

New England Region

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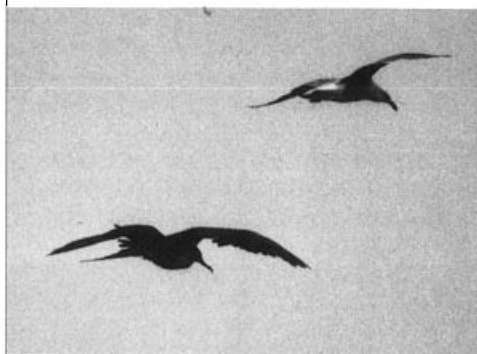
Autumn 1995 began sunny, warm, and very dry, but in mid-September it cooled to below-average temperatures and above-average precipitation, which continued to the end of the season. Some peak counts of migrants were associated with frontal passages August 26–27, September 28–29, and October 9, and several waterbird high counts were clustered around October 17–22. This year featured echoes of last fall's Ruddy Duck and American Coot flights, as well as eight more *Selasphorus* hummingbirds and eight more Northern Wheatears. Counts of Dickcissel and Clay-colored and Lark sparrows were the best in two decades. Northern irruptives arrived in numbers, particularly Bohemian Waxwing and Northern Shrike, with smaller flights of Pine Grosbeak and Common Redpoll. Another feature of this season was a major dispersal, mainly southward, of conventionally sedentary species, including Northern Saw-whet Owl, woodpeckers, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, and Brown Creeper. Presumably these were mainly young birds, responding to a

drought-related food shortage. Among rarities, the stars were Hammond's and Vermilion flycatchers in Rhode Island, both representing Regional second records, and Hermit and MacGillivray's warblers in Massachusetts, the former a Regional third.

Abbreviations: Appledore (*Appledore I., Kittery, York, ME*); Bluff Pt. (*Bluff Point, Groton, New London, CT*); Dead Creek (*Dead Creek W.M.A., Addison & Panton, Addison, VT*); H.B.S.P. (*Hammonasset Beach S.P., Madison, New Haven, CT*); Lighthouse Pt. (*Lighthouse Point, New Haven, New Haven, CT*); Monomoy (*Monomoy N.W.R., Chatham, Barnstable, MA*); Plum I. (*Plum I., Parker River N.W.R., Newburyport, Essex, MA*); Quaker Ridge (*Quaker Ridge, Greenwich, Fairfield, CT*). County names will be given the first time each locality is mentioned in the text.

Loons to Herons

Relatively few Red-throated Loons were reported, but nine at Moore Res., Littleton, *Grafton, NH* Nov. 15 provided a good inland count (RB). Another good inland count was >110 Com. Loons at Grand Isle, *Grand Isle, VT* Oct. 28 (DJH). Pied-billed Grebes were present in excellent numbers, highlighted by 60 at Misisquoi N.W.R., *Franklin, VT* Sept. 30 (TM), 48 at Lakeville, *Plymouth, MA* Oct. 26 (SA), and a record 135 in w. Massachusetts. Downeast Maine produced good counts of 285 Horned Grebes Oct. 29, and 250 Red-necked Grebes Oct. 26 at Bar Harbor, *Hancock* (*fide AB*); 62 Red-necked Grebes were reported inland, including a maximum of 19 Oct. 28 at Grand Isle, VT (DJH). The lone Eared Grebe of the season was at Trustom Pond, RI Sept. 29 (J. Hand, DP). Pelagics were fairly well reported. Good N. Fulmar counts included 50 on the Grand Manan Banks Oct. 8 (LB *et al.*); 150 were 40 mi s.e. of Nantucket (VL). High counts of Greater Shearwater were 1400 Aug. 8 on the Acadia Whalewatch (*fide AB*) and 5000 that were 40 mi s.e. of Nantucket Nov. 15 (VL). Modest numbers of Manx Shearwaters included a high of 12 from the MV Scotia Prince the week of Sept. 20 (*fide M.A.S.*), and four seen



Female Magnificent Frigatebird (with young Great Black-backed Gull) at Galilee, Rhode Island, October 28, 1995. Photograph/Paul Buckley

