

THE BIRDS OF DUTCHESS COUNTY

NEW YORK



STAN DEORSEY
BARBARA A. BUTLER

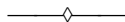
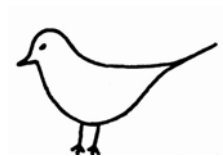
The Birds of Dutchess County New York

Today and Yesterday

A survey of current status
with historical changes since 1870

by

Stan DeOrsey
and
Barbara A. Butler



Published on behalf of
The Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club, Inc.
Poughkeepsie, New York

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First digital edition December 2010 with minor corrections. Additional digital updates September 2012, August 2014, and February 2016 each with some new sightings and AOS name and sequence changes. Photo Gallery added August 2017, nest photos added August 2021.

As of December 2021, all future updates will appear in a separate digital Addendum.

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Cover images:

Front: male Scarlet Tanager photographed June 19, 2019, at Ludlow Woods, Stanfordville, by Deborah Tracy-Kral.

Back Top: Eastern Screech-Owl bookmark painting by Helen Manson (Andrews) from a Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club dinner meeting favor. For many years Helen regularly created eighty favors per year in a variety of mediums. *Courtesy Joan DeOrsey*

Back Bottom: Eastern Bluebirds by Louis Agassiz Fuertes from *Birds of New York*, part 2, 1914. Fuertes spoke to the Rhinebeck Bird Club on the evening of June 6, 1916.

Overleaf: The small bird symbol was created by Ralph Waterman to use on personal notes and to mark pottery fired as a hobby. It is traditionally used by the Waterman Bird Club.

To Joan,
for introducing me to birding
and for total support on this
and other projects.

L.S.D.

To Helen Manson Andrews,
my mentor and birding companion
for many years.

To Wayne,
for his patience and support
during this project.

B.A.B.

Revised Edition

This is not a true second edition which would update “Status since 1990” to “Status since 2010.” Rather it is an updated first edition, a collection of important changes over the 14 years since it was first published. Nevertheless more than 60 pages have been added to include:

- all new sightings of casual and accidental species,
- breeding and other status changes, listed on page 254,
- updated bar graphs to match those in the *Reference Guide*,
- species names and sequence from the latest American Ornithological Society *Checklist*,
- over 35 historically important photos in a color Photo Gallery,
- early sightings of nearly 50 species which were rare or unknown in the county in 1900 but are now regularly seen,
- an up-to-date Bibliography, plus minor changes and corrections throughout.

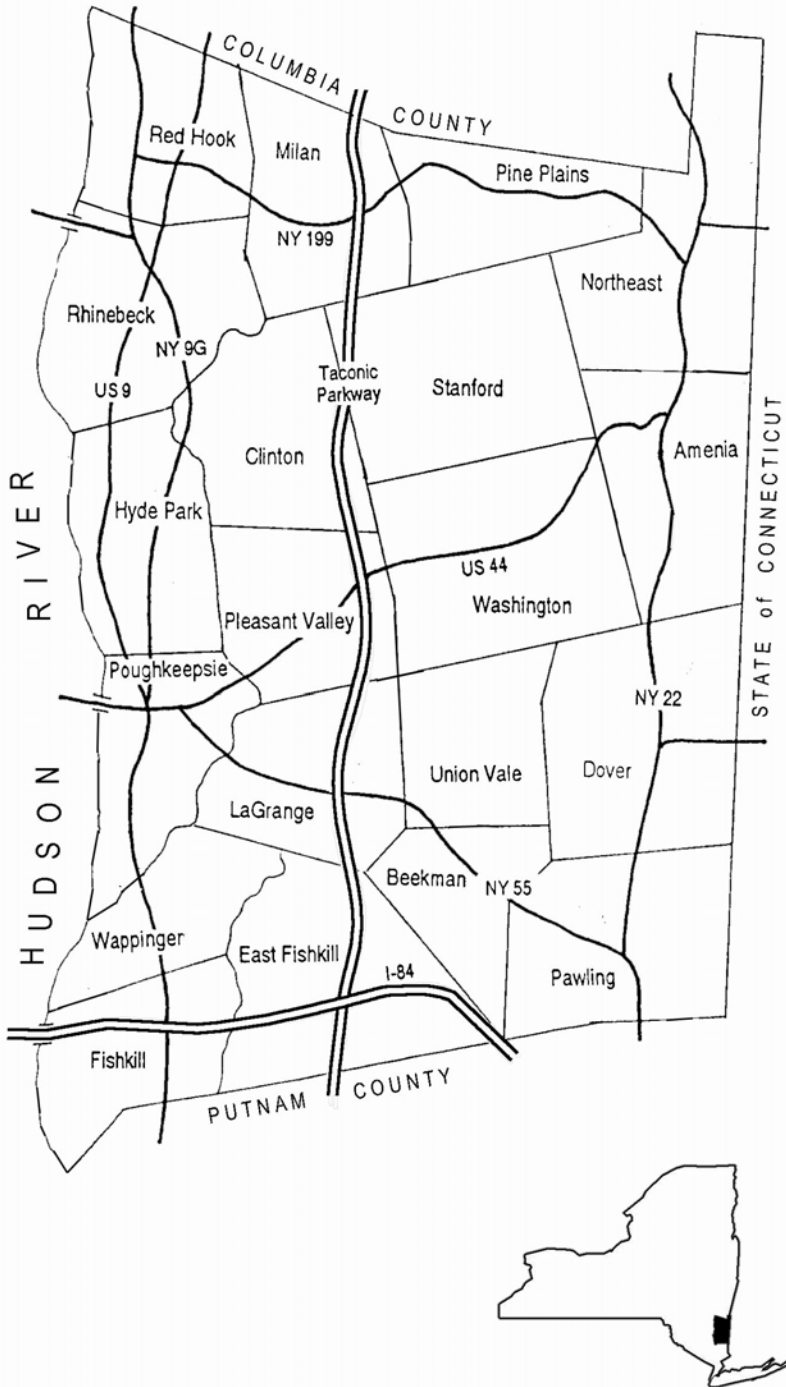
What has generally not been updated are the earliest or latest sightings and the largest flocks reported. The Foreword, Preface, and introductory chapters are mostly unchanged.

We hope you enjoy our local birds and find this book worth referencing frequently.

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DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK



FOREWORD

It is my pleasure to write this brief Foreword, or possibly more correctly called “backward glance” to Barbara’s and Stan’s excellent treatise on this new *Birds of Dutchess County*. To both the new and old birders, they give a fine synopsis of the birds of Dutchess County both past and present. Their 4-5 years of research and writing is unparalleled in my humble opinion and rightly deserves our highest acclaims as Dutchess County birders.

Maunsell S. Crosby (1887-1931) of Grasmere in Rhinebeck, New York, should properly be regarded as the Dean of Dutchess birders. From his many and precise records, Ludlow Griscom wrote the original *Birds of Dutchess County*, published by the Linnean Society of New York in 1933. Eleanor Pink and I updated this in 1964 and 1979 as part of the Club’s newsletter.

In the ’30s and ’40s there were less than a dozen serious birders in the county, led by Allen Frost and Ray Guernsey who had birded and studied with Maunsell Crosby. Meg Guernsey, Ray’s great-niece, later became the R.T. Waterman Bird Club president in



Otis Waterman and his father, Ralph Waterman, fishing on Sprout Creek near Stringham Rd., LaGrange in April 1946.

Courtesy Otis Waterman

1980. By the mid-1940s my father, Ralph, and I became students of Frost, Guernsey, and Ralph Palmer of Vassar College.

Thru the 1940s and 1950s, my father and I participated in the annual May Census Day, which Crosby had started in 1919, with the above handful of birders. Strangely, my father was an avid fly fisherman and pheasant hunter prior to becoming a diligent birder. He even carried me in his bird hunting vest at age two.

Ralph began teaching bird identification classes in the Arlington adult education program in 1948 and continued to 1958, when he and my mother were killed in an auto accident in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Some of his students, Jean Beck, Jane Geisler, Eleanor Pink, and Kay Sisson are still active Club members. From that nucleus of students, the Dutchess County Bird Club was formed in 1958 with Raymond Connelly as the first president. With my father's death the name was changed to the Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club in late 1959. In 1959, following in my father's footsteps, I continued teaching the adult education classes from 1958 thru 1972.

Eleanor Pink and I initiated the submission of monthly records by Club members in 1958, and it continues today. These records, kept by Eleanor from 1958-1989 and Barbara Butler since 1990, are the basis for this current book. Additionally, the Christmas Census summaries, which Florence Germond and I started in 1958, and the Club's May Census Day accounts add to the records available on the website.

Though the Club's records of the May Census cover the entire county, my own group continues to follow the original route conceived by Crosby in 1919. With major loss of habitat and huge increase in population (120,000 – 1940 and 280,000 – 2005), I notice a large decrease in warbler counts for just my group. For example, resident type warbler counts for the day dropped from an average of 150 in the '60s and '70s to below 100 in the last 10 years. Migrant warbler counts of 50 to 100 are down to 10 or under. Even the species totals for the day for the one route dropped from 120 or more to 90-100 in the last 10 years!

I should list all the fine and excellent birders I've known over some sixty years of birding, but Stan and Barbara just can't allot the space. Probably the most well-known was Roger Tory Peterson, who used to call my father "Mr. Cerulean Warbler" and who kindly drove 200 miles to come and name our son Roger Tory at his Christening in 1962.

Next on the list are my compatriots for my route on the May Census: Marion Van Wagner, the sharpest birder I ever knew; Eleanor Pink, my closest friend; and our son Fritz Waterman and daughter Krista Morris. I also have to list Florence Germond, the most vivacious, who originated the county's Bluebird Trail and did the Christmas Census and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Breeding Bird Survey with me for over 30 years. Actually, "number one" on my list is really my wife Ginny, who has put up with all my bird activities for 53 years, when I should have been home working! I also cannot fail to mention Thelma Haight and Elting Arnold, who, as part of the Thompson Pond Committee of the Nature Conservancy, almost single-handedly raised the money to purchase the Thompson Pond Preserve in the 60s and 70s. This area was a favorite birding spot for Crosby and Frost and remains a favorite for present day birders.

My Dutchess County "Life List" of species now stands at 276 and was started at age 7 in 1937 with a handful of Blue Jays at my Grandmother's feeder in Poughkeepsie. My first real "birder" birds were a Chipping Sparrow and a Rose-breasted Grosbeak in 1944 at our home, seen with my father's 1930 vintage Zeiss binoculars given to him by Ray Guernsey. My daughter Krista and son Fritz still use them occasionally!

Good birding.

OTIS WATERMAN (JULY 2006)

PREFACE

Dutchess County is fortunate to have its avian history well documented. Over 70 years ago, Ludlow Griscom published the first book, and 25 years ago the last update appeared. It is time for a new comprehensive work using the extensive records of the Waterman Bird Club. This book describes the status and history of 318 bird species found in Dutchess County, New York. Its purpose is to consolidate, summarize, and preserve all known data on Dutchess County birds, and to establish a foundation for future comparison. Based on well over one hundred years of virtually complete records, historical changes are presented in detail for each species. These changes are more extensive than generally understood and have not previously been as exhaustively documented. An astounding 45% of nesting species have started or stopped nesting since 1870. We especially hope that our readers will learn more about the birds around them and contribute to preserving our bird life for future generations.

The area covered is the entire county of Dutchess plus the adjoining Hudson River to the west shore. No attempt is made to determine whether a bird seen on or over the Hudson River is within the political jurisdiction of the county.

Dutchess County has a relatively large number of good areas in which to observe birds. While some historically productive birding sites have been lost to development, many more have been preserved. Situated near the southern edge of the breeding range of many northern birds, while also near the northern edge of the breeding range of many southern birds, the county attracts a rich variety of bird life each year. Although Dutchess County does not border the ocean, its entire western boundary is the Hudson River, a sea level estuary with tides and some salinity, which forms an attractive migration corridor. Inland areas are sufficiently elevated to enhance available habitats.

Dutchess County's bird records, dating back to the 1870s, are older and much more extensive than those existing for most counties, if not whole states. Detailed records have been kept for every month since June 1958, and for many months back to March 1945. A bird census has been conducted every May since 1919, and the Christmas Bird Count (referred to here as the Christmas Count) was first held in 1901 in Dutchess County. Migration, nesting, or other records exist for every year since 1885 for various parts of the county. Winfrid Stearns published an annotated bird list in 1880.

All sources, published and unpublished, used in creating this work are identified in the Bibliography. Approximately ten people contributed the vast majority of records prior to 1958. Since then, with the formation of the Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club, well over one hundred people have regularly contributed monthly records.

The dean of Dutchess County bird watchers was Maunsell Crosby. From 1901 to 1931, he collected data throughout the county, some of which he published. After Crosby's sudden death, his data became the basis for Ludlow Griscom's comprehensive

MAJOR SOURCES OF RECORDS

Period of Records	Source	Importance	Limitations	Where Published ^a
1879-1880	Winfrid Stearns ^b	Early, includes all species	Beacon area for only ten months	Stearns; Griscom
1870s-1880s	Edwin C. Kent	Early	Beacon area only; mostly game birds and waterfowl; no dates	Kent
1885-1925	Mary Hyatt	Migration dates to 1905; list of accidentals	Stanfordville only; few permanent residents	Eaton; Griscom
1890-1926	Arthur Bloomfield	Includes many casual specimens	Common species records lost	Griscom
1893-1904	Lispenard S. Horton	Many nesting dates	Excludes non-breeding species	Eaton; Crosby; Griscom
1901-1931	Maunsell S. Crosby	Detailed and complete	None	Crosby; Griscom
1901-date	Christmas Count	Number of years taken	Taken only eight years between 1933-57	<i>Bird-Lore</i> ; Griscom; Pink and Waterman; <i>Wings over Dutchess</i>
1919-date	May Census	Number of continuous years taken	1919-58 usually lists only species names	Crosby; Griscom; Pink and Waterman; <i>Wings over Dutchess</i>
1927-1966	John H. Baker	Covers long time period	Mostly Chestnut Ridge area; few winter records after 1939	Not published
1945-1958	Ralph T. Waterman and others ^c	Records for most months 1945-52	Inconsistent level of detail	Pink and Waterman
1958-date	Waterman Bird Club	Extensive records for every month	None	Pink and Waterman; <i>Wings over Dutchess</i> ; eBird
[a] See Bibliography for publication by the identified author as well as many other works not referenced in this table.				
[b] A limited number of early records were obtained from Philip Smith, mid-1870s; and Edgar Means, 1870s.				
[c] Unpublished journals from Marion Van Wagner for 1949-63, Eleanor Pink for 1949-58, Helen Manson Andrews for 1950-58, Otis Waterman for 1957-70, Erik Kiviat for 1972-date, and notes from George Decker for 1950s.				

work, *The Birds of Dutchess County, New York*. Griscom's tome summarizes much of the county's early bird history and was a significant source of historical information for this book.

The Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club has been very active since its inception and has generated a body of records that constitute the primary source of recent data for this book. The Waterman Bird Club was formed in 1958 to provide local birders with opportunities for bird study and observation. From the beginning, members documented bird sightings throughout Dutchess County by submitting monthly reports, normally identifying for each sighting the species, location, date, and number of individuals seen, along with the names of the people who made the observation. This data is published each month in the club newsletter, *Wings over Dutchess*. Field trips are conducted at least once a week, plus the club holds two bird censuses each year in May and December.

Four major works of New York State birds provided historical and geographic context for the Dutchess County information. In addition, they provided supplemental records of Dutchess County birds.

- 1910 and 1914 - *Birds of New York* by Elon Howard Eaton
- 1974 - *Birds of New York State* by John Bull
- 1988 - *The Atlas of Breeding Birds in New York State* edited by Robert Andrie and Janet Carroll
- 1998 - *Bull's Birds of New York State* edited by Emanuel Levine

The careful reader will notice a number of updates and corrections from previously published records. When Crosby and Griscom did their work, the records from Edwin Kent were unknown. When Eleanor Pink and Otis Waterman compiled records, John Baker's notebooks were not available, and those of Helen Manson Andrews and Marion Van Wagner, principally covering the 1950s, were not used. Erik Kiviat's extensive journals are also used for the first time in this work.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people helped us complete this work and all deserve our heartfelt thanks. Otis Waterman's supervision of the May Census and the Christmas Bird Count created important long-term indicators of population changes. We are indebted to all members of the Waterman Bird Club who submitted monthly records. Many members submitted records for 20 years and more. Eleanor Pink carefully organized those records for over 30 years, preserving the invaluable base of data that made this work possible. Those who provided extensive personal journals were Helen Manson Andrews, Erik Kiviat, Marion Van Wagner, and Otis Waterman. Mary Key shared hers and Jim Key's experiences and records. Otis Waterman, Alice Jones, Helen Andrews, Jane Geisler, and Eleanor Pink provided valuable information about early club activities and birding places that no longer exist.

