

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

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ON THE COVER

Purple Gallinule

When a juvenile Purple Gallinule was found this fall in a wetland in Mansfield Center, birders enjoyed excellent chances to study it during its extended stay. Mark Szantyr admired it so much that he quickly executed the artwork that graces our cover.

THE 2015 SUMMER BIRD COUNT

By Joe Zeranski and Patrick Comins

Introduction

The 2015 Summer Bird Count (SBC) marks the 24th year of SBC. SBC is our largest summer citizen science effort and provides valuable insight to the status of our breeding bird species and non-breeding June visitors to Connecticut. This analysis would not be possible without the efforts of the volunteer observers, compilers and captains. Thank you for your efforts and dedication.

Results

This year 177 count-day species were recorded. This is slightly below average (97%) and seven less than the last two years' counts. There was one additional count period species, an **American White Pelican** observed on the New Haven count, the first ever SBC record for this species. There were 277 observers, in 149 parties. The number of observers was a new record high eclipsing the previous record from 2009 by 14 observers. Volunteers tallied 1403.8 party hours, with 1341.8 being daylight hours and 62 night hours.

There were 108,147 individual birds recorded, which is a new record high and about 7,000 more than last year's total. The ten most abundant species were, in descending order: **Song Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Cedar Waxwing, Red-eyed Vireo, House Sparrow, Common Grackle, Gray Catbird, European Starling, Red-winged Blackbird** and **American Robin**.

Nine of these are repeats from the last year, with **House Sparrow** replacing **Canada Goose**. The order was quite different though with **American Robin** in 10th place this year and first place last year, **Song Sparrow** moving from 7th to 1st and **Chipping Sparrow** from 9th to 2nd. These changes in

rank don't likely represent broad-scale population changes for these species. The more common a species, the more likely things like timing of fledging will affect overall numbers or year-to-year fluctuations will show up in count results.

American Robins for example are down slightly from record high numbers in 2010, but came in at just about average for the last ten years, and aside from year-to-year fluctuations overall numbers are pretty flat since 1992. With only five years of exceptions we have found between 5,000 and 6,000 robins per 1000 party hours in every year since then.

Thirteen species were represented by a single individual: **Common Goldeneye, Red-throated Loon, American Bittern (E), Least Bittern (T), Semipalmated Plover, Ruddy Turnstone, Dunlin, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Nashville Warbler, Mourning Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, Wilson's Warbler** and **Dickcissel**. Additionally, a single "**Brewster's Warbler**" was recorded.

Non-nesting Species

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, Bufflehead.**

Common Goldeneye, Red-throated Loon, Black-bellied Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Greater Yellowlegs, Ruddy Turnstone, Dunlin, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Laughing Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Forster's Tern, Black Skimmer, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Mourning Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat (E) and Dickcissel.

The underlined species are potential nesters, but in the absence of additional supporting evidence they will be considered non-nesting visitors.

Noteworthy among these: Two **Bufflehead** were recorded from New Haven and they recorded **Common Goldeneye** for the second year in a row, the 3rd SBC record since 2005. New Haven also yielded a **Red-throated Loon**, only the 3rd record since 2005 and 8th record since 1992.

Arctic-nesting shorebirds often form a considerable portion of this list, with this year being no exception. **Black-bellied Plover**, **Semipalmated Plover**, **Greater Yellowlegs**, **Ruddy Turnstone**, **Dunlin** and **Semipalmated Sandpiper** were recorded this year, all from Greenwich/Stamford or New Haven. The **Dunlin** from Greenwich/Stamford was the most uncommon of the bunch, representing the 5th record since 2005.

Greenwich/Stamford found seven (!) **Forster's Terns**, a species they have been recording with regularity, which makes us wonder if there is a nearby nesting colony somewhere in New York State. **Black Skimmer** is another species that could potentially nest (and has nested) in the area, but the 13 recorded by New Haven were likely unsuccessful pioneers seeking out new nesting areas. Greenwich/Stamford also recorded an **Olive-sided Flycatcher**, which almost certainly represents a late migrant in this southern count area. This species has been confirmed as nesting at least twice in Connecticut, but any future nesting attempt is likely to occur in the northern reaches of the state.

Litchfield Hill's **Mourning Warbler** and New Milford/Pawling's **Kentucky Warbler** could certainly represent nesting attempts, but are treated here as late migrants. Woodbury/Roxbury recorded their first ever **Wilson's Warbler**, the 3rd statewide record since 2005 and 6th since 1992. The **Yellow-breasted Chats** (E) in Woodbury/Roxbury and Litchfield Hills (the first ever for this count) could also represent nesting attempts. Much effort has been put into the restoration of early successional habitat for New England cottontail rabbits in recent years. This could also benefit shrubland-nesting birds such as chats. While **Dickcissel** is a historic breeder, with one nesting attempt in recent times, Woodbury/Roxbury's bird is likely a wayward vagrant.

Notable Nesting Species

Gadwall have been missed three times since 2005, but were

recorded in Greenwich/Stamford and New Haven. Though not uncommon in much of the state, **American Black Duck** was a first for Storrs, where they also logged their first **Ring-necked Pheasant** and were only one of two counts, along with Barkhamsted, to find **Ruffed Grouse**.

Common Loon (SC) gets featured in the nesting species section this year with the confirmation of successful nesting on a lake in northwest Connecticut this summer. Observers from northern count territories should keep an eye out for any evidence of nesting on inland lakes, whereas those found elsewhere in the state would likely represent lingering migrants.

American Bitterns (E) are listed as state-endangered and can be quite secretive in the nesting season. Good work to the crew for finding one on the Litchfield Hills count. Similarly to the Hartford crew for documenting a state-threatened **Least Bittern** (T). Four **Upland Sandpipers** (E) were recorded by Hartford observers, at Rentschler field in East Hartford, a new statewide high count for this species. They persisted there despite extensive mowing this season, but the habitat



Mark Szantyr photo

Cedar Waxwing numbers are highly variable, but in 2015 they were one of the 10 most numerous species on the Summer Bird Count.



*Bruce Finnan photo
Ruby-throated Hummingbirds set an all-time high in 2014,
then broke it in the 2015 SBC.*

is scheduled to be developed in the next few months. This development will also make **Grasshopper Sparrows** (E) much more difficult to find in the state as the majority of the 11 recorded on the Hartford Count were at Rentschler.

Observers in Barkhamsted and Litchfield Hills were able to locate four **Northern Saw-Whet Owls** (SC). Much scouting work and specific efforts are required to document these rare and secretive owls. New Haven located their annual **Common Nighthawk** (E) and one was also recorded in Woodbury/Roxbury. Nighthawks are among the rarest and most endangered nesting birds in the state.

Nashville Warblers have been missed three times in the previous ten counts, but one was found by Litchfield Hills this year. **Black-throated Blue** and **Yellow-rumped Warblers** could hypothetically nest in the Greenwich/Stamford area, but these likely represent late migrants or young birds trying to establish territories. Both of these species are not uncommon nesters on northern counts. **Saltmarsh Sparrows** were recorded by Greenwich/Stamford and New Haven observers.



Mark Szantyr photo

An array of forest-nesting birds, including Great Crested Flycatcher, were recorded in record high numbers on the 2015 SBC.

Species Recorded in Above Average Numbers

Bald Eagles were recorded at another all-time high of 52, eclipsing the old record of 39 set last year. **Spotted Sandpipers** eclipsed their all-time record with 66, beating the old record from 2010 by a single bird. The 30 **American Woodcocks** recorded was about double the average for this species and a new all-time high count, another species that may be benefiting from the increased focus on early successional habitat. **Chimney Swifts** shattered their all-time high count with 1567, beating last year's record of 1132. **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** also broke all-time record highs with 335, again beating out last year's record of 278. Many forest-nesting birds had all-time highs including: **Red-bellied** and **Pileated Woodpeckers**, **Great-crested Flycatcher**, **Yellow-throated Vireo**, **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher**, **Louisiana Waterthrush**, **Cerulean Warbler**, **Blackburnian Warbler**, **Black-throated Blue Warbler**, **Pine Warbler** and **Dark-eyed Junco**.

Other all-time highs included: **Common Loon**, **Forster's Tern**, **Fish Crow** (tie) **Common Raven**, **Tree Swallow**, **Barn Swallow**, **House Wren**, **Cedar Waxwing**, **Chipping Sparrow**, **Indigo Bunting**, and **Orchard Oriole**. **Eastern Kingbird**

Northern Parula, and **Prairie Warbler** were at 10-year highs, the latter of which is especially encouraging for a species that had appeared to be in a steady decline.

Turkey Vultures and **Acadian Flycatchers** came close to their all-time high, missing only by a single bird. Though not records, both **Black-billed** and **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** appear to have been plentiful this year, with 69 and 104 recorded. These counts are 264% and 227% of average. **The Black-billed Cuckoo** total was just shy of the 10-year high of 74 of last year. This is not surprising considering the abundance of gypsy moth caterpillars this summer.

Species Recorded in Below Average Numbers

Canada Geese and **Mute Swans** came in at record low levels for the second and third years in a row respectively. **Great Egrets** also came in at a 10-year low with 120, only 51% of average. The previous record was last year with 143. Other wading birds with record-low counts included **Green Heron** and **Black-crowned Night-Heron**, the latter of which was only 22% of average. The 69 Snowy Egrets were also close to the record low of 66 in 2011. **Common Terns** were also diffi-



*Julian Hough photo
Most of the coastal-nesting herons, including Black-crowned Night
Heron, continued a downward trend on the 2015 Summer Bird Count.*



*Julian Hough photo
Birders commented on an apparent decline in Belted Kingfishers,
and the 2015 SBC recorded them in reduced numbers.*

cult to find with a new 10-year low of 82, only 24% of average and well below last year's record low count of 168. **Eastern Screech-Owls** also came in at a new 10-year low with 19; 45% of average and **American Crows** were at a new all-time low with 1960, eight less than last year's previous record low; whether this is due to lingering effects of west Nile virus or if that is a factor in any of the other species with new low counts isn't known. **Eastern Whip-Poor-Will** was missed for the first time ever.

Double-crested Cormorants only missed their 10-year low of by a single bird, being only behind 2009 and 2006 on the all-time low count. **Snowy Egrets** also missed record low numbers by a handful of birds, only surpassed by the low counts of 2010, 2011 and 2014. **Belted Kingfisher** only missed their 10-year low by two birds. **Black-throated Green Warblers** bucked the trend of bumper crops for forest birds, just missing their 10-year low by a single bird.

Other species recorded at less than 50% of average numbers, but not at record lows include: **Brant** (13%), **Semipalmated**

Plover (22%), Laughing Gull (27%), Ruffed Grouse (29%), Ring-necked Pheasant (39%), Monk Parakeet (41%), Least Tern (44%) and Clapper Rail (48%).

Thank you

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

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 (NDDDB) Project. This will ensure that the best available information can be taken into account in land-use decisions.*



Ed Doyle photo

An exception to the high numbers of forest-nesting species was the Black-throated Green Warbler, which came in very close to a 10-year low.

2015

Connecticut Summer Bird Count Totals

Species known to historically nest 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.

Low numbers are given only for those years when a species was recorded.