from shore Oct. 21 in Rye, *Rockingham, NH*, where they are rarely seen (A&BD). One Audubon's Shearwater was reported Sept. 9, 40 mi s. of Block I., RI (WP *et al.*). Wilson's Storm-Petrels were abundant in the n. Gulf of Maine, with >10,000 Aug. 8 from the Acadia Whalewatch (*fide AB*). Good flights of N. Gannets accompanied an Oct. 21 storm, with 5000 passing Rye, NH (+A&BD) and >1000 at First Encounter Beach, Eastham, *Barnstable, MA* the next day (BN). An observer at Harkness S.P., Waterford, *New London, CT* counted 250 gannets Nov. 12 (DP). There were 6 inland reports of Great Cormorant, including one exceptionally early Aug. 26 at Longmeadow, *Hampden, MA* (CM). A ♀ Magnificent Frigatebird toured Narragansett Bay with sightings Oct. 14 at Sachuest Pt. (†J. Davis) and Oct. 28 at Galilee (ph. PB, ph. P. Paton). Fifty-four Am. Bitterns included high-tide related counts of seven Oct. 27 at Plum I., *Essex, MA* (SA) and five at H.B.S.P., *Madison, New Haven, CT* Nov. 20 (W. Wedo *et al.*). Good numbers of Great Egrets included 80 at Rowley, *Essex, MA* Aug. 12 (J. Baird) and 24 at Longmeadow, MA on the Connecticut R., Sept. 13 (*fide SK*). Relatively few Tricolored Herons were reported, although five were seen Aug. 18 at Scarborough, *Cumberland, ME* (LB) at the n. end of the species' Regional distribution. There were 68 Cattle Egrets in the post-breeding flock from the Four Brothers Is., NY colony at Charlotte, *Chittenden, VT* Aug. 29 (TM), and a late October influx brought birds to Maine, e. Massachusetts, and c. New Hampshire, where 14 were seen Oct. 19 at Enfield and Canaan, *Grafton* (PH). A Green Heron at Quechee, *Windsor, VT* Oct. 31 was exceptionally late for Vermont (J. Nicholson). An imm. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron strayed E to Frenchman's Bay, *Hancock, ME* Aug. 11–Sept. 6 (*fide AB*). A roost count of 265 Glossy Ibis at Plum I., Aug. 2 (R.



Heil) eclipsed the previous Massachusetts high count.

Waterfowl

The only Tundra Swan was at Watson Res., RI Nov. 7–11 (R. Brown, DE). Five Regional Greater White-fronted Geese were reported in Trenton, *Hancock*, ME Oct. 11–12 (AB, C. Wiff), Hartford, CT in late November (M. O'Leary, *vide* D. Haight, GH), Little Compton, RI (JO), and adults in Massachusetts at Bridgewater, *Plymouth*, Oct. 7 (WP) and Rochester, *Plymouth*, Oct. 26 (MB, P. Svingen). The Snow Goose migration continues in staggering proportions in n.w. Vermont, with estimates of peak numbers at Dead Creek, *Addison*, varying from 20,000–40,000 Oct. 17–22.

SA The now annual report of camp-following Ross' Geese in Vermont reached new heights, with five meticulously documented, based on plumage characters and staining. One of these was the state's first blue morph (†m.ob., ph. DJH). What is going on with blue-morph Ross' Geese? Are these really pure Ross', or intergrades with "Lesser" Snow Geese? Why so many sightings of an extremely rare morph in the tiny migratory population to e. North America? Does this have something to do with the relatively little-known Hudson Bay population in Ontario?

Blue-winged Teal were reported in encouraging numbers for the 2nd consecutive year, with 93 at Briggs Marsh, RI Sept. 2 (DE), 53 at Exeter, *Rockingham*, NH Sept. 3 (A&BD), and 150 on S. Monomoy the same day (BN). More than 11 Eur. Wigeon were reported, about average. Decidedly not average for New Hampshire were at least two, perhaps more, Sept. 24+ at various coastal locations (m.ob., †A&BD). Last year's bird, which was first reported Nov. 5, 1994 (not Nov. 12, as related here), had been the first in many years. Others included >three in Massachusetts, two in Connecticut, and four at Riverside, RI Nov. 24 (DE). Where were Canvasbacks and Redheads? No count of the former exceeded 100, and there were less than 5 reports of the latter. On the other hand, Ring-necked Ducks seemed especially numerous, with 260 in Kingston, *Rockingham*, NH Nov. 17 (A&BD), 1000 in Pittsfield, *Berkshire*, MA the same day, and 700 at Watson Res., RI Nov. 11 (DE). With the Ring-neckeds came Tufted Ducks. Three were in Massachusetts: two at Lakeville, with a male Oct. 14–29 and a female Oct.

27–Nov. 5 (†SA, N. Komar *et al.*), and a male at Sterling, *Worcester*, Oct. 29–Nov. 26 (B. Volkie *et al.*). One was in Rhode Island on Tunipus Pond Oct. 27 (JO, DE). Both eider species put in simultaneous appearances on Long I. Sound, with a Common and a King at H.B.S.P., CT Oct. 21 (DP). High counts of Harlequin Duck available at this writing included 25 at Provincetown, *Barnstable*, MA Oct. 22 (Gd'E), and 22 at Halibut Pt., Rockport, *Essex*, MA Nov. 26 (RL). There was an excellent inland count of 69 Oldsquaw at Nepaug Res., *Litchfield*, CT Oct. 30 (J. Meyers). A spectacular fallout of Black Scoters was recorded in New Hampshire and Vermont Oct. 19 with a combined total of 1265 birds, including high counts of 300 on L. Sunapee, NH (T. Richards, K. Elkins), and 475 on Moore Res., NH (RB). The same sea watch that produced the eiders at H.B.S.P. also produced >500 scoters, including 100 Black; 500 Surf Scoters passed Harkness S.P., CT Oct. 28 (DP). Eleven November Barrow's Goldeneyes included six in Maine, and ≤four at the now traditional Burlington, VT wintering spot (FP, m.ob.). Ruddy Ducks were again locally common, but numbers were not up to last autumn's. Nonetheless, the high count was a staggering 3100 at Watson Res., RI Nov. 4 (DE).

