



The Kingfisher

VOLUME 31 – ISSUE 3

The Cape Cod Bird Club Newsletter

JANUARY – FEBRUARY, 2003

Cape Cod Bird Club meetings are 7:30 PM the second Monday of each month at the Museum of Natural History, Rte 6A, Brewster, MA.

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The Kingfisher is published bi-monthly.

Deadline for submissions for next issue : Feb. 7th.

Send to: ccbc_kingfisher@hotmail.com

Website: <http://www.massbird.org/CCBC>

President's Message

This is one of my favorite times of the year ... especially when we get at least a little snow here on the Cape! Our backyard bird feeders are now in full swing – all 12 of them!

Our suet feeders are the biggest draw for many of the birds. We see 4 species of woodpeckers nearly every day : Red-bellied, Flicker, Hairy and Downy. Carolina Wrens and Brown Creepers are dependable visitors as well as a host of other regulars. We're still waiting to see our first Red-breasted Nuthatch this season. Where they are hiding?

The bird bath with heater provides fresh drinking water and there's a steady stream of traffic all day long! Our feeder arsenal also includes a wireless transmitter outside to provide easy listening to bird activity from the comfort of our dining room, with coffee mugs in hand!

Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences and Birders' Exchange

If you've attended our Club meetings lately, you know we've held occasional auctions with books, software, and other birding tools drawing the 'highest bid.' Ellie Miller began this fun activity early this year and, to date, over \$460 has been raised. This amount will be sent to Manomet to be given to the Birder's Exchange for much-needed equipment.

What is the Birders' Exchange?

Birders' Exchange was founded in 1990 by the Manomet Center for Conservation Science (MCCS). In 1996, MCCS partnered with ABA to run the program, and a productive partnership blossomed, building on the extensive birder network of ABA and the conservation links with Latin America at MCCS. Since late February 2002, the program in its entirety has been run by the American Birding Association. ABA has made clear that it will continue to develop and expand the

Feeding the birds in your backyard is a fun experience and I hope your feeders are doing well too. I recommend plenty of grocery store beef suet as a staple in your menu for the birds. For our birds, it works much better than the suet cakes sold.

Speaking of our backyard birds, we also had added special treats: the day after Thanksgiving, our Eastern Screech Owl returned! It peeked out of the nesting box in the side yard, resplendent in all its 'red phase' glory! Just a week earlier, we had two sets of Eastern Bluebirds exploring our Bluebird Box and the surrounding area!

On that note, let me wish each of you a special New Year ... may your 2003 be the best ever! Enjoying the birds both on and off the Cape would be a very rewarding way to spend part of your new year!

Dick Jurkowski

program, based on the vision set forth by the MCCS.

For thousands of bird conservationists, researchers, and environmental educators in Latin America and the Caribbean, working without the proper tools is an unfortunate reality. At our November meeting, John Kricher told how difficult it is for new birders in these countries to even identify birds without a Field Guide. They often have to sketch pictures of the bird being seen to identify later when a guide is available. (And we take our field guides for granted!)

In 1990, the launch of Birders' Exchange brought a new, simple, yet highly effective means for North American birders, ornithologists, conservationists, and businesses to contribute to hemispheric conservation and environmental education efforts. Since 1990, Birders' Exchange has sent 1,800 binoculars, 1,025 field guides, 275 backpacks, 150 cameras, 200 scopes, 150 tripods, and other tools

(Continued on page 3)

Programs for January and February

January 13th - Winter Birding in Southeastern Texas

Paul Roberts began hawk watching in the early 1970s and in 1976 founded the Eastern Massachusetts Hawk Watch, which he led for over twenty years. He served several years as Editor of Bird Observer, was chair of the Hawk Migration Association of North America (HMANA) for four years, and is currently President of the Northeast Hawk Watch. In 1994 he received the Audubon "A" award and, in 1995, received the Maurice Brown award from HMANA for his service to further hawk migration study and conservation.

Paul has been birding southeastern Texas in winter for about a decade and is looking forward to sharing his fast-paced slide show of the variety of birds and habitats of southeastern Texas - from Houston, south along the coast to the Rio Grande and up the Lower Rio Grande Valley to Falcon Dam.

Whether one looks for Southeastern Texas' famous specialties, like Whooping Crane, Green Jay, Altamira Oriole, Brown Jay, Clay-colored Robin, Hook-Billed Kite and Aplomado Falcon or enjoys seeing hundreds of Loggerhead Shrikes, Long-billed Curlews, thousands of Redheads, White-fronted Geese, Sandhill Cranes, and more. You'll agree that it is a birding paradise in winter. Come for a special evening!

February 10 - X-treme Hawkwatching: New Trends and Techniques for the Casual or Committed

Tom Carrolan, known to many Massbirders for his online hawkwatching reports from Plum Island, Pilgrim Heights and his Hawksaloft.com web site, will explain "X-treme Hawkwatching" through slides, stories, and anecdotes.

Whether you are a casual birder or aspire to extremes, Tom will provide a colorful, up-to-date, and precise picture of the state of hawk identification and ecology.

Tom has been hawk watching for over thirty years. He grew up at Derby Hill on Lake Ontario, migrated to Northern New York, and now maintains a territory in New England.