Rare - noted on fewer than five years during previous 10 years [outlined box]

New Count Day[CD] species - not recorded on previous 10 years [darkened outlined box]

Higher numbers were tallied than were on any of the previous 10 years [underlined number]

Fewer numbers were tallied than were recorded on any of the previous 10 year [boldfaced number]

Not recorded in [CD] 2014, but recorded on all the previous 10 years [underlined, boldfaced zero]

All-time SBC record - surpassing all previous SBC records [double underline]

=	XX
=	XX
=	<u>XX</u>
=	XX
=	<u>0.0</u>
=	<u><u>0.0</u></u>

SPECIES	Coastal SBCs				CT				Upland SBCs:				2015 State Totals	% of 2005-14 Average	# yrs obs.	2005-2014		
	Valley		Northern		WR	NMI/P	Ba	LH	St	Ave	Low	High						
	GS	NH	Hfd	Hfd														
Snow Goose	6		251		214	228	349	274	61	6	6	6	0%	2	0.3	1	2	
Brant	892	366	6		10	13	8	8	<u>4</u>	2635	2635	2635	13%	10	47	5	235	
Canada Goose	35	21	84		49	<u>98</u>	36	55	16	<u>97</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>97</u>	74%	10	3580	2964	4153	
Mute Swan	60	<u>59</u>											44%	10	219	111	306	
Wood Duck	2	2								4	4	4	108%	10	421	272	607	
Gadwall													105%	8	3.8	2	13	
American Wigeon	27	11			9	<u>12</u>	6	1	1	67	67	67	0%	2	0.2	1	1	
American Black Duck	366	144	153		136	<u>224</u>	83	97	60	1263	1263	1263	141%	10	48	22	86	
Mallard													76%	10	1673	1062	2064	

	4	1	5							
<i>Mallard/Black Duck</i>										
<i>Blue-winged Teal</i>							0%	1	0.3	3
<i>Northern Shoveler</i>							0%	1	0.1	1
<i>Green-winged Teal</i>							0%	2	0.3	2
<i>Ring-necked Duck</i>							0%	5	0.7	2
<i>Greater Scaup</i>							0%	4	1	7
<i>Lesser Scaup</i>							0%	2	0.2	1
<i>King Eider</i>							cp			
<i>Surf Scoter</i>							0%	1	0.1	1
<i>White-winged Scoter</i>							0%	2	0.6	1
<i>Long-tailed Duck</i>							0%	6	1.8	6
<i>Bufflehead</i>			2				286%	5	0.7	2
<i>Common Goldeneye</i>			1				500%	2	0.2	1
<i>Hooded Merganser</i>		14	35				144%	10	24	7
<i>Common Merganser</i>	4	3	223				178%	10	126	86
<i>Red-breasted Merganser</i>	77	16					0%	8	1.1	2
<i>Ruddy Duck</i>							0%	6	2	1
<i>Northern Bobwhite</i>							0%	7	1.3	5
<i>Ring-necked Pheasant</i>	1		2				39%	10	5.1	8
<i>Ruffed Grouse</i>			3				29%	10	10.2	24
<i>Wild Turkey</i>	41	12	418				83%	10	50.1	415
<i>Red-throated Loon</i>			1				500%	2	0.2	1
<i>Common Loon</i>			11				244%	10	4.5	9
<i>Pied-billed Grebe</i>							0%	6	1.5	4
<i>Horned Grebe</i>							0%	3	0.4	2
<i>Wilson's Storm-petrel</i>							0%	1	0.3	3
<i>Double-crested Cormorant</i>	4	2	599				73%	10	82.3	598
<i>Anhinga</i>							0%	1	0.1	0
<i>American White Pelican</i>			cp						0	0

SPECIES	Coastal SBCs			CT			Upland SBCs:			2015		% of 2005-14		# 2005-2014		
	Valley		Hfd	Mid-state		Northern			State Totals	Average	obs.	Ave	Low	High	yrs	#
	GS	NH		WR	NM/P	Ba	LH	St								
<i>American Bittern</i>			1		1				1	34%	9	2.9	1	6		
<i>Least Bittern</i>			33		50	45	24		1	56%	9	1.8	1	4		
<i>Great Blue Heron</i>	25	40		44	40			301	106%	10	284	211	375			
<i>Great Egret</i>	96	24						120	51%	10	233	143	345			
<i>Snowy Egret</i>	38	31						69	84%	10	82	66	102			
<i>Little Blue Heron</i>									0%	6	0.7	1	2			
<i>Cattle Egret</i>	16	6	6	4	8	7	7	58	0%	1	0.1	0	1			
<i>Green Heron</i>	32	14		3				49	74%	10	79	59	113			
<i>Black-cr Night-Heron</i>	1	2						3	22%	10	224	71	449			
<i>Yellow-cr Night-Heron</i>									65%	10	4.6	1	10			
<i>Glossy Ibis</i>									0%	8	3.5	2	8			
<i>Black Vulture</i>	8	4		11	9	7	2	42	125%	10	34	17	59			
<i>Turkey Vulture</i>	37	59	13	58	81	90	31	462	123%	10	375	292	463			
<i>Osprey</i>	37	91	6	5		5	6	151	113%	10	134	90	184			
<i>Mississippi Kite</i>									0%	1	0.1	1	1			
<i>Northern Harrier</i>	1	1			1	2	2		0%	5	0.7	1	2			
<i>Sharp-shinned Hawk</i>	3	2	1	5	1	2	4	10	85%	10	12	7	18			
<i>Cooper's Hawk</i>								35	94%	10	37	21	49			
<i>accipiter species</i>								1								
<i>Northern Goshawk</i>									0%	8	3.4	3	7			
<i>Bald Eagle</i>	5	4	7	3	4	9	1	52	202%	10	26	13	39			
<i>Red-shouldered Hawk</i>	9	9	4	24	5	24	13	114	141%	10	81	43	135			
<i>Broad-winged Hawk</i>	7	1	1	7	7	21	5	79	133%	10	59	45	80			
<i>Red-tailed Hawk</i>	83	24	39	44	23	33	25	306	106%	10	289	217	360			
<i>Clapper Rail</i>	2	2						4	48%	10	8.4	2	17			

<i>Virginia Rail</i>				4	15	20	83%	11	24	13	32
<i>Sora</i>							0%	8	1.1	1	2
American Coot	29	8				37	71%	10	52	29	78
<i>American Oystercatcher</i>	2					2	71%	7	2.8	1	9
Black-bellied Plover	1					1	22%	8	4.6	1	15
Semipalmated Plover	14					14	102%	10	14	5	24
<i>Piping Plover</i>	45	24		15	23	227	91%	10	250	217	297
<i>Killdeer</i>	4	21		1	8	66	135%	10	49	31	65
<i>Spotted Sandpiper</i>							0%	4	0.4	1	1
Solitary Sandpiper							417%	7	1.2	1	5
Greater Yellowlegs	5					5	172%	9	16	4	29
<i>Willet</i>	11	16				27	400%	4	1	1	3
<i>Upland Sandpiper</i>				4		4	29%	8	3.4	1	11
Ruddy Turnstone	1					1	0%	4	2.7	1	22
Red Knot							0%	5	3	1	21
Sanderling							67%	4	1.5	1	11
Dunlin	1					1	0%	1	0.1	1	1
Purple Sandpiper							0%	5	21	7	73
Least Sandpiper							0%	7	1.7	1	6
White-rumped Sandpiper							0%	2	0.3	1	2
Pectoral Sandpiper							223%	8	35	2	215
Semipalmated Sandpiper	8	70				78	0%	1	0.3	3	3
Short-billed Dowitcher							0%	1	0.1	1	1
Wilson's Snipe				6	3	30	200%	10	15	8	24
<i>American Woodcock</i>	13				2		0%	1	0.1	1	1
Bonaparte's Gull	9					9	27%	9	33	4	111
Laughing Gull	46	209		4	1	260	73%	10	355	190	476
Ring-billed Gull	237	515				752	113%	10	663	413	975
<i>Herring Gull</i>											

SPECIES	Coastal SBCs			CT			Upland SBCs:			2015			% of 2005-14		# 2005-2014		
	Valley		Mid-state	Northern			Mid-state		Northern			State	Average	obs.	Ave	Low	High
	GS	NH	Hfd	WR	NM/P	Ba	LH	St	Totals	2005-14	2005-14	2005-14	2005-14	2005-14	2005-14	2005-14	
<i>Great Black-backed Gull</i>	57	99							156	73%	10	215	107	373			
<i>Least Tern</i>	1	68						69	44%	10	155	13	334				
<i>Gull-billed Tern</i>										0%	1	0.2	2	2			
<i>Caspian Tern</i>										0%	2	0.5	2	3			
<i>Black Tern</i>										0%	1	0.1	1	1			
<i>Common Tern</i>	73	9						82	24%	10	342	168	547				
<i>Foster's Tern</i>	7							7	250%	8	2.8	1	6				
<i>Royal Tern</i>									0%	1	0.2	2	2				
<i>Black Skimmer</i>		13						13	220%	6	5.9	1	26				
<i>Rock Pigeon</i>	173	139	108	49	39	67	69	71	715	74%	10	964	578	1154			
<i>Mourning Dove</i>	462	245	338	316	225	63	213	2/4	2136	85%	10	2517	2072	2897			
<i>Yellow-billed Cuckoo</i>	11	14	4	18	8	14	14	21	104	227%	10	46	11	144			
<i>Black-billed Cuckoo</i>	10	2	6	14	2	12	7	16	69	264%	10	26	10	74			
<i>cuckoo species</i>	1				1				2								
<i>Eastern Screech-Owl</i>	3			1	3		4	8	19	45%	10	42	26	59			
<i>Great Horned Owl</i>	2			3		3	3	3	14	63%	10	22	10	36			
<i>Barred Owl</i>	13	1	1	19		37	21	19	111	122%	10	91	61	132			
<i>Northern Saw-whet Owl</i>						3	1		4	267%	8	1.5	1	4			
<i>Nighthawk, Common</i>		1		1					2	69%	10	2.9	1	6			
<i>Eastern Whip-poor-will</i>									0	0%	10	9.1	1	22			
<i>Chimney Swift</i>	122	141	82	192	41	437	85	467	1567	193%	10	812	554	1132			
<i>Ruby-throated Hummingbird</i>	18	8	7	25	32	147	58	40	335	164%	10	204	146	278			
<i>Belted Kingfisher</i>	7	1	8	14	2	23	13	3	71	77%	10	92	69	118			
<i>Red-bellied Woodpecker</i>	249	84	87	125	72	85	80	87	869	129%	10	673	506	790			
<i>Yellow-bellied Sapsucker</i>	1			58	70	319	111	1	561	110%	10	509	337	649			

