10	181	142	236
<i>Belted Kingfisher</i>	<u>24</u>	7	11	18	5	36	9	<u>7</u>	117	126%	10	93	70	118
<i>Red-bellied Woodpecker</i>	247	88	73	98	64	68	60	48	746	118%	10	630	506	790
<i>Yellow-bellied Sapsucker</i>				31	24	279	117		451	72%	10	483	337	649
<i>Downy Woodpecker</i>	184	57	58	54	61	104	97	52	667	138%	10	809	501	1095
<i>Hairy Woodpecker</i>	61	21	22	21	19	57	28	6	235	29%	10	261	202	356
<i>Northern Flicker</i>	174	59	88	31	28	<u>35</u>	51	16	482	184%	10	523	468	613
<i>Pileated Woodpecker</i>	22	<u>8</u>	4	15	14	<u>50</u>	31	12	156	30%	10	133	103	167
<i>Olive-sided Flycatcher</i>										0%	7	1.1	1	3
<i>Eastern Wood-Pewee</i>	121	67	74	78	36	93	151	48	668	104%	10	642	510	797
<i>Yellow-bellied Flycatcher</i>							1		1	91%	4	1.1	1	5
<i>Acadian Flycatcher</i>	3		1	10	2	2	3		21	94%	10	22	7	34
<i>Alder Flycatcher</i>	1		1	<u>10</u>	<u>12</u>	10	<u>28</u>		62	61%	10	102	75	139
<i>Willow Flycatcher</i>	47	33	34	20	7	13	<u>64</u>	6	224	85%	10	264	226	315
<i>Least Flycatcher</i>				24	8	27	54	13	126	98%	10	129	75	158
<i>Epidonax species</i>				1	3		11	2	17					
<i>Eastern Phoebe</i>	70	25	43	119	86	205	227	75	850	118%	10	721	496	939
<i>Great Crested Flycatcher</i>	93	47	30	87	29	55	75	44	460	102%	10	450	360	529
<i>Eastern Kingbird</i>	68	24	31	78	26	94	89	46	456	84%	10	541	486	616
<i>White-eyed Vireo</i>	1	1		2	<u>1</u>		2	2	9	81%	10	11	2	22
<i>Yellow-throated Vireo</i>	26	6	8	35	32	35	62	15	219	92%	10	239	176	280
<i>Blue-headed Vireo</i>				17	1	58	38		114	68%	10	167	102	227
<i>Warbling Vireo</i>	195	90	129	154	69	66	102	<u>93</u>	898	121%	10	741	517	1011
<i>Red-eyed Vireo</i>	<u>309</u>	<u>98</u>	60	308	159	1145	974	<u>168</u>	3221	117%	10	2742	2255	3526
<i>Blue Jay</i>	310	129	123	<u>110</u>	71	271	148	65	1227	81%	10	1513	1328	1757
<i>American Crow</i>	260	99	126	<u>341</u>	245	396	415	111	1993	80%	10	2499	2202	3154

SPECIES	Coastal SBCs		CT	Upland SBCs:				2013 State Totals	% of 2003-12 Average	# yrs	2003-2012			
	GS	NH	Valley	Mid-state		Northern					obs.	Ave	Low	High
			Hfd	WR	NMP	Ba	LH	St						
<i>Fish Crow</i>	<u>68</u>	31	4	9	5	3	2	<u>9</u>	131	134%	10	98	62	148
<i>Common Raven</i>	<u>13</u>	<u>8</u>	8	6	9	43	17	<u>5</u>	109	125%	10	87	50	116
<i>Horned Lark</i>										0%	1	0.2	2	2
<i>Purple Martin</i>	41	5	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>				<u>11</u>	60	179%	10	34	14	87
<i>Tree Swallow</i>	231	224	177	148	113	398	406	116	1813	101%	10	1789	1245	2200
<i>Northern Rough-w Swallow</i>	129	40	33	51	36	40	18	20	367	86%	10	428	328	540
<i>Bank Swallow</i>			52	<u>4</u>	7	78	5	15	161	61%	10	263	148	407
<i>Cliff Swallow</i>	60	8	10	<u>103</u>	30	<u>52</u>	4		267	98%	10	271	181	365
<i>Barn Swallow</i>	439	217	80	215	137	<u>308</u>	318	182	1896	110%	10	1718	1483	1990
<i>Black-capped Chickadee</i>	155	67	73	195	88	540	335	117	1570	84%	10	1880	1602	2254
<i>Tufted Titmouse</i>	385	110	83	265	117	383	192	113	1648	91%	10	1818	1478	2005
<i>Red-breasted Nuthatch</i>	1				<u>1</u>	17	1	<u>1</u>	21	78%	10	27	7	60
<i>White-breasted Nuthatch</i>	85	32	27	29	43	150	60	60	486	74%	10	658	349	1040
<i>Brown Creeper</i>	3	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>		28	20		61	97%	10	63	41	78
<i>Carolina Wren</i>	185	42	49	43	31	<u>37</u>	19	33	439	132%	10	332	199	502
<i>House Wren</i>	287	52	48	187	100	<u>118</u>	168	64	1024	117%	10	873	544	1143
<i>Winter Wren</i>	<u>6</u>	<u>3</u>	1	8	2	51	22		<u>93</u>	217%	10	43	13	88
<i>Marsh Wren</i>	9	24	2		1		10		46	42%	10	110	52	253
<i>Golden-crowned Kinglet</i>					1	5	3		9	158%	9	5.7	1	16
<i>Ruby-crowned Kinglet</i>										0%	1	0.1	1	1
<i>Blue-gray Gnatcatcher</i>	42	<u>6</u>	6	70	17	54	40	33	268	104%	10	257	193	321
<i>Eastern Bluebird</i>	46	13	11	94	51	109	81	68	473	90%	10	523	441	684
<i>Gray-checked Thrush</i>										0%	1	0.1	1	1
<i>Veery</i>	79	27	21	214	192	744	639	82	1998	103%	10	1938	1371	2335
<i>Bicknell's Thrush</i>										0%	1	0.1	1	1

Swainson's Thrush	1				1				2	286%	6	0.7	1	2
<i>Hermit Thrush</i>				5	1	132	46		184	87%	10	212	147	270
<i>Wood Thrush</i>	115	61	82	145	55	247	175	63	943	77%	10	1224	1065	1419
<i>Gray Catbird</i>	794	234	227	434	282	733	669	<u>358</u>	3731	94%	10	3962	3140	4762
<i>Northern Mockingbird</i>	122	66	61	42	32	22	8	<u>19</u>	372	81%	10	459	370	522
<i>Brown Thrasher</i>	10	0	1	<u>7</u>	4	2	<u>3</u>	3	30	79%	10	38	26	56
<i>European Starling</i>	1492	603	940	198	207	295	421	<u>860</u>	5016	91%	10	5533	4766	6613
<i>Cedar Waxwing</i>	<u>396</u>	<u>296</u>	242	<u>159</u>	145	<u>1020</u>	596	<u>185</u>	<u>3039</u>	177%	10	1715	1181	2434
<i>Blue-winged Warbler</i>	43	29	20	49	22	37	55	50	305	98%	10	310	271	392
<i>"Lawrence's Warbler"</i>														
<i>"Brewster's Warbler"</i>														
<i>Golden-winged Warbler</i>										0%	1	0.1	1	1
<i>Tennessee Warbler</i>										0%	1	0.1	1	1
<i>Nashville Warbler</i>										0%	7	0.9	1	2
<i>Northern Parula</i>	2			4		2	1		9	173%	10	5.2	1	11
<i>Yellow Warbler</i>	418	148	173	224	146	149	555	136	1949	97%	10	2018	1791	2297
<i>Chestnut-sided Warbler</i>	3	4	3	60	41	190	256	5	562	92%	10	610	529	672
<i>Magnolia Warbler</i>	cp			3		64	8		75	71%	10	105	88	139
<i>Black-throated Blue Warbler</i>				9	1	115	61		186	94%	10	198	160	243
<i>Yellow-rumped Warbler</i>						73	17		90	81%	10	111	95	129
<i>Black-thr Green Warbler</i>	1	3		<u>61</u>	1	143	<u>127</u>	2	338	99%	10	343	272	424
<i>Blackburnian Warbler</i>				8	3	126	67		204	102%	10	199	139	243
<i>Pine Warbler</i>	31	<u>28</u>	16	17	10	159	106	41	408	99%	10	411	319	460
<i>Prairie Warbler</i>	2	<u>20</u>	20	33	2	5		<u>16</u>	98	94%	10	105	80	146
<i>Blackpoll Warbler</i>				1			4		5	143%	10	3.5	1	9
<i>Cerulean Warbler</i>					2	1	4	9	16	138%	10	12	4	21
<i>Black-&-White Warbler</i>	<u>9</u>	16	2	43	27	214	190	13	514	100%	10	516	417	624
<i>American Redstart</i>	<u>32</u>	15	34	151	102	455	457	58	1304	103%	10	1264	896	1566