Field Trips for Jan - Feb

Ginie Page, Coordinator

Fri - Jan. 3 9AM Celebrate the New Year looking for alcids, seabirds, waterfowl in Provincetown, Wellfleet and Eastham. Meet at Friendly's off the Orleans rotary for several hours of birding. Leaders: Diane Silverstein & Mike Dettrey 508-398-9484, e-mail Birder526@aol.com

Sat - Jan. 4 9AM Fort Hill Eastham. Meet at the lower parking lot. Leader: Dick Koeppen 508-430-1822

Sat - Jan. 11 8AM-Noon Marstons Mills - Best "Yard Birds" in a superb natural and enhanced habitat! 68 Liberty Lane, Marstons Mills. Leaders: Dick & Sylvia Jurkowski 508-428-8494

Sun - Jan. 12 9AM Falmouth. Ponds, ocean shores and thickets. Meet at

Locust St. parking area at the Shining Sea Bicycle Path. We'll carpool to ponds and shores. Leaders: Bob Vander Pyl and Alison Robb. 508-540-2408

Thurs - Jan 16 - 8:30AM Bristol County. Tiverton, Little Compton, RI and Westport, MA to visit various shore points and ponds. This will be an all-day trip with lunch at a warm restaurant somewhere along the route. Meet at Tedeschi's convenience Store at the Bourne Rotary at 8:30AM or at the leader's house earlier (call) Leader: Stauffer Miller 508-362-3384 e-mail stauffer@seepub.com

Sun - Jan 19 9AM - Sandwich. Ponds (if not frozen) and ocean birding areas of Sandwich. Meet at Sandy Neck upper parking lot. Sandy Neck Rd is about 1/8-1/4 mile West of the Sandwich/Barnstable line on 6A. Leader: Ellie Winslow 508-888-1760 e-mail birderellie@aol.com.

Thurs - Feb 6 9AM Outer Cape. Meet at Friendly's near the Orleans Rotary to possibly go to Provincetown - sites to be decided at meeting place. Leader: Stauffer Miller 508-362-3384 e-mail stauffer@seepub.com.

Sat - Feb 8 - 8AM-noon - Yard Birds (see Jan. 11) - 68 Liberty Lane, Marstons Mills. Leaders: Dick & Sylvia Jurkowski 508-428-8494

Sun - Feb 9AM Falmouth. Ponds, ocean shores and thickets. Meet at Locust St. parking area at the Shining Sea Bicycle Path. We'll carpool to ponds and shores. Leaders: Bob Vander Pyl and Alison Robb 508-540-2408

Fri - Feb 14 9AM Bring your "Sweetie" and bird at West Dennis Beach, Chatham and Orleans "Hot Spots." Meet at second cottage (at the West end of parking lot) on West Dennis Beach. Leaders: Mike Dettrey and Diane Silverstein 508-398-9484, e-mail Birder526@aol.com

Sun - Feb 16 9AM Sandwich. (See Jan 19) Leader: Ellie Winslow 508-888-1760 e-mail birderellie@aol.com.

Sat - Feb 22 9AM Fort Hill, Eastham. Meet at the lower parking lot. Leader: Dick Koeppen 508-430-1822

Encounters at First Encounter Beach

Blair Nikula

The following are two entries by Blair on Massbird.org. With Blair's permission, they are printed below for your enjoyment.

Subject: First Encounter!

Date: 27 Oct 2002

Although this last storm was a rather modest blow, it produced an amazing show at First Encounter Beach in Eastham this morning. Nothing rare, but a mind-numbing mass of gannets and kittiwakes along with a good assortment of other things (and nary a grain of wind-blown sand in my coffee!). When you pull into the F.E. parking lot before sunrise and the gannets and kittiwakes are already streaming by, you know you're in for a treat. In the 30 or so years I've been chasing seabirds at First Encounter, I think this morning's show would rate in the top 10 and, for sheer spectacle, may have been in the top five (especially considering the relatively pleasant weather conditions). There were times when I simply had to put my scope and binoculars down and try to take in the scene before me — optics were hardly necessary to appreciate the magnitude of the event. Several times I reached for my camera, but this was an experience that neither film nor words could come close to capturing. Gannets were simply everywhere, from nearly opaque clouds on the horizon, to streams passing right up the shoreline - seemingly close enough to touch at times, to flocks passing hundreds of feet high over the parking lot (across the face of the moon!), with some even heading off high to the southeast, apparently crossing the Cape (something I've almost never seen before). Blizzards of kittiwakes, in flocks numbering into the hundreds, passed during the first couple of hours, some attended by small groups of Pomarine Jaegers. There were so many birds that I'm sure lots of things slipped by. Except for a couple of hours mid-morning, I was alone and rarely

have felt so overwhelmed. God only knows what I missed. The following numbers represent my best effort to keep up with things, though in reality

*this was an experience that
neither film nor words could
come close to capturing*

are but a feeble attempt to quantify the unquantifiable. But for what it's worth, here's what I came up with (from 550 - 1120 hrs.): 16 Red-throated Loons; 1 (only) N. Fulmar (there may well have been others among the clouds of birds in the distance, but with so many birds in close, I pretty much ignored the "headache" birds on the horizon); 3 Cory's Shearwaters (all passed right up the beach); 400 Greater Shearwaters (a few flying over the flats at low tide!); 1 Sooty Shearwater 600+ large shearwater sp.; 1+ Wilson's Storm-Petrel (very late, but looked and acted like a perfectly typical Wilson's in all discernible respects), 7 Leach's Storm-Petrels, 9 storm-petrel sp.; 20,000+ N. Gannets (this number is based upon a few one-minute counts and I think it's conservative; even heard some calling as they passed high overhead. They were still passing at a rate of 20+/minute when I left.) 7 scaup sp.; 4000+ Common Eider 100's scoters (almost all Surf & Black), 600+ Red-breasted Mergansers, 1 Red Phalarope, 60 Pomarine Jaegers; 22 jaeger sp.; 220 Laughing Gulls 1 Little Gull (1W) 15 Bonaparte's Gulls, 3600+ Black-legged Kittiwakes (85+% adult; one badly oiled on the underparts.) 40 Common Terns, 2 Razorbills, 2 Atlantic Puffins.