<i>Downy Woodpecker</i>	187	93	80	103	128	240	128	57	1016	125%	10	810	667	1095
<i>Hairy Woodpecker</i>	73	21	26	36	23	87	36	8	310	115%	10	271	235	356
<i>Northern Flicker</i>	149	36	46	38	40	82	49	53	473	92%	10	512	436	613
<i>Pileated Woodpecker</i>	32	7	6	31	29	71	36	18	230	155%	10	149	103	214
<i>American Kestrel</i>		1	1	6	1	1	3	1	13	102%	10	13	6	21
Merlin										0%	2	0.2	1	1
<i>Peregrine Falcon</i>	1	3	2						8	116%	10	6.9	4	9
<i>Monk Parakeet</i>	12	26							38	41%	10	92	20	288
<i>Olive-sided Flycatcher</i>	1								1	100%	6	1	1	3
<i>Eastern Wood-Pewee</i>	132	64	52	103	89	157	219	73	891	129%	10	689	592	855
<i>Yellow-bellied Flycatcher</i>										0%	4	0.8	1	5
<i>Acadian Flycatcher</i>	3		1	21	2	2	5	1	34	133%	10	26	16	35
<i>Alder Flycatcher</i>	1		1	1	3	20	61	2	89	87%	10	102	62	139
<i>Willow Flycatcher</i>	61	31	38	31	10	31	90	7	299	108%	10	277	224	366
<i>Least Flycatcher</i>				12	11	61	62	19	165	121%	10	136	75	188
<i>Epidonax species</i>							8	1	9					
<i>Eastern Phoebe</i>	58	21	20	107	137	288	200	81	912	118%	10	772	548	939
<i>Great Crested Flycatcher</i>	95	80	28	75	77	58	92	86	591	125%	10	473	389	529
<i>Eastern Kingbird</i>	89	33	23	81	45	208	125	60	664	124%	10	535	456	619
<i>White-eyed Vireo</i>	7			2	1				10	99%	10	10	2	22
<i>Yellow-throated Vireo</i>	34	6	6	69	56	35	96	60	362	146%	10	248	206	291
<i>Blue-headed Vireo</i>				12	6	54	45	3	120	74%	10	162	102	227
<i>Warbling Vireo</i>	214	111	142	186	79	95	128	170	1125	134%	10	840	682	1175
<i>Red-eyed Vireo</i>	262	104	51	373	214	1146	938	257	3345	113%	10	2954	2490	3526
<i>Blue Jay</i>	368	224	96	161	91	395	138	102	1575	104%	10	1509	1227	1757
<i>American Crow</i>	240	123	127	300	244	413	349	164	1960	83%	10	2349	1968	2623
<i>Fish Crow</i>	40	36	10	27	1	5	5	24	148	137%	10	108	62	148
<i>Common Raven</i>	12	8	4	19	7	60	19	2	131	135%	10	97	50	116
<i>crow, sp?</i>														

SPECIES	Coastal SBCs			CT Valley	Upland SBCs:				2015 State Totals	% of 2005-14 Average	# of yrs obs.	2005-2014				
	Mid-state		Northern		WR	NMP	Ba	LH				St	Ave	Low	High	
	GS	NH	Hfd													Hfd
<i>Horned Lark</i>	96	69	21	67	55	102	13	75	498	0%	1	0.2	2			
<i>Northern Rough-w Swallow</i>	51	4	8	1			14		78	119%	10	420	349			
<i>Purple Martin</i>	204	237	121	199	311	575	355	323	2325	184%	10	43	14			
<i>Tree Swallow</i>	2	17	28	18	20	64	2	51	202	130%	10	1786	1245			
<i>Bank Swallow</i>	348	189	77	342	247	419	340	277	2239	84%	10	241	148			
<i>Barn Swallow</i>	47	12	4	105	13	145	7		333	128%	10	1755	1483			
<i>Cliff Swallow</i>									30	121%	10	275	181			
<i>swallow. Sp.?</i>	224	95	51	231	132	714	290	167	1904	0%	10	1878	1570			
<i>Black-capped Chickadee</i>	373	109	96	285	127	489	241	199	1919	101%	10	1836	1648			
<i>Tufted Titmouse</i>									23	105%	10	1836	1648			
<i>Red-breasted Nuthatch</i>	137	38	65	95	61	321	86	56	859	86%	10	27	7			
<i>White-breasted Nuthatch</i>	5		3	9	3	52	15		87	123%	10	699	486			
<i>Brown Creeper</i>	279	78	58	194	155	175	193	156	1288	131%	10	67	41			
<i>House Wren</i>	3	3		6	3	34	15		64	133%	10	967	723			
<i>Winter Wren</i>	9	39	5						80	117%	10	55	13			
<i>Marsh Wren</i>	74	24	13	29	11	32	4	30	217	83%	10	97	46			
<i>Carolina Wren</i>	43	9	14	106	28	112	54	70	436	97	10	368	199			
<i>Blue-gray Gnatcatcher</i>									5	59%	10	267	193			
<i>Golden-crowned Kinglet</i>						3	2			163%	10	267	193			
<i>Ruby-crowned Kinglet</i>	58	7	12	141	99	162	87	74	640	70%	10	7.1	1			
<i>Eastern Bluebird</i>										0%	1	0.1	1			
<i>Gray-checked Thrush</i>	163	30	6	243	222	702	705	148	2219	119%	10	536	445			
<i>Veery</i>										0%	1	0.1	1			
<i>Bicknell's Thrush</i>										0%	1	0.1	1			
<i>Swainson's Thrush</i>										107%	10	2066	1698			
										0%	7	1.3	1			

SPECIES	Coastal SBCs			CT Valley	Upland SBCs:				2015 State Totals		% of 2005-14 Average	# of obs.	2005-2014		
	Mid-state		Northern		WR	NM/P	Northern		State Totals	Ave			Low	High	
	GS	NH	Hfd				WR	Ba			LH	St			
<i>Chestnut-sided Warbler</i>	18	2	7	49	39	202	261	28	606	98%	10	618	529	672	
<i>Blackpoll Warbler</i>	1	1		13	1	172	111		4	114%	10	3.5	1	7	
<i>Black-throated Blue Warbler</i>	50	25	29	35	15	182	116	56	298	143%	10	208	162	246	
<i>Pine Warbler</i>	3			40	13	69	19		91	119%	10	425	398	489	
<i>Yellow-rumped Warbler</i>	39	10	19	45	4	15	4	21	167	88%	10	104	80	129	
<i>Prairie Warbler</i>	1	2		45	4	105	105	11	273	158%	10	105	80	146	
<i>Black-thr Green Warbler</i>				1		25	19		45	82%	10	332	272	416	
<i>Canada Warbler</i>				1					1	86%	10	52	39	75	
<i>Wilson's Warbler</i>				1					1	500%	2	0.2	1	1	
<i>Yellow-breasted Chat</i>				1					2	667%	2	0.3	1	2	
<i>Eastern Towhee</i>	64	25	18	110	52	151	150	48	618	111%	10	556	446	677	
<i>Chipping Sparrow</i>	313	76	84	274	250	1027	414	403	2841	115%	10	2464	2178	2780	
<i>Field Sparrow</i>	27	10	3	43	25	22	9	14	153	135%	10	114	77	156	
<i>Verper Sparrow</i>										0%	1	0.1	1	1	
<i>Savannah Sparrow</i>				9	4	1	6	10	73	93%	10	79	55	106	
<i>Grasshopper Sparrow</i>									11	208%	10	5.3	2	19	
<i>Nelson's Sparrow</i>										0%	4	0.4	1	1	
<i>Saltmarsh Sparrow</i>	1	1							2	36%	10	5.6	1	11	
<i>Seaside Sparrow</i>										0%	4	0.8	1	3	
<i>Song Sparrow</i>	433	171	236	324	283	628	499	183	2757	96%	10	2863	2374	3133	
<i>Swamp Sparrow</i>	1		12	7	41	118	113	6	298	90%	10	331	245	463	
<i>White-throated Sparrow</i>	cp					4		1	5	82%	10	6.1	1	19	
<i>Dark-eyed Junco</i>						45	25		70	143%	10	49	35	60	
<i>Scarlet Tanager</i>	120	55	30	122	60	187	216	73	863	112%	10	769	680	888	
<i>Northern Cardinal</i>	400	187	170	286	179	422	199	242	2085	107%	10	1942	1649	2247	

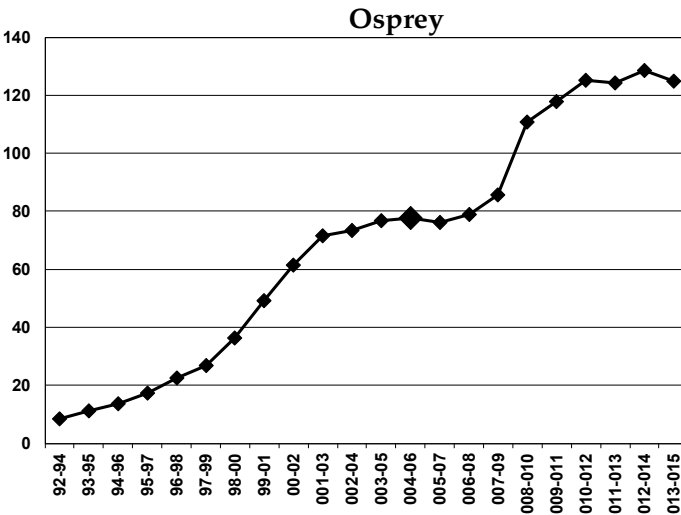
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	<u>67</u>	40	22	87	60	108	96	<u>36</u>	516	109%	10	474	385	577
Blue Grosbeak	93	28	27	131	93	<u>189</u>	79	<u>58</u>	698	0%	1	0.1	1	1
Indigo Bunting				<u>1</u>					<u>1</u>	1000%	1	0.1	1	1
Dickcissel			19	118	<u>88</u>	<u>16</u>	239	19	499	101%	10	496	391	703
Bobolink	728	717	548	579	<u>772</u>	339	955	664	5302	110%	10	4826	4291	5453
Red-winged Blackbird			7	1	<u>4</u>			2	14	86%	10	16	8	28
Eastern Meadowlark	1214	536	334	248	273	398	<u>346</u>	<u>257</u>	3606	73%	10	4909	3502	6534
Common Grackle										0%	1	0.1	1	1
Boat-tailed Grackle			69	112	119	181	<u>140</u>	<u>135</u>	1017	90%	10	1125	928	1284
Brown-headed Cowbird	151	110	69	44	4	<u>8</u>	7	2	126	156%	10	81	68	112
Orchard Oriole	329	132	69	<u>188</u>	37	121	<u>122</u>	<u>159</u>	1157	101%	10	1143	930	1400
Baltimore Oriole										0%	1	0.1	1	1
Bullock's Oriole	125	55	63	126	130	180	128	88	895	96%	9	934	776	1240
House Finch				4	5	86	44	<u>4</u>	143	94%	10	152	102	200
Purple Finch										0%	1	0.1	1	1
Red Crossbill	cp		209	<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>	cp	14	250%	3	5.6	3	50
Pine Siskin	306	181		216	205	<u>705</u>	<u>288</u>	<u>152</u>	2262	101%	10	2232	1737	2685
American Goldfinch										0%	2	0.9	2	7
Evening Grosbeak	1170	388	399	215	190	300	213	<u>583</u>	3458	109%	10	3176	1869	4194
House Sparrow														
other unidentified/hybrid														