SPECIES	Coastal SBCs		CT	Upland SBCs:					2013 State Totals	% of 2003-12 Average	# yrs	2003-2012		
	GS	NH	Valley	Mid-state		Northern						obs.	Ave	Low
			Hfd	WR	NMP	Ba	LH	St						
<i>Prothonotary Warbler</i>									0%	1	0.1	1	1	
<i>Worm-eating Warbler</i>	15	21	2	21	6	5	13	19	101%	10	101	75	141	
<i>Ovenbird</i>	63	64	17	164	87	629	573	106	111%	10	1536	1249	1951	
<i>Northern Waterthrush</i>	1			3	2	16	22		91%	10	49	22	77	
<i>Louisiana Waterthrush</i>	26	7	4	50	16	49	54	6	121%	10	175	84	225	
<i>Kentucky Warbler</i>									0%	1	0.2	2	2	
<i>Mourning Warbler</i>							1		125%	4	0.8	1	4	
<i>Common Yellowthroat</i>	170	58	89	196	116	519	484	100	98%	10	1760	1516	2019	
<i>Hooded Warbler</i>	1			29	17		7	1	134%	10	41	11	72	
<i>Wilson's Warbler</i>									0%	2	0.2	1	1	
<i>Canada Warbler</i>	1			5	5	12	20		83%	10	52	39	75	
<i>Yellow-breasted Chat</i>									0%	4	0.5	1	2	
<i>Eastern Towhee</i>	31	27	22	72	56	97	107	43	80%	10	567	446	677	
<i>Chipping Sparrow</i>	281	88	105	346	113	768	390	245	100%	10	2344	1707	2745	
<i>Field Sparrow</i>	10	6	22	33	14	4	9	8	97%	10	110	77	156	
<i>Savannah Sparrow</i>			48	28	1	2	22	3	157%	10	66	21	106	
<i>Grasshopper Sparrow</i>			6						171%	10	3.5	2	7	
<i>Nelson's Sparrow</i>	cp								0%	5	0.5	1	1	
<i>Saltmarsh Sparrow</i>	3	1							58%	10	6.9	1	11	
<i>Seaside Sparrow</i>	1								56%	4	1.8	1	11	
<i>Song Sparrow</i>	571	205	290	337	224	487	663	167	108%	10	2722	2093	3133	
<i>Swamp Sparrow</i>	5	3	6	2	46	53	191	4	93%	10	334	245	463	
<i>White-throated Sparrow</i>						1			15%	10	6.6	2	19	
<i>Dark-eyed Junco</i>				5		41	14		136%	10	44	29	59	

<i>Scarlet Tanager</i>	102	40	17	120	54	245	147	43	768	103%	10	745	569	888
<i>Northern Cardinal</i>	431	166	150	229	124	334	245	135	1814	97%	10	1867	1452	2247
<i>Rose-breasted Grosbeak</i>	40	23	24	73	36	98	67	24	385	83%	10	463	351	577
<i>Blue Grosbeak</i>										0%	1	0.1	1	1
<i>Indigo Bunting</i>	74	<u>45</u>	29	116	68	114	66	36	548	107%	10	514	346	616
<i>Dickcissel</i>										0%	1	0.1	1	1
<i>Bobolink</i>			17	128	41	56	267	<u>26</u>	535	113%	10	472	335	703
<i>Red-winged Blackbird</i>	720	506	763	527	333	268	818	589	4524	95%	10	4741	3851	5453
<i>Eastern Meadowlark</i>			4	1	5		3		13	77%	10	17	8	28
<i>Common Grackle</i>	1422	635	450	229	174	355	400	121	3786	74%	10	5092	3871	6534
<i>Boat-tailed Grackle</i>										0%	2	0.6	1	5
<i>Brown-headed Cowbird</i>	188	64	94	95	83	111	157	136	928	81%	10	1139	922	1284
<i>Orchard Oriole</i>	20	8	14	20			4	2	68	86%	10	79	57	112
<i>Baltimore Oriole</i>	260	100	93	140	69	96	102	74	934	81%	10	1152	930	1400
<i>Bullock's Oriole</i>										0%	1	0.0	0	1
<i>Purple Finch</i>				3	7	54	38		102	64%	10	159	122	200
<i>House Finch</i>	181	94	106	137	89	143	100	101	<u>951</u>	260%	10	366	278	503
<i>Red Crossbill</i>										0%	1	0.1	1	1
<i>Pine Siskin</i>						2	1		3	56%	3	5.4	1	50
<i>American Goldfinch</i>	219	135	177	158	137	449	325	137	1737	74%	10	2342	2171	2685
<i>Evening Grosbeak</i>										0%	2	0.9	2	7
<i>House Sparrow</i>	1185	314	418	160	142	280	248	167	2914	88%	10	3321	2816	4194
other unidentified/hybrid	2			2	3									

SPECIES	Coastal SBCs		CT	Upland SBCs:					2013 State Totals	% of 2003-12 Average	# yrs obs.	2003-2012		
	GS	NH	Valley	Mid-state		Northern						Ave	Low	High
			Hfd	WR	NMP	Ba	LH	St						
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	20812	9390	9196	10168	6276	18201	16608	6869	97520	100%		97409	82283	1E+05
<i>CD Species</i>	130	126	109	121	116	122	138	102	184	99%	236	186	174	191
<i>CP Species</i>	2				3							2	1	6
DEGREE OF EFFORT:														
<i>Observers</i>	50	<u>41</u>	44	23	<u>25</u>	19	35	12	249	103%		241	193	263
<i>Parties</i>	34	17	27	16	<u>18</u>	13	16	<u>8</u>	149	116%		128	102	144
<i>Party Hours</i>	294	138	115	122	<u>125.5</u>	257	189	<u>94.25</u>	1334.8	105%		1269	1008.5	1417
<i>Day Party Hours</i>	286.5	137	114	118	<u>123</u>	252	182	<u>90.75</u>	1303.3	107%		1214	962.5	1358
<i>Night Party Hours</i>	7.5	1	1	4	<u>2.5</u>	5	7	<u>3.5</u>	31.5	58%		54	40.5	61.75
<i>Indiv. birds per 10 PHs</i>	708	680.4	800	833	500	708.2	878.7	728.8	730.6			155	70.536	853.4
<i>Indiv. birds per Observer</i>	416	229	209	442	251	958	475	572	392			734	445.65	855.2
<i>% SBC Observers</i>	20	16	18	9	10	8	14	5	100					
<i>% SBC Party Hours</i>	22	10	9	9	9	19	14	7	100					
<i>% SBC Individual Birds</i>	21	10	9	10	6	19	17	7	100					

STATEWIDE COUNT TOTALS

Count Dates: June 2, 8, 9, 15, 16, 22, & 23

Totals: 183 species were recorded and totaled 97,520 individual birds. Two hundred and forty-nine observers in 149 parties spent 1334.8 Party Hours [PH] in the field.

During the prior decade 238 species were recorded on count days. This year Northern Shoveler and Bonaparte's Gull were added to this list. Northern Goshawk was not reported after being recorded during the previous ten years.

Since 1776, 253 SBC species have been counted, while another 3 species remain only count period birds. In the decade previous to this year 236 were reported.

LOCAL COUNT TOTALS

Barkhamsted Summer Bird Count (*founded 1992*)

Count Dates: June 22 & 23(Sat. & Sun.)

Totals: 122 species, 18,201 individual birds. Nineteen observers in thirteen parties spent 257 PHs in the field. Since 1992 159 CD species have been recorded.