Why this modest tempest produced so many birds, I haven't a clue, except that it's prime time for some of these species. I was hoping for a decent show this morning, but certainly didn't expect what transpired. It's one I'll savor for a while — at least until the next storm!

First Encounter Beach

Date: 14 Nov 2002

Another nice seabird show at First Encounter Beach this morning. Although the numbers were not overwhelming, the variety was good and the conditions downright pleasant. From 0620 - 0850: 325 Red-throated Loons (one flock of 150+ high over the parking lot!), 4 Common Loons, 3 Red-necked Grebes, 1 Northern Fulmar, 25 Greater Shearwaters, 8000 N. Gannets (a lot of milling about this morning, so it was very difficult to count); 2500 Common Eider; 400 Red-breasted Mergansers, 4 Pomarine Jaegers, 5 jaeger sp.; 10 Laughing Gulls, 2 Little Gulls (1W), 590 Bonaparte's Gulls, 240 Black-Legged Kittiwakes, 16 Common Terns, 1 Dovekie; 30 Razorbills, 135 large alcid sp.; 1 Fish Crow.

Birders' Exchange (Cont'd from page 1)

to more than 350 programs in over 30 Latin American and Caribbean countries. This equipment enhances awareness of birds, and it empowers local people to make wise conservation decisions.

If you'd like to help

Donations of the following are especially appreciated. Binoculars, spotting scopes, tripods, field guides to Neotropical birds, field guides to North American birds, ornithology texts, laptop computers, and backpacks. The equipment must be in good working order, however. Binoculars must be in proper alignment, the focus wheel in operation, and the glass without flaws.

Birders' Exchange also needs financial contributions to continue its work. There is currently a matching grant of \$50,000 so your donation would be doubled. Checks should be made out to ABA and marked "Birders' Exchange.")

All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent permissible by law. All contributions will be gratefully received and acknowledged by letter. Call 1-800-850-BIRD or go to www.americanbirding.org/bex for more information.

Why Iceland?

Ned Handy

Where else in a hurried three day trip can you see : Whooper Swans, almost close enough to touch; Black-headed Gulls; Iceland Gulls; Glaucous Gulls; Meadow Pipits; Lesser Black-backed Gulls; Black-tailed Godwits; European Oystercatchers; Pied Wag-tails; Tufted Ducks; European Shag; fields dotted with Golden Plover and Greylag Geese; Redshanks in flocks of three to five hundred; Redwings; Arctic Terns; Fulmar; AND White-tailed Eagles.

The success of the visit, planned late in the day, turned in large part, on the wonders of modern communication. When we learned of our layover in Iceland, the obvious question was how to make the most of the opportunity. Peter Alden, an old friend of ours and the Bird Club and one of the first, best and most colorful of America's Eco-tour leaders, suggested that we contact Johann Oli Hillmarsson, author of the Icelandic Bird Guide. With E-mails and a telephone call or two we made arrangements to share our mutual enjoyment of birds. He turned out to be a gentle giant of a man with great ham hands and hesitant but passable English, a photographer of rare skill (see his fine field guide), an occasional consultant for BBC and a current employee of the Iceland Society for the Protection of Birds.

For us, he was the soul of generosity. He met us, loaded our baggage into his big 4-wheel drive and struck out for several hours of birding and sight seeing in and about Reykjavik. The day was warm, sun-struck and glorious; the early morning traffic heavy; the architecture European, modern, crisp, colorful and clean looking, with some dramatic angular structures; the landscape, largely treeless, except for yard adornments. In the and around the city we saw many of the birds listed above.

Note this bit of local trivia. Icelanders carry the name of their male parent: thus Johann is the son of Hilmar. If chance had sexed him differently, she would have been Hilmarsdottir. Listings in the telephone book are by first names; for example, Johann Oli [Hilmarsson]. The patronomic name (Hilmarsson) is never used alone as in Mr. Hilmarsson. One wonders whether family dynasties in Iceland are unknown.

After lunch, Johann helped us rent a car and saw us off on a 3 or 4 hour drive to Stykkisholm on the Snaefellsnes peninsula. The drive was through barren, mountainous landscape with an occasional tumbling river or field of ragged lava heads and from time to time we even saw another car. We arrived in time to sign on for the morning bird trip to the islands in Breidafjörður Fjord and then located a nice farmhouse B&B standing alone on an inlet with a fine view. The \$72 price and the beds with great puffs suited us perfectly after a long day.

We were greeted the next morning with a sumptuous breakfast of juices, cheese, cereals, sliced tomatoes and cucumbers, melon, toast, apple marmalade among other tidbits— and rain. But the boat sailed. It was sizeable with a glassed-in salon, tables, a covered back deck that afforded protection for cameras and a kitchen that served tea, coffee, beer and lunch. We were out for a little over two hours weaving through the many small volcanic islands. They were green-topped, lichen-covered, some with a few sheep and/or a single house, some with small Icelandic horses, many with Shags, Cormorants and nesting Fulmars. While we were late for the 11,000,000 Puffins and the multitude of Kittywakes, we did have a memorable visit with a White-tailed Eagle and one of its bulky chicks. Iceland has about 50 pairs of these spectacular birds, once almost extinct.

After the boat trip, we drove in the rain around the peninsula. It was warm even though we were less than 100 miles south of the Arctic Circle and it was wet, too wet to scope the many promising bird sites. We did see the skirt of a glacier at the end of the peninsula and passed by a number of tiny hamlets, usually with bright red or blue roofs and sparkling white buildings. The scenery was stark and spectacular with the complex coast, the mountains and the wildly turbulent lava fields.