Christmas Bird Count 2014-2015

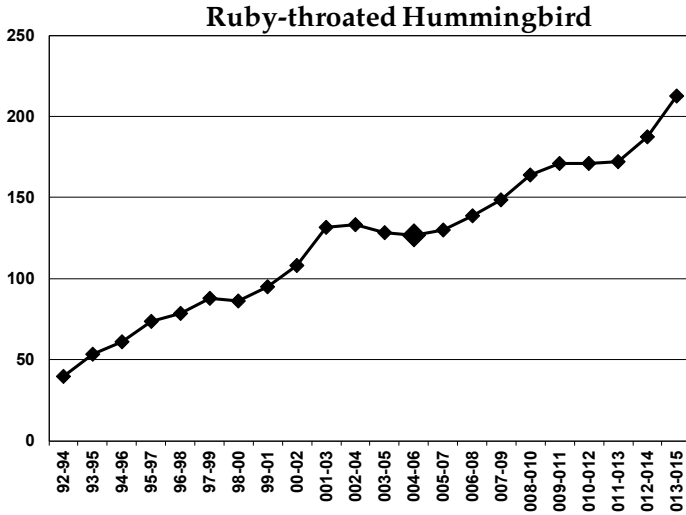
SPECIES	Coastal SBCs			CT		Upland SBCs:				2015 State Totals	% of 2005-14 Average	# yrs obs.	2005-2014			
	GS	NH	Hfd	Valley		Mid-state		Northern					Ave	Low	High	
				WR	NM/P	Ba	LH	St								
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	19163	10609	7349	12075	9605	22309	16804	10299	108192	110%	98224.9	90180	105940			
<i>CD Species</i>	137	124	101	128	117	127	132	112	177	97%	182.4	172	191			
<i>CP Species</i>	2	1						1	1		2.8	1	6			
DEGREE OF EFFORT																
<i>Observers</i>	54	41	40	23	25	37	37	20	277	111%	249	229	263			
<i>Parties</i>	34	19	24	15	14	18	15	10	149	109%	136.1	116	149			
<i>Party Hours</i>	292	172	97	125	103.5	258	183	173.3	1403.8	106%	1319	1184	1416.5			
<i>Day Party Hours</i>	286	172	97	120	102	246	162	156.8	1341.8	106%	1265.5	1124	1357.5			
<i>Night Party Hours</i>	6	0	0	5	1.5	12	21	16.5	62	117%	52.9	31.5	60			
<i>Indiv. birds per 10 PHs</i>	636.27	616.8	757.63	966	928.02	864.69	918.25	594.29	770.7							
<i>Indiv. birds per Observer</i>	354.87	258.76	183.73	525	384.2	602.95	454.16	514.95	390.6							
<i>% SBC Observers</i>	19.5	14.8	14.4	8.3	9.0	13.4	13.4	7.2	100							
<i>% SBC Party Hours</i>	20.801	12.3	6.9098	8.9	7.4	18.4	13.0	12.3	100							
<i>% SBC Individual Birds</i>	17.7	9.8	6.8	11.2	8.9	20.6	15.5	9.5	100							

For this year's graphs we are revisiting the species we had featured in 2006 as either declining or increasing at that time to see if those trends have continued. The numbers presented are three-year rolling averages per 1000 party hours. This corrects for differences in "party hour" level of effort, while maintaining a similar order of magnitude to raw numbers of birds recorded. The three year rolling average smooths out the natural year-to-year fluctuation in numbers because of weather or the timing of fledging in a given year (a count after fledging can increase the number of birds recorded). We have highlighted the point from 2006 with a larger diamond on the axis.

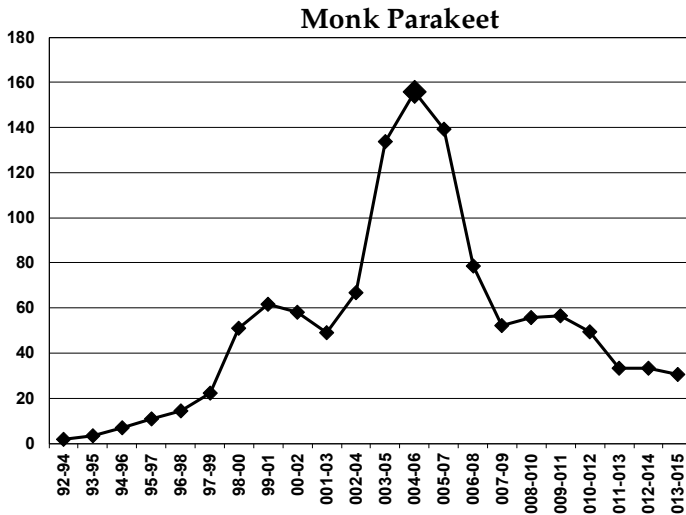
Species featured as "increasing" at that time:



Osprey have continued or even accelerated their increasing numbers since that time. What seemed like the peak of a mountain in 2006 looks like a foothill compared to today's numbers.

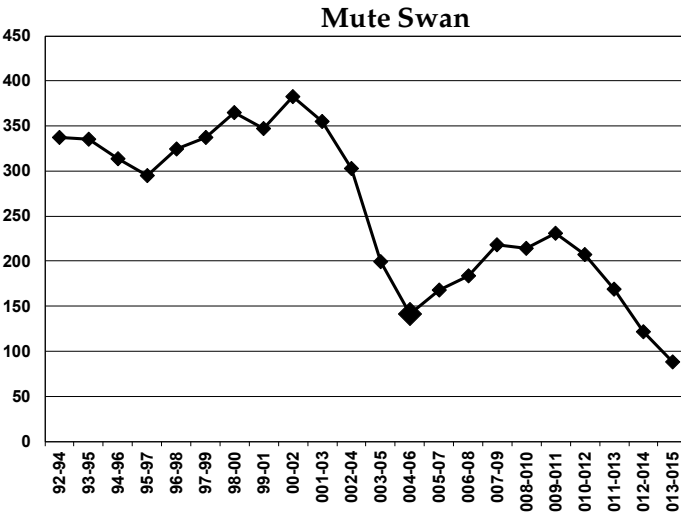


We had mentioned that there seemed to be a plateau after steadily increasing numbers of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds in the 2006 article, but it appears that the upward trend has continued since that time.

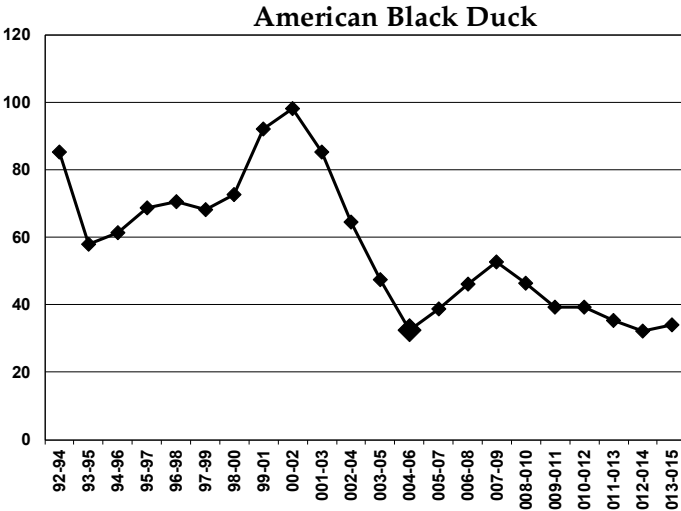


Monk Parakeets have had the most drastic change in the status of any species. Their numbers appeared to be on a meteoric trip to infinity in 2006, but today the graph looks like an exaggerated bell curve with a peak around that time.

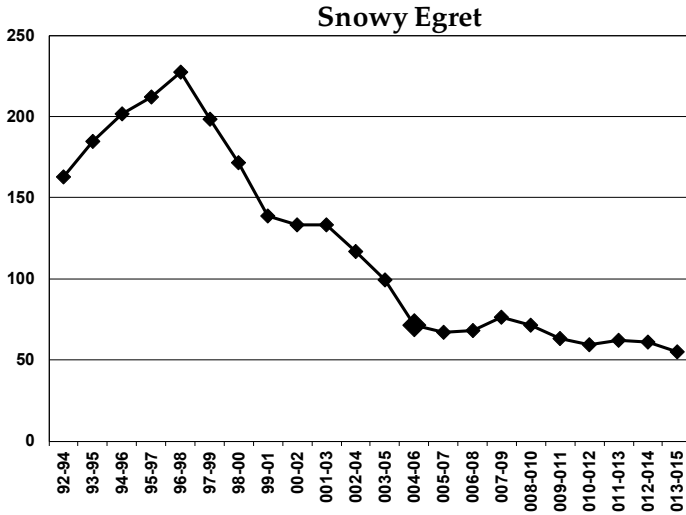
Species featured as “declining” at that time:



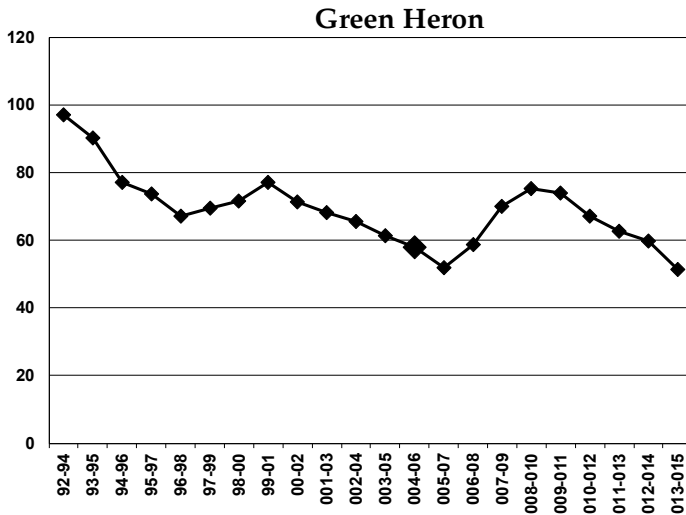
We had noted a recent drop in the numbers and record low of Mute Swans found on the count in 2006. Numbers appeared to climb for a few years after that, but have now eclipsed the record lows of that time.



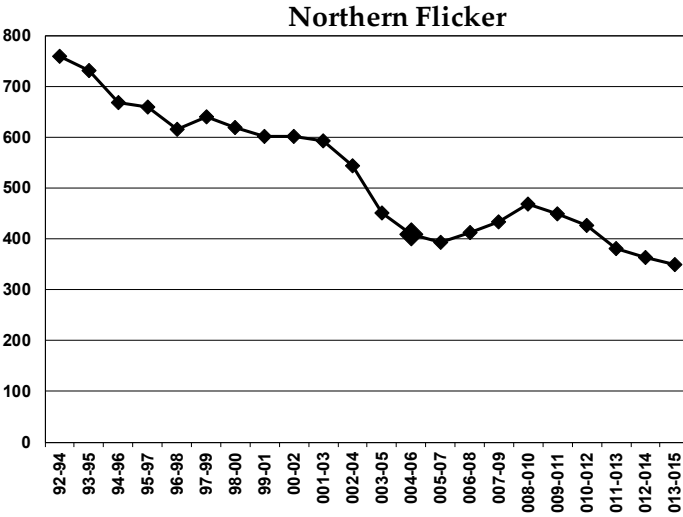
American Black Duck has had peaks and valleys since 2006, but we are now close to the record low numbers recorded at that time.