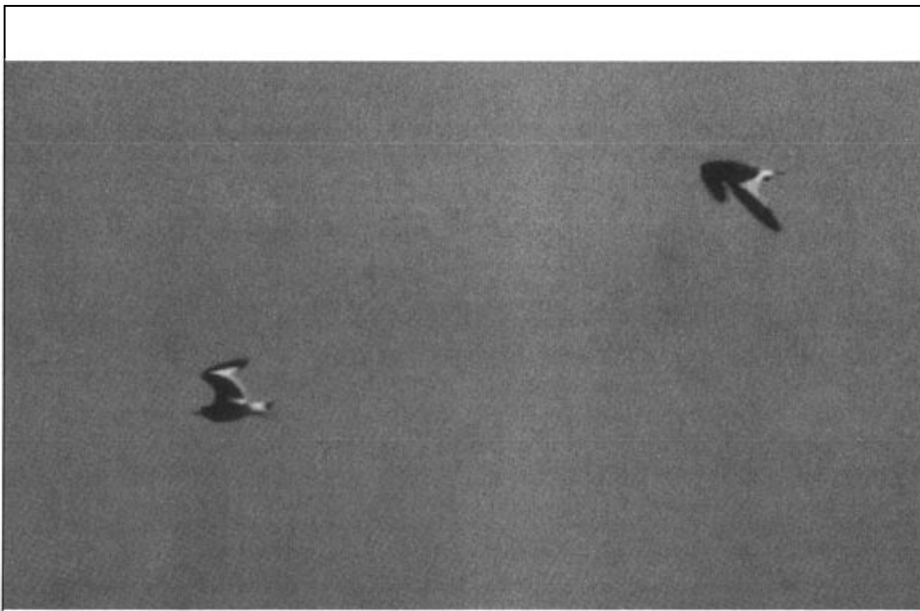
Raptors to Crane

Reports of the increasing Black Vulture included one at Leominster, *Worcester*, MA Sept. 10 (D. Arvidson), and a record season total of three at the Quaker Ridge, Greenwich, *Fairfield*, CT hawk watch. Good numbers of Bald Eagles at S. Harpswell, *Cumberland*, ME, with a record 14 and a high of six Sept. 10 (GA), and in w. Massachusetts (*vide* SK) indicate a continuing recovery. The big flight of Broad-winged Hawks occurred Sept. 15, with a strong echo Sept. 18–19. A huge record 32,000 passed Quaker Ridge Sept. 15 (BO). Several other watch sites also recorded their season high on this date. There were 3 late-season reports of Swainson's Hawk, with an immature photographed at Storrs, *Tolland*, CT Oct. 26 (MS, SS), and an adult at Middleborough, *Plymouth*, MA Oct. 31–Nov. 12 (T. Aversa, SP, K. Anderson), and an adult at New Milford, *Litchfield*, CT Nov. 17 (C. Wood). Although Rough-legged Hawks arrived early in Vermont, with singles Sept. 3 & 7, numbers were modest at best by season's end. By contrast, Golden Eagle numbers were very high, with 37 reported Sept. 29+, including a record 23 at Quaker Ridge (BO). South Harpswell, ME had a very good Merlin flight, with 270 for the

season and a one day maximum of 65 Sept. 18 (GA). Good counts of the Peregrine Falcon included 31 at Odiorne Pt., Rye, NH Oct. 8 (SM, P. Lacourse). A gray Gyrfalcon was found Nov. 5 at Charlestown, RI (ST). Convincing details were submitted with the only Yellow Rail report from Yarmouth, *Barnstable*, MA Oct. 19 (S. Miller, *vide* RS). Common Moorhen continues to occur in small numbers, with 15 reported. As with Ruddy Duck, the numbers of Am. Coot reported were good but less staggering than in 1994; high counts were 270 at Lakeville, MA Nov. 13 (FP), 300 at Bantam L., *Litchfield*, CT Oct. 22 (L. Whitdeley, PC *et al.*), and 314 on Laurel Res., Stamford, *Fairfield*, CT Oct. 29 (PD). Six Sandhill Cranes included one in Brandon, *Rutland*, VT Aug. 26 (†S. Wetmore), two in mid-October at Sherman, *Aroostook*, ME (*vide* M.A.S.), one at Odiorne Pt., NH Nov. 4 (†ph. A&BD), and two in Spencer, *Worcester*, MA Nov. 8–30 (D. LaCroix, †CM).

Shorebirds

Despite low water levels in August and early September, inland shorebirding was spotty, with windfall numbers and diversity in n.e. Connecticut and *Worcester*, MA, but a "poor flight" in w. Massachusetts, and a mediocre season in Vermont's Champlain Valley. Very good numbers of common species were recorded at major coastal concentration points, such as the 3000 Black-bellied Plovers at S. Beach, Chatham, *Barnstable*, MA Aug. 27 (WP). American Golden-Plover numbers were low, with less than half of 1994's total reported; the highest count, 15, provided a local record at Mansfield Hollow, *Tolland*, CT Sept. 18 (MS *et al.*). Intriguing and plausible reports—but not quite unshakably convincing—were submitted for a Regionally unprecedented Pacific Golden-Plover in Seabrook, *Rockingham*, NH Sept. 16, and a twice reported Com. Ringed Plover at Hampton, *Rockingham*, NH Aug. 31. The former report did not strongly exclude Greater Golden-Plover as a possible identification, especially given characteristics in one of the photos submitted. After last year's failed attempt, Am. Oystercatchers fledged young at Stratton I., ME, with two lingering to late September in Scarborough, (m.ob.). Four Am. Avocets at N. Beach, Hampton, NH Sept. 15 (†R. Woodward) were the only ones reported. Over 75 Upland Sandpipers were reported, with a maximum of 35 from Epping to Deblois, *Washington*, ME Aug. 9 (CD, WP *et al.*), and an extraordinarily late bird feeding on rose hips in



Two juvenile Sabine's Gulls at Mansfield Hollow Reservoir, Connecticut, September 5, 1995. Particularly rare inland in the north-east, these represented a first state record. Photograph/Mark Szantyr.