The next day we threaded our way back into Reykjavik, did some serious sight seeing and finally met Johann Oli for dinner. He had been at a meeting which considered making it illegal to sell stuffed Ptarmigan, a troubled species in Iceland, in gift shops. We had been surprised to see stuffed Puffins for sale as souvenirs for roughly \$100. We had a fine dinner and Johann Oli enjoyed his roasted Cormorant breast although he thought it might have been Shag. We passed up the Puffin ... maybe next time.

To a Friend in Antarctica

Robert F. Pease

*So how are the penguins, the alcids,
and cloud trails high up in the sky?
And how, in the morning,
when first you look out,
does the sun shine, the ice heave,
while jaegers and petrels fly by?
We are spun on the wheels of a wagon
as old as all life on this earth.
We are learning the turning of seasons,
the wonders of being and birth.
We know now how lucky we all are
to be given a moment to share
in awareness of how our world matters,
how precious are sunlight and air.
You are part of the miracle, my friend.
We all are, and life is a gift from above,
but the ones who most truly deserve it,
are those treating creation with love.*

Everglades National Park, Florida: Peerless Birding

John and Jane Sloane

A “Great White” Heron floated in through first light, graceful and majestic, and set down on Eco Pond barely twenty feet from us. No doubt it’s a bird to start an argument. Start with the name. It’s now considered a white morph of the Great Blue Heron, not a “Great White” Heron at all, though everyone still calls it that, perhaps hoping that the “wise men” will again recognise it as a separate species. Its immense stature and bearing, especially with its distinctly disagreeable disposition, seem much more deserving of a name than an asterisk.

The “Great White” Heron, *Ardea herodias occidentalis*, is found in southern Florida, mostly in the Everglades and the Florida Keys, though also occurs uncommonly elsewhere in the Caribbean. Like other Great Blue Herons in this area, it is perhaps 10% larger than Great Blues found elsewhere in its range, so it can stand more than four feet tall with a wingspan over six feet. Yellowish legs distinguish this alabaster giant from the Great Egret which has black ones; if you see them both together, however, the sheer mass of the heron would suffice.

Eco Pond is near Flamingo in Everglades National Park and our early morning stroll there rewarded us with miraculously close sightings of the Great White Heron and almost-as-good ones of Great Egret, Little Blue Heron, Green Heron, Snowy Egret, Anhinga, Glossy Ibis, White Ibis, Pied-billed Grebe, Red-shouldered Hawk, Osprey, Killdeer, Purple Sandpiper, Prairie Warbler, Palm Warbler, Savannah Sparrow, Common Yellowthroat, a truly splendid Purple Gallinule, and lots of Moorhen and American Coots.

Everglades National Park is huge, about 2,300 square miles, though it contains only a fraction of the ecosystem. Flamingo, the only settlement, but 38 miles from the gate, is the place to stay, either in the campground or the rustic motel. There is also a small shop, a café and a restaurant.

From Eco Pond we ventured down Snake Bight foot trail. This is the most reliable place in the United States to see Greater Flamingos in the wild, and our steps were quickened by the assurance from fellow visitors that there had been sightings there the previous day.

We needn’t have worried about quickening our steps. From the first, we were chased down the 1.8 miles of arrow-straight trail by the Everglades *other* resident — mosquitoes. We were cheerfully assured that there were more than 40 species of these, but “they’re not bad at this time of year.” Not bad, indeed! Despite being lathered with insect repellent, we were pursued by a haze of these, like the Eye of God pursued Cain. Their attacks seemed coordinated and sustained — just wiping an arm would kill several which had settled in to dine. These mosquitoes weren’t just taking blood, they were taking hostages!

Quickly we understood the advice we’d received: hire a bike and ride down the trail. We might not have been able to outpace all the pests, but at least we would have limited our exposure.

For a trail leading to the best chance to see flamingos, Snake Bight is narrow and not much travelled. Perhaps dread of the mosquito overcomes enthusiasm for rare ornithoids. However, the trail ends in a fine boardwalk over the lagoon, blissfully free of biting insects, and affording a fine view of Florida Bay. What it did not afford us however were any sightings of flamingos, despite the fact that we had carefully chosen high tide for our visit. Perhaps those who reported sightings had mistaken the Roseate Spoonbill (of which we could see many out in the bay) for them or perhaps we chose an unfortunately flamingo-free day. Regardless, we had run a *Culicid* gauntlet without that particular reward!

Mercifully, other rewards were plentiful, including Blue-winged Teal, American White Pelican (what a splendid, regal bird!), Tricoloured Heron, Spotted Sandpiper, Black-bellied Plover, Willet, Greater Yellowlegs, Forster’s Tern, the usual egrets, and a truly fabulous look at a Roseate Spoonbill in spectacular full adult plumage which perched nearby on the handrail of the boardwalk. There is no uninteresting view of a Roseate. In flight they are a slow flapping cruciform, more crimson than roseate, an agreeable contrast to an azure sky. While feeding they dance a coordinated Lambeth walk, scything their spatular bills from side to side through the mud, like horizontal metronomes.

This one was just standing, seemingly proud of the intricacies of his plumage.

His wings, back, and belly were hot pink grading to blood-red, his “knees” contrasting charcoal against ruby legs, and pale orange on his tail and sides. The whole is surmounted by a gleaming white neck, a featherless head with green-grey skin, and the characteristic, eponymous, spoon bill. It’s a big, bulky, stupendous bird about thirty inches in length with a wingspan of four feet and recently making a heartening recovery from near extinction at the hands of plume hunters. Perhaps only thirty Roseates survived in Florida by 1930.