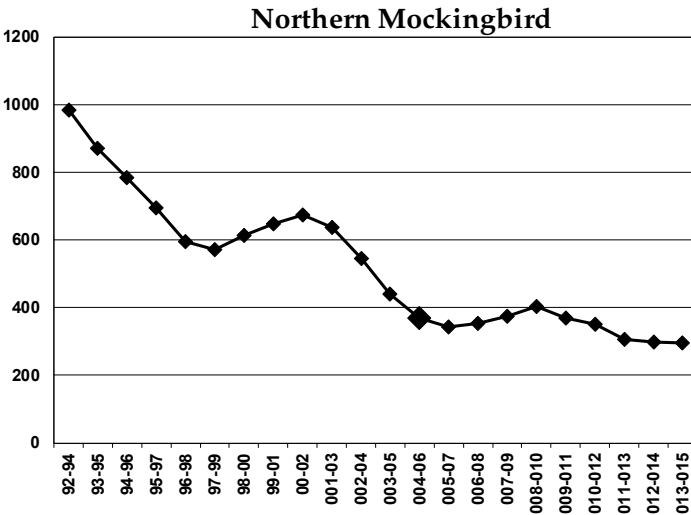
We had expressed concerns about declining numbers of Snowy Egrets in 2006, but recent counts have come in at around half of that amount. Our concern for this species has only grown. Fewer of nearly all the coastal nesting herons and egrets are being recorded in recent years. Efforts should be put into investigating possible causes for these declines and what can be done to reverse these trends.



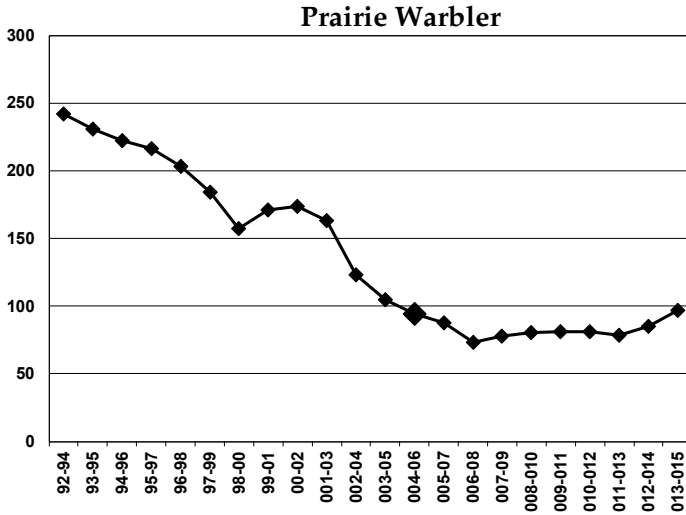
Green Herons were selected as a declining species in 2006, but numbers have risen and fallen again since that time. They now stand at all-time lows.



Northern Flickers appeared to rebound in the years following 2006, but are now at all-time low levels.



Northern Mockingbirds appear to have continued the downward trends since that time and also stand at all-time low levels.



Prairie Warblers appear to have hit a floor and may be rebounding in recent counts.

STATEWIDE COUNT TOTALS

Count Dates: June 6, 7, 13, 14, 20, 21, 25, & 29

Totals: 177 count day [CD] species were recorded and totaled 108,192 individual birds. Two hundred and seventy-six observers in 149 parties spent 1403.8 Party Hours [PH] in the field.

Since 1976, 265 SBC species have been counted, while another 4 species remain solely as count period [CP] birds. During the prior decade 239 species were recorded on count days.

LOCAL COUNT TOTALS

Barkhamsted Summer Bird Count (*founded 1992*)

Count Dates: June 25 & 29 (Thur. & Mon.)

Totals: 126 species, 22,309 individual birds. Thirty-eight observers in eighteen parties spent 258 PHs in the field. Since 1992 164 CD species have been recorded.

Participants: Tim Acker, Rich Allen, Bianca Beland (assistant compiler), Francine Beland, Ray Belding, Matt Danville, Ayreslea Denny, Angela Dimmitt, Elizabeth Faber, Peter Faber, Sharon Fabrizio, Nicki Hall, Seth Harvey, Vicki Hester, Mark Hildebrand, Bob Holms, Dorrie Holms, Sean Hurley, Jim Kandefer, Marie Kennedy, Ed Kohl, Dave Kucia, Lorraine Langweiser, Mike Langweiser, Vima LeJeune,, Andrew Hubbard, Heather Longley, John Marshall (assistant compiler), Russ Naylor, Carol Parent, Cynthia Phipps, Patti Pickard, Mike Placo, Wally Placo, William Roberts, **David Rosgen** (121 Laurel Way, Winsted, CT 06098-2534; ctbluebird1020@gmail.com), Sam Slater, and Peter Tokarz.

Weather: 6/25 - daytime: Partly Sunny, breezy, humid, very warm., 6/29 - Partly cloudy, cool, breezy;

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 6 & 7 (Sat. & Sun.)

Totals: 138 count species, plus 2 count period species, and 19,163 individual birds. Fifty-four observers in 34 Parties spent 292 party hours [PHs] in the field. Since 1976, 238 CD species plus 4 CP have been recorded. Not seen during the prior ten years but recorded this year were Black-throated Blue and Yellow-rumped Warblers.

Participants: Tom Andersen, John Askildsen, Mike Aurelia, Andrew Baksh, Trudy Battaly, Joe Belanger, Gail Benson, Kelli Bochnik, Michael Bochnik, Jacqueline Bruskin, **Thomas W. Burke** (235 Highland Road, Rye, NY 10580; 914 967-4922, tom.burke@mcgladrey.com), Ioa Byrne, Al Collins, Chris Cooper, Annette Cunniffe, Brian Donovan, Rich Donovan, Patrick Dugan, Morgan Evans, Andrew Farnsworth, Kathy Gellman, Steve Gellman, Ted Gilman, Olivia

Giutini, David Havens, Jalna Jaeger, Wendy Knothe, JoAnn LaBare, Ryan MacLean, Jim O'Brien, Maryann O'Leary, Brian O'Toole, **Gary Palmer** (34 Field Road. Cob Cob, Ct., 06830; 203 661-4897, gejlpalmer@yahoo.com), Drew Panko, Matt Popp, Steve Ricker, Bob Rocco, Polly Rothstein, George Roussey, David Salmon, Meredith Sampson, Alan Scuterud, Bob Shriber, Penny Solum, Andy Towle, Matt Tozer, Marvin Turner, Michael Usai, Jim Utter, Bill Van Loan, Jr., Jim Voros, Bill Wallace, Mike Warner, Al Welby, and Joe Zeranski.

Weather: 6/6- NE-NW winds, 10 mph, 56° to 73°F., Early light rain [0.3"], clear by noon; 6/7- S-S/W winds, 15 mph, 44° to 73°F., Clear.

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 6 & 7 (Sat. & Sun.)

Totals: One hundred and one CD species, 7,347 individual birds. Forty observers in 24 Parties covered 97 PHs. One hundred and seventy-three CD species have been documented since 1992. Not seen during the prior ten years, but recorded this year was Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

Participants: Bill Asteriades, Rob Ballinger, Tom Baptist, Doug Beach, Shirley Beach, Carol Bradovchak, Mona Cavallero, Paul Cianfaglione, Patrick Comins, Andrew Dasinger, Paul Desjardins, Peter Egan, Beth Fordiani, Dee Hanson, Eric Hanson, Bill Hoover, Denise Jernigan, **Jay Kaplan** (71 Gracey Road, Canton, CT. 06019; 860 693-0157, jaybrd49@aol.com), John Karpinski, Gil Kleiner, Brian Kleinman, Steve Kotchko, Judy Larkin, David Lawton, Larry Lunden, Alan Lurie, Bonnie Maguire, Annette Pasek, Marianne Piche, Roger Preston, Rick Reed, Hannah Reynolds, Isaac Rosenthal,

Susanne Shrader, Joan Tinson, Brian Toal, Jon Ward, Judy Whittlesey, Mike Whittlesey, and Sara Zagorski.

Weather: 6/6- 69° to 85°F. Winds: 5 to 20 mph, partly to mostly cloudy; 6/7- 60° to 86°F., Calm Winds, partly to mostly cloudy;

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 13 & 14 (Sat. & Sun.)

Totals: 132 species, 16,804 individual birds. Thirty-eight observers in 15 Parties accumulated 183 PHs. Since 1994, with the addition of Yellow-breasted Chat this year, 177 CD species have been recorded.

Participants: Susanne Ainsworth, Betsy Assenza, Fabienne Audette, Michael Audette, Janet Baker, John Baker, Bob Barbieri, Marcia Barker, Ray Belding, Arsylea Denny, Angela Dimmitt, Eileen Finnan, Kevin Finnan, Ed Goodhouse, Tina Green, Nicki Hall, Greg Hanisek, Alex Kennedy, Marie Kennedy, Joan Lang, Jerry Marcellino, Debbie Martin, Dan Mercurio, Scott Mills, Avi Mistriel, Russ Naylor, Gene Newell, Susan Newell, Ann Orsillo, Andrea Pelletier, Dean Sarjeant, Sue Shnurr, Sam Slater, Donna Rose Smith, Olaf Soltau, **David Tripp Jr.** (345 Colebrook Road, Winsted, Ct. 06098; dtrippjr@gmail.com), Ryan Wirtes, and Fran Zygmunt.

Weather: 6/13 - 64° to 82°F., SSE winds, 2-9 mph.. 6/14 - Pre AM showers, 66° to 78°F., SSE winds, 6-10 mph, 0.2" rain.

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 6 & 7 (Sat. & Sun.)

Totals: 124 species, 10,609 individual birds. Forty-one observers in 19 Parties spent 172 PHs in the field. Since 1991, 202 CD species have been confirmed.

Participants: Marion Aimsbury, Ralph Amodel, Phil Asprelli, Larry Bausher, Steve Broker, Gail Cameron, Dana Campbell, Cheryl Cape, Patrick Comins, Sharon Dellinger, John Farley, Mike Ferreri, Mike Horn, Lynn James, Kris Johnson, Amanda Kallenbach, Pat Leahy, Chris Loscalzo, **Steve Mayo** (27 Tuttle Court, Bethany, CT 06524; 203 551-1707, rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net), Nancy Meyer-Lustman, Bob Mitchell, Judy Moore, John Oshlick, Bernie Phillips, Karrie Phillips, Frank Ragusa, Nancy Ragusa, Craig Repasz, Jason Rieger, Arne Rosengren, Mark Scott, Arthur Shippee, Nancy Specht, Charla Spector, Steve Spector, Maria Stockmal, Deborah Tenney, John Ttiana, Marianne Vahey, Lisa Wahle, and Winnie Wirth.

Weather: 6/6– daytime: N winds, 0-10 mph, 59° to 77°F., Overcast AM, Mostly cloudy PM; 6/7– NNE shifting to ESE/SE, 5-10 mph., 51° to 70°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 20 & 21 (Sat. & Sun.)

Totals: 117 species, 9605 individual birds. Twenty-five observers in fourteen parties spent 103.5 PHs in the field. Since 2003, 154 CD species have been recorded, including this year's addition of a Peregrine Falcon and Brown Thrasher.