Bar Harbor, ME Nov. 30 (W. Townsend, *vide* AB). Excellent Whimbrel counts included 200 at Cutler, *Washington*, ME Aug. 1 (*vide* AB) and 550 Aug. 12 on N. Monomoy (W. Harrington). Hudsonian Godwit peaked at Monomoy Aug. 5 with 160 (BN), and put in rare appearances at Dead Creek Oct. 10–11 (JP, TM), and at W. Haven, *New Haven*, CT Sept. 10 (B. Devine). Marbled Godwit returned after the dearth of 1994, with 16 including two in Maine, one in New Hampshire, and the rest in Massachusetts, where the high count was seven Sept. 5 on N. Monomoy (BN). An impressive 2200 Sanderlings graced S. Beach, Chatham, MA Sept. 9 (BN). Also impressive were 7000 Semipalmated Sandpipers on the Lubec Flats, *Washington*, ME Aug. 18 (CD, B. Silliker). Western Sandpipers were more numerous than in 1994 and one at Mansfield Hollow, CT Sept. 7 provided a first for n.e. Connecticut (MS). White-rumped Sandpiper high counts included 125 at Petit Manan N.W.R., Steuben, *Washington*, ME Aug. 9 (*vide* AB) and 196 Sept. 6 at Plum I. (W. Drew); the latest was at Plum I., Nov. 25 (T. Maloney). A slightly above-average total of 49 Baird's Sandpipers included a record seven in w. Massachusetts Aug. 26–Sept. 4, and one–two at Mansfield Hollow, CT Aug. 14–Sept. 7 (MS). Pectoral and Stilt sandpipers numbers were very low and low, respectively. Curlew Sandpipers were reported from Cutler, ME on the late date of Nov. 13 without details, and at Scituate, *Plymouth*, MA Aug. 10–20 (J. Nor-

ton, m.ob.). The only Ruff report was at Briggs Marsh, RI Aug. 7 (W. Bosse). An excellent 61 Buff-breasted Sandpipers were reported, with eight in New Hampshire, 16 in Maine, 14 in Connecticut, seven in Rhode Island, and the rest in Massachusetts. Highlights included almost unheard-of *adults* at Portland, ME Aug. 12 (*vide* JD) and Windham Airport, *Windham*, CT Aug. 3 (MS) representing a first local record, and an exceptionally late trio at Cutler, ME Nov. 27 (NF). Only nine Wilson's Phalaropes were reported, with one in Maine, \leq four in Rhode Island, and the rest in e. Massachusetts. Reported high counts of Red-necked and Red phalaropes included 3000–4000 Red-neckeds from the Acadia Whalewatch, ME Aug. 5 (*vide* AB), and 200 Reds Oct. 8 in the Gulf of Maine (LB *et al.*); neither species was reported inland.

Jaegers to Alcids

Modest numbers of jaegers were reported: just 18 Parasitic and 107 Pomarines, with a maximum of 60 of the latter Sept. 9, 40 mi s. of Block I., RI (WP *et al.*). Two ad. Long-tailed Jaegers were late with reports Oct. 14 at Bar Harbor, ME (Z. Klyver, *vide* AB) and Oct. 18, 10 mi s. of Nomansland in Massachusetts waters (VL). About 10 skuas were reported from Maine waters, six identified as Greats (*vide* JD). Two South Polar Skuas were seen within sight of Block I., Aug. 29 (DF, JO). Two Laughing Gulls were well inland at Longmeadow, MA Aug. 6 (E. Burt, *vide* SK). The only Franklin's Gull reported was at S. Monomoy Aug. 28–31 (WP *et al.*). Just over 20 Little Gulls included four–five in Vermont Aug. 23–Nov. 25, five–six on the New Hampshire coast Aug. 26–Oct. 21, nine in Maine, two in Massachusetts, and one in Rhode Island. Ten