As great as the spoonbill was, there was better to come in the form of a Würdemann’s Heron. It’s another colour morph of the Great Blue Heron and, like the Great White — a rare southern Florida specialty and massive even by heron standards. It’s a stunning bird, with the body of a Great Blue, though lighter, and the neck and head of the Great White, though darker. He flopped in, just off the point, to stand sentry over the rising waters.

The Everglades is unique in the world, a habitat of sawgrass, hardwood hammocks and mangroves. The name derives from “River Glades,” though the Native Americans called it Pahayokee meaning “Grassy Waters.” It is said to be “a river more than fifty miles wide but only six inches deep,” flowing from Lake Okeechobee to Florida Bay, and now severely threatened. A comprehensive recovery plan for the entire ecosystem, “the Restudy” may, over the next 20 years, reverse some of the destruction and save what’s left. What’s left is so worth saving.

The word “Everglades” should never be mentioned without tribute to Marjory Stoneman Douglas, 1890-1998, conservationist. What we have left of the Everglades is due to her and her 108 years of feisty crusading in defense of her River of Grass. The planet never had a better friend.

Stay up-to-date with Massbird.org!

Go to Massbird.org for Club Information, Walks, and for what’s being seen around the area! Don’t miss out!

What's Around

This article on birds seen on Cape Cod is based on personal observations, supplemented by information from the Rare Bird Alerts (RBAs) of MassAudubon. It roughly follows the outline of Birding Cape Cod, published by the Club and Mass-Audubon. November observations are based entirely on the RBAs; I was out of the country and then off-Cape for an extended time due to the death of a close friend. Very common birds are omitted.

September 30, 2002, Dennis and Harwich: Great Blue Heron, Brant, Black, Surf and White-winged scoters, Turkey Vulture, Black-bellied and Semipalmated plovers, Greater Yellowlegs, Sanderling, Least Sandpiper, Dunlin, Short-billed Dowitcher, Laughing Gull, Common Tern, Belted Kingfisher, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Carolina Wren.

October 14, 2002, Truro: Northern Gannet, Great blue Heron, Brant, Common Eider, Cooper's Hawk, Sanderling, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Indigo Bunting, Redwing Blackbird, White-throated Sparrow.

October 18, 2002, Wellfleet: Common Loon, White-winged Scoter, Red-tailed Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Sanderling, Belted Kingfisher, Northern Flicker, Red- and White-bellied nuthatches, Golden- and Ruby-crowned kinglets, Brown Thrasher, Black-throated Green, Palm and Pine warblers, Redwing Blackbird, Common Grackle.

October 21, 2002, Dennis and Harwich: Common Loon, Great Blue Heron, Brant, White-winged Scoter, Bufflehead, Red-breasted Merganser, Red-tailed Hawk, Greater Yellowlegs, Sanderling, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Carolina Wren, Yellow-

rumped Warbler, Field Sparrow, Redwing Blackbird. **MassAudubon:** Osprey, Peregrine Falcon, Piping Plover, American Oystercatcher, Willet, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, Semipalmated, Western, Least, White-rumped and Pectoral sandpipers, Dunlin, Short-billed Dowitcher, Common Snipe, Pomarine and Parasitic jaeger, Laughing Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake, Common Tern, Short-eared Owl, Tree Swallow, Marsh and Winter wrens, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Eastern bluebird, American Pipit, Blue-headed and Red-eyed vireos, Nashville, Palm and Blackpoll warblers, Yellow-breasted Chat, Lapland Longspur, Eastern Meadowlark.

October 28, 2002, Yarmouthport, Dennis, Brewster: Common Loon, Red-necked Grebe, Northern Gannet, Great Blue Heron, Brant, Ring-necked Duck, Common Eider, Bufflehead, Red-breasted Merganser, Turkey Vulture, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Merlin, Black-bellied Plover, Greater Yellowlegs, Sanderling, Bonaparte's Gull, Belted Kingfisher, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Redwing Blackbird. **MassAudubon:** Red-necked Grebe, Northern Fulmar, Cory's, Greater and Sooty shearwaters, Wilson's and Leach's storm-petrels, Eurasian Widgeon, Wood Duck, Peregrine Falcon, Northern Harrier, Cooper's Hawk, Common Snipe, Red Phalarope, Pomarine Jaeger, Little and Bonaparte's gulls, Black-legged Kittiwake, Common Tern, Razorbill, Atlantic Puffin, Hooded, Yellow-rumped and Palm warblers, Lincoln's, White-crowned and White-throated sparrows.

November 1-15, 2002: MassAudubon: Red-throated and Common

loons, Northern Fulmar, Greater and Sooty shearwaters, Leach's Storm-petrel, Northern Gannet, Great Blue Heron, Green-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Greater Scaup, Common Eider, Long-tailed Duck, Surf and White-winged scoters, Red-breasted Merganser, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks, Merlin, Black-bellied Plover, Greater Yellowlegs, Sanderling, Pectoral Sandpiper, Pomarine Jaeger, Laughing and Bonaparte's gulls, Black-legged Kittiwake, Common Tern, Razorbill, Black-billed Cuckoo, Brown Creeper, Cedar Waxwing, Black-throated Green Warbler, Fox and Swamp sparrows, Eastern Meadowlark, Baltimore Oriole.

November 16-30, 2002:

MassAudubon: Red-throated and Common loons, Horned and Red-necked grebes, Northern Fulmar, Cory's, Greater and Sooty shearwaters, Northern Gannet, Snowy Egret, Long-tailed Duck, Black, Surf and White-winged scoters, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Purple Sandpiper, Pomarine Jaeger, Laughing, Little, Black-headed and Bonaparte's gulls, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake, Common Tern, Dovekie, Thick-billed Murre, Razorbill, Atlantic Puffin, Fox Sparrow.