Participants: Pat Bailey, Ray Belding, Don Breger, Barbara Butler, Ioa Byrne, Binnie Chase, Jay Coles, **Angela Dimmitt** (PO Box 146, Sherman, Ct. 06784; 860 355-3429, angeladimmitt@aol.com), Jacob Ebinger, Larry Fisher, Josh Hamilton, Linton Hamilton, Marge Josephson, Anne Kehmna, Judy Kelley-Moberg, Marie Kennedy, Dennis Larkin, Sariena Masiero, Russ Naylor, Adrienne Popko, Sally Spence, Nick Thold, Jim Utter, Tricia van Oers, and Bill Wallace.

Weather: 6/20 – daytime: 61° to 70°F. Wind: 0 mph., 0.2" rain; Rain on and off all day; evening: 61°F., Wind: 2 mph., 6/21 - daytime: 68° to 81°F., 0.8" Rain AM, evening: 63°F., 0.2" heavy rain AM..

Count (15-Mile diameter circle) Center: 41°32'N 73°34'W (Intersection of Akindale and Ravine Roads 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 13 & 14 (Sat. & Sun.)

Totals: 112 species, 10,299 individual birds. Twenty observers in ten parties accumulated 173.3 PHs in the field. Since 1990 138 CD species have been counted. Not seen during the prior ten years but recorded this year were American Black Duck, Ring-necked Pheasant, and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

Participants: Bruce Carver, Isabela Carver, Mike Curtis, Chris Demers, Kathy Demers, Susan Harrington, Tom Harrington, Susan Hochgraf, Jorge de Leon, Sebastian de Leon-Aubrey, Paul Manzone, **Steve Morytko** (288 Varga Road, Ashford, CT 06278-1828; 860 680-5729, smorytko@yahoo.com), Chip Moseley, Tom Prescher, Steve Rogers, Philip Rusch, Kevin Thompson, Peter Thompson, Colin Tieman, and Doug Warner.

Weather: 6/13- SW winds, 0-10 mph., 49° to 83°F., evening: 60° to 66°F., 6/14- SSW winds, 0-10 mph., 54° to 85°F., partly cloudy; evening: 54° to 68°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, Willington, Windham and small portion of Andover.

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

Count Date: June 7 (Sun.)

Totals: 128 species, 12,075 individual birds. Twenty-three observers in 15 Parties spent 125 PHs in the field. Since 1978, with the addition of Dickcissel this year, 180 CD species have been recorded.

Participants: Renee Baade, Dave Babington, Ray Belding, Polly Brody, Robert Cartoceti, Buzz Devine, Angela Dimmitt, Ken Elkins, Larry Fischer, Dennis Hannon, Seth Harvey, Anne Kehmna, Bill Liedlich, Nancy Liedlich, **Russ Naylor** (44 Church Street, Woodbury, CT 06798, 203 841-7779), Kathie Rice, Donna Rose Smith, Darcy Thurrott, Carol Titus, Leigh Wells, Chris Wood, Tom Zissu, and Fran Zygmont.

Weather: 6/7 daytime: W/NW Winds, 15-25 mph., 45° to 80°F., Mostly Sunny.

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.

CONNECTICUT FIELD NOTES

Spring Season, March 1 through May 31, 2015

By Greg Hanisek

The season started as a continuation of a very cold, inclement February. Early signs of migration were few, and at the end of March, lakes were still frozen. April arrival dates were generally unremarkable, and some species that typically make a first appearance in late April did not arrive until early May. However, some species that usually arrive later in May were somewhat early. It was an especially productive season for gulls, and kites put on a good show.

Following is a compilation of first arrival dates for a broad spectrum of regular migrants. Some more noteworthy arrivals are presented in the main text.

Northern Gannet – March 17 in Stratford (CP); Snowy Egret – March 26 in Guilford (SB); Green Heron – April 19 in Westport (TG); Yellow-crowned Night-Heron – March 29 in Darien (fide AW); Glossy Ibis – March 30 in Madison (TA); Osprey – March 7 in Madison (JSe); Broad-winged Hawk – April 6 in Windsor Locks (PDe); Piping Plover – March 17 in Milford (SS); American Oystercatcher – March 10 in Westbrook (PCo); Spotted Sandpiper – April 14 in Litchfield (MD); Solitary Sandpiper – April 24 in Southbury (RP); Willet - April 13 in

Westport (TG); Lesser Yellowlegs - March 17 in Westport (TG); Upland Sandpiper – April 17 in East Hartford (SZ); Least Sandpiper – April 23 in Milford (FM); Pectoral Sandpiper – April 2 in Portland (RS); Short-billed Dowitcher – April 26 in Guilford (CLo); Least Tern – May 3 in Madison (RS); Common Tern – May 3 in Greenwich (CEh).

Also Yellow-billed Cuckoo – May 7 in Litchfield (MD); Black-billed Cuckoo – May 5 in Litchfield (MD); Whippoorwill – April 15 in Lyme (HG); Chimney Swift – April 10 in East Lyme (DRt); Ruby-throated Hummingbird -



Russ Smiley photo
This Prothonotary Warbler, shown here on April 25, was a popular draw for birders at Connecticut Audubon's Larsen Sanctuary in Fairfield.



Russ Smiley photo
This adult male Blue Grosbeak, shown here on April 26, spent several days at a feeder in Clinton.



Julian Hough photo
This stunning Smith's Longspur entertained a cadre of birders who were able to scurry to Allen's Meadow in Wilton for its one-day stay on May 1.



Tom Murphy photo
One of the now-annual White-faced Ibises appeared at Rocky Neck State Park in East Lyme on April 15.

April 18 in Branford (DLo) and Easton (JR); Eastern Wood-Pewee – May 7 in Lyme (JG); Acadian Flycatcher – May 2 in East Lyme (AGr); Willow Flycatcher – May 8 in New Haven (WB); Least Flycatcher – April 29 in Boston Hollow (DMo); Eastern Phoebe – March 21 in Hamden (SKr); Great Crested Flycatcher – April 30 in Stamford (SM) and Stratford (LJ); Eastern Kingbird – April 20 in Norwalk (ID); White-eyed Vireo – April 30 in Salem (DB); Yellow-throated Vireo – April 22 in Fairfield (CP); Blue-headed Vireo – April 13 in New Milford (ADi); Warbling Vireo – April 22 in Milford (RS, SS); Purple Martin – April 2 in Westport (TG); Tree Swallow - March 12 in Norwich (DWa) and Madison (IG); Northern Rough-winged Swallow – March 29 in Derby (BD); Bank Swallow – April 22 in Southbury (BB); Cliff Swallow – April 4 in Barkhamsted (DRo); Barn Swallow – April 3 at multiple locations; House Wren – April 13 in Ashford (DMo); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher – April 6 in Amston (AP); Veery – April 28 in Suffield (PDe); Swainson's Thrush – May 4 in Southbury (CP);

Wood Thrush – April 13 in Litchfield (MD).

Also Ovenbird – April 16 in New Haven (KS); Louisiana Waterthrush – April 5 in East Haddam (DRt); Northern Waterthrush – April 17 in Ashford (DMo); Blue-winged Warbler – April 27 in Avon (DLA); Tennessee Warbler – May 3 in Stamford (JMa); Nashville Warbler – May 3 in Hartford (SKw); American Redstart – April 30 in East Hampton (RS) and Fairfield (TG); Cape May Warbler – May 5 in Hartford (PCi, Dmc); Northern Parula – April 24 in Milford (FG); Magnolia Warbler – May 3 in Harwinton (PCa); Bay-breasted Warbler – May 4 in Bethlehen (RW); Blackburnian Warbler – May 3 in Stamford (BH) & Litchfield (OS), Yellow Warbler – April 22 at multiple locations; Chestnut-sided Warbler – April 30 in Bethany (JOs) & Portland (RS); Black-throated Blue Warbler – April 28 in Bethany (AKa); Palm Warbler – April 3 in Cromwell (HS); Pine Warbler – March 31 in Weston (CP); Prairie Warbler – April 29 in Southbury (RH); Black-throated Green Warbler – April 22 in Woodbury (GH) and Bethany (WB);



Russ Smiley photo

These female Boat-tailed Grackles, shown here on April 16 at the East River marshes in Guilford, were away from the species' very limited breeding areas.

Canada Warbler – May 5 in Windsor (PDe); Wilson's Warbler – May 3 in Madison (RS); Grasshopper Sparrow – April 18 in East Hartford (DRt); Scarlet Tanager – May 1 in Woodbridge (AS); Rose-breasted Grosbeak – April 22 in Fairfield (TSe); Indigo Bunting – April 21 in Salem (DB); Bobolink – May 4 in Storrs (CEl), Eastern Meadowlark – March 20 in Stratford (PCo); Orchard Oriole – April 27 in Stamford (SM); Baltimore Oriole – April 24 in Middlebury (CW).

Four **Greater White-fronted Geese** were at Riverfront

Park in Glastonbury on March 28 (BA), and singles were at Cove Island Wildlife Sanctuary in Stamford on March 22-24 (MM et al); in Northford on March 25-26 (NB et al.); at Aspetuck Reservoir in Easton on March 29 (TMu), and on Whirlwind Hill Road in Wallingford April 1-2 (JRi et al.). A **Cackling Goose** flew by Burying Hill Beach in Westport on March 20 (TG). A flock of 18 Snow Geese flew over Old Saybrook on March 18 (JOG), and 15 were on the lawn at Lighthouse Point in New Haven on March 22 (BR). Other flocks included 30 over South

Windsor (PDe) and 100+ over Storrs (KB), both on April 3. Flocks also made late appearances, with 15 over Harwinton on May 8 (PCa); 35 over West Cornwall on May 15 (AGi); and 125 over West Cornwall on May 19 (AGi). A flock of six Tundra Swans flew over a Stratford yard on March 17 (FM).

Typical of the state's prodigious Wood Duck population was a flock of 120 in Cromwell Meadows on March 31 (SB). **Eurasian Wigeon** were reported from eight locations, including an inland one at Rocky Hill Meadows April 4-5 that was a first for Hartford County since 1997 (BA et al.). The high count of seven Blue-winged Teal was April 25 in Glastonbury (BA). Approximately 700 dabbling ducks in the marsh at Milford Point at high tide on April 5 included two Northern Pintails, up to 300 Green-winged Teal and 14 Northern Shovelers (NB). The next day the marsh held an incredible 26 Northern Shovelers (FG). Other noteworthy shoveler reports included 10 on April 24 at Long Beach in Stratford (FM) and 12 there April 29 (KM). **Green-winged (Eurasian)**

Teal were at Edgewood Park in New Haven on March 16 (WB); at Shell Beach in Guilford on March 25-April 3 (NB et al); at two locations in Milford on April 2-5 (MKo, TG, JT); and at Rocky Neck State Park in East Lyme on April 8 (TC).