Participants: Bob Barbieri, Ray Belding, Ayreslea Denny, Angela Dimmitt, Peter Faber, Nikki Hall, Seth Harvey, Vicki Hester, Jim Kandefer, Marie Kennedy, John Marshall, Russ Naylor, Carol Parent, Andrea Pelletier, Mike Placo, **David Rosgen** (121 Laurel Way, Winsted, CT 06098-2534; ctbluebird1020@gmail.com), Sam Slater, Dave Tripp Jr., and Fran Zygmunt.

Weather: 6/22 - daytime: W winds, 0-10 mph., 60° to 82°F. mostly sunny; evening: WS/W winds, 0-5 mph., 82° to 56°F., partly clear; 6/23 - daytime: SW winds, 0-5 mph., 56° to 85°F. partly cloudy; evening: SS/W winds, 0-10 mph., 85° to 65°F., mostly cloudy;

Count (a rectangle, 12 mile east-west by a 17 mile north-south) Center: 41°5'N 72°59'W. Elevation: 285 to 1457 feet. Area covered: Barkhamsted, Burlington (northern edge),

Canton, Colebrook, Hartland, New Hartford, Torrington (northeast 1/4), and Winchester.

Greenwich-Stamford Summer Bird Count (*founded 1976*)

Count Dates: June 8 & 9 (Sat. & Sun.)

Totals: 130 species, 20812 individual birds, plus three count period species. Fifty observers in 34 Parties observed for 294 PHs. Since 1976, 237 CD species have been recorded, 145 of these have been found nesting

Participants: Tom Andersen, Mike Aurelia, Tom Baptist, Valya Baptist, Marty Barris, Trudy Battaly, Joe Belanger, Gail Benson, Michael Bochnik, **Thomas W. Burke** (235 Highland Road, Rye, NY 10580; tom.burke@mcgladrey.com), Ioa Burn, Al Collins, Annette Cunniffe, Peter Dav-enport, Patrick Dugan, Cynthia Ehlinger, Debby Ethridge, Andrew Farnsworth, Kathy Gellman, Ted Gilman, Carolyn Hartel, David Havens, Kelli Jewell, Wendy Knothe, Ellen McLean, Chris Mignone, Kenneth Mirman, Frank Novak, Jim O'Brien. Maryann O'Leary, Brian O'Toole, **Gary Palmer** (34 Field Road. Cob Cob, Ct., 06830; gejlpalmer@yahoo.com), Drew Panko, Matt Popp, Steve Ricker, Bob Rocco, Polly Rothstein, David Salmon, Meredith Sampson, Jonna Schaffer, Bob Shriber, Andy Towle, Matt Tozer, Marvin Turner, Bill Van Loan, Jr., Mike Warner, Jeison Williams, John Wissmann, Taylor Wright, and Adam Zorn.

Weather: 6/8- NW winds, 11-21 mph, 55° to 75°F., mostly cloudy, 0.5' rain; 6/9- NW winds, 4 – 13 mph, 57° to 79°F., sunny.

Count (a square, 15x15 mile east-west) Center: 41°05'N 73°37'W. Elevation: sea level to at least 740 feet. Area covered: in Connecticut (65% of area)- Darien, Greenwich, New Canaan, and Stamford, and in New York (35% of area)- Armonk, Bedford (in part), Port Chester, Rye, and White Plains (in part).

Hartford Summer Bird Count (*founded 1991*)

Count Dates: June 8 & 9 (Sat. & Sun.)

Totals: One hundred and nine CD species, 9,196 individual birds. Forty-four observers in 27 Parties covered 115 PHs. One 169 CD species have been documented since 1992.

Participants: Rob Ballinger, Nick Barnett, Donald Blume, Mona Cavallero, Paul Cianfaglione, Jonah Cohen, Jan Collins, Pamm Cooper, Fran D'Amico, Andrew Dasinger, Paul Desjardins, Ed Dettore, Gale Donnelly, Peter Egan, Carl Ekroth, Patrice Favreau, Beth Fordiani, Sam Fried, Cnristine Graesser, Sylvia Halkin, Dee Hanson, Eric Hanson, **Jay Kaplan** (71 Gracey Road, Canton, CT. 06019; jaybrd49@aol.com), Gil Kleiner, Steve Kotchko, David Lawton, Matthew Lawton, Judy Larkin, Elaine Lechowicz, David Leff, Larry Lunden, David Lyons, Kristi Mazzoni, Jamie Meyers, Annette Pasek, Marianne Piche, Roger Preston, Susanne Shradler, Brian Toal, Karli Walczewski, Jon Ward, Judy Whittlesey, Mike Whittlesey, and Phyllis Winer.

Weather: 6/8- clearing up after previous day's 1.58" rainfall, 52° to 78°F., 6/9- a gorgeous day 56° to 81°F.,

Count (15-Mile diameter circle) Center: 41°46'N 72°40'W. (Old State House), Elevation: 40 to 640 feet. Area covered: Avon (in part), Bloomfield, East Hartford, Farmington (in part), Hartford, Manchester (in part), Glastonbury (in part), Newington (in part), Rocky Hill (in part), South Windsor, West Hartford, Wethersfield, and Windsor.

Litchfield Hills Summer Bird Count (*founded 1994*)

Count Dates: June 8 & 9 (Sat. & Sun.)

Totals: 138 species, 16,608 individual birds. Thirty-five observers in 16 Parties accumulated 189 PHs. Since 1994, with the addition of King Rail this year, 175 CD species have been recorded.

Participants: Janet Baker, John Baker, Marcia Baker, Robert J. Barbieri, Ray Belding, Arsylea Denny, Angela Dimmitt, Cathy Felton, Eileen Finnan, Kevin Finnan, Evelyn Gel-

eter, Nicki Hall, Greg Hanisek, Dennis Hannon, Pam Hicks, Marianne Horn, Marie Kennedy, Joan Lang, Jerry Marcellino, Debbie Martin, Marcia McGowan, Scott Mills, Russ Naylor, Ann Orsillo, Dave Rosgen, Ronnie Santo, Sam Slater, Donna Rose Smith, Olaf Soltau, BK Stafford, Peary Stafford, **David Tripp Jr.** (63 Dyer Ave., Canton, Ct. 06019, dtrippjr@comcast.net), John Wagenblatt, Ryan Wirtes, and Fran Zygmunt.

Weather: 6/8 – gusty NW winds, 54° to 73°F., evening: NW winds, 73° to 60°F. 6/9 - NW winds, 55° to 75°F., evening: W winds, 75° F.,

Count (15-Mile diameter circle) Center: 41°43'N 73°14'W. Elevation: 450 to 1658 feet. Area covered (in whole or in part): Cornwall, Goshen, Kent, Litchfield, Morris, Sharon, Torrington, Warren, and Washington.

New Haven Summer Bird Count (*founded 1991*)

Count Dates: June 8 & 9 (Sat. & Sun.)

Totals: 126 species, 9,390 individual birds. Forty-one observers in 17 Parties spent 138 PHs in the field. Since 1991, 203 CD species have been confirmed with the addition this year of Northern Shoveler and Bufflehead.

Participants: Marion Aimsbury, Barbara Amatruda, Ralph Amodel, Toby Appel, Christin Arnini, Phil Asprelli, Bill Batsford, Larry Bausher, Steve Broker, Roy Dellinger, Sharon Dellinger, John Farley, Mike Ferreri, Stacy Hanks, Mike Horn, Kris Johnson, Meg Kilmore, Patrick Leahy, Christ Loscalzo, **Steve Mayo** (27 Tuttle Court, Bethany, CT 06524; rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net), Florence McBride, Pat McCrelles, Nancy Meyer-Lustman, Bob Mitchell, Judy Moore, Ryan Murphy, Richard Payne, Beverly Propen, Frank Ragusa, Nancy Ragusa, Brian Roche, Nancy Rosenbaum, Arne Rosen-gren, Lee Schlesinger, Arthur Shippee, Nancy Specht, Charla Spector, Steve Spector, Marianne Vahey, Lisa Wahle, and Paul Wolter.

Weather: 6/8– daytime: N/NW winds shifting

to S/W, 3 mph, 55° to 77°F., scattered clouds. 6/9 – S/W winds, 4 mph., 62° to 79°F., mostly cloudy,

Count (15-Mile diameter circle) Center: 41°18'N 72°56'W. Elevation: Sea level to 700 feet. Area covered: Branford (western), East Haven, Milford, New Haven, North Haven, Orange, West Haven, and Woodbridge (in part).