While this work presents much of the information about birds in Dutchess County, a book format is impractical for some aspects with bulky amounts of data. Carena Pooth digitally produced and enhanced printed and 35mm slide photographs but new ones have grown exponentially. In addition, she made the collection of May Census and Christmas Bird Count results available in spreadsheet format.

Tenny Brinckerhoff told us about Allen Frost and birding at Jackson Pond. Peter McGivney at Howland Public Library in Beacon, Paul Sweet at the American Museum

of Natural History, Tom Hayward at the Bates College Library, and the staffs of Vassar College Library, Bowdoin College Library, the Carl A. Kroch Library at Cornell University, and the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard University all provided access to hard-to-find publications and documents. The staff of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library was most helpful with items in their collections. Sylvia Roberts of the Millbrook School provided access to the school's extensive banding records, and Jonathan Meigs provided Trevor Zoo records of injured local birds. Margaret Dykens at the San Diego Natural History Museum library and Bill Evarts provided journals and pictures from Bill's grandfather Clinton Abbott. Art Jones and the staff of the Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery helped trace the backgrounds of various individuals. Tim Holls helped with historical details for both people and places. The Adriance Memorial Library in Poughkeepsie provided access to microfilmed newspapers.

We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to those who came before us and left documented records. At a minimum, they include John Baker, Arthur Bloomfield, Maunsell Crosby, Edwin Kent, Allen Frost, Ludlow Griscom, Lispernard Horton, Mary Hyatt, Winfred Stearns, and Ralph Waterman.

The book *Connecticut Birds* by Joseph Zeranski and Thomas Baptist provides excellent accounts of recent and historical records for the area east of Dutchess County. The format is very similar to that of this book; indeed, it was an example we emulated.

Lorrayn Pickerell edited the entire work and made it much more readable. Otis Waterman reviewed the entire work and kept us honest on questionable statements. Gary Lovett reviewed the "Nature and Use of the Land" chapter and helped with historical weather data. Carena Pooth and Ken Fredericks also reviewed drafts and made many valuable suggestions. We are indebted to them all. The authors alone take responsibility for any errors, omissions, or bad judgment.

SUPPLEMENTAL DATA

In conjunction with this work, a number of computer files were created and are available from the Waterman Bird Club. These files, which will be updated on an ongoing basis, include spreadsheets of the May Census, Christmas Count, Waterfowl Count, and Bluebird Trail data. Updates of this book and other data have also been added.

Visit www.WatermanBirdClub.org, the Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club Internet website, for summaries of monthly records from 2001, the club's calendar of events, a Field Check List, a guide to Dutchess County's birding hotspots, club membership, and much more.

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THE HISTORY OF ORNITHOLOGY IN DUTCHESS COUNTY

FROM DISCOVERY TO 1870

The first stage in studying birds is to find and name them. When Europeans first stepped ashore in the New World, literally everything was new, including the vast majority of bird species. Regardless, they assigned familiar names to seemingly familiar birds, such as Martin, Redstart and Robin. It is unfortunate that the Indians were not able to impart their knowledge of local wildlife. Certainly they were well acquainted with the variety of birds and the timings of their passages.

The first Europeans to arrive were more interested in discovery and exploration than studying nature, including Henry Hudson, the first European to see the future Dutchess County. When he sailed the river that now bears his name in September 1609, Hudson kept a journal, but it does not provide details of local birds. The first Europeans to settle what became Dutchess County arrived by the mid-1600s, but their time was consumed eking out a living from the land.

Rudimentary documents from early explorers and settlers hint at a different composition of bird life than found in the 1800s. Tales are told of flocks of White Pelicans and Cranes passing overhead, of Wild Turkeys and Passenger Pigeons filling the forests. Alexander Wilson (1766-1813) was the first to fully describe the birds found in the eastern states. His book *American Ornithology* was published from 1808 to 1814 in nine volumes. He apparently never came to Dutchess County, although he twice sailed the Hudson River, from Albany to New York City in November 1804, and from New York City to Albany in September 1812.

By the early nineteenth century writings survive that mention birds specifically seen in Dutchess County. Dr. John Bachman, for whom a warbler is named, visited Dutchess County in 1812 and recorded Gadwalls raised from a pair captured on a local mill pond in 1809. In his book *Birds of Long Island*, published in 1844, Jacob P. Giraud, Jr. documented a White-rumped Sandpiper seen near Poughkeepsie. And James D. Hyatt¹ told of the Red-headed Woodpecker being rather common from 1838 to 1850. Also in 1844, James E. DeKay (1792-1851) published the first book to focus only on New York State birds, *Zoology of New York, Birds*.²

By the Civil War, the birds of the Northeast were known, but the timings of migration and especially their breeding and wintering territories were largely unknown. Details needed to be recorded at the local level.

1870-1900 — LOCAL PEOPLE, LOCAL BIRDS

For the 1870s, we find three sources of limited local bird information—the chapter on zoology in the *General History of Du[t]chess County*, by Philip H. Smith; *List of Birds of the Hudson Highlands*, by Edgar A. Mearns (1856-1916); and *The Isle of Long Ago, Sporting Days*, by Edwin C. Kent³ (1856-1938). Each of these works gives an intriguing glimpse into bird life in Dutchess County. Smith, whose work is interesting but too general to be very informative for many species, tells of the House Sparrow, a recently introduced species with “a contentious disposition.” Mearns’ work is excellent and complete but largely covers the area around Highland Falls (West Point), including Dutchess County only in its broader area. Kent’s book relates memories of hunting and fishing around Fishkill-on-Hudson (Beacon) from the perspective of 60 years. By focusing on hunting, he excludes the vast majority of song birds, although he weaves the only known first person account of the Passenger Pigeon in Dutchess County as it was being slaughtered into extinction.

Naturalist Winfrid A. Stearns (1852-1909) wrote the original manuscript of *New England Bird Life*, heavily edited by Elliott Coues. He also wrote on the natural history of Labrador, which he visited shortly after leaving Dutchess County.⁴ Stearns spent ten months in Fishkill-on-Hudson (Beacon) from September 1879 through June 1880, during which time he compiled and published the first annotated local list of birds of Dutchess County, numbering 132 species.⁵ The list is important due to its age and for brief but informative annotations. Most of Stearns’ records were supported by specimens, including some from local collectors. Like Kent, Stearns is focused on the Beacon area and thus misses birds found elsewhere in the county. Since he was here for under one year, he also missed the less frequently occurring birds, notably shorebirds.

On the other side of the county at Honeymead Brook, Stanfordville, Miss Mary Hyatt⁶ (1862-1940) tracked spring arrival dates beginning in 1885, as well as species of casual occurrence. Her original lists survive.⁷ Hyatt listed only birds seen at her farm, so misses waterfowl, shorebirds, and any others found elsewhere in the county.

By the 1880s, “bird watching,” to the degree it existed, was in fact “bird shooting.” The field guide had yet to be developed and binoculars were expensive. Identification often required close examination of the body, which in turn generated large collections of bird skins. In 1893, Lisenard S. Horton⁸ (1878-1942), then living in Gretna, started a collection of bird eggs. He also photographed young birds and nests, keeping extensive notes on nesting dates.⁹ Beginning as early as 1904, many of his photographs were published in various books and magazines.¹⁰ When Elon Howard Eaton (1866-1934) was compiling his state book, *Birds of New York*, he turned to both Hyatt and Horton for Dutchess County data, which yielded a list of 152 species.

Pre-1900 bird records are often detailed in shooting journals kept by hunters of the period. While Dutchess County has a large number of hunt clubs, some established before 1900, no true hunt journal is known to have survived. Kent’s book comes the closest, although Stearns included some data supplied by hunters.

Another early collector was Arthur Bloomfield¹¹ (1866-1943) of Hyde Park, who assembled and mounted an extensive collection of bird skins from 1890 to about 1919.¹² When he and Crosby met in 1923, Bloomfield added ten previously unrecorded species¹³ to Crosby’s recently published Dutchess County list. Franklin Roosevelt was well aware of Bloomfield and his interests.¹⁴ Young Roosevelt played with the children of neighbor Col. Archibald Rogers, where Bloomfield was the butler. Bloomfield introduced Roosevelt to taxidermy.

Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882-1945) was interested in nature and birds. At the age of 14, he kept a bird diary of every species heard or seen around Hyde Park between January and June 1896, when he left for the family summer home on Campobello Island, Canada. That same year he shot and mounted a number of birds, which remain on display at his home, and also collected Pine Grosbeaks for Frank Chapman at the American Museum of Natural History.¹⁵

Vassar College received three noted bird skin collections from this period. In 1867 Jacob Post Giraud, Jr.¹⁶ (1811-1870) donated about 700 North American bird skins, including 13 which had belonged to Audubon. He also provided funds to start a museum. Prof. James H. Orton, the Vassar Museum curator in the 1870s, contributed about 500 South American bird skins. And in 1904, Curtis Clay Young from Brooklyn gave 500 bird skins and 463 eggs, some from Dutchess County. Two of the rarer skins were sold in 1965 to the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto¹⁷ — a Labrador Duck, and the Great Auk originally given to John James Audubon and the model for his painting. Both are extinct; neither occurred in Dutchess County. The Vassar College collection was dispersed by 1980 with the majority of it going to the New York State Museum. Vassar Brothers' Institute also housed a collection of bird skins dating from the 1880s.¹⁸

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Advertisement for Frederic Stack of Poughkeepsie from Davis' Standard Collectors Directory, 1895.

Courtesy Stan DeOrsey

Eugene Bicknell (1859-1925), for whom a thrush was named, was there as well. All were dispersed when their museum closed in 1951. Today, historic collections are on display at the Akin Library in Pawling and the Grinnell Library in Wappingers Falls.

There was also a segment of people, including Horton, interested primarily in bird nesting. This interest usually manifested itself through studying and collecting birds' eggs, known as oology. Oology provided insights into when and where birds nested, data still valuable today. To meet the needs of egg collectors, entrepreneurs sprang up to sell supplies, including Frederic W. Stack (1870-1915) of Poughkeepsie.

Charles Francis Dieterich (1836-1927) exemplified another aspect of the nineteenth century interest in birds. Dieterich began buying property in Millbrook in 1889 and ultimately created an elaborate estate reminiscent of his native Bavaria. He imported European mammals and birds,

which he liberated on his estate. Full details of bird releases are unknown, but they included both game and song birds.¹⁹

Frank M. Chapman (1864-1945), curator of birds at the American Museum of Natural History, wrote the first book to approach field use, *Handbook of Birds of Eastern North America*, published in 1895 with subsequent editions. While the handbook contains some illustrations, it is a text-based guide. Prior to this, the major source of bird knowledge came from *Key to North American Birds*, published in 1872 by Elliott Coues. It contains long sequences of yes-no identification questions. Bloomfield is known to have relied on Coues. In 1905 Chester A. Reed (1876-1912) from Massachusetts produced two small pocket *Bird Guides* for Land Birds and Water Birds with a colored picture of each adult spring bird.²⁰ Although not helpful for all variations in plumage, the guides were very popular.

All of these people made significant contributions to the knowledge of birds in Dutchess County. They were the pioneers. Their work, the availability of improved books, the burgeoning Audubon movement to educate people and protect birds, and the first laws to reduce hunting on breeding grounds all contributed to an expanded interest in birds. Thus the stage was set for the era of local clubs and local publications.

1900-1931 — THE MAUNSELL CROSBY ERA

In 1899, Maunsell Schieffelin Crosby²¹ (1887-1931), having recently lived in Egypt, returned to Grasmere, an estate on the south side of Rhinebeck village purchased by his parents in 1894.²² Crosby may have developed an interest in birds through his father²³ or his maternal grandparents. His grandmother released Skylarks in 1896-97 and his great-uncle, Eugene Schieffelin, introduced Starlings to North America in 1890. However, his summer tutor, Clinton Abbott, taught him the ways of birds. In 1901 at the age of 14, Crosby conducted the first Christmas Count in Dutchess County, the second year of the national count begun by Frank Chapman. Crosby continued leading Christmas Counts until his death. By 1909, he had begun keeping a journal of detailed bird notes, a habit he continued all his life and perhaps learned from Abbott, who kept a journal from at least 1902.

Clinton G. Abbott (1881-1946) was born in England of American parents. He came to the United States in 1897 and soon attended Columbia University. He was hired as a tutor for Maunsell Crosby during the summers of 1900 and 1901 at Grasmere. They spent a great deal of time identifying birds, finding their nests, and photographing them, while developing a strong and continuing friendship. In subsequent years Abbott frequently spent part of his vacations and holiday weekends at Grasmere. In 1915 he bought a farm in Rhinebeck, which he ran as a business, and moved there in 1917. Abbott was also an accomplished nature writer and photographer of young birds and nests.²⁴

Crosby graduated from Harvard University in 1908 and was active in civic affairs, becoming widely known throughout the county. He cultivated fruit trees and maintained a herd of Brown Swiss cattle. From at least 1915, a number of local people accompanied Crosby on birding field trips. They included Allen Frost, George W. Gray, Ray Guernsey, Charles Moulton,²⁵ and Edmund Platt,²⁶ among others, all from the Poughkeepsie area. Crosby visited most of Dutchess County in each season and was the first to compile a bird list for the entire county. In 1919, Frost suggested Crosby conduct a spring migration census, and they soon did.²⁷ The May Census, which continues today, became an eagerly awaited event with others joining Crosby and Frost. They would start



Clinton Abbott photographing bird nest at Grasmere, June 28, 1905.

Taken by Maunsell Crosby.

Courtesy Bill Evarts

by 3AM after an evening party. The story is told of Crosby pulling a pistol from his belt at Thompson Pond, firing in the air, then listening for a response from rails,²⁸ apparently a common practice.

In November 1914, the Rhinebeck Bird Club was formed as part of the Audubon movement promoted by Chapman in response to the wanton killing of birds, particularly egrets for lady's fashions, and the threatened extinction of the Passenger Pigeon, Wood Duck, Snowy Egret, and others. Clubs sprang up in many states and cities. A Millbrook Bird Club was formed by 1915, but appears to have withered quickly.²⁹ Vassar College started the first bird club in the county in 1895, soon named the Wake Robin Club.³⁰ They studied birds and regularly visited John Burroughs at West Park.

It is not clear if Crosby or Abbott was the driving force behind the Rhinebeck club, most likely it was both. Crosby was president and Abbott was secretary and a frequent speaker. With their support, the club flourished. In 1920 they had 119 members, including F.W. Vanderbilt, Warren Delano, Mrs. Vincent Astor, Mrs. Ogden Mills, and Margaret Suckley. Dues were 50 cents per year. In addition to featuring prominent speakers at their meetings, such as Louis Agassiz Fuertes and T. Gilbert Pearson, and fostering a very active school program with nearly 300 junior members, they published yearbooks.³¹ In October 1921

Abbott moved to California and became director of the San Diego Natural History Museum. With his departure and Crosby's competing activities, the club no longer published annual reports³² and seems to have disbanded about 1924.

In 1914 and 1915, Crosby wrote an excellent series of articles, generally two per month, for the *Rhinebeck Gazette*. They covered the progression of bird life through the year. The Rhinebeck Bird Club republished them in a yearbook under the title "Rhinebeck Birds and Seasons." Additionally, Crosby began to track every species of bird seen in Dutchess County plus their migration and nesting dates. He had previously published a list of 128 birds in the Oct. 23, 1909, *Rhinebeck Gazette*. In 1916 and 1917, the Bird Club published his small folders of migration and nesting dates and gave one to every school child. In 1921, they published Crosby's "Preliminary List" of 229 species from Dutchess County. These publications were far and away the most complete description of bird life in Dutchess County assembled up to that time. Crosby continued to add to the bird list and contacted anyone who had data. However Bloomfield was not contacted until after the "Preliminary List" was published.

Coincident with collecting records, Crosby was also a bird bander and ardent field trip leader. For 1915-17 and 1920-23, Crosby conducted a breeding bird census at Grasmere, totaling 66 species.³³ His home was always open to his birding friends, and

his Dutchess County field trips became legendary. Beginning in 1922, from March through May, he conducted field trips for spring migration, and in October and November, trips for fall ducks. Extra trips were added at any time. The majority of trips were around Rhinebeck or Cruger Island, with occasional trips to Thompson Pond or Poughkeepsie. Crosby was often accompanied by his friends from the Linnaean Society of New York and the American Museum of Natural History. They included such luminaries as Ludlow Griscom, Roger Tory Peterson, and John H. Baker, among many others.