Com. Black-headed Gulls were found on the coast, with the majority in Maine; one patronized a bird feeder (!) in N. Dartmouth, *Bristol*, MA Nov. 14 (M. Boucher). Rhode Island's Black-tailed Gull remained to at least Oct. 31 as it acquired basic plumage (m.ob.). Perhaps evidence of a "roadside rest" effect was a Mew Gull, also at Sachuest Pt., RI Oct. 8 (†N. Roy). Twenty-five Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported, most on the coast but a few at scattered inland venues, including Mascoma L., Enfield, NH Nov. 11–20 for a first local report (PH); Gardner, *Worcester*, MA Sept. 26–Nov. 19 (†CM, m.ob.); Acton, *Middlesex*, MA Nov. 19 (M. Resch), and Coventry, *Tolland*, CT Nov. 5 (MS). Black-legged Kittiwakes included one well into Long I. Sound at Meigs Pt., H.B.S.P., CT Nov. 7 (DP, MS), and two first basic inland at Mascoma L., NH Nov. 19–20 (SM, PH). Five Sabine's Gulls were found within a narrow range of dates Aug. 29–Sept. 5, including three offshore in Massachusetts waters and two juveniles at Mansfield Hollow, CT Sept. 5, inland and long overdue as the first reported in Connecticut (MS, ph. B. Carver). This autumn's record hurricane season never seriously affected New England, and southern terns generally stayed south. Royal Terns were largely confined to Connecticut for a 2nd consecutive year, with only a few in Rhode Island. Caspian Terns were reported in middling numbers with 26 total, 14 in coastal Massachusetts. The best count of Royal Terns in Connecticut was nine at Menunketesuck Oct. 6 (DP) and one lingered at H.B.S.P. until Nov. 8 (J. Maynard). The annual staging flock of Roseate Terns at N. Monomoy peaked at 1200 Aug. 12 (Gd'E). Forster's Tern numbers seemed subdued, with less than 100 reported; however, an adult in Shelburne Bay, *Chittenden*, VT Oct. 22 (†S. Morriscal) represented only Vermont's 4th. A **Bridled Tern** wing was salvaged on the shores of S. Beach, Chatham Sept. 12, its origin and date of arrival unknown (SP, * to I. Nisbet). Alcids were few and far between, with only two each reported of Dovekie and Thick-billed Murre, including one on Long I. Sound Oct. 31 (m.ob.), and Com. Murre; the latter were summering birds in the n. Gulf of Maine (CD, LB). Even Razorbill was uncommon, with only 68 reported Oct. 22+; nonetheless, one at Griswold Pt., Lyme, *New London*, CT Nov. 21 (DP) was one of very few ever reported from the Nutmeg State. Atlantic Puffins were encountered 40 mi s.e. of Nantucket Nov. 15 (VL) and in Block I. Sound, RI Nov. 25 (M&S Carr).

Cuckoos to Woodpeckers

Few cuckoos of either species were reported, but a Black-billed Nov. 1 at Wareham, *Plymouth*, MA (ML) and Yellow-billed Oct. 21 at E. Machias, *Washington*, ME (CD, I. Balodis) and Oct. 22 at Rockport, MA (SP) were notably late. Snowy Owls were scarce again this autumn, with only three reported. *Asio* owls were in low numbers in n. New England and Massachusetts, but Long-eareds were regular on the Connecticut shore, especially at H.B.S.P. (*fide* GH). Northern Saw-whet Owls were in very good numbers late in the season, with 27 in e. Massachusetts in November, including 17 banded at Marshfield, *Plymouth*, Nov. 28 (NS), and regular sightings along the Long I. Sound shore in Connecticut, with a maximum of three at H.B.S.P. Oct. 9 (JG). Common Nighthawk high counts traced the southward migration in New England Aug. 29–Sept. 2; the highest counts were 2350 at Northampton, *Hampshire*, MA (*fide* SK) and 4500 at Norwood, *Norfolk*, MA (EN) Sept. 1. The *Selasphorus* hummingbird story continues in New England: Eight more were reported this fall. Unfortunately, most were not readily identifiable to species, emphasizing the serendipity of 1994's array of ad. males. It is hard to tell if the last few autumns reveal a genuine increase of *Selasphorus* vagrancy or observer sensitization to rusty hummers; we suspect the former. Reports include an imm. female in Grand Isle, VT late July–Sept. 10 (*fide* DJH), immatures in Dayton, *York*, and Bar Harbor, ME, and two more imm. females in w. Massachu-

sets. A well-photographed Rufous at Little Compton, RI Oct. 22–Nov. 20 provided the Ocean State's first (J. Dennis *et al.*, PB) and a bird reported as a Rufous in Sandwich, MA Oct. 29 was at this writing presumably snugly tucked away in a greenhouse for the winter (M. Kasprzyk). Red-bellied Woodpeckers flooded into n. New England with 10 in Vermont, 17 in New Hampshire, and 12 in Maine, largely starting in mid- to late October. A total of 34 in e. Massachusetts during October was also exceptional (*fide* RS). Downy and Hairy woodpeckers dispersed in large numbers with good counts at coastal migration sites on Long I. Sound in October (GH). Even a few Pileated Woodpeckers may have moved, given the passage of one at Lighthouse Pt., *New Haven*, CT Oct. 9 (GH).