New Milford/Pawling Summer Bird Count (*founded 2003*)

Count Dates: June 15 & 16 (Sat. & Sun.)

Totals: 116 species, 6278 individual birds. Twenty-five observers in eighteen parties spent 125.5 PHs in the field. Since 2003, 157 CD species have been recorded, including this year's addition of Ring-necked Duck and Swainson's Thrush.

Participants: Pat Bailey, Ray Belding, Don Breeger, Barbara Butler, Ioa Byrne, Binnie Chase, Jay Coles, Vicky Daley, **Angela Dimmitt** (PO Box 146, Sherman, Ct. 06784; angeladimmitt@aol.com), Larry Fischer, Dot Fleury, Sibyll Gilbert, Linton Hamilton, Carol Hartel, Cliff Jensen, Marge Josephson, Anne Kehmna, Marie Kennedy, Dennis Larkin, Russ Naylor, Nancy Nichols, Sally Spence, Nick Thold, Eva von Ancken, and Bill Wallace.

Weather: 6/15 – daytime: 53° to 77°F. “Perfect day”; evening: 55° to 53°F., clear; 6/16 – daytime: 56° to 70°F. “Cloudy but nice”, evening: 53° to 56°F., Clear.

Count (15-Mile diameter circle) Center: 41°32'N 73°34'W (Intersection of routes 68 & 157 in Pawling NY). Elevation: 300 to 600 feet. Area covered: in Connecticut (1/3 of area): Sherman, New Fairfield, and New Milford (west of route 7); and in New York (2/3 of area): Patterson, Pawling, Putnam Lake, Carmel, southern Wingdale, and Poughquag.

Storrs Summer Bird Count (*founded 1990*)

Count Dates: June 22 & 23 (Sat. & Sun.)

Totals: 102 species, 6869 individual birds. Twelve observers in eight parties accumulated 94.25 PHs in the field. Since 1990 137 CD species have been counted.

Participants: Denise Anamani, Jorge de Leon, Susan Harrington, Tom Harrington, Karen Hochgraf, Susan Hochgraf, Ann Lewis, **Steve Morytko** (288 Varga Road, Ashford, CT 06278-1828; smorytko@yahoo.com), Steve Rogers, Philip Rusch, Patty Shannon, and Fred Streams.

Weather: 6/22- SW winds, 0-10 mph., 55° to 85°F., evening: SW winds, 0 mph., 55° to 58°F., 6/23- SW winds, 0-20 mph., 58° to 85°F.,

Count (15-Mile diameter circle) Center: 41°48'N 72°15'W. (Juncture of Route 195 and North Eagleville Road) Elevation: 200 to 750 feet. Area covered: Ashford, Chaplin, Coventry, Mansfield, Tolland, Willimantic, Willington, and Windham.

Woodbury-Roxbury Summer Bird Count (*founded 1978*)

Count Date: June 2 (Sun.)

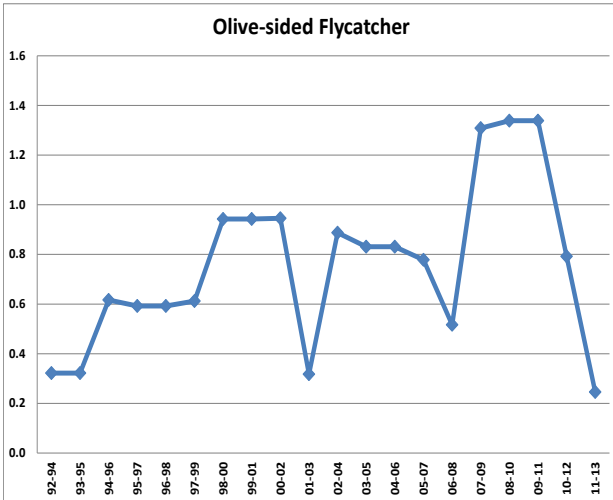
Totals: 121 species, 10,168 individual birds. Twenty-three observers in 16 Parties counted during 118 PHs in the field. Since 1978, 181 CD species have been recorded.

Participants: Renee Baade, David Babington, Ray Belding, Polly Brody, Bob Cartoceti, Buzz Devine, Ken Elkins, Larry Fischer, Dennis Hannon, Seth Harvey, Tom Hook, Anne Kehmna, Marie Kennedy, Bill Liedlich, Nancy Liedlich, **Russ Naylor** (44 Church Street, Woodbury, CT 06798, 203 263-2502), Donna Rose Smith, Marty Swanhall, Darcy Thurrott, Carol Titus, Fred Tregaskis, Leigh Wells, and Tom Zissu.

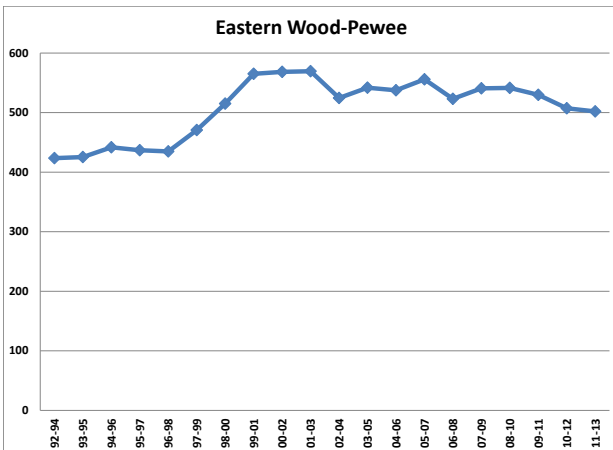
Weather: 6/2 daytime: W/SW Winds, 15-20 mph., 60° to 90°F., Scattered showers.

Count (15-Mile diameter circle) Center: 41°32'N 73°16'W. Elevation: 110 to 1060 feet. Area covered: Bethlehem, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Middlebury, New Milford, Newtown, Roxbury, Southbury, Washington, and Woodbury.

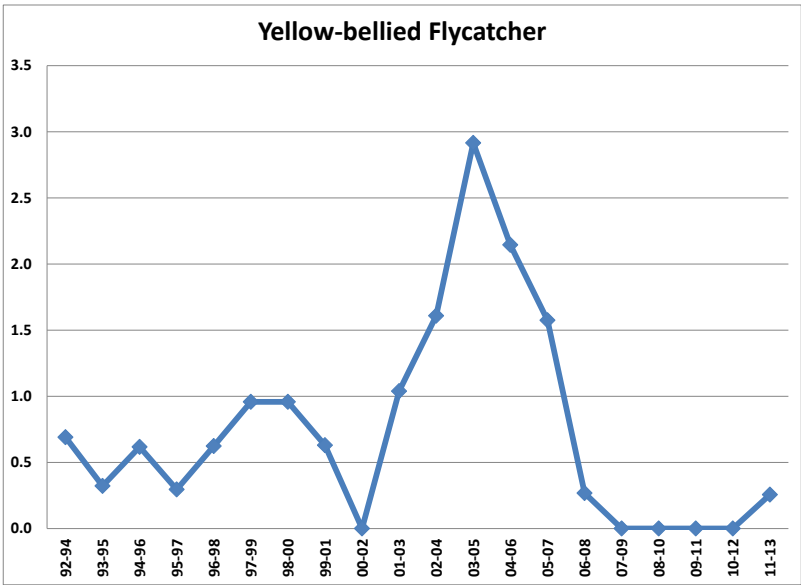
This year we present graphs on 22 years of results for our regularly occurring flycatchers. The below graphs present the number observed per 1000 party hours on a three- year rolling average of those results. Correcting for 1000 party hours rather than simply by party hours gives a result that is more in line with the actual number of birds observed, while still correcting for the level of effort