The Feeder Census Form missed being sent with the last newsletter — but here it is, a little late. Please record your birds each month according to the directions. Turn it in at the April meeting or you can mail it — whichever is easiest for you.

Cape Cod Bird Club

FEEDER CENSUS 2002-2003

Directions: Use this form to report birds feeding at your feeders or on natural food in your yard on the first complete weekend in each of the months listed. Watch your feeders on Saturday and Sunday (or 2 consecutive days near the weekend), and record the highest number of each of the species observed at one time. For example: if on Saturday you see at one time 3 Chickadees, record 3. If later that day or on Sunday, you see 5 at one time, cross out 3 and record 5. If later you see 2 or any number less than 5, don't record it. Do not accumulate the

number seen. Record the dates you conduct the census at the top of each column. If you are gone for a month, just leave that month blank, and resume the census when you return. Species not on the list can be added in the spaces at the bottom of the list. Notes about special feeds, bird behavior, etc. can be put on the back of the sheet. Return this form at the April meeting, or mail it to: CCBC, c/o Museum of Natural History, Route 6A, Brewster, Ma 02631.

	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	
Sharp-shinned Hawk							
Cooper's Hawk							
Bobwhite							
Mourning Dove							
Flicker							
Hairy Woodpecker							
Downy Woodpecker							
Red-bellied Woodpecker							
Blue Jay							
Am. Crow							
B C Chickadee							
Tufted Titmouse							
White-Breasted Nuthatch							
Carolina Wren							
Am. Robin							
Cedar Waxwing							
Starling							
Yellow-rumped Warbler							
Pine Warbler							
No. Cardinal							
Song Sparrow							
White-Throated Sparrow							
Junco							
Red-Winged Blackbird							
Grackle							
Cowbird							
House Finch							
Goldfinch							
House Sparrow							
other:							

Name: _____

Address (census location): _____

Dick & Sylvia Jurkowski
68 Liberty Ln
Marstons Mills MA 02648



Cape Cod Bird Club
The Cape Cod Museum of Natural History
PO Box 1710, Brewster, MA 02631



The Cape Cod Bird Club Inc.

is an organization whose members are interested in the protection and conservation of the bird life and natural resources of Cape Cod.

If you are interested in joining, please send a check for \$10 single membership, \$15 family membership to:

**CCBC, Cape Cod Museum of Natural History
PO Box 1710, Brewster, MA 02631**

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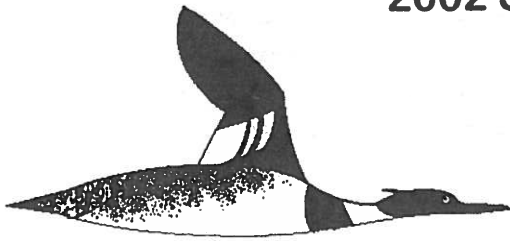
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Cape Cod Lake & Pond Waterfowl Survey

2002 SUMMARY



The 20th annual Cape Cod Lake and Pond Waterfowl Survey was conducted on the weekend of December 7-8, 2002. In sharp contrast to recent years, the weather preceding the count was very cold, about 2°(F) below normal in both October and November, and for the first time in recent memory, a majority (63%) of the area ponds were completely or mostly frozen. In addition, water levels remained very low following drought conditions for the past year or so, and some small, shallow ponds remained virtually dry.

At least 54 observers censused 354 ponds, the lowest number of ponds since 1995, though still above average. Of these, only 130 were open. A meager 22 species of waterfowl were found, the poorest variety in the survey's history. However, the extensive icing had no obvious impact on the overall numbers, as the total of 10,981 individuals was very close to the 18-year average.

RESULTS BY SPECIES

Three species were found in record high numbers this year, while one species was in record low numbers and another totaled the second lowest ever.

Pied-billed Grebes, totaling just 32 birds, established a record low, some 64% below average. This continues a sharp five-year decline from their peak of 204 birds in 1998.

Gadwall, at just 94 individuals, were at their lowest level since 1992. This species has declined steadily since peaking in 1995.

For the second consecutive year, no **Eurasian Wigeon** were found, though the species was present on the Cape both before and after the survey.

American Wigeon, at just 71 birds, were 33% below the survey average.

American Black Ducks totaled 911 birds, 34% below average and the lowest since 1993.

Although **Canvasbacks** recovered very slightly from last year's near absence, the 39 bird total was still the second lowest yet, and 91% below average. During the first five years of this survey, this handsome duck averaged almost one thousand birds annually! Reasons for this decline remain a mystery, though it should be noted that prior to the 1970s, Canvasbacks were quite scarce throughout New England.

Ring-necked Ducks established a new high with 565 birds (159% above average) shattering the previous record of 374 birds in 1998.

Bufflehead continued a five-year decline, dropping to 1498 birds, the lowest total since 1989 and 16% below average.

Common Goldeneye is one of the hardiest of waterfowl and a species whose numbers on this survey generally have been highest during the coldest years. That tendency was evident again this year with a total of 314 birds being the most since 1995 and 42% above average.

Hooded Mergansers established yet another record high, with 1160 birds exceeding the 1999 peak of 1037, and continuing the species' steady increase over the past couple of decades.

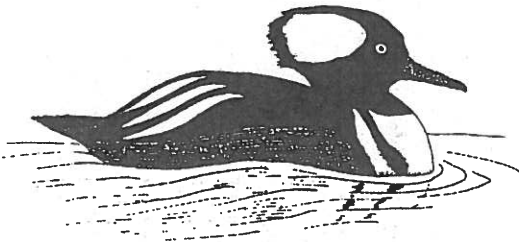
Common Merganser is another cold-weather species and this year's total of 912 was a record, far surpassing the previous peak of 515 birds in 1991, and almost four times the norm.