Flycatchers to Kinglets

Rare flycatchers were well-represented. One of the best was a late *Empidonax* photographed and identified as the Region's 2nd Hammond's Flycatcher Nov. 24–30 at Barrington, RI (†RF *et al.*, ph. PB, ph. DF). Yet another November *Empidonax* was seen Nov. 5–6 at Truston N.W.R., RI (DK, ST). The other star tyrannid of the season was a ♀ Vermillion Flycatcher Oct. 14–15 at Plum I., providing only the 2nd Regional report, although it was not new for this storied hot spot. Other more regular rarities included an Ash-throated Flycatcher Oct. 23–29 at Barrington, RI (RF, D. Vary, ph. DF) and a below-average six W. Kingbirds limited to the coast from *Washington*, ME to *Fairfield*, CT. An

impressive four Scissor-tailed Flycatchers included *two*, a female Aug. 29–Sept. 3 and an imm. male Sept. 12–Oct. 17 in Saunderstown, RI (m.ob.), one at Petit Manan N.W.R., Steuben, *Washington*, ME Oct. 13 (R. Widrig, *fide* AB, JD), and one at Middleborough, MA Oct. 28–Nov. 7 (S. Shapiro, m.ob.). Good swallow counts included 70 N. Rough-wingeds Sept. 11–18 at Wellesley, *Norfolk*, MA (R. Forster), 75 Cliffs in Addison, VT Aug. 7 (JP), 400 Banks Sept. 1 at Burton I., *Franklin*, VT (BDo), 500 Barns at Bridport, *Addison*, VT Sept. 9 (FP), and 600 Barns at Methuen, *Essex*, MA Aug. 22 (J. Hogan). A wayward Gray Jay popped up at Quabbin Res., MA Nov. 9 (J. Lafley). Blue Jays poured out of the n. country, with 1000 at Petit Manan N.W.R., ME Oct. 13 (*fide* AB), and 20,000 for the season at Lighthouse Pt., CT, with maximum of 8500 Oct. 9 (GH, FG). Fish Crow and Com. Raven are expanding their respective ranges on a collision course. Fish Crows pushing the envelope included five in Maine, one in New Hampshire, and three in w. Massachusetts. Good counts of ravens included 24 over Mt. Wachusett, *Worcester*, MA Sept. 15 (SP), and 21 in E. Hartland, *Hartford*, CT Sept. 16 (P. Desjardins, PC). A lone raven reached Quaker Ridge, CT Oct. 9 (m.ob.).

That parids were on the move was evidenced on the Connecticut shore, with 500 Black-capped Chickadees at Lighthouse Pt., Oct. 23 (GH), and 500 Tufted Titmice at H.B.S.P., Oct. 6 (DP). Not all titmice dispersed southward, as shown by birds at feeders in Berkshire, Franklin (BDo) and Sheffield, Caledonia, VT (P&S Wagner), and Fort Kent, Aroostook, ME (S&G Flagg, *fide* M.A.S.). Brown Creepers also moved in numbers, with a record 117 banded at Block I. (EL). Carolina Wrens continue to hang on, with 18 reported in n. New England and a count of 15 Sept. 16 at Cuttyhunk, Dukes, MA (SP). Some Carolina Wrens saw the winter of 1995–1996 coming, as evidenced by a strong flight at Lighthouse Pt., with a maximum of 20 Oct. 9 (GH). Sedge Wrens included birds in Corea, Washington, ME Aug. 22 (NF), Plum I., Sept. 11 (RS *et al.*), Storrs, CT Sept. 27 (MS, SS), and Sept. 30–Oct. 1 at Scarborough, ME (S. Pollock *et al.*). October 9 produced a great kinglet flight at both ends of the Region, with >100 Golden-crowneds and 150 Ruby-crowneds at Rogue I., Jonesport, Washington, ME (*fide* AB), and similar numbers tallied at Block I., RI (DE).

Thrushes to Vireos

Northern Wheatears once again made news with a seasonal total of eight, includ-



This *Empidonax* at Barrington, Rhode Island, in late November 1995 was identified as a Hammond's Flycatcher, a first for the state and second for New England. The very short bill, round-headed look, and long projection of the primaries would appear to support this identification. Photograph/Daniel M. Finizia.