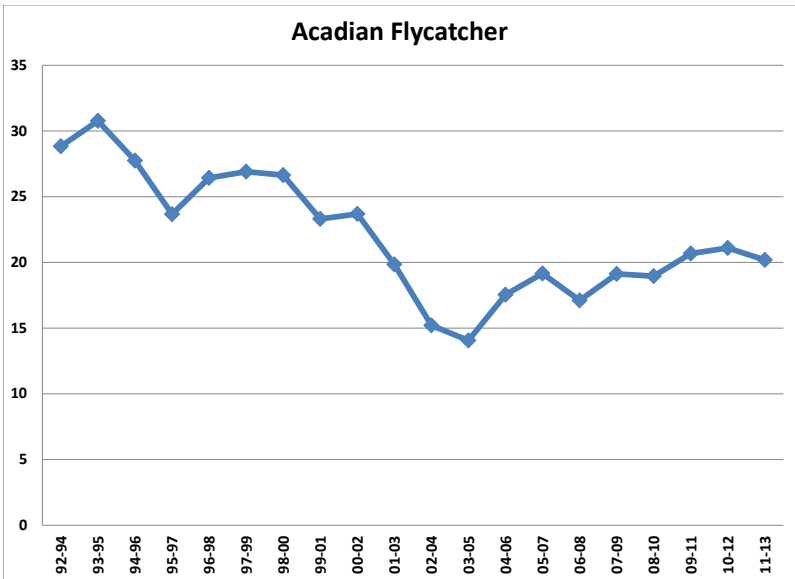
Olive-sided Flycatchers are listed as confirmed nesters for one location in "The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Connecticut", but since they are late migrants the vast majority encountered on the count are uncommon and non-nesting visitors. As would be expected for such a species, the graph is erratic and does not indicate any trend.



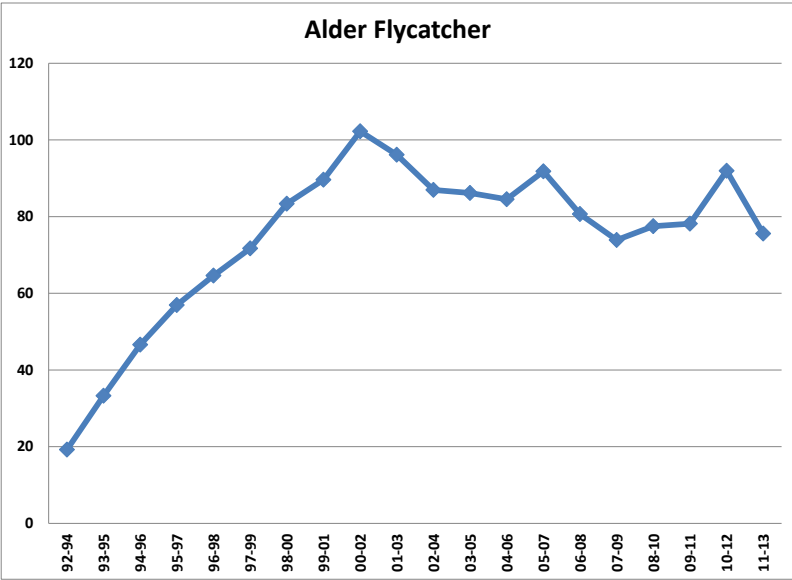
The above graph may indicate a slight increase in Eastern Wood-Pewees for later counts relative to earlier counts, but a more conservative interpretation would be to say that their numbers appear to be fairly stable.



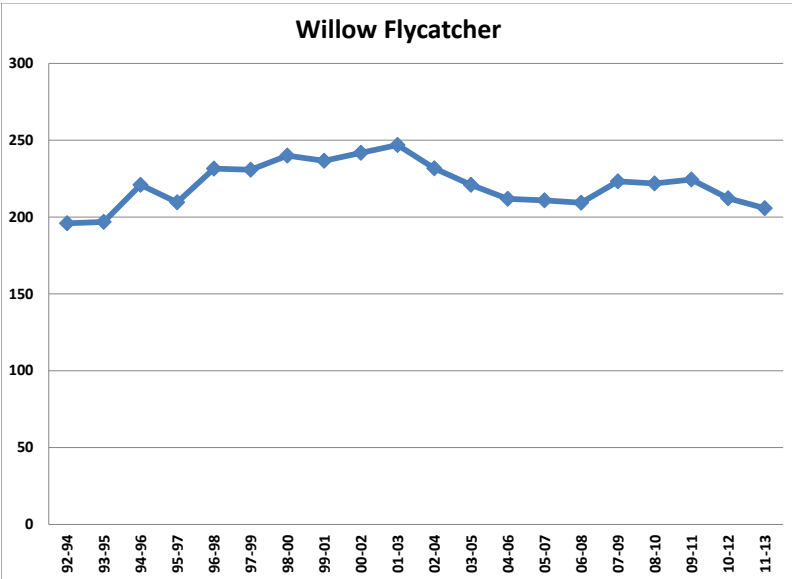
As an uncommon migrant, one would expect the graph for Yellow-bellied Flycatcher to have erratic peaks and valleys.



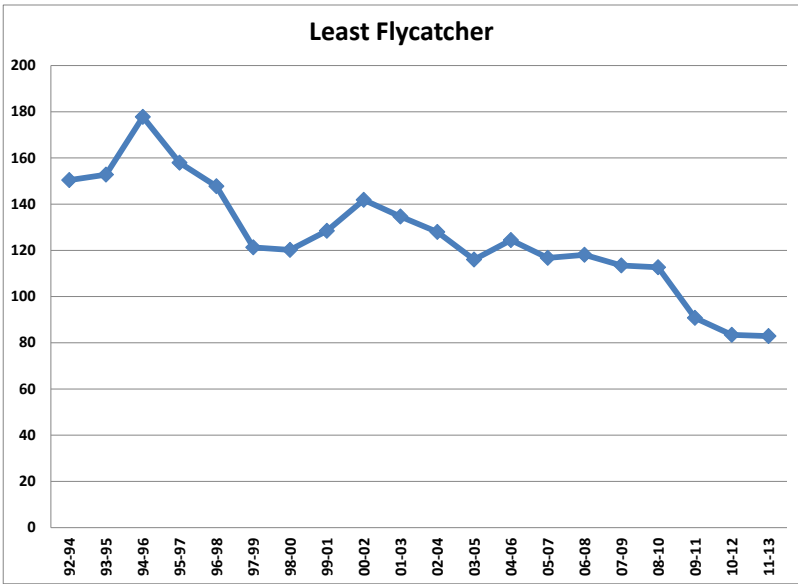
The graph for Acadian Flycatcher gives the impression of a moderate decline, but with such a small sample size we should take that with a bit of a grain of salt



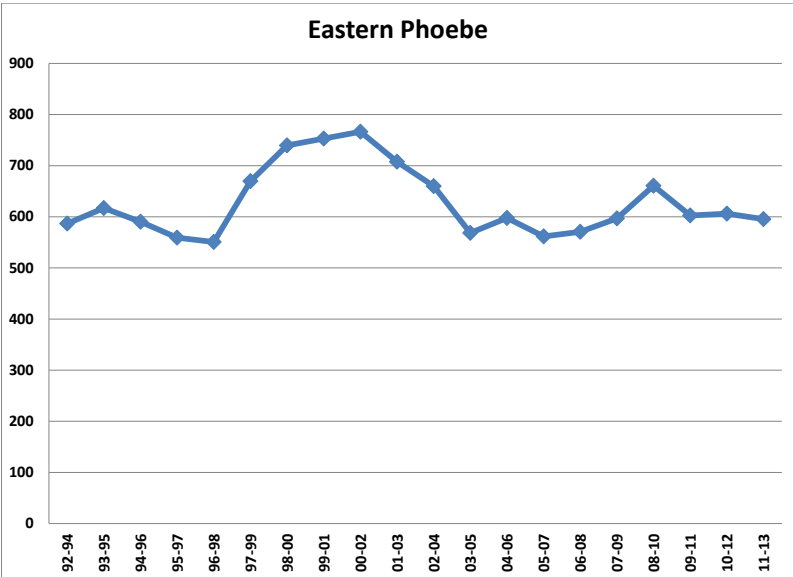
The graph for Alder Flycatcher is interesting. Did we really detect an increase in their population or did we just get better at finding them?