Ludlow Griscom (1890-1959), then Assistant Curator of Ornithology at the American Museum of Natural History, first came to Grasmere in 1921 and claims to have been the most frequent visitor, often spending his vacations there.³⁴ It was Griscom who revolutionized bird watching by advocating bird identification by sight versus the barrel of a gun.

Crosby desired to publish a book on Dutchess County birds. He had collected all the necessary data and even arranged for the Vassar Brothers' Institute in Poughkeepsie to publish it.³⁵ Many times he spoke about it to Griscom. Indeed, from 1909 Griscom had been collecting similar data on New York City birds and was writing his own book, *Birds of the New York City Region*, for which Crosby reviewed proofs. Unfortunately, before Crosby was able to publish his work, he was hospitalized for appendicitis and died from complications on Feb. 12, 1931.

Griscom and Crosby's friends at the Linnaean Society, particularly John H. Baker and William Vogt, decided to publish Crosby's data as a memorial. Crosby had bequeathed all his notes and journals to Griscom. With some help from Frost and Baker, in 1933 Griscom published what Crosby had largely already compiled in *The Birds of*



Lunch in Turkey Hollow, about 1920. Left to right: Allen Frost, Edmond Platt, Maunsell Crosby, and Charles Moulton. Likely taken by George Gray.

From Griscom, 1933

Dutchess County, New York. It identified 245 species. Dutchess County is fortunate to have such a thorough book published by such an eminent author. It is one of a few early county bird books.

In 1941 Frost secured Crosby's original journals from Griscom for inclusion in the Dutchess County history collection of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.³⁶

1931-1945 — PRESERVING THE INTEREST

With the passing of Crosby, Allen Frost³⁷ (1877-1946) became the focal point for bird activity in the county. Frost held various financial positions but preferred nature. He was curator of the Vassar Brothers' Institute from 1925 until his death. He established a bird study club for local students from about 1924 to 1928, which met at the Institute.³⁸ He was also very active in the Boy Scouts. Frost kept records from at least 1912 and often went afield with George W. Gray and Crosby from about 1915. While Frost and Gray continued the May Census after Crosby's death, they did not continue the Christmas Count.

In 1941 with the opening of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Frost took a position on the staff. James Whitehead, also on the staff and interested in birds, accompanied Frost on the 1941 May Census. Another staff member, Margaret "Daisy" Suckley (1891-1991), asked to participate in 1942. She had been a member of the Rhinebeck Bird Club while growing up at Wilderstein.³⁹ Suckley was close to Roosevelt and in February asked if he would like to participate in the census. He expressed "keen interest" and plans were made.⁴⁰ It was decided to invite Griscom, then Research Curator of Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology, since he knew the President and had participated in the early years. In spite of Griscom's different political leaning, he went.⁴¹ Ray Guernsey had become a regular participant and also attended.

When the day came, Sunday, May 10, 1942, Whitehead drove the others, arriving at Roosevelt's home at 4AM. The President was ready, having been up at 3AM. Frost took the front seat to direct the chauffeur; Suckley and Griscom rode in the back with the President. The Secret Service car followed, and Whitehead and Guernsey were last. They drove to Thompson Pond with a few stops along the way to hear Whip-poor-wills "of course," and to lower the President's convertible top. They reached Thompson Pond a little after 5AM and listened to the various marsh birds call, Virginia Rails, Sora, Bitterns, Marsh Wrens, and others. Apparently no one fired a pistol this time! They told stories and the President had a grand time. As it became light, it started to drizzle; two pictures were taken and the President left about 7:30.⁴²

On at least one other occasion, Roosevelt birded Dutchess County as President. On Friday, October 8, 1943, Margaret Suckley rode to Cruger Island with both President and Mrs. Roosevelt. Suckley recorded that they drove beside the railroad tracks and "watched thousands of birds collecting for the night." She further records, "The President is awfully interested, birds being one of his many hobbies. Mrs. Roosevelt was frankly not specially interested."⁴³

An alumnus of Crosby's field trips, John H. Baker⁴⁴ (1894-1973), a New York City investment banker, became president of the Linnaean Society of New York in 1933. In 1934 he was named executive director of the National Association of Audubon Societies. In this capacity he was the driving force behind rejuvenating the National Audubon Society, acquiring Corkscrew Cypress Swamp in Florida, starting Screen Tours, establishing Audubon Camps in Maine, and much more. His first day on the job he hired



May Census, about 7AM, May 10, 1942, at Thompson Pond. Left to right: Ray Guernsey, Allen Frost, Franklin Roosevelt, Margaret Suckley, and Ludlow Griscom. Photograph taken by James Whitehead.

Courtesy Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

Roger Tory Peterson (1908-1996) who was just finishing *A Field Guide to the Birds*, the book that transformed bird identification and contributed to popularizing birding.⁴⁵

By 1931, Baker had purchased a farm on Chestnut Ridge, Union Vale, on which he raised Aberdeen-Angus cattle and from which he also led field trips with Peterson, Richard Pough, and others. He kept extensive records from 1927 to 1966 of birds seen in Dutchess County.⁴⁶

George Gray⁴⁷ (1885-1948), an early birding associate of Frost and then Crosby, participated in the May Census from the beginning until his death. Much of his time was spent about the extensive Greenvale Farms and Gray's Riding Academy on New Hackensack Rd., Poughkeepsie.

Raymond Guernsey⁴⁸ (1878-1959), an attorney in Poughkeepsie, was another ardent birder who birded with Crosby and Frost from about 1920. He participated in early May Censuses, missing few through 1956. Guernsey and Frost conducted Christmas Counts again in 1940 and 1944.

Frank Gardner, Jr.⁴⁹ (1906-1957) was an avid birder, Boy Scout merit badge examiner, and insurance agent from Poughkeepsie. He was a "Frost Boy," a member of Frost's bird study club, and participated directly in the May Censuses from 1927 until 1956.

The work of Frost, Baker, and others in collecting and preserving data, as well as encouraging an interest in bird life, formed a firm bridge between the work of Crosby and that of Ralph Waterman for Dutchess County birds.

1945-1958 — RALPH T. WATERMAN'S INFLUENCE

Ralph T. Waterman (1901-1958) was an insurance agent and active fisherman when, in 1943, he became a Boy Scout scoutmaster. It was while helping the scouts learn local birds for a merit badge that he became intrigued himself, thus began his devoted association with the world of birds. Frost, Guernsey, and others were his mentors.

In 1945, Waterman participated in the May Census with Frost, Guernsey, Gray, and Gardner. The next year his 15-year old son Otis participated. Allen Frost passed away Jan. 9, 1946, having asked Waterman to take responsibility for organizing the May Census and keeping local bird records.⁵⁰

Starting in 1948 at the urging of Eleanor Pink, Ralph Waterman taught bird identification classes at Arlington High School as part of adult education. He also became a well-known speaker on birds, and printed a checklist⁵¹ of the "Birds of Dutchess County." His enthusiasm led to the formation of the Dutchess County Bird Club in April 1949 with 17 members, including Frank Gardner and Ralph Palmer, Vassar College professor and newly named New York State Zoologist. Ray Guernsey was president, Waterman vice-president, and Marion Van Wagner secretary / treasurer.⁵² George Decker and Helen Manson were also early members. The club continued to hold the May Census every year. Waterman did a Christmas Count in 1946 and from 1948 to 1951 with the club participating only in 1950. Apparently 1947 was missed, possibly due to heavy snowfall. However, none of the results were submitted for national publication.



Thompson and Stissing Ponds, June 3, 1951, with members of the Dutchess County Bird Club. Left to right: two unknown, Eleanor Pink, Karen and Marion Van Wagner, Danforth Munsell, Ralph Waterman, Natalie Mestechin, Jane Geisler, Helen Manson, Mabel Brewster, and Louisa Chrystal. Photograph by Bill Chrystal.

Courtesy Waterman Bird Club

In 1952, Waterman began spending winters at Myrtle Beach, S.C., and Christmas Counts were again discontinued. Over time the club held fewer meetings and began to drift apart, though a few loyal followers continued to bird together and to keep records. During the summer of 1958, students from Waterman's bird identification classes held an informal meeting at Baird State Park with the purpose of restarting the club. Interest was high and on Sept. 9, 1958 the Dutchess County Bird Club was formally reborn with 71 members.⁵³

Waterman was vacationing at Myrtle Beach, S.C. on Nov. 20, 1958, when he, his wife, and two friends were killed in a violent automobile crash. On the first anniversary of his death, the club he founded was renamed in his honor.

1958-PRESENT — THE RALPH T. WATERMAN BIRD CLUB

The Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club continues to be very active, having over 300 members. It provides opportunity for the study and observation of birds, and promotes conservation by educating the public through nature walks, lectures, publications, and related programs.

Members have continued both the May Census and the Christmas Count. A Waterfowl Count in conjunction with the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs was added in 1960. For many years Otis Waterman and other club members continued the identification classes that Otis's father Ralph Waterman began. In 1962 Florence Germond began a Bluebird Trail. It has been very successful, fledging six that first year and over one thousand in 1992.⁵⁴ Otis Waterman and Florence Germond also covered a Breeding Bird Survey route from Rhinebeck to Pine Plains from 1966 into the 1990s. For a number of years, the club held a Hawk Watch at various locations,⁵⁵ but Dutchess County is not on a prime hawk migration path and the watch was discontinued.

In 1959, the Waterman Bird Club joined the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs which was founded in 1949 and publishes a quarterly journal, *The Kingbird*. The Federation was renamed the New York State Ornithological Association in 2003. The Waterman Bird Club contributes their records and occasional articles to that journal. Beginning in 1980 and again in 2000, the entire state was surveyed for a Breeding Bird Atlas, contributing greatly to updated breeding coverage of Dutchess County. Barbara Butler coordinated both atlas projects for Dutchess County.

Bird walks have always been the best way to learn birds. They also provide a social aspect that is key to building a dependable core. Initially walks were held monthly, but midweek walks were added in March 1961. Walks are now held every Wednesday



*Jim Southward helps
Florence Germond install
a new bluebird box on
March 31, 1962.
Photograph taken by Roz
Davis.*

Courtesy Waterman Bird Club

throughout the year, plus many weekends. Attendance of 20 to 30 is normal for most walks. Club meetings are held monthly, with an Annual Dinner meeting in November.

A newsletter also contributes greatly to a club. The Waterman Bird Club has published a monthly newsletter, *Wings over Dutchess*, continuously since November 1960. Each issue includes an extensive list of birds reported for the previous month, plus news and reports of recent walks. Members compiled a birding guide, *Where to Bird in Dutchess County*, in 1977 and updated it in 1990, with Barbara Butler as editor. Bill Consiglio began a weekly newspaper column on all aspects of birding. Helen Manson soon took it over and continued writing for many years in the *Millbrook Roundtable*, *Southern Dutchess News*, and other weekly papers. In 2001, Carena Pooth created an Internet website for the club, www.watermanbirdclub.org. It includes the records and other items from the newsletter, as well as photographs, both current and historical, and other information.

From the beginning of the Waterman Bird Club, assembling Dutchess County bird records has been a high priority activity, originally led by Eleanor Pink and Otis Waterman. Club members contribute monthly reports of their sightings, which are added to lists from field trips and published in *Wings Over Dutchess*. Initially Eleanor Pink compiled the monthly records. Beginning December 1968, records were sent to compilers who prepared the report for the newsletter. Among the long-serving compilers are Eleanor Pink, Marion Van Wagner, Mary Key, Helen Manson, Otis Waterman, Florence Germond, Alice Jones, Barbara Butler, Stan DeOrsey, Barbara Michelin, and Carena Pooth. There are now nearly 50 years of continuous monthly records for Dutchess County.

As Records Chairman, Eleanor Pink kept all the reports and compilations and transcribed most of the records onto a set of index cards for each bird. In 1989 she turned the records over to the Barbara Butler, who created a computer database to contain records since 1990. Otis Waterman compiled the results of the May Census and the Christmas Count until recently. The club records also formed the basis of two updates to *Birds of Dutchess County* by Griscom. Eleanor Pink and Otis Waterman prepared the updates published in 1967 and 1980.

Current avian related facilities in Dutchess County include the Rockefeller University Field Research Center in Millbrook. The center conducts research on varied topics, including an intensive program on bird songs. The Hudson Valley Raptor Center in Stanfordville rehabilitates about one hundred injured raptors yearly, the majority due to automobile collisions. The Trevor Zoo, part of the Millbrook School, teaches animal care and helps injured birds. At various times the school has had an active bird banding program.

Dutchess County has a rich history associated with birds from many perspectives, which continues today through the activities of the Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club.

NOTES

- [1] Mary Hyatt's father, quote recorded in Mary Hyatt's Occasional Visitants list.
- [2] DeKay published his work in six parts, each focusing on a different class of animals. Birds are covered in part 2, but no specific record from Dutchess County is mentioned beyond a statement of White Pelicans numerous on the Hudson River, p.294.
- [3] Obituary, *Auk* 1942, p.142.
- [4] Winfrid Stearns, *Labrador: a sketch of its peoples, its industries and its natural history*. 1884.
- [5] Stearns also published a *List of Plants of Fishkill, N.Y. and vicinity*, 1880, privately printed.
- [6] Obituary, *Poughkeepsie Eagle-News*, March 9, 1940.

- [7] Hyatt's lists of migrant arrival dates from 1885 to 1905 and Occasional Visitants to 1925 are in the collection of the Waterman Bird Club. They were given to the club by Thelma Haight, having been found in a yard sale!
- [8] Obituary, *Poughkeepsie New Yorker*, July 15, 1942. Minimal detail. Gretna was a small named location in northwestern Pleasant Valley.
- [9] Griscom, p.16.
- [10] Horton's known published photographs are listed in the bibliography.
- [11] Obituary, *Poughkeepsie New Yorker*, March 23, 1943. Called "local ornithologist." Minimal detail.
- [12] Griscom, p.16-18. The latest record from Bloomfield is 1923.
- [13] It is not clear which ten species these would be, certainly Upland Sandpiper, Dovekie, Pileated Woodpecker, Bicknell's Thrush, and Prothonotary Warbler; probably Whimbrel and Great Gray Owl; likely Redhead and Black Scoter; and possibly Tufted Titmouse.
- [14] It was Roosevelt who told Crosby about Bloomfield. Griscom, p.17.
- [15] Franklin Roosevelt, Bird Diary entry for Feb. 18, 1896.
- [16] Witmer Stone, "Jacob Post Giraud, Jr., and his Works," *Auk*, 1919, pp.464-72. "A Letter of J.P. Giraud, Jr." *Auk*, 1921, pp.314-5. John Belknap, "Jacob Post Giraud, Jr." *Kingbird*, May 1960. About 1860 Giraud moved to Poughkeepsie, residing on the Albany Post Rd. (South Road) at Hemlock, the estate adjacent to Locust Grove on the south.
- [17] The sale of the Great Auk is told by the Royal Ontario Museum at www.rom.on.ca/biodiversity/auk.
- [18] Stevenson, 1884, is a list of bird skins in the Vassar Brothers' Institute museum, but no details are provided. Many of the skins apparently came from the Poughkeepsie Society of Natural History.
- [19] Phillips, p.49; "American Game Parks" in *Forest and Stream*, July 4, 1896, p.6.
- [20] Reed also published thin booklets titled *Wild Birds of New England* and *Wild Birds of New York* in 1912 with bar graphs for bird abundance by month, the earliest known use of that format.
- [21] Obituaries, *Auk* 1931, p.320, and *Natural History*, 1931, pp.219-220.
- [22] Maunsell Crosby, "The Story of Grasmere," *Dutchess County Historical Society Yearbook*, 1929, pp.24-25, and Sari B. Tietjen, *Rhinebeck; Portrait of a Town*, 1990, pp.221-225. Both describe the history of Grasmere.
- [23] Ernest Howard Crosby (1856-1907) published a short note as well as two poems about birds in *Bird-Lore* (1902, 1916). A reformer and author, he had been appointed a judge on the International Court at Alexandria, Egypt.
- [24] Abbott wrote a book, *The Home-Life of the Osprey*, published in 1911. He also wrote the section on birds for the Boy Scout *Handbook*. A selection from his 1905 Journal was published in *Wings over Dutchess*, May 2005.
- [25] Charles W. Moulton was a professor at Vassar College. He died Sept. 13, 1924.
- [26] Edmund P. Platt (1865-1939) was author of *The Eagle's History of Poughkeepsie*, 1905. He became editor of *The Poughkeepsie Eagle* newspaper in 1907 and from 1912 served five terms as a U.S. Congressman. His uncle was cofounder of Luckey Platt & Co. department store.
- [27] This beginning of the May Census is described in Crosby (1925).
- [28] Florence Page Jaques, *Birds Across the Sky*, 1942, p.7.
- [29] *Second Annual Report of the Rhinebeck Bird Club*, p.55. Clinton Abbott presented an illustrated talk on "Dutchess County Birds" to the Millbrook Bird Club.
- [30] Harry Haring, ed. *Slabsides Book of John Burroughs*, 1931, final chapter by Caroline Furness.
- [31] Interesting articles and a list of members were published in each yearbook.
- [32] Abbott also submitted short yearly summaries of club activities to *Bird-Lore*. Crosby continued this until 1923. See *Bird-Lore*, 1918, pp.106-108 and p.502.
- [33] A census was also conducted at Grasmere on July 4, 1904, when 59 species were found.
- [34] Crosby would also travel extensively through the southern United States and Central America, often with Griscom, on collecting trips under the auspices of the American Museum of Natural History. Griscom and Crosby jointly published "Birds of the Brownsville region, southern Texas," *Auk*, 1925, pp.432-440, 519-537; 1926, pp.18-36. This work remains a classic of that region.
- [35] Letter from Crosby to Hyatt dated May 3, 1924, in collection of Waterman Bird Club.
- [36] Letter from Griscom to Frost dated Oct. 6, 1941, in collection of Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.
- [37] Obituaries, *Poughkeepsie New Yorker*, Jan. 14, 1946, and *Auk* 1948, p.649.
- [38] Per. Conv. with Joseph TenEyck Brinckerhoff (1905-2003), a member of the bird study club. Crosby's Journal entry for May 11, 1924, census day, mentions "Frost's Boys." Helen Dickinson, Ken Flewelling, Jackson Ketcham, and Frank Gardner were also active study club members.
- [39] In 1985, Margaret Suckley joined the Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club, the only person known to have belonged to both the Rhinebeck and Waterman clubs.
- [40] Whitehead memo dated May 20, 1942, in collection of Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.
- [41] William Davis, *Dean of the Birdwatchers*, 1994, pp.128-130. Griscom stayed at Suckley's home, *Wings*

over Dutchess, April 1985.