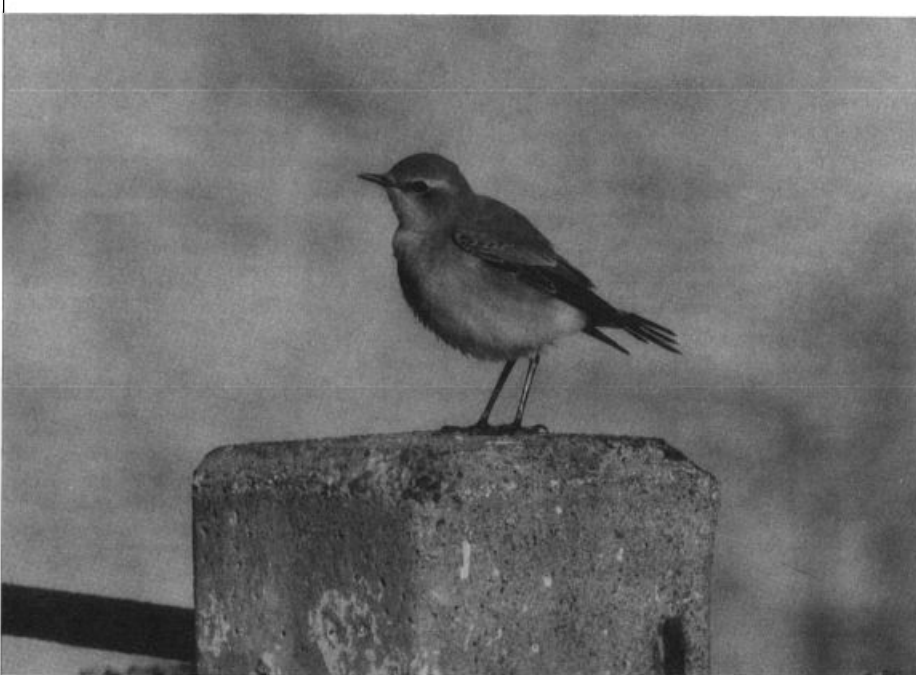
ing one at Dead Creek, VT Oct. 15 (†N. Brown), four in Massachusetts, and three in Connecticut, including the first for the n.e. corner Sept. 19–23 at Mansfield Hollow (ph. MS *et al.*). *Catharus* thrushes were reported in low numbers, especially Gray-cheeked and Swainson's; however, there was a good predawn count of flight-calling Veeries, with 150 at Durham, *Strafford*, NH Sept. 9 (PH, SM). American Pipits arrived early with two at Windham Airport, CT Aug. 31 (MS). Over 1100 Bohemian Waxwings flooded n. New England, with a few reaching as far south as n.e. Massachusetts and n.w. Connecticut. Early arrivals appeared in the first week of October in Maine and Oct. 15 in New Hampshire. Farthest afield were eight in Sharon, *Litchfield*, CT Oct. 29 (*fide* GH). Equally staggering was the N. Shrike irruption that commenced in New Hampshire Oct. 11, and Oct. 13 in Vermont and e. Massachusetts. By season's end, >200 had been reported throughout the Region. The only Loggerhead Shrike found was at Plum I., Sept. 16 (RL). Reports of White-eyed Vireos included four vagrants n. of Regional breeding areas, including one at Appledore Oct. 5 (DH) and a laggard Nov. 25 at Plum I. (TB *et al.*). Fifty Red-eyed Vireos streamed off Bluff Pt., *New London*, CT Sept. 28 (DP) and two were late at Bar Harbor, ME Nov. 8 (*fide* AB).

Warblers

The warbler migration generally produced longing for the "good old days," when at least several days in a fall might produce trees decorated with small green and yellow birds. The warblers that caused most concern this fall were Tennessee (universally poor numbers), Cape May, Bay-breasted, Wilson's, Canada, and N. Waterthrush. Blackpoll Warbler was also frequently cited, but high counts this fall indicate that despite declines, it is still one of our most common *Parulines*. The only species generally considered numerous were the short-



This Hermit Warbler, the Region's third, was at Amherst, Massachusetts, November 23. Photographed by Scott D. Sumner.



Eight Northern Wheatears reached New England this season. This one was at Petersham, Massachusetts, September 18, 1995. Photograph/Bill Byrne.

distance migrants, Yellow-rumped and Palm. Golden-winged Warbler reports were distressingly few; given this fact, it was perhaps not a coincidence that the hybrid "Lawrence's" Warbler was thrice reported, with one banded at Appledore Aug. 23 (DH), one at Sterling, *Windham*, CT Aug. 27 (R. Dixon), and another in Kingston, RI Sept. 16 (DK). A modest 17 Orange-crowned Warblers were found Aug. 27–Nov. 10, with numbers almost evenly split between n. and s. New England. High counts of migrating warblers were dominated by reports from Bluff Pt., CT. Selected *maxima* included: 54 Black-throated Blues at Block I., Oct. 9 (R. Bowen) and 40 at Bluff Pt., Oct. 17 (DP), 3000–5000 Yellow-rumpeds at Bluff Pt., Oct. 17 (DP), 225 Blackpolls at Bluff Pt., Sept. 28 (DP), 125 Am. Redstarts at Bluff Pt., Sept. 24 (SP, DP *et al.*), and 67 Common Yellowthroats at Cuttyhunk, MA Aug. 26 (MR). Black-throated Blue counts indicate the lateness of the 1995 migration, and how much we have to learn about the timing of migration in common birds. Arguably the best warbler of the season was Massachusetts' 2nd and the Region's 3rd **Hermit Warbler** at Amherst, *Hampshire*, Nov. 19–27 (D. Quilty, CM, S. Sumner, m.ob.). Palm Warblers arrived early with a "western" banded at Appledore Aug. 22 (DH), and one at Marblehead Neck, *Essex*, MA Aug. 27 (P&F Vale). For the 2nd consecutive year reversed southern warblers were few, with four Ceruleans n. to Bar Harbor, ME; three Prothonotaries, with two banded at Appledore Aug. 30 and Sept. 7 (DH); one Worm-eating Sept. 5 at Cummaquid, MA (S&E Miller); one

Kentucky at Plum I., Sept. 9–21 (EN *et al.*); and four Hoodeds, with one n. to Jonesport, ME Sept. 28–30 (NF). Echoing last falls great showing were 28 Connecticut Warblers Sept. 4–Oct. 11, including three in Vermont, five in Maine, four in Connecticut, two banded on Block I. (EL), and the remainder in Massachusetts. A tantalizing observation of a **MacGillivray's Warbler** at Southwick, *Hampden*, MA Sept. 22 (SK) awaits review as a 5th or 6th state record. Over 45 Yellow-breasted Chats were reported Aug. 25–Nov. 19, including 12 in Maine, 19 in Massachusetts, and eight on Block I., with only four reported well inland.