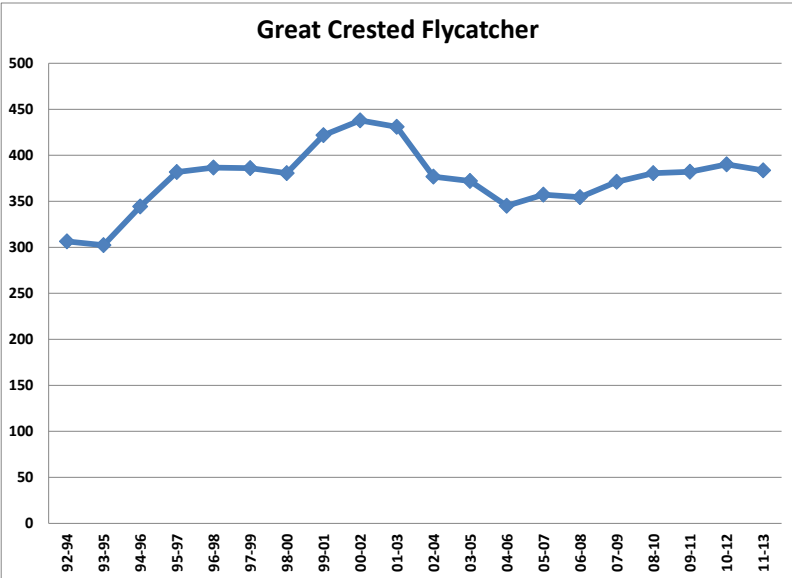
Numbers of Willow Flycatchers appear to be quite consistent throughout the period.



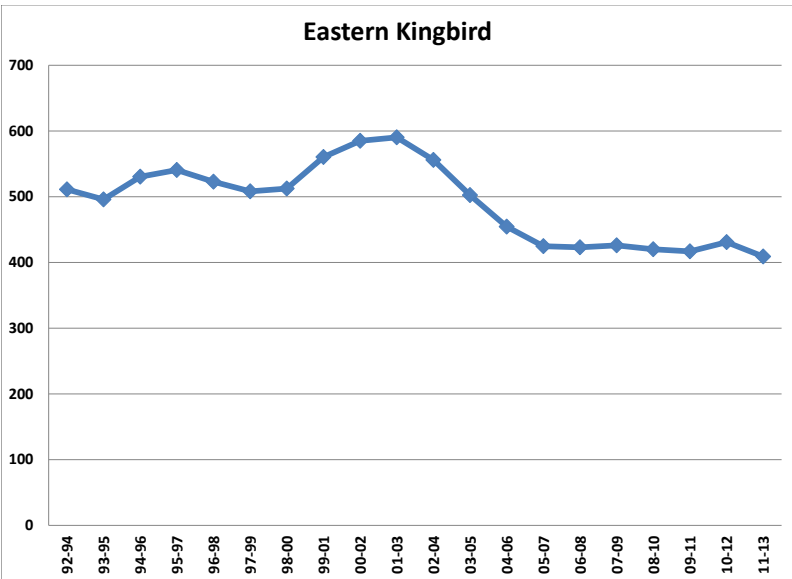
In the case of Least Flycatchers, we appear to have detected a real declining trend. Anecdotally, breeding Least Flycatchers appear to be much harder to find than they used to be and the Breeding Bird Survey results show a statistically significant decline of 4.6% annually for this species in Connecticut between 1966 and 2011. <http://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/cgi-bin/atlasa11.pl?04670&1&11> This may not sound like much, but over 45 years it amounts to more than a 90% decline!



The numbers of Eastern Phoebes detected are fairly consistent over the years.



As are the numbers of Great-crested Flycatchers.



Eastern Kingbirds are slightly less common in 21st Century counts relative to those of the 20th Century, but a conservative interpretation would say that their numbers are fairly consistent.

NOTES ON BEHAVIOR, STATUS AND DISTRIBUTION

Aggressive American Oystercatcher Behavior

In spring 2013, I was observing an adult and a young American Oystercatcher feeding on the sandbars at Milford Point, when a first-year Herring Gull flew in and landed near the baby. The adult oystercatcher immediately attacked the gull, causing it to fly off with the screeching oystercatcher in hot pursuit. The gull had gone only a few yards when the oystercatcher reached out and grabbed the tip of the gull's wing in its bill, arresting the gull's forward momentum and causing it to pivot and slam face first into the beach. The gull staggered up and was driven away by the protective parent.

American Oystercatchers often chase and are aggressive toward one another and toward intruders into their nesting area, but this is the first time I have witnessed one actually grabbing another bird by the wing.

Frank Gallo

Predation of a House Sparrow by a Common Grackle

On May 28, 2013, at around 11 a.m. there were six recently fledged House Sparrows feeding on seeds on the ground beneath our feeder in Milford, along with a Common Grackle, a Blue Jay, a Mourning Dove, and a Northern Cardinal. A House Sparrow a few inches away from the grackle began to take flight, but it had just gotten off the ground when the grackle grasped it around the neck with its bill. The grackle forced it to the ground, held it down with one foot, and began to rip open its chest with its bill. It proceeded to eat the House Sparrow, even while it was still moving and apparently not yet dead. The rest of the House Sparrows took cover in a nearby bush, and for weeks after that were tentative to come to the feeders when grackles were around. The Blue Jay, Mourning Dove and cardinal barely missed a beat, though, and continued feeding.

Vanessa Mickan

A Banded Semipalmated Sandpiper

John Oshlick and I found a banded Semipalmated Sandpiper (“JNH” on a blue leg flag) at Long Beach in Stratford on Aug. 6, 2013. This bird was banded on Jan. 26, 2012, in Coroa dos Ovos, Maranhao, Brazil. It was the sighted on May 21, 2012 in Mispillion Harbor, Delaware (migrating north toward its breeding grounds.) It likely traveled much farther north into northern Canada or Alaska to breed on the tundra, followed by our sighting above. The distance between Stratford and the Brazil site is roughly 3400 miles, and that’s only part of the yearly journey. This is for a bird that weighs 0.88 ounce (25 grams).

Frank Mantlik

A Tangled Web for Waterbirds



This Brant, photographed at Stonington Point on Dec. 2, 2012, finds itself in a potentially fatal situation. Discarded fishing line, plastic six-pack holders and similar carelessly discarded trash can entangle waterfowl, loons, grebes, gulls and other birds. Anyone seeing this kind of hazard should take a minute to remove it.

Hank Golet photo

CONNECTICUT FIELD NOTES

Spring Season, March 1 through May 31, 2013

By Greg Hanisek

It was an interesting and exciting spring with a variety of noteworthy species found, as the boldface type throughout this report indicates. Three or four of them would have been candidates for Bird of the Season had they not been eclipsed by a first state record of Brown Booby, a bird that was briefly cooperative before disappearing the day of its discovery.

The following are first arrivals for selected regular migratory species: Great Egret – March 19 in Greenwich (TB); Snowy Egret – March 24 in East Lyme (BMc); Green Heron – April 16 in Hartford (PDe); Glossy Ibis – April 2 in Milford (LC); Osprey – March 4 in Niantic (BMc); Semipalmated Plover – May 1 in Guilford (FMa); Piping Plover – March 5 in Stratford (CB); Upland Sandpiper – April 13 in South Windsor (SZ, TA), Semipalmated Sandpiper – May 9 in Milford (FG); Least Sandpiper – May 9 in Milford (FG); Pectoral Sandpiper – March 23 in Westport (JDe); Short-billed Dowitcher – May 9 in Milford (FG); Least Tern – May 7 in Milford (SSp); Common Tern – April 28 in Madison (GH).

Also Yellow-billed Cuckoo – May 11 in Stratford (FMa); Black-billed Cuckoo – May 15 in Waterbury (GH); Common Nighthawk – May 13 in Stratford (TM); Whip-poor-will – April 27 in Lyme (HG); Chimney Swift – April 19 in Stratford (JSh); Ruby-throated Hummingbird – April 18 in Killingworth (TE); Eastern Wood-Pewee – May 15 in West Haven (MSc); Willow Flycatcher – May 12 in Litchfield (PDe); Least Flycatcher – April 27 in Lyme (DP); Great Crested Flycatcher – April 25 in Southbury (BBa); Eastern Kingbird – April 24 in Mansfield (TRe); Yellow-throated Vireo – May 1 in Litchfield (GH) and Sterling (RD); Blue-headed Vireo – April 11 in Killingworth (SZ); Warbling Vireo – April 20 in Simsbury (JCl); Red-eyed

Vireo – April 28 in Fairfield (AB); Purple Martin – April 9 in Greenwich (MSa); Northern Rough-winged Swallow – April 3 in Milford (FMa); Bank Swallow – April 8 in New Hartford (FZ); Cliff Swallow – April 13 in Guilford (PW); Barn Swallow - April 1 in Milford (SSp); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher – April 9 in Stratford (SK); Wood Thrush – April 26 in Wilton (JB) and New Haven (JOs).