For the second straight year, **American Coots** were almost non-existent, with a meager 10 birds some 93% below the survey average.

For the first time in several years, scaup (both species combined, 2062 birds) were the most numerous birds on the survey, followed by Mallard (1982 birds), Bufflehead (1498), Hooded Merganser (1160 birds) and American Black Duck (911). These six species comprised 69% of the overall total. The most widespread species were Mallard, occurring on 82 ponds (63% of the non-frozen ponds), Bufflehead on 64 (49%) ponds, and American Black Duck on 55 (42%) ponds.

RESULTS BY TOWN

As always, Falmouth out-distanced all other towns by a wide margin, with 3682 birds or 34% of the Capewide total. Barnstable was runner-up with 1246 birds (11%), followed by Harwich's 1135 birds (10%). The best variety was in Falmouth where 17 species were found, followed by Yarmouth with 16 species. Provincetown brought up the rear with 28 birds of two species, though there was virtually no open water there.



RESULTS BY POND

An average of 31 birds/pond was recorded. However, if the frozen ponds are eliminated, the average jumps to 84 birds/open pond. Of the 130 open ponds, 22 (17%) had no birds at all—these ponds must be especially unattractive to waterfowl! Salt Pond in Falmouth traditionally harbors a large flock of scaup and consequently takes top honors every year for the largest number of birds: This year 1698 individuals of nine species there included 1600 scaup. Second this year was Lake Wequaquet in Barnstable (555 birds), followed by Herring Pond in Eastham (448 birds). The best variety was on Lake Wequaquet with 12 species, followed by Pilgrim Lake in Orleans with 11, and Sider's Pond in Falmouth with 10 species.

PARTICIPATION

At least 54 people took part in this year's survey. Many thanks to each and every one.

Participants

John & Elizabeth Berg, Carl Bergfors, Sally Branch, Keith Brunell, Frank Caruso, Kathleen Casey, Sally Clifton, Dick Comeau, Marlene Denessen, Mike Dettrey, Don Dyer, Nathan Dyer, Peter Flood, Juliana Foscaldi, Ed Foster, George & Judy Gove, Kevin Kelleher, Mary Kelleher, Kevin Harding, Seward Highley, Dick Jurkowski, Phil Kyle, Don Manchester, George Martin, Kathy & Rives McGinley, Stauffer Miller, Liz Moon, Blair Nikula, Tom Noonan, Bob O'Neil, Ginie Page, Alida Pellegrini-Toole, Alison Robb, Don Scott, Arky & Janet Silverio, Diane Silverstein, Dick Stacy, Barbara Stanton, Betsy Stepney, Sandy Sutherland, Jim Talin, Aurele Thomas, John Toole, Jeremiah Trimble, Peter Trimble, Lou Turner, Mark Tuttle, Bob Vander Pyl, and Dennis Wiehe, Ellie Winslow.

If you wish additional copies of this summary, send a large S.A.S.E. to the compiler: **Blair Nikula, 2 Gilbert Lane, Harwich Port, MA 02646.**

71st CAPE COD CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT – 2002

December 15, 2002

Red-throated Loon.....	48	Merlin.....	2	White-breasted Nuthatch	52
Common Loon	77	Peregrine Falcon	3	Brown Creeper	3
Pacific Loon	1	Northern Bobwhite	26	Carolina Wren	142
Pied-billed Grebe	5	Wild Turkey	1	Winter Wren	2
Horned Grebe	3	Virginia Rail.....	6	Marsh Wren	2
Red-necked Grebe	5	American Coot	2	Golden-crowned Kinglet.....	70
Northern Gannet	3909	Black-bellied Plover	47	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	4
Double-crested Cormorant.....	7	Greater Yellowlegs	3	Eastern Bluebird.....	39
Great Cormorant	70	Ruddy Turnstone	2	Hermit Thrush	19
Great Blue Heron.....	83	Red Knot	28	American Robin	791
Great Egret	1	Sanderling.....	1081	Gray Catbird	6
Black-crowned Night-Heron	1	Western Sandpiper.....	3	Northern Mockingbird	92
Turkey Vulture.....	1	White-rumped Sandpiper.....	1	European Starling.....	1424
Snow Goose.....	2	Dunlin	4512	Cedar Waxwing	280
Canada Goose	1495	Common Snipe	2	Orange-crowned Warbler	2
Brant.....	739	American Woodcock	1	Yellow-rumped Warbler	605
Mute Swan	23	Pomarine Jaeger	8	Pine Warbler	1
Wood Duck	1	jaeger species.....	13	Palm Warbler.....	8
Gadwall	6	Little Gull.....	2	Black-and-white Warbler	1
Eurasian Wigeon	1	Bonaparte's Gull	131	Yellow-breasted Chat	9
American Wigeon.....	66	Ring-billed Gull	365	Eastern Towhee.....	2
Am. Black Duck	2240	Herring Gull.....	3542	American Tree Sparrow	24
Mallard	537	Iceland Gull.....	3	Chipping Sparrow	10
Northern Pintail.....	2	Lesser Black-backed Gull.....	3	Field Sparrow	16
Green-winged Teal	20	Great Black-backed Gull	2018	Savannah Sparrow.....	17
"Eurasian" Green-winged Teal..	1	Black-legged Kittiwake.....	969	"Ipswich" Sparrow.....	5
Canvasback.....	110	Dovekie	113	Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow ..	1
Ring-necked Duck	131	Common Murre.....	36	Fox Sparrow	3
Greater Scaup	262	Thick-billed Murre	31	Song Sparrow	316
Lesser Scaup.....	4	Razorbill	3432	Swamp Sparrow	39
scaup species	35	large alcid species.....	4937	White-throated Sparrow.....	289
Common Eider	1361	Rock Dove	150	White-crowned Sparrow	3
Harlequin Duck	6	Mourning Dove.....	199	Dark-eyed Junco.....	84
Surf Scoter	19	Eastern Screech-Owl	3	Lapland Longspur.....	16
White-winged Scoter	432	Great Horned Owl.....	8	Snow Bunting	47
Black Scoter.....	82	Calliope Hummingbird.....	1	Northern Cardinal.....	358
Long-tailed Duck	100	Belted Kingfisher.....	17	Red-winged Blackbird	70
Bufflehead	1878	Red-bellied Woodpecker.....	9	Eastern Meadowlark.....	3
Common Goldeneye	350	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.....	1	Purple Finch	1
Barrow's Goldeneye	1	Downy Woodpecker	67	House Finch.....	641
Hooded Merganser	344	Hairy Woodpecker.....	12	Common Redpoll	1
Common Merganser	611	Northern Flicker	81	American Goldfinch.....	443
Red-breasted Merganser.....	1139	Eastern Phoebe.....	1	House Sparrow.....	676
Ruddy Duck	83	Blue Jay	228	TOTAL SPECIES	136
Northern Harrier	18	American Crow.....	707	TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	47,256
Sharp-shinned Hawk.....	14	Horned Lark	167	Number of observers	40
Cooper's Hawk	7	Black-capped Chickadee	1099	Total Party-Hours.....	95.5
Red-tailed Hawk.....	38	Tufted Titmouse	187		
Rough-legged Hawk	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch	9		