A Ring-necked Duck lingered to May 24 at Hammonasset Beach State Park in Madison (hereafter HBSP – GH). A Redhead was unexpected April 6 at Fisher Meadow in Avon (PCi). The winter season's female **Tufted Duck** in Bridgeport remained through March 19 (TG, DK et al.). Another female Tufted Duck was found March 29 at North Cove in Old Saybrook (GH, TG et al.), and remained at least one more day. Long-tailed Ducks were inland on the Connecticut River in Enfield on March 25 (JPf) and at Lake Lillinonah in Newtown on May 18 (RBd). A White-winged Scoter was present to at least May 27 at Station 43 in South Windsor (PDe). A **Common X Barrow's Goldeneye** was present in mid-March off Milford and Stratford (FG, SKr). **Barrow's Goldeneyes** were unusually widespread with one off Madison March

1-April 12 (NB et al.) and others during that span in Southport (SM), Stamford (DK), Milford (FG) and Westport (JT, AKi). A Ruddy Duck lingered to May 13-15 at Bantam Lake in Litchfield (FM, DT).

Away from northern Litchfield County, a Ruffed Grouse was in East Granby on April 19 (JWe). A Red-throated Loon was late May 29 at Fargeorge Preserve in New Haven (PS). A Horned Grebe lingered to May 17 in Fairfield (JPu). Red-necked Grebes were reported from more than 20 locations, with a high of six on April 29 at Bantam Lake in Litchfield (MD). Three were on Battersson Pond in Farmington on April 27 (PCi). There was a widespread coastal arrival of Double-crested Cormorants on March 28-29 (m.ob.). Two **American White Pelicans** seen May 29 at HBSP (MKo) appeared the next day at Milford Point (DRt et al.), Stratford Point (PCo et al.) and Sherwood Island State Park in Westport (TG, SZ et al.). American Bitterns were clearly migrating in early April, when two were found at Larsen Sanctuary in Fairfield (AKi) and one was

in Shelton (EJ), both April 12 in areas where the species does not breed. Tricolored Herons made a coordinated appearance April 14 in Old Lyme (HG) and April 15 in Westport (TG). Another was in Old Lyme on May 23 (SZ et al.) The season's only Cattle Egret was in the Great Island area of Old Lyme May 22-23 (DB et al.). A Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was a good inland find May 12 at Rocky Hill meadows (JSh). A good inland count of 18 Glossy Ibis were at an industrial park in Cheshire on April 14 (RBa). A fine count for anywhere was 102 on May 13 in Clinton (MKo). A now-annual **White-faced Ibis** was at Rocky Neck State Park in East Lyme April 15-16 (TMr, RS), followed by one May 10-30 in Westbrook and Clinton (CLo et al.). Another was found on May 31 at Milford Point (FM et al.). A good inland flight of 520 Broad-winged Hawks was noted April 22 in Suffield (DH).

Swallow-tailed Kites created a lot of excitement. Of special note were two seen on the morning of May 13 at HBSP (GN). The observer quickly got the word out, and not-

ing the strong northwest winds, observers to the south scrambled for good vantage points. The result was sightings of the two at 11:35 a.m. at Lighthouse Point in New Haven (JOs) and 1:58 p.m. at Cove Island in Stamford (PDU). One also was seen at 1:06 p.m. in Fairfield (CH). Other singles were over Cheshire on May 9 (MB) and at Rocky Hill on May 16 (JRe). Sightings of single **Mississippi Kites** May 9 and 26 in Glastonbury suggested local breeding, but no further evidence could be found (BA, DJ et al.). A Golden Eagle

found its way to a large concentration of Bald Eagles on the lower Housatonic River in Stratford on March 9 (GH et al.) and one was in West Cornwall on March 11 (RBe et al.). March 30 produced four **Sandhill Cranes** flying over Bethlehem (RW) and up to five in a field in Canaan, where they were seen through April 14 (TSc, BD et al.). Other reports included three April 7 in Goshen (BD), two April 9 in Plainfield (LD), one on May 3 in Coventry (PG) and one May 9 at Shell Beach in Guilford (CLO et al.).



Keith Mueller photo

This Mew Gull, shown here on April 18 at Oyster River on the Milford-West Haven boundary, is believed to be of the Far Eastern race kamchatschensis.

A **Piping Plover**, a species associated with coastal sands, was completely unexpected when photographed May 4 at Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks (RT). American Oystercatchers had six chicks on May 29 at Cokenoe Island in Westport (AH, TG). The season's only Whimbrel was in the East River marshes in Guilford May 16-24 (DRt et al.). Scattered May reports of the plummeting Red Knot never exceeded two individuals. Five White-rumped Sandpipers were at Stratford Point on May 6 (PCo). Sometimes Purple Sandpipers can be easier to find in May than mid-winter, if you look in a place like Merwin Point in Milford, which held 11 migrants on May 22 (SS). A Dunlin was a nice inland find May 17 at Station 43 in South Windsor (PDe). Wilson's Snipe were on the move March 27 with 20 at Nyala Farms in Westport (TG) and 10 on Whirlwind Hill Road in Wallingford (JRi), following 17 the previous day at Sherwood Island State Park in Westport (JT). The high count of 65 came from Station 43 in South Windsor on April 11 (PCi).

In an excellent season for **Little Gulls**, the first one appeared in Milford on April 5 (NB et al.). They were then found regularly through April 15, primarily at Southport Beach, where unusually high counts of seven on April 8 (KM) and six on April 13 (TG) were recorded. With gulls the center of attention, April also produced multiple reports of **Mew Gulls**. The first report came from Southport on April 10 (MH, MW), a large dark bird believed to be the Asiatic subspecies *kamchatkensis*. On April 15 both Bonomo and Mueller saw this species at Oyster River mouth on the Milford-West Haven line. Examination of photos suggests two different individuals were present - a *kamchatkensis* that appeared to be the same one found on April 10 (NB) and one believed to be the nominate race, *canus* (KM). The *kamchatkensis* was seen again at Oyster River on April 17 (KM et al.). With gulls high on the radar, a visit to West Haven boat launch on April 19 yielded a **Thayer's Gull** (JH), which was seen there again the next day (LB). A third report came from Stratford Point on April 21 (PCo).

Two Caspian Terns were at Great Island in Old Lyme on May 31 (TG, JT). Two Forster's Terns April 4 at Southport Beach were followed by a few singles through the rest of the season (JT et al.). This species is more common as a post-breeder. The first two Black Skimmers appeared May 23 at Bluff Point State Park in Groton (HJ). Thereafter up to six were at Milford Point through the end of the period (JWi et al.).

A **Barn Owl**, a species hanging on by a thread in the state, appeared in Bridgeport on April 16 (FM), Stratford on May 4 (PCo), and Stamford on May 5 (PDU). Snowy Owls were still present April 1 at Milford Point (SS) and April 15 at Bradley Point in West Haven (JH, TMu). Both Long-eared and Short-eared Owls continued to emerge at dusk into late March at Silver Sands State Park in Milford (m.ob.). However, the exact numbers were hard to assess because of the difficulty in separating them in flight under low light conditions. Other Short-eared Owl reports came from Groton on March 27 (TT) and Stratford Point on March 23 (PCo). Unexpected and exciting was a

Northern Saw-whet Owl calling on April 23 in a Stratford yard (FM). The high count for Common Nighthawk was 25 on May 18 in Canaan (TSc). A Whip-poor-will was a nice find April 29 at Northwest Park in Windsor, a spot lacking a breeding population (FP). The same applies to one on May 8 at East Rock Park in New Haven (TMu). Three on May 3 in Southington were in an area known to have breeders (JSw).

The first of about 15 Olive-sided Flycatcher reports was on May 13 at Fairchild Garden in Greenwich (AW et al.). There were just five reports of Yellow-bellied Flycatchers, the earliest on May 17 in New London (TC). The first of about 15 reports of Philadelphia Vireo was May 15 in Norwalk (PH). Eleven Fish Crows on April 4 in Barkhamsted was a high count for northern Litchfield County (FZ). One of the state's few inland Purple Martin colonies was occupied April 23 when five showed up at houses at Lake Waramaug Country Club in New Preston (CM). Of special interest was the discovery of two colonies in May in Glastonbury, un-

usual for Hartford County (BA, ADa). A Marsh Wren on May 17 in an East Granby beaver swamp was the observer's first one there in 20 years (BK). There were only about a dozen reports of Gray-cheeked (type) Thrush, which remains a very sparse and seldom-encountered migrant. A leading candidate for bird of the season, a **Smith's Longspur** caused a flurry of excitement during a one-day stay May 1 at Allen's Meadow in Wilton (BS, m.ob.).

Lawrence's Warblers were seen May 6 in East Haddam (RBr), May 10 in Stafford (PDe) and May 16 in Nauugatuck (CLo). A Black-and-White Warbler was early April 3 in Westport (PL). A **Prothonotary Warbler** found April 22 at Larsen Sanctuary in Fairfield entertained many observers through April 29 (TG et al.). Making it an unusually good spring for this southern species were singles May 18-19 at the Farmington Canal Trail in Hamden (JOs, SZ) and May 20 at Goodwin Conservation Center in Hampton (PB). The earliest of about 20 reports of Mourning Warbler was May 14 at Rosa Hartman Park in

Stamford (MH). Cerulean Warblers were at two of the state's limited breeding areas May 2 in Ashford (JMi) and Lyme (DP), and singles were unexpected May 4 in Farmington (PDe) and May 10 in Easton (CP). Blackpoll Warblers continued their recent trend of appearing earlier than historical norms, with a first record May 2 in Fairfield (JT, AKi). A Palm Warbler was late May 17 in Avon (PDe). A Pine Warbler that wintered at a suet feeder in Branford was still there to at least March 20 (CLe, GL). Single **Yellow-throated Warblers** visited a feeder in Orange April 23-25 (MKi et al.) and a Wallingford yard on May 5 (TB). A Yellow-breasted Chat was stationed in thickets near Southbury Training School in Southbury during late May (RN et al.). One was banded May 20 at Birdcraft Sanctuary in Fairfield (KV).

A Vesper Sparrow was a good find April 29 in Pomfret (AR). A Nelson's Sparrow was a good inland find May 9 in Avon (BT). A Fox Sparrow was late April 21 in South Windsor (PDe). A female **Summer Tanager** was a distinguished visitor

May 11 in Kent (AGi). **Blue Grosbeaks** were found on April 21 in Mystic (fide GW); April 22 in Clinton (JPz), with the latter present to at least April 27 (m.ob.); and May 5-6 in Hamden (AZ et al.). The long-staying adult male **Painted Bunting** at Cove Island Wildlife Sanctuary in Stamford was still present through at least March 21 (DWi et al.). It was joined by a **Dickcissel** that stayed to at least March 17 (DWi et al.). Another Dickcissel was in Westbrook April 28-30 (MKo). The high count of Rusty Blackbirds was 76 at a reliable feeder in Hamden on March 4 (JZ). Two Boat-tailed Grackles were back at HBSP on April 11 (JCo), and two were away from the state's very restricted breeding sites May 3 along the East River in Guilford (CLO). The season's first was in Stratford on March 9 (FM).

A Purple Finch was feeding a fledgling May 21 in Goshen (KF). A **White-winged Crossbill** was unique for the season May 25 in Suffield (HC). A few Common Redpolls lingered with 15 on March 10 in Litchfield (PCa), and 30 at Nod Brook in Simsbury on March 28 (BT).