Tanagers to Finches

The only Summer Tanager was located on Monhegan I., ME the week ending Sept. 26 (*fide* M.A.S.). A fairly low seven Blue Grosbeaks Sept. 17–Oct. 9 featured singles in Maine and Rhode Island and the balance on Nantucket and Cape Cod, with three in Truro Oct. 9 (H. d'Entremont). In contrast, >84 Dickcissels represented the best total in 2 decades; Monhegan hosted >12 of Maine's >33 Sept. 24 (VL *et al.*, BN). Another 33 were in Massachusetts, 14 in Connecticut, and four in New Hampshire. Rufous-sided Towhees did some wandering, with two showing up well n. in Houlton and Fort Kent, *Aroostook*, ME in mid-October (*fide* M.A.S.). Forty Clay-colored Sparrows was eight

better than last year's best-in-20-years flight. Reports ranged from Sept. 8–Nov. 10 and were almost evenly split between Maine (18) and Massachusetts (19), with loners in the 3 other coastal states. Lark Sparrow was also present in good numbers Sept. 13–Nov. 1; a Regional total of 20—eight in Maine and 12 in the Bay State—was the best tally since 1978. Grasshopper Sparrow showed a tendency toward late movement with 4 November reports, the latest in Dorchester, MA Nov. 27 (R. Donovan). The only Seaside Sparrow report from n. of its breeding range was of one–two at Scarborough, ME in early October (*vide* M.A.S.). Of the more common migrant sparrows, Fox and Lincoln's were considered to be in above-average numbers in w. Massachusetts (SK); selected *maxima* for other species included >200 Chipping Sept. 23 in N. Truro, *Barnstable*, MA (SA), 300 White-throats at Monhegan Sept. 29 (BN), and counts of 300–400 juncos at Turner, *Androscoggin*, ME Sept. 24 (JD), Monhegan Sept. 29 (BN), and Bluff Pt., Oct. 9 (DP). White-crowned Sparrows staged a modest flight, with six at Provincetown, MA Sept. 14. A pale-lored bird, presumably one of the w. races, was at Cove I. Park, Stamford, *Fairfield*, CT Oct. 17–19 (PD). A Harris' Sparrow photographed at Provincetown, MA stayed Oct. 14–22 (BN *et al.*) and provided the first Regional fall report since 1986. A probable junco x White-throated Sparrow hybrid was located in Storrs, CT Oct. 25 (MS). The largest flocks of Snow Buntings were 500 at Dead Creek, VT Nov. 5 (FP), and an impressive >2000 at Logan Airport, MA Nov. 2 (NS). Five Yellow-headed Blackbirds were found Aug. 11–Sept. 20, two each in Maine and Massachusetts and one in Rhode Island. Orchard Orioles tend to move out early, so a female eating berries in S. Londonderry, *Windham*, VT Aug. 17 (W. Norse) and one on Monhegan the week prior to Oct. 3 (*vide* M.A.S.) were unexpected. The first vanguard of a sizeable Pine Grosbeak flight arrived in Pepperell, MA Oct. 29 and in Vermont and New Hampshire Nov. 5. The high count was 50 at Bangor, *Penobscot*, ME Nov. 29. Observers at Lighthouse Pt., CT detected numbers of Purple and House finches joining the n. country exodus, with 2500 of the former for the season and a peak 2200 of the latter Oct. 27 (GH, FG). Most crossbills apparently stayed elsewhere, with 10 scattered reports of Reds, including a maximum of 40 at the Enfield Lookout at Quabbin Res., MA Nov. 26 (TB *et al.*), but only 3 Regional reports of White-winged. Common Redpolls staged

a widespread irruption, with first reports Oct. 20 in Vermont and New Hampshire and a grand total of >520 Regionwide. The remaining finches staged modest flights, with *maxima* of >350 Pine Siskins at Athol, MA Nov. 20 (D. Small), 330 Am. Goldfinches at Lighthouse Pt., CT Sept. 23 (SP *et al.*), and 209 Evening Grosbeaks at Lebanon, *Grafton*, NH Oct. 25 (PH, D. Crook).

Exotics

As many as four Whooper Swans continued in Ipswich, MA through October. Monk Parakeets were reported n. to the Bay State. And Egyptian Goose and Eur. Goldfinch were on the wing in Connecticut.

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Hudson-Delaware Region

ROBERT O. PAXTON, WILLIAM J. BOYLE, JR., AND DAVID A. CUTLER

The summer's drought and heat persisted into October. Stressed by lack of water, such furtive species as Yellow-breasted Chats lingered at backyard water sources, reported Koch. The drought also stunted fruit, nut, and cone crops. From the Adirondacks to New Jersey observers reported mass food migrations of Grey and Red Squirrels. Food shortage may also explain why the winter finches that turned up early this fall passed through quickly, and disappeared. Finally, dry conditions meant poor shorebirding on the Atlantic and Great Lakes coasts, contrasting with shorebird bonanzas at exposed lake shores and river bars inland.

Substantial rains came in October, though it remained warm. Snow began precociously in the north (October 16 on Adirondack peaks) and in the south by late November. It was the snowiest November on record in parts of the Lake Ontario "snowbelt." And it was cold