HIGHLIGHTS. *Four(!) species new to count:* Wild Turkey, White-rumped Sandpiper, Calliope Hummingbird, Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow. *Record high counts for 3 species:* Hooded Merganser, Common Murre, White-crowned Sparrow (tie). *Other highs:* Red-tailed Hawk (2nd highest), Rough-legged Hawk (1st since 1989), Razorbill (3rd highest), Red-bellied Woodpecker (2nd highest), Horned Lark (highest since 1981), Tufted Titmouse (2nd highest), Carolina Wren (2nd highest), Eastern Bluebird (ties for highest since 1965), Yellow-breasted Chat (ties for 2nd highest), Lapland Longspur (highest since 1981), Red-winged Blackbird (2nd highest).

LOWLIGHTS. *Missed:* American Kestrel, Brown Thrasher, Common Yellowthroat, Seaside Sparrow. *Low counts:* Pied-billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, American Coot, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Eastern Meadowlark.

2002 Cape Cod Lake and Pond Waterfowl Survey

Species	BOURNE	FALMOUTH	SANDWICH	MASHPEE	BARNSTABLE	YARMOUTH	DENNIS	BREWSTER	HARWICH	CHATHAM	ORLEANS	EASTHAM	WELLFLEET	TRURO	PROVINCETOWN	TOTAL	% OF TOTAL	# OF PONDS
Common Loon	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	3	0	0	8	0.1	7
Pied-billed Grebe	0	15	0	0	2	0	0	0	12	1	1	0	0	1	0	32	0.3	11
Canada Goose	0	105	123	21	295	40	32	3	30	26	14	47	5	1	0	742	6.8	41
Mute Swan	4	51	7	5	5	83	7	2	0	7	5	2	0	0	0	178	1.6	27
Wood Duck	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	6	0.1	3
Gadwall	0	19	7	0	0	65	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	94	0.9	7
American Wigeon	0	25	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	28	14	0	0	0	71	0.6	8
Black Duck	0	123	13	35	30	172	9	4	100	21	144	212	2	19	27	911	8.3	55
Mallard	0	535	122	122	430	225	86	16	56	66	136	167	0	20	1	1982	18	82
Northern Pintail	0	1	0	0	0	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	0.2	2
Green-winged Teal	0	0	31	0	0	6	0	0	0	9	1	0	0	0	0	47	0.4	4
Canvasback	0	12	0	0	0	1	0	0	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	39	0.4	4
Ring-necked Duck	0	78	199	72	59	17	0	0	0	0	43	87	10	0	0	565	5.1	19
Greater Scaup	0	1710	0	7	8	0	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1749	15.9	5
Lesser Scaup	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	10	0.1	4
scaup species	0	25	0	0	21	0	0	48	175	20	0	4	0	10	0	303	2.8	13
Bufflehead	0	291	5	403	69	248	83	26	96	11	207	50	4	5	0	1498	13.6	64
Common Goldeneye	0	9	3	170	12	7	0	15	88	0	1	9	0	0	0	314	2.9	20
Hooded Merganser	0	471	4	130	194	27	0	1	32	50	59	186	2	4	0	1160	10.6	46
Common Merganser	0	104	43	100	88	11	2	2	513	0	0	0	18	31	0	912	8.3	17
Red-breasted Merganser	0	85	0	40	31	5	1	2	0	0	27	4	0	0	0	195	1.8	20
Ruddy Duck	0	23	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	103	0	0	0	130	1.2	3
American Coot	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	6	2	1	0	0	0	0	10	0.1	5
TOTAL NUMBER	4	3682	557	1111	1246	938	244	127	1135	218	671	885	44	91	28	10981		108
% of Total	0	34	5	10	11	9	2	1	10	2	6	8	0	1	0			
Number of Species	1	17	11	13	14	16	8	13	12	12	15	12	7	8	2	25		
Number of Ponds Censused	13	56	18	16	50	29	19	28	24	29	29	11	14	10	8	354		
Birds per Pond	0	66	31	69	25	32	13	5	47	8	23	80	3	9	4	31		
Number of Observers	3	16	3	4	5	4	2	2	6	2	5	2	3	2	2	54		