Also Ovenbird – April 25 in Bethany (SMY); Worm-eating Warbler – April 28 in Fairfield (AB) and Hamden (SMY); Louisiana Waterthrush – April 8 in East Haddam (DRt); Northern Waterthrush – April 16 Killingworth (GN); Blue-winged Warbler – April 25 in New Haven (MSc); Black-and-White Warbler – April 10 in New Haven (KC); Nashville Warbler – April 27 in Derby (RH); American Redstart – April 26 in Manchester (ED); Cape May Warbler – May 9 in Ashford (MSz); Northern Parula – April 20 in Stamford (BI); Blackburnian Warbler – April 28 in Fairfield (AB); Yellow Warbler – April 19 in Milford (SSp); Black-throated Blue Warbler – April 29

in New Haven (JOs) and Madison (PDe); Pine Warbler – March 31 in Woodbridge (CL); Prairie Warbler – April 21 in New Haven (JOs); Black-throated Green Warbler – April 17 in Killingworth (GN); Canada Warbler – May 12 in Bethany (NB) and Ashford (DRt); Wilson’s Warbler – May 11 in Glastonbury (DJe); Scarlet Tanager – May 1 in West Haven (MSc); Rose-breasted Grosbeak – April 18 in Willington (DW); Indigo Bunting – May 5 in New Milford (ADi) and Bristol (MPo); Orchard Oriole – April 29 in New Haven (JOs) and Norwalk (SMu).

The now-regular **Greater White-fronted Goose** produced 10 reports for the season, including four on March 16 at Streamns Farm in Mansfield (MSz). **Cackling Goose** remains harder to find, in part no doubt for identification reasons, with three reports for the season. A **Trumpeter Swan** of unknown origin was at Konolds Pond, Woodbridge, on March 3-20 (SB et al.). Two Tundra Swans were at a beaver swamp in Nachaug State Forest, Windham, on March 24 (DMo). It was the third time in six years that



Patricia Rauscher photo

This Brown Booby was a stunning Connecticut first when it landed on an oyster boat off Westpot on May 23.

the observer saw this scarce species there. Four **Eurasian Wigeon** for the season were about average. Two **Eurasian Teal** were good inland finds at Thomaston Dam in Thomaston on March 24 (BD) and at Portland Fairgrounds on March 26-April 1 (RS, KM et al.). At the latter location a second male was noted periodically, and an observer who has raised the species in captivity believed a female there fit the very difficult identification criteria (KM). A late Blue-winged Teal was unexpected in New Haven Harbor at Sandy Point, West Haven on May 20 (RS). A pair of Northern Shovelers at Hammonasset Beach State Park in Madison (hereaf-

ter HBSP) for an extended period beginning May 14 raised hopes of breeding, but no evidence was found (DRt et al.).

The season's only Redhead was at Fisher Pond in Salisbury on April 13-20 (PCa et al.). A beaver pond in Salisbury held 400 Ring-necked Ducks on April 18 (PCa). Wintering Greater Scaup included a flock of 2500 off Charles I. in Milford on March 7 (FMa). A raft of 20 Common Eiders was at Ender's Island in Mystic on March 31 (GW et al.), and 12 were off Harkness Memorial State Park in Waterford on May 19 (PCo). A seawatch on April 12 from Cove Place

in Stratford produced 400 Long-tailed Ducks (FMa). A Long-tailed Duck and a White-winged Scoter on a small pond at Nod Brook Wildlife Management Area in Avon on April 19 were unexpected (BT). Female Hooded Mergansers were escorting broods of 11 on May 9 at Sperry Pond in Middlebury (GH), seven on May 15 at River Road in Kent (SB et al.) and five on the Farmington River in Collinsville on May 16 (JMe). A male Red-breasted Merganser was out of place in a small pond near Rentschler Field in East Haven March 29 to April 2 (JT et al.). South Cove in Old Saybrook held 150 Ruddy Ducks on April 7 (PB). Ruddys were a bit tardy with four each on

Greenbacker Pond in Durham on May 6 (NB) and on Lake Winnemaug in Watertown on May 7, with two there May 9 (GH). Two were really late May 14 at Bolton Lake in Bolton (EH).

A road-killed Ruffed Grouse May 10 in Southbury was noteworthy in that almost all recent reports have been from the northwestern part of the state (PCo). Even more heartening was one drumming in Madison on May 16 (MDi). A **Pacific Loon** molting into alternate plumage was seen in Long Island Sound at the Milford-West Haven line on May 18 and remained to at least May 20 (FG et al). Two late Horned Grebes showed off their



Frank Mantlik photo

Connecticut's first spring Pacific Loon was molting into breeding plumage May 18 off West Haven.



Paul Fusco photo
Sadly, these stunning Red Knots in full breeding array on May 31 at Milford Point have become scarce in Connecticut as their global numbers decline.



Russ Smiley photo
This handsome Eurasian Green-winged Teal, seen here on March 27, was one of at least two in wetlands at the Portland Fairgrounds early in the season.

nuptial plumage May 21 at Milford Point (FMa). The season's four Red-necked Grebes were singles on the Connecticut River in Enfield on March 3-6 (RT et al.), on Batterson Pond, Farmington, on March 22-29 (PDe et al.); on Batterson on April 13 (PCi); and at HBSP on April 28 (GH et al.). Probably the second best bird of the season was a **Western Grebe** found and photographed off Sachus Head, Guilford, on April 29-30 (SSa, APT).

The bird of the season, however, and near the top of the state's all-time list, was a first state record **Brown Booby** seen perched on an oyster boat off Westport on May 23 (PRa). It was later relocated in Norwalk harbor perched on markers and boats and was seen by several observers that day only (LF, NB et al.). A Great Cormorant was a good inland find March 2-4 at Coventry Lake in Coventry (DMo). The Stratford seawatch on April 12 logged 138 Northern Gannets (FMa). An American Bittern was an interesting flyover May 11 at Batterson Pond, Farmington (PCi). A Great Blue Heron rookery at Wangunk Meadows in Portland held

124 birds on March 30 (BA) and 137 active nests on April 8 (HG). A Tricolored Heron was early on March 31 at Sherwood Island State Park in Westport (TG). One of the **hybird Tricolored X Little Blue Herons** that have been present at HBSP the past two years appeared in mid-May in adult plumage and remained through summer and into fall (MSz et al.). Single Cattle Egrets were at Portland Fairgrounds on April 20 (BA); at a pond near Rentschler Field in East Hartford May 10 -19 (ED et al.); and at North Farms Reservoir, Wallingford, on May 12 (MMo). A **White-faced Ibis**, now annual, was right on schedule May 19 in Salt Meadow Sanctuary in Guilford (PCo) with probably the same bird seen in Westbrook on May 21 (FG et al.).

A flock of 25 Black Vultures on the ground in the upper level of East Rock Park in New Haven on April 24 was an exceptional number away from known inland concentrations (PDe). A **Swallow-tailed Kite** was an exciting flyby in Milford on May 13 (DS, NG). Single **Mississippi Kites** were seen on May 30 in Norwalk (BMu) and in

Orange (AZ) and on May 31 in Norwich (DP). A Northern Harrier was no doubt on the move May 19 in Bethlehem (DTr). An adult Golden Eagle was at Saville Dam in Barkhamsted on April 2 (DRo). Two King Rails were calling in the Quinnipiac River marshes in North Haven on May 18 (NB), and a likely one was heard May 19 at Salt Meadow Sanctuary in Guilford (PCo). A Sora was at Eel Pond in Warren on May 10 (JMa) and at a marsh in East Granby on May 18 (BK). The season's **Sandhill Crane** reports: two flyovers March 14 in Litchfield (IG); one flyover at Aton Forest in Norfolk on April 11 (MA); one flyover April 21 in East Hartford (APe, MPe); and two flying over Bristol on May 21 (WY).