[42] Whitehead memo dated May 20, 1942. Geoffrey Ward, *Closest Companion*, 1995, pp.157-158.

[43] Geoffrey Ward, *Closest Companion*, 1995, p.248.

[44] Obituary, *Auk*, 1974, p.679.

[45] Peterson credits Clinton Abbott with first encouraging him to write *A Field Guide to Western Birds*, in Preface.

[46] Baker's records are in the collection of the Waterman Bird Club.

[47] Obituary, *Poughkeepsie New Yorker*, Nov. 17, 1948.

[48] Obituary, *Auk*, 1961, p.123.

[49] Obituary, *Poughkeepsie New Yorker*, Nov. 6, 1957.

[50] Otis Waterman, "Ralph T. Waterman Remembered," *Wings over Dutchess*, April 1983.

[51] By 1940 the first checklist for Dutchess County birds was printed as a small card, possibly by Allen Frost in association with Vassar Brothers' Institute. Ralph Waterman reprinted these, later adding the heading "Dutchess County Bird Club." Not updated, it retained the birds listed by Griscom. In 1960, cards were printed with new species (including Rock Pigeon), the "Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club" name, plus symbols for nesting, accidental, and sight-record-only. Updates in 1969 and 1977 added more species and a code for when each bird was present. The bar graph format was introduced in 1985. In 1998, a larger sheet allowed adding Where to Bird locations. This was updated in 2001.

[52] Secretary minutes and membership roster in collection of Waterman Bird Club.

[53] Helen Manson, "The First Twenty-five Years," *Wings over Dutchess*, April 1983.

[54] See Eastern Bluebird species account for further details on the Bluebird Trail history and results.

[55] Hawk watches were held on Mt. Beacon in the 1960s, on Dutchess Hill in the 1970s, and finally on Quaker Hill.

The Nature and Use of the Land

Dutchess County lies in the Hudson Valley of eastern New York, between the Hudson River and Connecticut. The county is midway between Albany and New York City, bounded to the north by Columbia County and to the south by Putnam County. The panhandle at the northeastern corner touches Massachusetts. The area encompasses 804 square miles or 514,600 acres¹ and lies between the parallels of 42° 27' and 42° 5' north latitude. The meridian 74° west from Greenwich passes about a mile west of the most western point in the county. The longitude of the eastern boundary is approximately 73° 30'.

To describe the terrain, Griscom used much of the characterization found in the 1909 Dutchess County Soil Survey. As such features do not change, it is repeated here. "Dutchess County possesses an uneven or diversified surface. It has no very extensive level or undulating areas, but hills and ridges...are common ...cut by a number of trough-like valleys... The elevations...range from sea-level on the Hudson River, which here has a tidal flow [not brackish however], to a little over 2300 feet on the highest mountain [Brace Mt.] in the extreme northeast corner of the County... The mountainous part of the County lies along the southern and eastern boundaries. The Fishkill Mountains, which are a part of the Hudson Highlands, begin at the extreme southwest corner of the County [and] continue along the southern boundary... North of Tenmile River...the mountainous topography follows the eastern side of the Dover Valley, continuing along the Connecticut State line...culminating in Brace or Monument Mountain... and on into the State of Massachusetts, where there are still higher points. There are three main interior valleys...[whose] trend is from northeast to southwest... the Wappinger Valley,...the valley of Fishkill Creek...and...the...valley occupied by Tenmile River, and its tributaries. The first two flow into the Hudson River, the last-named into the Housatonic. There are also several smaller creeks and a number of ponds, either artificial or dammed by debris deposited by glaciers."

Nearly 50 miles of Hudson River shoreline are in Dutchess County. The four to five foot tides affect the shore, coves, and all tributaries upstream to the first dam or waterfall. The salt front is generally well south of the county, reaching Newburgh Bay in the late summer and occasionally approaching Poughkeepsie in drought years. Such conditions make Dutchess County's river shoreline part of an unusual habitat, a freshwater, tidal estuary. The rugged slopes lining much of the shore allow for little shorebird habitat. In climate data collected at Millbrook from 1951 to 1988, average daily low and high temperatures range from 12.6° to 32.8°F in January and 57.7° to 81.8°F in July. County temperatures rarely exceed the extremes of -20° and 100°F. Annual and seasonal averages have remained consistent throughout the data available from Poughkeepsie weather stations from 1931 through the present. Poughkeepsie temperatures average slightly higher than Millbrook's, about two degrees in winter and three degrees in summer. Total

precipitation as measured at Poughkeepsie (since 1901) and Millbrook (since 1951) has averaged 39-41 inches annually and is well distributed throughout the year. The northern portion of the county receives less (30-40 inches) than the southern portion (40-50 inches).² The 1955 Soil Survey showed how the rainfall can vary throughout the county by listing annual averages from Wappingers Falls (45.12 inches), Red Hook (38.41), Honeymead Brook [the Hyatt homestead] (42.92), and Poughkeepsie (39.23). Griscom noted that two to three feet of snowpack on level ground for weeks at a time was not unusual for a winter early in the twentieth century. Since 1931 snowfall at Poughkeepsie has averaged about 39 inches per winter (38.3 during the 1930s and 39.8 during the 1990s, for example). An indication of the year-to-year variability is shown by the winter of 1994-95 when only 14 inches was recorded at Poughkeepsie. The following winter had 97 inches. A favorable climate exists for raising a variety of crops and hosting many wild bird species in the County.³

The previously described characteristics of Dutchess County are not generally affected by man's presence. Other habitat characteristics important to birds have changed substantially, especially the nature of the vegetation covering the land. These changes have been brought about by both the growing number of people residing in the county and their activities.

ELIMINATION OF THE FORESTS

Forest covered the land that became Dutchess County in 1683. Non-native population grew slowly until the mid-1700s. Land in the valleys was cleared for agriculture, with wheat as the principal cash crop, making the county the "breadbasket" of the new nation.⁴ By the 1825 opening of the Erie Canal, wheat farming was declining due to depleted soils and other factors. The new canal made more fertile lands accessible to farmers moving west and for shipping wheat back east. Dutchess farmers began raising other cash crops, principally dairy and fruit. Sloping land not suitable for wheat was cleared for pasture. The Borden milk plants built along the railroad lines⁵ at Wassaic in 1861 and later at Wingdale, Millbrook, and other places provided a market for the increasing dairy production. Originally introduced by the Saltford family, violets were grown in many greenhouses around Rhinebeck.⁶ Agricultural acreage peaked about 1890.

Deposits of iron ore beneath the land southeast of a line from Beacon to the northeastern panhandle led to further deforestation. Local forges produced iron products for the Revolution. Beginning in the 1820s, large blast furnaces were built and some continued production through the early 1900s (Maltby Mine and Furnace in Millerton, 1750-1893;⁷ Tymor Furnace in Union Vale, 1831-1883; Sharparoon Furnace in Dover, 1881-about 1900). As part of the Housatonic River watershed, the eastern towns were part of "the most heavily industrialized region of the new United States" in 1830.⁸ In 1840 there were 10 iron furnaces in eastern and southern Dutchess County.⁹ Charcoal, produced by slowly burning wood, fired the forges and furnaces. A single furnace required 600 acres of wood per year of operation,¹⁰ denuding the hillsides in ever widening areas around each furnace. Production peaked after county railroads made transport of raw materials and output more feasible. Brickworks, developed to process clay found in local deposits, also consumed large amounts of wood to fire kilns.

By 1890 the once-forested Dutchess County was 90-95% cleared.¹¹ Most hillsides and mountain tops had been cleared, some several times. The forests that covered Brace,

Stissing, Schaghticoke, and Bald Mountains were gone.¹² The impact on birdlife was profound.

REFORESTATION

By the end of the nineteenth century, several external factors led to the rather rapid demise of iron mining and smelting in the Northeast: discovery of richer ore in the Mesabi Range in Minnesota, change to coke (made from coal) instead of charcoal (from wood), and development of the steel industry in Pittsburgh. Other economic conditions brought about the long slow decline in agriculture from its peak in about 1880. Many farm commodities could be produced at lower cost other places and shipped to consumers by improved transportation systems. During various financial panics, especially the Great Depression, marginal farms went bankrupt. Land in Dutchess County became more valuable for other purposes.

When no longer plowed or cut, land in the Northeast eventually reverts to forest. The initial successional vegetation depends on the last use of the land before abandonment (field crops, hayfield, pasture, or lumbering), as well as the soil composition and condition.¹³ Some tracts have been untouched for many decades and others more recently left alone. Thus, we now see a variety of successional habitats: grassland, weedy fields, fields filling with shrubs and red cedar, thick stands of saplings, hillsides of laurel and oak, hemlock ravines, and mature woods of oak and beech. While the mature woods appear stable, change can be seen there, too. Ferncliff Forest is a prime example. Otis Waterman remarked that the trees there are now much taller than on his first visit there in the 1950s. When the authors first birded at Ferncliff in the 1980s, the towering hemlocks created dark, cool places. As the hemlocks thin and die due to the woolly adelgid and are replaced initially by striped maple, the woods become more open and have more light.

By 1938 Roberts and Reynolds noted that abandoned farmland was returning to the “primeval condition.”¹⁴ Several factors prevented their prediction from coming true: increasing non-farm population, the arrival of non-native species of plants (Japanese barberry, multiflora rose, black locust, purple loosestrife, to name a few), and the introduction of diseases that decimated two important tree species, American chestnut and American elm.¹⁵ A worrisome development is the appearance of hemlock woolly adelgid and beech bark disease, with Asian longhorn beetle, emerald ash borer and sudden oak death disease looming on the horizon. Predictions are that more tree species

The moss-covered stone wall in the woods shows this land had been cleared. Stone walls were built on open land. The photo was taken in 2006 at Tymor Forest Park. Before it was a town park, the land was a dairy farm. In earlier times an iron furnace operated nearby.

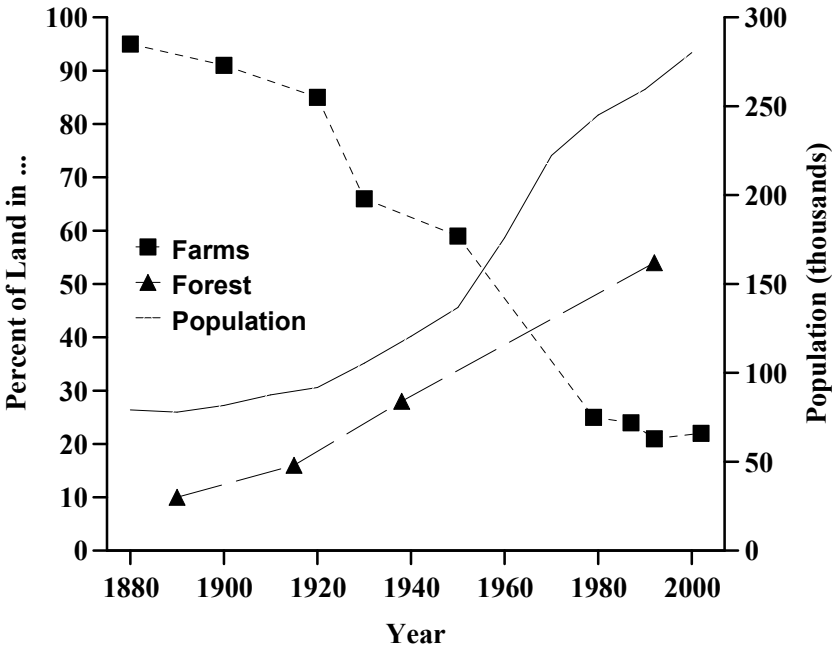
Courtesy Barbara Butler



will decline or disappear as a result. With the return of the woodlands, but not of large predators that had been extirpated by hunting, the white-tailed deer populations recovered and then soared. Deer browsing can clear out the understory and interfere with growth of young trees. Birds that nest on the ground or in the understory are also impacted.

Not content to let nature take its course, the state Conservation Department, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), and landowners, including tree farmer Franklin Roosevelt, created tree plantations of a few acres to many more. Most were conifer plantations, often of non-native Norway spruce, or red pine, native but not common in Dutchess County. Some were harvested for the timber, but many still exist and are now mature. There was a CCC camp at Baird Park from 1940 to 1942, just after Baird Farm became a state park. The Conservation Department acquisition and reforestation of land after 1942 became the foundation of the state forests in the county: Taconic-Hereford, Lafayetteville, Stissing Mountain, Depot Hill, and Wassaic. Another type of tree plantation is an orchard. The largest and still active apple orchards are in the Red Hook area. Abandoned farm orchards exist around the county and constitute rich wildlife habitat, for example Buttercup Farm Sanctuary's old orchard.

Thus, vegetative cover, especially woodlands, increased during the twentieth century, but the species composition became somewhat different than existed during the eighteenth century. The chart gives a sense of the scale of changes in population, agriculture, and forests. In the early 1700s, Dutchess County was essentially all forest, with only small areas cleared for agriculture or logging. By the end of the 1800s, nearly all forests had been cut and the land was farmed. The values come from several



Trends for three indicators of land usage during the 1900s. Farm acreage is mostly pasture and cropland but including some woodlots. Forest acreage is measured without respect to ownership.

Sources given in footnote 16.

sources.¹⁶ Yet, the chart does give an indication of the trends since the peak of the deforestation.

Unlike other parts of the nation with huge monoculture fields, agricultural areas of the Northeast generally provide a variety of good bird habitats. Expansive cultivation is not possible on the undulating land punctuated by steep slopes and many roads. In Dutchess County, land use on farms is diverse (crops, hay fields, pasture, woodlots, fallow land, hedgerows, Christmas tree plantations, orchards, farm ponds, wetlands, and lawns) and the type of farm varies (commercial operation, hobby farm, weekend retreat, and estate). Many bird species are able to find food and shelter somewhere in the mix.

DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY, HOUSING, AND RECREATION

Growth of industry gave alternative employment to farm laborers and to the farmers' sons and daughters. During the early twentieth century, population rose in the cities, Poughkeepsie and Beacon, and declined in the outlying towns. Industries included the Vassar Brewery, Caire Pottery,¹⁷ Buckeye Mowing Machines, Dutchess Hat Works, Smith Brothers Cough Drops, DeLaval cream separators, Dutchess Bleachery, Schatz bearings, Dennings Point Brick Works, and others.¹⁸ Industry was concentrated along the waterfronts of Poughkeepsie and Beacon and at sources of waterpower, such as Wappingers Falls. The result was a considerable impact on water and air quality.