A feeder in Barkhamsted hosted 100+ Pine Siskins to at least March 21 (FZ), and 20 were still visiting a Norwalk feeder on April 11 (LF). A few were present through the end of May in Hamden (JZ), Canaan (TSc) and Bent of the River in Southbury (KE et al.).

Observers – Tim Antanaitis, Bill Asteriades, Renee Baade (RBd), Tom Baptist, Rob Ballinger (RBa), Bill Banks, William Batsford, Melissa Baston, Penny Bauer, Ray Belding (RBe), Louis Bevier, David Bingham, Andrew Bock, Nick Bonomo, Rob Braunfield (RBr), Steve Broker, Kevin Burgio, Paul Carrier (PCa), Paul Cianfaglione (PCi); Jan Collins (JCI), Patrick Comins (PCo); Heather Conley, Jerry Connolly (JCo); Tom Cordock, Andrew Dasinger (ADa), Buzz Devine, Paul Desjardins (PDe), Ian Devlin, Angela Dimmitt (ADi), Linda Dixon, Robert Dixon, Mike Doyle, Patrick Dugan (PDu), Cynthia Ehlinger (CEh), Ken Elkins, Chris Elphick (CEI), Kevin Finnan, Larry Flynn, Frank Gallo, John Gaskell, Art Gingert (AGi), Ian Godwin, Hank Golet, Tina Green, Andy Griswold (AGr), Peter

Grose, Dick Haas, A.J. Hand, Greg Hanisek, Chris Harrison, Roy Harvey, Mayn Hipp, Jan Hollerbach, Bo Hopkins, Julian Hough, Haley Jennings, Denise Jernigan, Elsbeth Johnson, Lynn Jones, Amanda Kallenbach (AKa), Marge Kidd (MKi), Aidan Kiley (AKi), Brian Kleinman, Mickey Komara (MKo), Deborah Kral, Sam Krerowitz (SKw), Scott Kruitbosch (SKr), Dave Lawton (DLa), Carol Lemmon (CLE), Gary Lemmon, Donna Lorello (DLo), Chris Loscalzo (CLo), Preston Lust, Charles Makarewich, Frank Mantlik, John Marshall (JMa), Stefan Martin, John Mitchell (JMi), Deborah McTigue (DMc), Mike Moccio, Don Morgan (DMo), Keith Mueller, Tom Murphy (TMr), Tom Murray (TMu), Russ Naylor, Gina Nichol, John Ogren (JOg), John Oslick (JOs), Ford Parker, Ron Pelletier, Annie Perko, Jim

Pfeifer (JPf), John Pfitzner (JPz), Charlie Plimpton, Dave Provencher, James Purcell (JPu), Andy Rzeznikiewicz, Judy Richardson (JRi), Jason Rieger (JRi), Jim Resch (JRe), Brian Roach, Dave Rosgen (DRo), Dan Rottino (DRt), Olaf Soltau, Tom Schaefer (TSc), Mark Scott, Tommy Self (TSe), Kameron Shahid, Jannie Shapiro (JSh), Joseph Shea (JSe), Russ Smiley, Paul Smith, Steve Spector, Andrew Stack, Howie Sternberg, Bruce Stevenson, Jack Swatt (JSw), Rollin Tebbetts, Jory Teltser, Timothy Thompson, Brian Toal, Dave Tripp, Kathy Van Der Aue, Doug Warner (DWa), Mike Warner, John Weeks (JWe), Alan Welby, Glenn Williams, James Winkelmann (JWi), Dave Winston (DWi), Ryan Wirtes, Chris Wood, Sara Zagorski, Anthony Zemba, Jim Zipp, Fran Zygmunt.

NOTES ON BEHAVIOR, STATUS AND DISTRIBUTION

Purple Martins Nesting in Hartford County

Purple Martins are considered to be a very uncommon bird in Hartford County. Previous reports have consisted of single individuals, either in the early spring or in late summer. However, in the last four years Purple Martin sightings have increased, especially in the Rocky Hill Meadows, where flocks of upwards to eleven birds were now being reported. These observations at the time were believed to be of passing migrants or post-breeding wanderers.

As a result of this sudden increase in martin numbers, I decided the time was right to begin mounting new Purple Martin houses in the Greater Hartford Area. The original goal of the project was to offer and entice these migrants to return the following spring to nest. So in April of 2014, with



*Bill Asteriades photo
Purple Martins in South Glastonbury on May 17, 2015.*

permission from the Great Meadows Conservation Trust, I installed my first martin house in the Wethersfield Meadows. A second house followed in April of 2015 in the South Windsor Meadows, adjacent to Station 43.

But on May 17, 2015, Andrew Dasinger surprised most of the locals by announcing that he had just discovered a new colony of Purple Martins on a farm along Ferry Lane in Glastonbury. The martin house was mounted on a relatively short pole and was leaning to one side, far from ideal, but effective nonetheless. Andrew estimated the number of martins to be around 12, with others likely in the box and out foraging.

The Glastonbury nest site not only confirmed my premonitions about the need for new houses, but also explains the reasons behind the sudden increase of Purple Martin sightings in the Rocky Hill Meadows.

Historically, the Purple Martin nested abundantly in the 1880's along the Connecticut River Valley, followed by a decrease due to competition with House Sparrows and a steady loss of wet meadows and open lands. The earliest confirmed record for nesting Purple Martins in Hartford was 1911, 1913-14. By the 1920s, the martin had become "very local" in southern New England (Zeranski, J.D., and T.R. Baptist. 1990 Connecticut Birds).

The last confirmed nesting for Hartford County prior to this year's discovery was also in Glastonbury. Glastonbury historical bird records indicate active colonies of Purple Martins (observer: Whittles, publication RNEB) between the years of 1950 and 1956, with a high number of counted birds of 56.

In more recent times, the closest known nest site to Hartford County was that of an active colony in Vernon.

The location of active Purple Martin colonies in Connecticut, according to sites reported to the CT DEEP from 2010 to 2014, finds most situated along the Connecticut coast, with smaller numbers in Litchfield County and one in Tolland County (Connecticut Purple Martin Newsletter, spring 2014, issue1).

It is my hope, with the installation of few more nest boxes, that the Purple Martin will have stronger presence in Hartford County for years to come. I would like to thank Andrew Dasinger for discovering the Glastonbury Purple Martin nest site and for providing pertinent information. I would also like to thank Bill Asteriades and Jay Kaplan for further information and comments.

Paul Cianfaglione

Canton

Migration Is No Laughing Matter

My brother somehow talked me into fishing with him on the morning of Oct. 18, 2015, around the Norwalk/Westport/Fairfield area. Given the weather conditions (cold, strong NW breeze), I would have rather been birding on land. However, it was very cool to see passerines reorienting north back toward land after obviously having been blown over water by the night's gusty winds. Several Yellow-rumped Warblers, sparrows, and Dark-eyed Juncos could be seen struggling to fight their way back toward land. Birds were dropping onto whatever piece of solid ground they first reached. At one point we were right against the Penfield Reef Light, and on/around the lighthouse itself at one time were Chipping, Song, Savannah, and Swamp Sparrows. Kinglets and juncos also made brief appearances before continuing the short distance to the mainland. These birds were tired. I wasn't the only one who noticed the struggling passerines though. Laughing Gulls were opportunistically picking these birds off. The gulls were most interested in the nearby bluefish blitz, but every now and then I would see a few gulls break away to chase a landbird over water. One of the juncos almost landed on our boat to take cover. It was pretty dramatic stuff. A couple of the birds did seem to get away. I had never seen Laughing Gulls do this out there before. Later in the morning, on our way back through Norwalk Harbor, two Laughing Gulls were pursuing a larger, long-tailed passerine as it crossed the harbor moving west. It was clearly a cuckoo, though I could not tell which species with my naked eye

from that distance. The cuckoo somehow broke away and safely dove into cover on Peach Island.

Nick Bonomo

Wallingford

Very Hungry Hummingbirds

On Aug. 11, 2015, I counted a total of 22 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds around my feeder array, of which there were 5 adult males. That's the most this year. In the past, I've had up to 26 individuals at once. This year I kept track of the amount of sugar water that the birds have been consuming. Hard to believe, but for the first two weeks of August, they were going through an average of 70-75 ounces per day. That amount has diminished slightly as the males have begun to leave. It reminds me of Southeast Arizona except there is only one species present. At least so far.

Phil Rusch

Chaplin

A Banded Semipalmated Sandpiper

I received information on a banded adult Semipalmated Sandpiper that I saw resting and feeding among a flock of 2000 at Stratford Point on July 30, 2015. It was wearing yellow leg tag "XP4" (and aluminum band "2601-06744"). It was hatched in 2011, and was banded April 21, 2012 in Com-mewijna District, Suriname, in northeast South America. The bander was Dr. David Mizrahi of the Cape May (NJ) Bird Observatory.

Frank Mantlik

Stratford

PHOTO CHALLENGE

By Mark Szantyr

This quiz reminds me of a riddle from the old Batman TV show. The Riddler asked the Dynamic Duo,

“ When is a bonnet not a bonnet?”

While sorting through the birds at my feeder, I noticed a medium-sized blackbird that seemed to be entirely black except for a few rusty and pale edges to feathers on the dorsal aspect of the bird. The lesser wing coverts also showed thin pale edging.

There are not very many all-black icterids that might occur in Connecticut. The most likely is Common Grackle. Rusty



Blackbird would be next most likely. (Oooh!.... rusty edges... Rusty Blackbird?) and then Boat-tailed Grackle and the very rare Brewer's Blackbird.

Four species. This should be relatively easy to sort out. But there is a problem. All of these four species, when they appear all black, show very pale yellow or whitish eyes. This bird had dark eyes.

So what the heck was going on here? It wasn't a Brown-headed Cowbird. Cowbird has a dark eye but has that velvety brown head. Not a Red-winged Blackbird. It also has a dark eye, but has that bright red and gold shoulder patch.... but wait!

The bird *looked* like a Red-winged Blackbird. It had that thick-based, sharply pointed bill. It was the right size and shape. It "*chucked*" like a Red-winged Blackbird and twitched its tail. I have seen some Red-wings conceal the shoulder patch pretty well, but there is usually ample evidence of its presence at some point during an observation. There was no visible red here and I had never seen a male Red-winged Blackbird with zero red.

I checked the literature for similar plumages. Interestingly, several examples of "second-year, SY" males were very similar to this bird in that they showed virtually no red or gold at the shoulder.

I went back out the next day to observe the bird through my spotting scope. This closer look showed a very, very faint hint of orange-red near the edge of the shoulder area that was not always visible.

I love birds like this, birds that make me reconsider what I know and then force me to learn something in the process. This was probably not a very difficult quiz but surely helps reinforce the idea that identifying a bird by one character can lead to missed ID's and missed learning. Second-year male Red-winged Blackbird...Cool!

I photographed this “black-out” Red-winged Blackbird at my feeder in Storrs on 7 July 2015.

Oh yeah...When is a bonnet not a bonnet? When it becomes a young lady.

I love Frank Gorshin.



Photo Challenge No. 91

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

Editor

Greg Hanisek - 175 Circuit Ave., Waterbury, CT 06708
(203) 754-4401 email: ghanisek@rep-am.com

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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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