An American Golden Plover on April 28 at McKinney National Wildlife Refuge, Stratford, was unusual for spring (FMa). For a species that doesn't normally occur in migratory flocks, a flock of 19 Spotted Sandpipers on May 16 at Burying Hill Beach in Westport was extraordinary (TG); one was a bit early April 10 in Farmington (PDe). A major Whimbrel

flight on May 24 brought 12 to Sandy Point in West Haven (NB) and 31 to Penfield Reef in Fairfield (JPu). Three **Wilson's Phalaropes** delighted one photographer at Barn I., Stonington, on May 21 (RS).

The season's only **Black-headed Gulls** were at Holly Pond in Stamford on March 16 (MMc) and April 5-7 (PDU et al.). The early spring staging of gulls in Long Island Sound produced counts off Long Beach, Stratford, of 8000 Herring Gulls on March 28 (FMa) and 10,000 Ring-billed Gulls on April 5 (FMa). Single Lesser Black-backed Gulls, among about eight for the season, were nice inland finds on March 10 at Nepaug Reservoir in New Hartford (DRo, JK) and on April 5 at Batterson Pond, Farmington (PCi). An immature Glaucous Gull was at the Lordship sea wall in Stratford on April 9 (FMa). The season's only Caspian Tern was at Short Beach, Stratford, on May 12 (FMa). A total of 14 Black Terns off Darien and Stamford on May 23 was a high number for the state (JDu). A Razorbill was late April 16 off Mystic (TP). Three Black Skimmers were



Jim Carr photo

This Savannah (Ipswich) Sparrow was a nice April find away from the beaches at Hammonasset State Park in Madison.

at Sandy Point, West Haven, on May 20 (RS).

Cuckoo tallies for the season were at least 20 Yellow-billed Cuckoos and at least 10 Black-billed Cuckoos. A Northern Saw-whet Owl was singing in Avon on April 28 (DLA). Short-eared Owls were at Rocky Hill Meadows on March 17 (JMa) and Stratford Point on March 25 (FMa). After the arrival in Lyme noted above, Whip-poor-wills were reported from Ellington (CEk), Durham (NB), Plymouth (GH), Portland (BA), Southington (JN) and Waterbury (GH). A female **Rufous Hummingbird** first seen in early January in Groton remained at

feeders until April 18 (MR). Single Red-headed Woodpeckers were in Pachaug State Forest in Voluntown on May 27 (BW) and in Old Saybrook on May 30 (LMA).

The first of about 10 reports of Olive-sided Flycatchers was May 15 in Cornwall (PCa). The only Yellow-bellied Flycatcher reports came from New Hartford on May 27 (PCa) and Canaan on May 28 (BD). An Acadian Flycatcher was first noted May 10 in Boston Hollow, Ashford (DMo). As usual Alder Flycatcher was among the latest of the regular migrants to arrive, with one on May 16 in Barkhamsted (DRo). A Philadelphia Vireo report

May 12 in Old Saybrook was the first of five for the season (JSh). In keeping with recent trends, the first Swainson's Thrush was earlier than historically expected, on April 30 in Kent (JJo). As usual there was a dearth of Gray-cheeked (type) Thrushes with the first report a bit early May 12 in Fairfield (PH). A Lapland Longspur lingered April 28-May 7 at HBSP (JCo et al.).

The only Golden-winged Warbler for the season was a migrant in Waterbury on May 22 (JPe), but none was found at former breeding sites. The season's only Lawrence's Warbler was in Essex May 9 and through the season (AG et al.). A Brewster's Warbler was in Nehantic State Forest in Lyme on May 22 (DP).

Prothonotary Warblers were at Lake Chamberlain in Bethany on April 26 (JOs) and in Nehantic State Forest in Lyme on May 4 (DP). An Orange-crowned Warbler was a good spring find May 17 in Orange (JMe). The first of eight Mourning Warbler reports came from Stratford on May 20 (GH). A Hooded Warbler was a bit early April 18 at Mondo Ponds in Mil-

ford (FG). Cerulean Warblers were first noted on April 30, with three in Salem (CC, DJe) and one in North Guilford (TK). After a few years of very early arrivals, Blackpoll Warbler dialed it back a bit with the first report on May 8 in Salem (DB). Bay-breasted Warblers were also on a more traditional schedule with multiple reports from May 11 on (DLA, MO et al.), although one was seen as early as May 4 in Fairfield (DJe). A Yellow-breasted Chat that wintered at a feeder in New Haven was still present on March 8 (fide SK). One was at Silver Sands State Park in Milford on May 23 (MW et al.). Overall May 16 appeared to be a peak flight day, with widespread reports of good numbers and species diversity including 20 species at East Rock Park in New Haven (MSc).

A very late American Tree Sparrow was carefully noted by an experienced birder on May 11 at HBSP (JCo). There was a widespread arrival of Chipping Sparrows on April 9 (m.ob.). A Grasshopper Sparrow was a good find April 29 at Stratford Point (SK). Field workers for a tidal marsh bird project captured

10 Nelson's Sparrows at Barn Island in Stonington in the last week in May (CEI). Remarkable among five **Summer Tanagers** for the season were two adult males that appeared at a feeder in Madison on May 12 (FH, TH). Other singles were in East Rock Park in New Haven on May 17 (TM et al.); at Rocky Neck State Park in East Lyme on May 21 (FG et al.); and a singing male May 24 in Milford (FG). Four **Blue Grosbeaks** for the season were an adult male April 21 at Shippan Point, Stamford, (PDu); an adult male May 14 at Sherwood Island State Park, Westport (TG); a female at Northwest Park in Windsor on May 17 (PDe); and a first-year male May 27 in Stamford (AdL). An Indigo Bunting that wintered at a feeder in Woodbridge was last seen on April 27 (CL). An adult male **Painted Bunting** was a spectacular find in a Greenwich yard on May 4 (TB).

A flock of five Eastern Meadowlarks was at Great I., Old Saybrook, on March 9 (TG); three were singing on March 31 at Horsebarn Hill at the Uconn campus in Storrs (PRu); and two were singing

April 7 at Rocky Hill Meadows (BA). An immature male **Yellow-headed Blackbird** that visited March 16-19 at the Dixon feeder in Sterling was the sixth feeder record there. Then an adult male appeared on March 24 for a seventh record (RD). An adult male was in a Canterbury yard on March 19 (SL). Given their dwindling status, 21 Rusty Blackbirds were a welcome sight at feeders in Cheshire during a March 7 snowfall (SB). A **Bullock's Oriole** that wintered at an Ellington feeder was taken into care March 21 after showing signs of injury or illness. It was taken into care at Mount Vernon Songbird Sanctuary in Southington (DMc, JN). The tail end of notable crossbill flight included 10 White-winged Crossbills at HBSP on March 2 (DRt) and one Red Crossbill was in Winsted on May 22 (DRo). A House Finch nest in Windsor Locks had young by the early date of March 19 (LMo). Common Redpoll numbers remained strong into early March with 100+ counts at several feeders and a peak of 300 on March 23 at a Barkhamsted feeder (FZ). After one of the best flights on record for this

rarest of boreal finches, a **Hoary Redpoll** was still at the same Barkhamsted feeder on April 6 along with 33 Common Redpolls (FZ). Pine Siskins that first appeared at a Sterling feeder in October 2012 reached 120 on April 23 (RD) and juveniles were noted in May as dwindling numbers continued through the season. There also were scattered reports around the state in May.

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Russ Smiley photo
Two (of three) Wilson's Phalaropes May 21 at Barn Island Wildlife Management Area in Stonington were a nice surprise.

PHOTO CHALLENGE



Julian Hough photo
This wading bird lacks the slender bill typical of most shorebirds. It's too robust for even the short, stout bills of the plovers. Overall it works much better as a heron, and that bill lacks the long, thin look of all herons except the night-herons. So can we tell which one from this silhouette? With enough experience looking at the two species, or studying good images, we can with confidence ascribe this rather round-headed, stout-billed profile to the Yellow-crowned Night-Heron.



Photo Challenge No. 83

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

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Send manuscripts to the Editor. Please type double spaced with ample margins, on one side of a sheet. Submit a copy on a computer disk, if possible. Style should follow usage in recent issues. All manuscripts receive peer review.

Illustrations and photographs are needed and welcome. Line art of Connecticut and regional birds should be submitted as good quality prints or in original form. All submitted materials will be returned. We can use good quality photographs of birds unaccompanied by an article but with caption including species, date, locality, and other pertinent information.

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