Industry expanded enough that people moved to Dutchess County for jobs. Most notable was the growth of IBM, beginning in the 1940s. In response, much land in the western and southern parts of the county was turned into housing developments. Proximity to the New York City urban area and improved transportation created demand for primary and weekend homes that, by comparison to the city, were inexpensive, leading to further transformation of farmland to building lots. In 1950 Poughkeepsie Plaza was opened on Route US-9, the first of many shopping malls to provide habitat for European Starlings, House Sparrows, and Ring-billed Gulls.

Dutchess County has long been attractive to wealthy New York City residents, who established large estates from 100 to over 1000 acres. The river estates north of Poughkeepsie were built early. The last and grandest, the Vanderbilt estate, was completed in the 1890s. Other centers of large estates are in the Millbrook and Pawling areas. Estate land remains undeveloped, but is often extensively manicured by clearing the woodland understory and trimming grass and bushes. The recent use of conservation easements held by Dutchess Land Conservancy¹⁹ and other organizations helps to ensure that many of these holdings will remain undeveloped.

Beginning with the railroads and continuing with the construction of the Taconic Parkway in 1939 and 1949, Dutchess County became a recreation destination. Shooting preserves, rod and gun clubs, and summer camps were established, taking advantage of and preserving the recovering woodlands. The Millbrook Hunt was established in 1907 and still operates on the lands north and east of Millbrook. The Rombout Hunt, established in 1927, rode the hounds across lands of the old Rombout Patent, which encompassed much of southern Dutchess, and kenneled the dogs at Greenvale Farms.²⁰ In the 1950s, the growth of subdivisions forced the Hunt to retreat north to its current location in the Town of Clinton. A similar move was necessary for the Casperkill Rod and Gun Club, which originally occupied land near the Casperkill Creek and Albany Post Road. That land became the IBM Country Club, and the gun club now owns land in the Town of Clinton. With the loss of the market for charcoal, small homesteaders on Preston Mountain began selling parcels of land to the Preston Mountain Club in the



The railroad station at Stissing was at the junction of two lines of the Central New England Railway. The one on the left went to Hopewell Junction then Beacon, the right to Pleasant Valley then Poughkeepsie. The track behind the photographer went to Pine Plains. The photograph was taken Nov. 5, 1932 just south of what is now the entrance to Buttercup Farm Sanctuary. The trail through the west section of the sanctuary follows the old railroad bed.

Courtesy University of Connecticut Libraries

1920s. The club now owns most of the mountain in Dover on the Connecticut border, also known as Schaghticoke Mountain.²¹ Increasing demand for land creates pressure on the holdings of these clubs, and also on camps operated by non-profit organizations. Metropolitan Baptist Camps in Union Vale closed in the 1980s and the land is now privately owned. Holiday Hills YMCA sold their land, the last parcel in 2003 to the Town of Pawling for Lakeside Park. New York City Mission Society's Camp Minisink and Sharparoon in Dover Furnace have suspended operations temporarily. The Fresh Air Fund camps at Sharpe Reservation in Fishkill and Girl Scout Camp Kaufmann in Holmes are still in operation. Land occupied by Girl Scout and Boy Scout camps along Deuel Hollow Road in Wingdale has been sold and subdivided. Camp Nooteeming in Pleasant Valley is currently used by both Boy and Girl Scouts. Also still operated as a camp is The Presbyterian Center at Holmes.

In addition to forests and parks, New York State acquired five substantial tracts of 700-1000 acres each for prisons and mental hospitals by purchasing sets of adjoining farms. Self-sustaining communities were established on each with power plants, water and sewage systems, farms, churches, and cemeteries. While the institutions consisted of large buildings, these were clustered, leaving much land in habitat useful for birds. The first, Hudson River State Hospital, between Poughkeepsie and Hyde Park, was opened in 1871. Next came Matteawan State Hospital (1892) west of Beacon, followed by Harlem Valley State Hospital in Wingdale (1924) and Wassaic State School in Dover (1930). Green Haven State Prison was built in Beekman just prior to World War II and opened as a state prison in 1949. Over the course of the 1970s and 1980s, most residents of the mental institutions were discharged to community-based services. In 1994 Harlem Valley State Hospital closed completely, and Wassaic State School and Hudson River State

Hospital substantially reduced their operations. The state sold the land, retaining a small portion of each location. Most of Wassaic property, including the farm buildings and fields, is now Listening Rock Farm, a tree farm. Plans for a mix of residential and commercial development on Harlem Valley and Hudson River land are still being negotiated between the towns and the new owners. The effects of these changes on the land and surrounding areas are yet to be seen. Green Haven and Matteawan (now Fishkill Correction Facility) are still in operation, and the farm at Green Haven is still active.²²

Several large farms became town or county parks; among them are Union Vale's Tymor Park, Pawling's Lakeside Park, and Dutchess County's Wilcox Park in Milan. The farm that is part of Vassar College is no longer farmed, but is now open habitat for birds. The community gardens at Vassar College Farm and Stony Kill attract sparrows and other migrants in the fall.

WATER FEATURES

The dominant aquatic feature of Dutchess County, the Hudson River, has been impacted by industrialization and other human activity. Railroad lines completed on the eastern shore of the Hudson River by 1851 cut off most coves and marshes from the main influence of the river flow. From December to March, ice forms on the river, the timing varying from year to year.²³ In earlier times when the river froze shore-to-shore, people walked across it, ice-boating was popular, and ice-harvesting was profitable. Since the late 1930s, powerful Coast Guard ice breakers have kept the navigation channel open,²⁴ creating favorable conditions for wintering waterfowl and eagles.

The river's food resource for migrating waterfowl has been altered by the invasion of water chestnuts. Initially introduced into a Schenectady lake in 1884 and confined to the Mohawk River system until at least 1934, they invaded the Hudson soon after.²⁵ In the late 1960s, long-time duck hunter Crissy Wilson of Columbia County observed the effect. "The migration of ducks and geese is as great as it was twenty-five or thirty years ago along the Hudson," Crissy says, "but the ducks don't stay as long. You get 'em for one or two days, but then they're gone. My contention is that the biggest factor is the water chestnut. The wild rice, the wild celery, the wild oats, the duck potatoes, they're going or they're gone with the spread of the water chestnut."²⁶ Zebra mussels have a less direct impact on bird life. Their prodigious filtering of detritus and phytoplankton from the water makes it clearer than before the mussels' arrival in the early 1990s.²⁷

Most of the lakes and ponds are man-made. Pond names on local maps give clues to the origins: Mill Pond, Furnace Pond, and Ore Pond. Farm and recreational ponds were created or enlarged by dams. Streams were dammed to power mills, creating lakes. Gravel mining operations excavated ponds. Iron mines and stone quarries created huge holes that filled with water. Sylvan Lake was a deep open-pit iron mine and is now a site for a variety of waterfowl most winters. An exception is Wappinger Lake, which lies upstream of a 75-foot high waterfall in Wappinger Creek. The other major natural water bodies are near Pine Plains. Thompson Pond, Stissing Lake, Twin Island Pond, and Buttermilk Pond were formed by the retreating glaciers.

Until recently, land that was wet or swampy was considered by most landowners a problem to be remedied. Understanding of wetlands' value has developed slowly and is marked by the passing of the Freshwater Wetlands Act in 1975. Yet the birding community early appreciated the importance of swamps and marshes for finding birds. The list of places visited on the first set of May Censuses during the 1920s included a



Lake Walton around 1960. The former railroad, now a rail trail, is the diagonal line adjacent at the top of the lake, the field along the bottom edge is a housing development, and the field above that is now overgrown. Now a county park.

Post card, courtesy Joseph Brinckerhoff

disproportionate number of wet areas, including Cruger Island and its marshes, Brickyard Swamp, Thompson Pond, and the panhandle wetlands below Brace Mountain.

Wetlands currently occupy approximately 5% of the county acreage. The wetlands surrounding the Swamp River as it meanders from Pawling into the Ten Mile River comprise The Great Swamp, which is the largest wetland in the county at 2000+ acres. The next largest at 1000+ acres is the Thompson Pond wetlands in Pine Plains and Stanford, which include parts of Mashomack Preserve and Buttercup Farm Sanctuary. Other significantly sized wetlands (>500 acres) are the Tivoli North and South Bays and the panhandle wetlands (soon to be accessible to birders via the Harlem Valley Rail Trail).²⁸ Many smaller wetlands exist throughout the county. A recent increase in beaver activity has created new swamps or expanded old ones.²⁹ Beavers partly offset man's destructive impact, but also flood out species that need shallow or intermittent water.

The story of Poughkeepsie's Brickyard Swamp is an illustration of the fate of an unknown number of wetlands.³⁰ The headwaters of Casperkill Creek ran through a marsh of buttonbush and cattails north of Dutchess Turnpike. Beds of clay, raw material for bricks, were discovered and a brickyard was built, which supplied bricks for the early Vassar College buildings in the 1860s, as well as many Poughkeepsie buildings. The brickyard closed in 1932 after a portion of the swamp had been turned into a large water-filled hole. The clay pits were then used as a dump. After many years, refuse filled the hole above water level, creating "land" now used for a shopping center (44 Plaza and Kmart) and businesses along Tucker Drive. Birders visited Brickyard Swamp as early as the 1910s, with Allen Frost and his friends probably walking there from the trolley stop at the head of Raymond Ave. It was a fruitful birding destination until the shopping centers were built in 1965 and 1972. The most notable bird to use the area recently was the Snowy Owl, who spent the winter of 1996-97 dining on the starlings and pigeons that now inhabit the once species-rich habitat.

FIELD CARD OF ALL
BIRDS

Occurring Annually in New York
or New England

OBSERVER *A. Frost*
Geo. Gray -
Frank Gardner

DATE *May 13, 1928*

WEATHER

WIND

TEMPERATURE

TIME *3 AM - 8.30 P.M.*

LOCALITY *Camelot - New Hackensack -*
Grays - Jackson Pond - Quaker Hill - Turkey Hollow -
Brick Yard -

NOTES

Checklist for 1928 May Census (south party), in Frost's hand. Observers: Allen Frost, George Gray, Frank Gardner. Time: 3AM-8:30PM Standard Time. Localities: Camelot [via Barnegat Rd.], New Hackensack, Grays [Greenvale Farm], Jackson Pond [now named Lake Walton], Quaker Hill, [also Swamp River probably near Dover Furnace, not noted here.] Turkey Hollow, and Brick Yard [Swamp]. 115 species were recorded. Many of these localities have changed. Camelot and Barnegat Road were taken over by quarry activities, George Gray's Greenvale Farm is a housing development, and Brickyard Swamp is a shopping center.

OLD PLACES AND NEW PLACES

The previous discussion of Brickyard Swamp is but one example of a number of birding places that aren't "there" anymore. That is, they no longer have significant habitat useful to birds. Other such places are Astor Flats, Barnegat Road, Dutchess Hill, Forbes Swamp, and Karl Ehmer Farm wetlands. In other cases, bird habitat is still intact, but the property is no longer accessible for monitoring birds. The situation is disappointing to the birders, but wildlife still benefits. Dieterich Estate, Round Pond, Sharpe Reservation, and Penny Road are in this category. Open dumps are closed with the land put to other uses. While the dumps had been a problem for the environment, some interesting birds could be found there, especially gulls.

In 1965 Pink and Waterman lamented the lack of land protection in the face of the increasing influx of people. The influx has not abated, but there is some effort at land protection. The Nature Conservancy, Scenic Hudson, and National Audubon Society have preserved several important areas, including Thompson Pond, Nellie Hill Preserve, Buttercup Farm Sanctuary and recently Roger Perry Preserve in Dover, and Madam Brett Park at the mouth of the Fishkill Creek. New York State now owns several prime birding areas where destructive development had been planned: Cruger Island and surrounding marshes (where a nuclear power plant was forecast for 1975), Stissing Mountain (a planned pump storage area), and Dennings Point near Beacon (industrial development planned; now the future site of the Beacon Institute for Rivers and Estuaries).³¹ Continued efforts toward habitat preservation will be necessary lest Dutchess County become small islands of green in a sea of houses.

The substantial changes in the land use throughout the history of the county had an effect on the birds, to the detriment of some species and the benefit of others. The county will continue to be influenced by economic and environmental developments on local,

regional, and global levels. It is hoped that an interesting diversity of birdlife will always find a place within the borders of Dutchess County.

NOTES

- [1] Soil Survey of Dutchess County, New York, 1991.
- [2] Roberts and Reynolds, 1938, p. 11.
- [3] Soil Survey, Dutchess County, New York, 1955; National Climatic Data Center, Ashville, NC. www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/ncdc.html; Institute of Ecosystem Studies, Environmental Monitoring Program, 2005. Institute of Ecosystem Studies, Box AB, Millbrook, N.Y., www.ecostudies.org
- [4] Stanne, 1996, p. 120.
- [5] Railroad lines on the Hudson shore extended from New York City to Poughkeepsie by 1849 and crossed Tivoli Bays in 1851. In the Harlem Valley, the railroad reached Pawling in 1848 and Millerton by 1851. Cross-county lines then developed and the last was completed by 1892.
- [6] see www.violets-info.com – scroll down to “The Violet in North America”.
- [7] Jeanneney and Jeanneney, 1983, p. 79. The mine and furnace were not in operation for all the time shown. The range shows the years of first opening and final closing of the mine.
- [8] Polhemus, 2005, p. 115.
- [9] Geisler, Jane, “Geology of Union Vale”, adapted from a presentation by Dr. Claude Epstein to Union Vale Historical Society, 1982.
- [10] www.lastgreatplaces.org/berkshire/history/art6162.html and Kirby, Edward M., *Echoes of Iron in Connecticut's Northwest Corner*. Sharon, Conn.: Sharon Historical Society, 1998. Part of a rich web site about the Berkshire Taconic landscape, www.lastgreatplaces.org/berkshire/history includes the northeastern corner of Dutchess County. The history section covers the human history that impacted the landscape of the region where Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York meet.
- [11] Most sources put the peak of the deforestation at 1890. Roberts and Reynolds, 1938, p.25 said “By 1880 ... 95% of the land, previously covered with ... forest had been converted into farms ...”, but not all land in farms was cleared. Jeanneney, p. 56, “By 1890 Dutchess forests had been 90 percent cleared.”
- [12] Griscom, 1933, p. 21.
- [13] Strahler, Arthur, and Alan Strahler, 1974. *Introduction to Environmental Science*.
- [14] Roberts and Reynolds, 1938, p. 28.
- [15] The organism responsible for Chestnut blight was identified in New York City in 1904. By 1915, it had appeared in Dutchess County. By 1950 all mature Chestnut trees in the Eastern US were gone. Sprouts still grow from old roots, but die back before producing nuts. (American Chestnut Foundation website: www.acf.org; Moody and Bentley, 1915). Dutch Elm disease arrived in New York State in the early 1930s. American Elms were drastically reduced, especially the rows of trees that once lined neighborhood streets.
- [16] Farm: Soil Survey, 1955; Pink and Waterman, 1979, p.4; USDA Agricultural Survey.
Forest: Moody and Bentley, 1915; Roberts and Reynolds, 1938, p. 25; Northeastern Forest Inventory & Analysis, 1993, www.fs.fed.us/ne/fia/states/ny/1993.html.
Population: US Census.
- [17] The pottery, in operation on Bridge Street in Poughkeepsie from the 1820s until the end of the nineteenth century, produced clay pipe for drains and sewers, as well as some decorative stoneware. Jeanneney and Jeanneney, 1983, p. 86.
- [18] Jeanneney and Jeanneney, 1983, pp.82-104.
- [19] Dutchess Land Conservancy holds easements on over 22,000 acres according to their Spring / Summer 2005 newsletter.
- [20] Greenvale Farms was managed by George Gray, a birding associate of Crosby and Frost.
- [21] Polhemus, 2005, p. 11.
- [22] Hudson River: www.historic51.org/history.shtml
Matteawan: www.geocities.com/MotorCity/Downs/3548/facility/fishkill.html
Harlem Valley: www.harlemvalley.org/
Green Haven: www.geocities.com/MotorCity/Downs/3548/facility/greenhaven.html
- [23] Griscom gives dates of ice-out or river-open from Crosby's diaries; dates ranged from March 11 in 1930 to April 4 in 1923.
- [24] “Domestic icebreaking is mandated by Executive Order 7521 dated December 24th, 1936, that directs the Coast Guard to assist in keeping channels and harbors open to navigation” (From a transcript of testimony before a House committee on the 2000 budget, March 29, 2000.)
- [25] Boyle, 1969, p. 119.
- [26] Boyle, 1969, p. 123.

- [27] Stanne, 1996, p. 51.
- [28] Jacobs, William E., 1984, "Freshwater Wetlands of Dutchess County, Part I, Inventory and Guide for Local Government Officials", published by Dutchess County Environmental Management Council.
- [29] Beavers were nearly extirpated from the state by 1800. Trap and transfer projects, regeneration of woodland habitat, and trapping regulation restored low numbers of beavers to New York by 1940. During the 1970s, trapping regulations were changed to allow increased beaver impoundments for the benefit of other wildlife. In the last two decades, with trapping below that allowed by the regulations and woodland habitat still increasing, beavers are creating many new or larger impoundments. From "Beaver Damage Control Techniques Manual" found on the NYSDEC website [www.dec.state.ny.us /website/dfwmr/wildlife/beaver/](http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dfwmr/wildlife/beaver/).
- [30] Warthin, A. Scott, 1965, "Our Lovely Casperkill", an article in *Wings Over Dutchess*, December 1965. Dr. Warthin was professor of Geology at Vassar College and a Waterman Bird Club member.
- [31] See www.riversandesturaries.org for current information.

BIRDS LOST AND GAINED IN DUTCHESS COUNTY

The bird species cited below are representative examples applicable to Dutchess County and not a complete list of every species affected by the point discussed. Additional details are in the specific species accounts.

NATURAL AND UNNATURAL CHANGE

The seasons are a natural change, a precursor to the wonders of migration and more specifically to the variety of migrating birds themselves. Some birds return in spring to breed, while others return in fall to overwinter. Many others simply pass through on a great migration, in spring heading towards the Adirondacks or possibly the Arctic, and in fall neotropical migrants heading to Caribbean islands or South America. Over an extended time period, the species observed change.

Dutchess County is on or near multiple migration flyways. The east coast of the United States is a migration trail for uncountable numbers of birds. Many follow the Hudson River, itself a major migration corridor for birds headed north in spring. A broad migration front between the Atlantic coastline and the Great Lakes / St. Lawrence River also passes over and near Dutchess County. Birds not only migrate north and south, but also east and west from the Mississippi and Ohio River valleys.¹ Mountain ridges to the east and west of Dutchess County are also migration pathways, especially for hawks in the fall. To spend a day in May, particularly in the “rich woods” of the Northeast or Dutchess County, and experience migration firsthand is a marvel to behold.

It is easy to think that the species of birds seen in one area are basically the same from year to year. This is true when the period of time is short, perhaps less than ten years. But when looking at data for well over the last one hundred years, the changes in bird life within a relatively limited area like Dutchess County are phenomenal. Some of these changes are undoubtedly natural, but by no means all.

Table 1 summarizes change in published species counts in Dutchess County at roughly 25-year intervals since 1880. Table 2 displays census data over ten-year periods approximately forty years apart. The number of species recorded has grown significantly. Also more individual birds are being found in Dutchess County. The number of wintering individual birds counted recently in December is approximately equal to the number counted in May forty years ago. While there are also more birders now, Maunsell Crosby and his associates in the 1920s were extremely capable and were afield very often.

Gross numbers hide specific changes. Since 1870 in Dutchess County, 41 species expanded their breeding range and started nesting (Table 3), 15 species altered their

Source (Year)	Regular Species	Casual or Accidental	Breed
Stearns (1880) ^a	132	0	59
Eaton (1907) ^a	148	4	74
Griscom (1932)	209	36	127
Pink & Waterman (1964)	226	53	118
Pink & Waterman (1979)	237	51	119
DeOrsey & Butler (2006)	249	61	138

[a] Stearns and Eaton did not cover the entire county.
Counts are number of species adjusted to current taxonomy without subspecies, hybrids, exotics, or hypothetical. Over time some accidental species have become regular. Breeding species are included in the regular count.

Table 1: Published species counts.

Years	May Census		Christmas Count	
	Species ^a	Total ^b	Species ^a	Total ^b
1920-1929	170	—	52	—
1961-1970	192	6,794	97	4,336
2002-2011	200	12,578	119	7,455

[a] *Cumulative count* of species seen on at least one census during the specified ten-year period.
[b] *Average per year* of individual birds seen, excludes Red-winged Blackbird from May Census and Canada Goose, American Crow, and European Starling from Christmas Count, due to their excessive numbers.

Table 2: Census species counts.

breeding range and stopped nesting (Table 4), and nine stopped then resumed nesting (Table 5). Nine species were introduced by man (Table 6). This represents an astonishing 53% of the nesting species that have significantly changed their nesting status since 1870. Eleven non-nesting species expanded from unknown in the county to relatively common (Table 7). Additionally, many species are present at different times, generally wintering when they previously migrated farther south. Others breed outside of the county and now wander north as non-breeding summer visitants. There have also been significant changes in the population of many species; some increased and others decreased, a few were once on a path to extinction. Yet others are *now* facing extirpation. Most of these changes can be attributed to the man’s intervention.

CHANGE TO THE END OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY²

With the end of the last ice age about 14,000 years ago in Dutchess County, the initial grass and sedge vegetation gave way to boreal conifers and by 10,000 years ago to the mixed forests found by the first European explorers. Bird species would have been predominantly the woodland birds known today. Archeological excavations in Dutchess

County have yielded mostly the larger boned birds used for food by the indigenous natives. These include Canada Goose, Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey, Northern Bobwhite, and Passenger Pigeon.³

The early European colonists had little impact on their surroundings before the mid-1700s. By 1731, Dutchess County had a European population of 1,727, hardly enough to significantly impact the abundance of birds. By 1800, the population had grown to 37,909, and now birds were facing a change. The colonists primarily shot birds for food. Tundra Swans, Wild Turkeys, and Sandhill Cranes⁴ were large, tasty, and easy targets; consequently they were the first impacted by the colonists. By the early 1800s, each was driven from the Northeast. A few such as Turkey Vultures and Common Ravens retreated when they were persecuted as bad omens. American White Pelicans were more common, but departed in the 1700s. It is believed Brown-headed Cowbirds arrived from the West by the late 1700s and were among the earliest birds to join the local avifauna.

By the early nineteenth century, the eastern populations of American Oystercatcher, Black-necked Stilt, and American Avocet each suffered excessive disturbance, particularly hunting and egg gathering. Each had nested at least as far north as coastal New Jersey, Oystercatchers much farther. Long-billed Curlew were also very common at the beginning of the nineteenth century but were effectively nonexistent in the East at the end. Dickcissels too were common to abundant along the Atlantic coastal plain, including Long Island, but disappeared by about 1850 for reasons still not understood. Some of these may have occurred accidentally in Dutchess County.

While the above changes occurred near Dutchess County, little is known with certainty about bird life in the county before the 1870s. However, one great change climaxed around 1880. Throughout the nineteenth century, hundreds of thousands of acres of land were cleared in Dutchess County to farm or supply charcoal for iron furnaces. It is difficult today to visualize how much land was cleared. The number of stone walls encountered in the "middle of the woods" is at best a limited indication. The clearing of land was sufficient to drive many woodland birds from the county. Northern Goshawk, Ruffed Grouse, Great Horned Owl, Red-headed Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Great Crested Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, and Scarlet Tanager are among the birds whose populations declined significantly during the 1800s, sometimes to the complete absence of the species from the county.

At the same time woodland birds were being denied habitat, new fields, most planted with grasses, crops, or orchards, were being created. This new habitat attracted Horned Larks, Bobolinks, Grasshopper Sparrows, Vesper Sparrows, and Eastern Meadowlarks, while orchards attracted Loggerhead Shrikes. Early in the nineteenth century Nashville Warblers, Chestnut-sided Warblers and later Golden-Winged Warblers were attracted to the new forest edges and undergrowth. The extensive clearing of lands truly had a massive impact on bird species in Dutchess County. In time the introduction of mechanical harvesting reduced successful hay field nestings. Today such extensive clearing would never be allowed. Not only environmental organizations but also the general population would view it as wrong and improper. Yet our ancestors considered it progress and proper use of the land. Times changed, and the birds changed.

By the 1880s and 1890s, the human population increase coupled with limited hunting laws and lack of enforcement resulted in another large decline in the population of many bird species. Geese (Snow Goose, Canada Goose, and Brant), ducks (Wood Duck, Hooded Merganser, and Ruddy Duck), and shorebirds (American Golden-Plover, Semiplumbeated Plover, Pectoral Sandpiper, and Wilson's Snipe) were particularly

impacted. Brant, Wood Duck, and Ruddy Duck were nearly lost for all time. Upland game birds' (Ruffed Grouse and Northern Bobwhite) population was similarly reduced. Indeed, Ring-necked Pheasants were initially introduced to provide hunting replacements for the decreased native game birds. Much of this hunting represented traditional harvesting of food from a perceived "inexhaustible" source. Fortunately many of the effected species recovered once hunting laws were standardized and enforced.

Dutchess County's bird population was impacted indirectly by market hunters, men who shot hundreds of birds per day and shipped barrels of carcasses to markets in the larger cities. Generally working during migration when birds congregated in massive numbers in marshes and along the coast, they targeted not only waterfowl but also various shorebirds, large plovers and sandpipers, plus doves. Even small species such as Eastern Bluebird and Song Sparrow were not immune.⁵ The Eskimo Curlew and Passenger Pigeon became extinct as a result. Though there is no record of major market hunting in Dutchess County, the practice further reduced the populations of those species, many of which migrated through Dutchess County. The Passenger Pigeon is the only extinct species known to have frequented Dutchess County.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Northeastern gull colonies, principally Herring Gull and a few Ring-billed Gull, were regularly raided for eggs⁶ as well as feathers. Southeastern colonies of Great Egrets and Snowy Egrets were raided to obtain long plumes for lady's hats. Both activities significantly reduced the populations of the effected species and consequently eliminated their occurrence in Dutchess County.

The birds at a feeder in Annandale in February 1885 were typical of the few winter birds around many homes: Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, and Dark-eyed Junco, with American Kestrel, American Crow, and American Goldfinch in the immediate area.⁷ Many more are certainly found around homes now. The lack of variety during the winter contrasted sharply with the welcomed return of birds in the spring.

No. 331	Name	Marsh Hawk
Collector,	Lispenard S. Horton	
Locality	Dutchess Co. N. Y.	
Date	May 2. 1897	
Set	2	Identity sure Incubation fresh
Nest	made of a few sticks and hay placed on the ground in a swamp.	

Lispenard Horton's egg data card, in his hand, for a Marsh Hawk [Northern Harrier, AOU code 331] nest from Gretna, Pleasant Valley. He took four eggs on May 2, 1897 from the second nest he found [the 2/4]. It is not known who bought these eggs or when but they came to the Utah Natural History Museum which transferred them with this card to the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology.

TABLES OF CHANGING NESTING STATUS SINCE 1870s

Species	First Nesting	Breeding Habitat
Northern breeding species expanding to the south		
Canada Warbler	1920	Cool wooded ravines
Black-throated Blue Warbler	1920	Mature woods
Savannah Sparrow	by 1921	Moist tall grass meadows
Tree Swallow	1921	Open areas near water
Blue-headed Vireo	1922	Mixed woods
Hermit Thrush	by 1924	Mixed woods and thickets
Wilson's Snipe [i]	1936	Wet meadows and bogs
Brown Creeper	by 1958	Woodlands and groves
Purple Finch	by 1959	Coniferous woods
Blackburnian Warbler	by 1959	Mature coniferous woods
Dark-eyed Junco	by 1963	Cool wooded ravines
Blue-winged Teal [i]	1963	Farm ponds or marshes
Northern Goshawk	1968	Deep coniferous woods
Hooded Merganser	1970	Small wooded ponds
Golden-crowned Kinglet [i]	1975	Large spruce stands
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1975	Coniferous woods
Northern Waterthrush	by 1977	Woodlands with still water
Winter Wren	by 1981	Coniferous forests near water
Yellow-rumped Warbler [i]	1982	Forests
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1994	Woods and orchards
Common Raven	1996	Forests
Common Merganser	2002	Wooded ponds
Northern Parula nested once, in 2002. Dark-eyed Junco nested in 1924.		
Southern breeding species expanding to the north		
Louisiana Waterthrush	by 1880	Fast moving streams
Golden-winged Warbler	by 1880s	Early successional brushy fields
Worm-eating Warbler	1901	Wooded hillsides
Barn Owl [i]	1916	Open buildings and fields
N. Rough-winged Swallow	1916	Open areas with banks near water
Blue-winged Warbler	1920	Late successional brushy fields
Prairie Warbler	1924	Old brushy fields
Northern Cardinal	1949	Suburban yards, bushes
Tufted Titmouse	1960	Suburban woodlands
Northern Mockingbird	1961	Open area bushes, parks
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1973	Suburban woodlands
Carolina Wren	1975	Suburban woodlands
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	by 1980	Open woods and shrubs
Fish Crow	by 1989	Woodlands near rivers
Turkey Vulture	by 1992	Open country
Black Vulture	2002	Open country
Kentucky Warbler nested twice, 1981 and 2008.		
Western breeding species expanding to the east		
(Prairie) Horned Lark	1900	Open fields
Cerulean Warbler	1922	Mature deciduous forest
Willow Flycatcher	by 1959	Brushy swamps
Western Meadowlark and Evening Grosbeak each nested once, in 1962.		
Gains before the 1870s are not known with certainty and are omitted.		
[i] Species breeds infrequently in Dutchess County, perhaps once per decade.		

Table 3: Species that began nesting in Dutchess County.

Species	Last Nesting	Contributing Factor
Bald Eagle [r]	1921	Human encroachment
Peregrine Falcon [r]	1933	Human encroachment
Northern Bobwhite [r]	1930s	Over hunting
Sedge Wren	1930s	Loss of wet meadow habitat
Henslow's Sparrow	1940s	Loss of damp field habitat
Black-crowned Night-Heron	1950	Loss of riverside habitat
Nashville Warbler	1950s	Hill top habitat evolution
Northern Harrier	1956	Marsh succession
American Bittern	1963	Loss of marsh habitat
Yellow-breasted Chat	1966	Loss of dense thickets, cowbird predation
Long-eared Owl	1974	Loss of thick woods near water
Barn Owl	1980	Loss of open barn habitat
Golden-winged Warbler	1985	Brushy field habitat evolution
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1985	Never fully established
Common Nighthawk	by 1989	Fewer gravel roofs, crow predation
Losses before the 1870s are not known with certainty and are omitted, although the Passenger Pigeon likely breed prior to mid-1800s.		
[r] subsequently has been reestablished (see Table 6)		

Table 4: Species that ceased nesting in Dutchess County.

Species	Period <i>not</i> Nesting	Breeding Habitat
Broad-winged Hawk	by late 1800s - by 1922	Forests
Pileated Woodpecker	by 1890 - 1940s	Forests
Great Blue Heron	1890s - 1960	Dead trees in water
Acadian Flycatcher	by 1920 - 1972	Mature deciduous forest
Alder Flycatcher	1932 - 1979	Wet alder thicket
White-eyed Vireo	1949 - 1979	Wet thickets
Pine Warbler	1933 - 2000	Pine woods; first known nest 1925
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1929 - 2001	Mixed forests
Osprey	1924 - 2015	Near water
Excludes species reestablished (see Tables 4 and 6)		

Table 5: Species that ceased for many years then resumed nesting in Dutchess County.

Species	First Nesting	Reason
Rock Pigeon [n]	by 1860s	Freed and escaped domestic stock
House Sparrow [n]	about 1865	Intentionally introduced
European Starling [n]	by 1914	Intentionally introduced
Ring-necked Pheasant [n]	by 1920	Stocked for hunting
Mallard	1940s	Released for hunting
Northern Bobwhite	1950s	Stocked for hunting
Canada Goose	1956	Released for hunting
House Finch [n]	1965	Illegally released
Wild Turkey	1974	Released to reestablish
Mute Swan [n]	1978	Allowed to escape
Peregrine Falcon	1994	Released to reestablish
Bald Eagle	1999	Released to reestablish
[n] introduced non-native species		

Table 6: First nesting after being introduced, released, or reestablished.

Species	First Sighting	Contributing Factor
Evening Grosbeak	1910	Expanded from West
Ring-billed Gull	1915	Population increased
Great Egret	1918	Population increased
Gadwall	1920	Population increased
Ring-necked Duck	1922	Population increased
Northern Shoveler	1922	Population increased
Double-crested Cormorant	1923	Population increased
Golden Eagle	1930	Small Eastern population
Brant	1957	Population increased
Great Black-backed Gull	1958	Expanded south along Atlantic coast
Snow Goose	1959	Population increased
Most of the above were present in the Colonial Period but were shot or otherwise disturbed. Changes before the 1870s are not known with certainty and are omitted.		
<i>Non-nesting</i> species which were formerly regularly seen, but are no longer seen in Dutchess County are few. The Loggerhead Shrike is the most prominent.		

Table 7: Regularly seen non-nesting species that expanded through Dutchess County.

CHANGE DURING THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The accumulated desecration of bird species took its toll. Audubon societies were formed in the 1880s, but not until the early 1900s were they well enough organized to effectively fight for bird preservation. President Theodore Roosevelt created the first National Wildlife Refuge in 1903. By 1918, with the signing of the United States and Canada Migratory Bird Treaty and enforcement of hunting laws, the recovery of game birds and all other birds was well underway.

By the 1920s, widespread land clearing had stopped and former farm fields were being reclaimed by shrubs and subsequently trees. In many places full forests have reestablished, generally with a different mix of plant species than existed when originally cleared. With the reverse of habitats came a reverse in bird species. The woodland birds, such as Red-tailed Hawk, Great Horned Owl, and Pileated Woodpecker, returned and the grassland birds, including Horned Lark, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Eastern Meadowlark, declined, exactly the opposite of what happened in the 1800s. This change did not occur over a single decade. Indeed, as fields reverted to brush, a number of warbler species became more common, such as Blue-winged Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, and Prairie Warbler. Field vegetation is still shifting with many brushy fields too overgrown for Yellow-breasted Chat and Golden-winged Warbler. While a number of breeding grassland species have become extremely scarce in Dutchess County, only the Henslow’s Sparrow is extirpated.

Many northern species have expanded their breeding range south into Dutchess County (see Table 3). There appears to be no simple reason for this, although it is clearly related to the changing habitat. As mentioned previously, throughout the Northeast there is a general return to more forests with improved availability of small water sources, ponds, marshes, and creeks. It is likely some of the birds expanding their breeding into Dutchess County bred there in pre-Colonial days.

The expansion of wildlife refuges in the 1930s successfully increased duck populations, particularly Wood Ducks, Ruddy Ducks, and others that had experienced severe declines. The added refuges are also partially responsible for Canada Geese and Mallards becoming ubiquitous and more sedentary, changes very evident in Dutchess

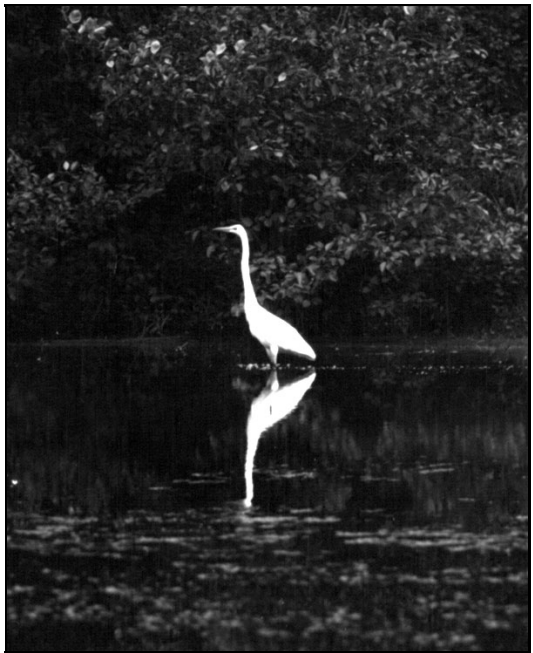
County. Canada Geese and Mallards were released by individuals and government agencies, and adjusted to the improved habitat without the need to migrate. Mallards then expanded farther east through Dutchess County, and began breeding with Black Ducks, reducing the Black Ducks populations.

Wet areas were less often drained or filled in Dutchess County than places with more extensive swamps, though some were, such as Brickyard Swamp. Nevertheless some wet areas have been restored or allowed to reform, particularly with a recent increase in beavers, resulting in an increase in Wood Ducks and Hooded Mergansers. Great Blue Herons have established more heronries with a corresponding increase in their population. However, American Bittern and Common Gallinule are decreasing.

Pesticides were also introduced in the twentieth century. Their widespread use started in the late 1930s and increased continually after World War II. One pesticide, DDT, caused Peregrine Falcons, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Coopers Hawks, Red-shouldered Hawks, Osprey, and Bald Eagles to lay eggs that broke or failed to hatch. Since DDT was banned in 1972, all the hawks have rebounded, some with human aid.

Particularly since the 1950s and continuing today, the many consequences of "development" have caused significant changes in the bird population and mix of species. Acid rain, which effects water chemistry and thus vegetation and ultimately bird populations, is possibly one of the contributors. Creeks and other water features have been polluted or altered, resulting in loss of breeding Black-crowned Night-Herons, Northern Harriers, and Sedge Wrens. With increased urban sprawl has come the proliferation of backyard bird feeders, plus yard plantings attractive to birds. These changes have had a very significant impact on the presence of wildlife, both birds and mammals, by increasing the winter food supply. When considered at the county level, this increased food supply has caused the largest change in bird populations of any local activity since World War II.

Warmer weather has also allowed some southern species to expand to the north and breed in Dutchess County. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Worm-eating Warblers bred as far north as Putnam County. At the end of the twentieth century, they were breeding well into Columbia County, possibly due to availability of insects brought about by weather changes. Starting around 1980, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, Olive-sided Flycatchers, and Bank Swallows arrived up to a week sooner than they did at the beginning of the twentieth century. Even some flowers are blooming up to a week earlier.⁸ Feeders, yard plantings, and warmer weather are credited with the expansion of the Red-bellied



Great Egret, July 1925 near Poughkeepsie by Allen Frost. The second county record as they recovered from being hunted for their plums.

from Frost Collection in Waterman Archives



Red-shouldered Hawk not yet fledged, photographed by Lisenard Horton in 1903 or 1904. It was then common to remove young birds from the nest to be photographed. At that time, with less forested areas in Dutchess County, Red-shouldered Hawks were more common than Red-tailed Hawks.

from Shields Magazine, July 1906

Woodpecker, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, Northern Mockingbird, and Northern Cardinal. However, when a hard winter occurs, some of the newer species suffer drastic declines such as Carolina Wrens in 1995-96 and Northern Mockingbirds in 1993-94.

Many birds that used to leave in fall now overwinter in Dutchess County. The number of wintering bird species began to increase during the 1950s and accelerated during the 1970s. Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, American Robin, and White-throated Sparrow all now winter in larger numbers. Increased wintering by Canvasback, Common Merganser, and Bald Eagle can be attributed to icebreakers keeping the Hudson River open throughout the winter. Lakes and streams are also open more than in the past. Similarly, many irruptive birds irrupt less frequently, apparently not needing to go as far south for food. They include Boreal Chickadee, Pine Grosbeak, Red Crossbill, and Evening Grosbeak.

With increased development, less area is available for hunting, resulting in a dramatic increase in the deer population. Their browsing on low tree branches and shrubs has impacted the birds that feed and nest there, such as Brown Thrasher and Eastern Towhee. Increased development has also fragmented forests, which creates more forest edges. This gives Brown-headed Cowbirds increased access to other birds' nests, particularly vireos and warblers, which reduces the smaller birds' nesting success. Double-crested Cormorants and Ring-billed Gulls both increased tremendously in population once they were allowed to exist free of man's persecution. In each case they have expanded their breeding range and consequently their population to the point of being unwanted by many people. Only time will tell their next fate.

Other urban changes to habitat have also impacted bird life in Dutchess County. Chimney Swifts and Purple Martins have abandoned hollow trees for chimneys and man-made housing. Common Nighthawks now nest on gravel roofs. These species are now in decline as building materials change. There are fewer undisturbed gravel and sand banks for Banks Swallows to nest in. Barn Owls and Cliff Swallows also exploited human structures. Peregrine Falcons now nest on Hudson River bridges. One theory on the drastic reduction in Loggerhead Shrikes in the Northeast relates to collisions with

automobiles as they swoop after insects along roadways.⁹ The closing of garbage dumps, while undoubtedly a positive action, has caused a reduction in Herring Gulls and other gulls. However, the increase of large electric transmission lines with low brush beneath them has created added habitat for birds such as the Prairie Warbler and Field Sparrow.

Habitat is critical for every bird species as that determines what food and nesting materials are available. A woodpecker would not nest in a grassland, nor would a sandpiper nest in a forest. As land vegetation evolves, either naturally or through man-made alterations, birds are encouraged and expand or discouraged and leave. Those species expanding north into Dutchess County are generally attracted by a habitat of overgrown fields and suburban yards. Those expanding to the south are finding nesting territory in the maturing forests and expanded wet areas similar to those that existed prior to the nineteenth century.

A large reduction in the number of neotropical migrants, especially thrushes and warblers, seen in May migration occurred during the twentieth century, and the reduction is accelerating. Efforts are being made to protect neotropical migrants on their wintering grounds. It is hoped the actions are effective.

In spite of these changes in bird life, a significant number of birds have remained unchanged over the past one hundred or more years. Specifically, they are the ones that prefer smaller areas of habitat or have adapted to man's habitat, for example, Eastern Wood-Pewee, House Wren, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, Warbling Vireo, Blue Jay, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Cedar Waxwing, American Tree Sparrow, and Chipping Sparrow.

INTENTIONALLY RELEASED SPECIES

Finally, a number of non-native birds have been intentionally and successfully introduced, including Mute Swans, Rock Pigeons, European Starlings, House Finches, and House Sparrows. Each of these non-native species competed successfully against native species, resulting in reductions to the native population, especially Eastern Bluebirds, Purple Martins, and other hole dwelling birds. Yet these are only a few of the many non-native species which have been introduced across North America both intentionally and unintentionally. Charles Dieterich released many European birds on his estate in Millbrook simply to create the feeling of a European oasis. Dieterich's did not survive, as was true with most introductions.

Sky Larks were released in Dutchess County and elsewhere, but the introductions were unsuccessful. Demonstrating an attitude supportive of supposed "good" introductions, Clinton Abbott visited Brooklyn on April 30, 1905, noting in his journal, "A skylark sprang into the air not 50 yards from me and ceaselessly pouring forth its unrivaled melody proceeded to mount higher and higher ... I simply stood spell-bound in delighted admiration. 'There is certainly no native American song-bird which can ever approach that song,' I felt to myself, as I listened to the ceaseless, ever-changing

WILD MALLARDS AND PHEASANTS

A limited number of pure bred wild Mallards, superior in size, form and color and straight flyers. Also twenty full blood Mongolian Cocks, one year old, and twenty first cross Mongolian Cocks, two years old. Can also supply a limited number of hen pheasants. Delivery can be made on or before Nov. 1, 1912. Address all communications to the Clove Valley Rod and Gun Club, Verbank, Dutchess County, N. Y., Game Department.

Advertisement to sell "wild" Mallards and a subspecies of Ring-necked Pheasants, generally to release for hunting.

from Forest and Stream, Sept. 28, 1912

trills.”¹⁰ It is easily understood why supporters in the nineteenth century desired to establish Sky Larks in North America. The beauty of the song, like the nobleness of a swan, encouraged attempts to enhance nature. Perhaps failed introductions are truly a loss, then again maybe we should be thankful for the failures, as they often have unintended adverse consequences on preexisting bird life.

European Starlings and House Sparrows often deprived Eastern Bluebirds of nest sites. Beginning in 1962, Florence Germond waged a successful battle to restore bluebirds to Dutchess County with a Waterman Bird Club nest box program. Monk Parakeet escapees have become established nearby, but not in Dutchess County. Ring-necked Pheasants are repeatedly released by hunt clubs, as are native Northern Bobwhite. Individuals and hunt clubs have released additional game birds, but the few that escape seldom survive their first winter.

Primarily in the first half of the twentieth century, government agencies and others released Canada Geese and Mallards to improve hunting. Then followed re-introductions of Wild Turkeys beginning in the 1950s. These programs were successful, but helped to establish sedentary Canada Geese and Mallards. Unfortunately, Canada Geese and, to a lesser extent, Wild Turkeys are now pests to some people. Other re-introductions are viewed more positively. In the 1970s, government agencies and supporting organizations teamed to reestablish breeding species lost to pesticides. As a result, Peregrine Falcons and Bald Eagles are now seen again in the Northeast.

The previous examples of changes to bird life are the consequences of man's deliberate intervention with nature. In at least two instances, “non-native” species invaded on their own. Both Cattle Egret from Africa and Glossy Ibis from Europe expanded their ranges *without* human intervention. Each is occasionally seen in Dutchess County.

WHAT ABOUT FUTURE CHANGE?

What does the future hold regarding habitat and environmental change? How bad will global warming become? How much more air and water pollution will there be? The only certainty is that there will be change, some good, some not. It is likely that grassland species, such as Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Vesper Sparrow, will continue to decline with continued habitat evolution. Neotropical migrants will also continue to suffer habitat loss on their wintering grounds. The clearing of South American rain forests, changing farming techniques, and using pesticides will most likely continue, further reducing the populations of thrushes and warblers. As a result, fewer will migrate to Dutchess County. And what about the many birds that depend on the boreal forests of Canada and Alaska for breeding grounds? Hydrocarbon exploration and lumbering for buildings and paper are changing the landscape and reducing numbers of Northern Shrikes, Rusty Blackbirds, and many waterfowl.¹¹

Introduced Eurasian Collared Doves will likely expand to the Northeast soon. Bohemian Waxwings are regular winter invaders to our north and east and may become winter visitors. Sandhill Cranes are also expanding in the Northeast and may become regular transients, if not nesters, in Dutchess County. Double-crested Cormorant, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Osprey, and Magnolia Warbler may soon be verified as nesting. If more nest boxes were provided and kept clean, American Kestrels, Barn Owls, and Eastern Screech-Owls populations would likely increase.

Encroachment takes place incrementally, before damage is recognized. While we know what birds are present and when, ornithologists know little about many species'

specific needs. We do know that forest fragmentation is a major problem. One tree is nice and more are better, but a backyard grove is not sufficient for the vast majority of forest species. Protected areas need to be linked by wildlife corridors. We also know that woods margins encourage Brown-headed Cowbird parasitism.

Will acid rain be controlled? Will PCBs and mercury and heavy metals be cleaned up? How will our understanding of the natural world change? When the twenty-second century dawns, we hope no one looks back at our time as the golden age of birds. Ornithologists emphasize a need to manage species throughout their range, summer and winter. That is our challenge. We hope future stories can be written of many bird species thriving in Dutchess County.

SELECTION OF EARLY NEST PHOTOGRAPHS

The following photographs are primarily from the early years of birding in Dutchess County when cameras were relatively new for nature photography. The subject had to remain motionless for the exposure, making nests a common subject. Several photos confirm breeding for species which no longer breed in the county.



Northern Harrier - nest with one recent hatchling, 1902 near Gretna, Pleasant Valley by Lispernard Horton. Harriers nest on the ground. The last confirmed nest in Dutchess County was in 1956.

*from Shields Magazine,
January 1906*



Grasshopper Sparrow - nest with four eggs, 1902 near Gretna, Pleasant Valley by Lispernard Horton. Grasshopper Sparrows regularly nested in the county but declined from the 1940s with the last refound nesting in 2006.

*from Birds of New York,
by Eaton*



Sedge Wren - nest,
1902 near Gretna,
Pleasant Valley by
Lispenard Horton.
Sedge Wrens prefer
damp areas where
they build an
enclosed nest with
an entrance hole.
The last suspected
Dutchess County
nesting was in the
1930s.

*from Birds of New York
by Eaton*



Long-eared Owl -
on nest with young,
May 17, 1903 at
Hyde Park by
Lispenard Horton.
The nest was in a
maple tree, 25 feet
from the ground. The
camera was in a tree
six feet away with a
60 foot tube to
activate the shutter
from below. The
exposure was 20
seconds. While
removing the camera,
the owls vigorously
attacked within feet
of Horton's head
then alighted with
ruffled feathers and
drooping wings
uttering a loud call.
The last known
nesting in Dutchess
County was in 1974.

*from Bird-Lore,
Jan.-Feb. 1904*



Northern Bobwhite

- male standing near nest, Grasmere, Rhinebeck about 1904 by Maunsell Crosby. Native Bobwhite were mostly absent from Dutchess by the early 1900s due mostly to hunting.

*from Rhinebeck Bird Club
1916 Yearbook*



Golden-winged Warbler

- a female sitting on her nest, May 26, 1911 at Grasmere Farm, Rhinebeck by Maunsell Crosby. The Golden-winged was the most common warbler nesting at Grasmere. The last Dutchess County nesting was in the late 1980s.

*from Bird-Lore,
May-June 1912*



Barn Owl -

Greenvale Farm, Poughkeepsie by George Gray who raised the young Barn Owl from September to November, 1916. Note it has been tied to the branch. Barn Owls are infrequent breeders in Dutchess, the last known was October 1980.

*from Frost Collection in
Waterman Archives*



Tree Swallow -

June 12, 1921,
Grass Pond,
Millerton by Allen
Frost. First known
Tree Swallow nest in
Dutchess County,
found by Crosby and
Frost. Now an
abundant breeder.

*from Maunsell Crosby's
birding journal, vol. 2*



Blue-headed Vireo -

sitting on four eggs,
Turkey Hollow,
Amenia June 8, 1922
by Allen Frost. First
nest found in
Dutchess County of
the then common
transient

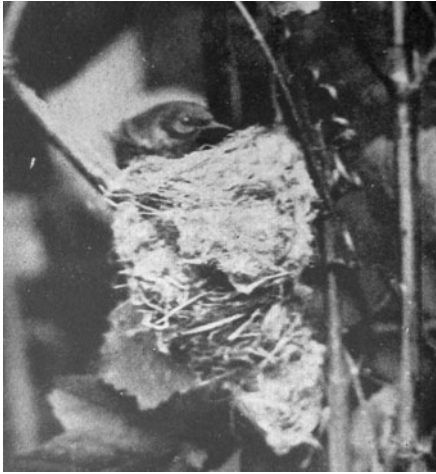
*from Bird-Lore,
May-June 1925*



Hermit Thrush -

three eggs in a nest
on Mt. Riga near
Millerton, June 8,
1924 by Allen Frost.
Normally a transient
this was the first nest
found in Dutchess
County. They now
breed regularly
particularly in the
eastern portions of
the county.

*from Bird-Lore,
May-June 1925*



Prairie Warbler -

June 22, 1924 on a nest with three eggs, foot of Schaghticoke Mt., Dover by Allen Frost. First nest found in Dutchess. Now commonly found nesting in county.

*from Bird-Lore,
May-June 1925*



Prairie Horned

Lark - four young wanting to be fed, April 16, 1941, Salt Point by Allen Frost. Horned Larks have become very scarce breeders in Dutchess County. The Prairie Horned Lark is a subspecies which expanded from the West.

*from Bulletin to the Schools,
March 1944*

NOTES

- [1] Griscom, p.37.
- [2] Early historical data is primarily for the Northeast, from Forbush plus Zeranski and Baptist. Forbush (1912), pp.1-35, provides additional details on the early history.
- [3] Levine, chapter "From Glaciers to Global Warming" by David Steadman, pp.56-71.
- [4] Forbush convincingly notes Sandhill Cranes migrated along the New England coast, although Bull is less accepting for Long Island. Some authorities also note Whooping Cranes in the Northeast.
- [5] Emanuel Levine, "'To Market, To Market' ...to See a Life Bird," *Kingbird*, 2000, pp.384-386.
- [6] Zeranski and Baptist.
- [7] *Forest and Stream*, Feb. 26, 1885, p.85.
- [8] "No Room to Run," National Geographic Magazine, September 2004, p.40.
- [9] See Levine, 1998, p.379 for other views.
- [10] Clinton Abbott's birding journal, April 30, 1905. There is no reason to believe Abbott supported introducing non-native birds.
- [11] Jeff Wells, "The Importance of the CBC to Our Understanding of Boreal Bird Populations," *American Birds* 105th Christmas Count Issue, 2005.

ANNOTATED LIST OF THE BIRDS OF DUTCHESS COUNTY, N.Y.

INTRODUCTION

All species, regular or accidental, found in Dutchess County are included. Sightings were taken on good faith to be valid, although in most cases there are sufficient supporting records to outweigh an occasional incorrect record. For accidental occurrences and other sightings of unique importance, the record is listed with full details. When previously published records are known to be incorrect, an explanation is provided. The existence of significant photographs is also noted. A + superscript following the word photograph⁺ indicates that photograph is in the Photo Gallery or introductory chapters of this book. Details normally found in field guides or species specific reference books are omitted.

Some exotic species of historic significance are included, but not escaped domestic fowl or pet birds. Both exotic and hypothetical sightings are included in the Miscellaneous Reports section.

Unusually early spring or fall arrival dates and unusually late spring or fall departure dates are often included, although such reports may be unconfirmed. In a very few cases, the authors have chosen not to use an unpublished record that simply did not seem correct. In some cases, the report is alluded to with qualification but without details; in other cases it is simply ignored.

A May Census has been conducted every year since 1919. It covers all of Dutchess County. Through 1958 a specific route was generally followed, sometimes by a single group of people and sometimes by two groups. In some years, reports of birds seen by non-group members were added. Since 1959 many groups, often ten or more totaling fifty or more people, scour the county. The census is conducted over 24 hours during peak migration, although most groups do not bird at night. Prior to 1959, the number of individuals of each species was not usually retained. During the 1920s, a census was held multiple weekends in May. The census preceding May 16 has been designated the "official" May Census for purposes of May Census records. Data from the other dates are incorporated in the general county bird records.

The Christmas Count, started by Frank Chapman of the American Museum of Natural History in 1900, was first held in Dutchess County in 1901 and in most subsequent years through 1931. After 1931 it was conducted sporadically until 1958 and has been held every year since then. For the early counts, Maunsell Crosby covered the Rhinebeck area. Counts in the 1940s and 1950s covered the area near Poughkeepsie but were not always submitted to Audubon. Since 1958, the area covered is a circle with a

diameter of 15 miles, centered on the west entrance to James Baird State Park. It extends to the Hudson River at Poughkeepsie but excludes the northern half of the county and large portions in the south and east. Since 1958, upwards of 40 people have participated each year. Christmas Counts are also held in Sharon, Conn., and Pawling, N.Y., each covering a portion of Dutchess County. Dutchess County data from these two counts are incorporated in the general county bird records.

Population trend comparisons between May Census data and Christmas Count data is often difficult. The May Census covers a larger area, the Christmas Count was not held every year, and the number of people participating varies.

A Waterfowl Count is also conducted each January, usually on the middle weekend. The count was started in 1955 by the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs. Dutchess County data has been collected since 1960.

Two Breeding Bird Atlases have been compiled for New York State. A Breeding Bird Atlas shows the geographical breeding distribution of each species found nesting. To obtain this data, the state is divided into blocks of nine square miles, and each block is surveyed to determine which species nest there. Evidence is noted as possible (present in suitable habitat and time), probable (e.g. territorial singing), or confirmed (e.g. nest with young or adult feeding young). Dutchess County's 96 Atlas blocks were surveyed for both Atlases. The first survey was conducted from 1980-85, and a book of maps and descriptions was published in 1988. The second survey, Atlas 2000, was conducted from 2000-05. Although the Atlas was not published in time to be a resource for this book, interim data was available on the NYSDEC website. That data was incomplete and subject to review, but combined with the local field experience of the authors, it allowed them to note changes in the breeding status of certain species.

Since 1977 the New York State Avian Records Committee (NYSARC) has reviewed submitted reports of rare sightings. Most reports submitted to NYSARC are noted in this work with an indication of the finding of the committee. NYSARC's 1998 report commented on non-accepted records, "The fact that NYSARC does not accept a particular record does not mean the Committee, or any of its members, feels the record did not occur as reported. The non-acceptance of any record simply reflects the opinion of NYSARC that the documentation did not meet the rigorous standards appropriate for inclusion in the formal historical record." Some applicable records were never submitted.

Clearly, not every bird in Dutchess County is seen and recorded. There are likely earlier and later sightings, larger flocks, and totally unreported accidental species. Probably breeding occurred sooner than known for increasing species and more recently than known for declining species. Nonetheless, the large body of data covering more than a century ensures that the picture of bird life described is very accurate.

Species are named and listed in taxonomic order as defined by the American Ornithological Society's *Check-list of North American Birds*, 7th edition through supplement 62 (July 2021).

For each species, data is presented as follows:

Normal Dates specifies the dates during which the bird has generally been seen in Dutchess County since 1990. Extreme or unusual dates are described in the text as applicable. **Only Dates** itemizes *all known* sightings when about ten or fewer sightings exist.

Usual Locale indicates specific locations or areas of the county where the species is most often seen if found in limited areas. They might also be found other places. For species found throughout the county, the preferred habitat is given.

Status since 1990 provides abundance by season or month, migration dates, and nesting dates, primarily since January 1990. When appropriate, sighting location and who saw the bird is also given. **Status** is used for species with too few records to meaningfully limit report dates from 1990. Records have been included through at least December 2005 with some updates to December 2021.

Historical Notes describes the many changes in abundance, dates of occurrence, and breeding that have occurred since generally the 1870s. For migrating birds, the earliest and latest spring arrival and fall departure dates are given. The largest number of birds seen at one time is often listed as well. Omission of this data normally indicates the absence of extreme dates or numbers. Place names used are those in use at the time the sighting was reported. The “Places Named” chapter associates obsolete and less well-known place names with their current name and location.

Pre-1900 historical data for the Northeast was obtained from books published by Edward Howe Forbush on New England, and Elon Howard Eaton and John Bull on New York, as well as a few others. The Bibliography provides full details.

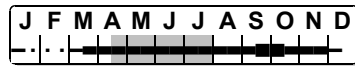
When quoting from books that cover a large area such as New York State, usually Eaton, Bull, and Levine; dates or abundance refer specifically to Dutchess County data. State records are never generalized to Dutchess County.

References to historic records are generally identified by the last name of the author publishing the record, for example, “Eaton” is indicated even though most of Eaton’s Dutchess County records were from Mary Hyatt and Lisenard Horton. Some people, such as Hyatt, Horton, Crosby, Frost, and Baker, made so many contributions that they are referenced with minimal or no detail as to the source of their record. The Preface and Bibliography identify the sources. Biographic information on many of these people appears in the section “History of Ornithology in Dutchess County.” Other significant contributors of records are further identified in the chapter “People Named.”

Generally an author’s name is used without specifying a date. Unless otherwise specified, the following dates should be assumed in such cases: Stearns, 1880; Eaton, 1907; Crosby, 1921; and Griscom, 1932.

Comment notes results of reports submitted to NYSARC or explains questionable records. Extended quotes from earlier works are occasionally presented to amplify changes. When appropriate, subspecies and hybrids are noted.

A **Bar Graph** is displayed for each regularly occurring species. The bar symbols, as defined below, indicate relative abundance each month since 1990. The following is a sample graph:



Occurrence / Abundance:

- **Abundant** (■) – widespread and easily found in proper habitat in large numbers
- **Common** (■) – widespread and easily found in proper habitat in smaller numbers
- **Uncommon** (—) – widespread in very small numbers or common only in very limited habitat
- **Casual** (· · ·) – irregular, not reported every year but expected again: (a) breeds in region including spring overshoots and post-breeding dispersal; (b) winters in region or occasional invader; or (c) migration route variances.

- **Accidental** – far out of range and not expected, a vagrant: (a) known to wander, often great distances; (b) disrupted by ocean storms; or (c) errant migrant.
- **Background shading** () – bred since 1990; bounds earliest date of first egg to latest date of last fledged, including multiple broods
- **photograph**⁺ in text indicates that photograph is in the Photo Gallery of this book.

Status:

- **Permanent Resident** – found throughout the year and normally breeds. Summer and winter populations may or may not include the same individuals
- **Summer Resident** – migrates to the county in spring to breed and departs in fall; usually also a Transient and generally found every year
- **Winter Resident** – migrates to the county in fall and departs in spring; generally found every year
- **Transient** – migrates through the county to breed farther north; does not breed in the county
- **Visitant** – in spring, overshoots breeding area before breeding; in summer, wanders after breeding; in fall and winter, occurs sporadically, often irruptive; does not breed in the county; usually not found every year
- **Vagrant** – occurs unexpectedly; wanders far out of range
- **Historical** – all records prior to 1950, no observer is living, it is unlikely to occur again.
- **Exotic** – non-native species, released or escaped, that has not established a sustaining feral population
- **Introduced** – non-native species, released or escaped, that has established a sustaining feral population; survives without substantive aid
- **Breeds** – indicates breeding has been confirmed since 1990 unless qualified by “infrequently” or “formerly,” in which case the text provides details

Other terms:

- **Regular** – generally ten or more accepted sightings in last 50 years
- **Hypothetical** – all reports are sight-only by three people or fewer, no photograph or specimen was obtained, and not accepted by NYSARC
- **Local** – species present, generally breeds, in few areas when similar habitat is present in other areas
- **Irruptive** – variable abundance, prone to erratic winter outbreaks. Some years none are seen
- **Flight year** – when a species occasionally irrupts and moves far beyond its normal range, often in very large numbers over a wide area, usually in winter
- **Straggler** – individual failing to depart in proper season
- **Invader** – non-native species that expanded their range from one faunal region to another without human aid
- **Nearctic** – the faunal region comprising North America north of tropical Mexico, including Greenland
- **Neotropical migrant** – species that winters in the Caribbean or Central or South America
- **Subspecies** – subdivision of a species, sometimes differentiable by sight or sound, often separated geographically, same as race
- **Hybrid** – the offspring of two different species
- **Intergrade** – the offspring of two different subspecies of the same species

- **Extirpated** – species no longer found at any time of year in an area where it formerly was regularly found, usually breeding, although still breeding elsewhere
- **Extinct** – species no longer living anywhere in the world
- **Immature** – having plumage between juvenile and adult; often also called first winter plumage
- **Morph** – a distinct variation in feather color related to breeding population and not to sex, age, or season; from polymorphic, same as phase
- **Albino** – all feathers that are normally colored are pure white
- **Gynandromorph** – a species showing both male and female characteristics particularly in plumage
- **Leucistic** – plumage is pale, but normal patterns are visible
- **Diurnal** – normally most active during daylight
- **Nocturnal** – normally most active at night
- **Crepuscular** – normally most active during twilight

Acronyms and Abbreviations:

- **BBS** – Breeding Bird Survey
- **MUA** – Multiple Use Area, a designation of some state owned lands
- **NHS** – National Historic Site
- **NWR** – National Wildlife Refuge
- **NYBBA** – New York Breeding Bird Atlas, see Andrle, Robert & Janet Carroll in Bibliography
- **NYSARC** – New York State Avian Records Committee
- **NYSDEC** – New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

ORDER – WATERFOWL

GEESE AND DUCKS

———— FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna bicolor*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Date:

One April 9, 1981, at Tivoli North Bay, Cruger Island, by Florence Germond, James and Mary Key, Eleanor Pink, Marion Van Wagner, and Mary Yegella.

Status: Fulvous Whistling-Ducks occur very irregularly along the Atlantic coast and less often inland. They feed primarily at night.

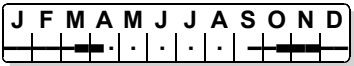
Historical Notes: Fulvous Whistling-Ducks inhabit a number of isolated areas around the world, including the east coast of Mexico. They irregularly wander, often in small flocks and often at great distances over oceans. The Mexican population expanded to Texas and then to Louisiana by the 1920s. In both states the population has fluctuated

widely. They settled in southern Florida in 1961, at which time they were also reported all along the Atlantic coast. Bellrose suspects this population may have come by way of Cuba which was colonized in 1943 from a colony in northern South America. The first New York State record is Dec. 22, 1962, on Long Island. Since then they have appeared very irregularly. This 1981 sighting represented the twelfth record from New York State, of which five were from upstate.

Comment: The following describes the first sighting in Dutchess County. Written by Mary Key, it appeared in April 1981, *Wings over Dutchess*, “Our attention was attracted by one duck flying the length of the marsh with a slow wing beat and giving a strange plaintive distress call, something like a plover call with a slurred whistle. It flew with feet trailing and neck downward giving a bowed silhouette. With poor lighting due to an overcast sky, we could see only a dark duck with a light rump area. It flew down the length of the marsh, turned and flew up the marsh, turned again and flew back to alight on the open water in front of us about 50 yards out. It came in with feet extended and its long neck down. With binoculars and scope we saw a very military upright duck about the size of a mallard near by, but with a long goose-like lovely tawny neck and under parts, a light area under its chin, light striping on its side, a dark bill with a slight hook and dark back. Then the obliging duck walked up on the mud bank showing us its very long dull blue legs.” The report was accepted by NYSARC.

———— **SNOW GOOSE** (*Anser caerulescens*) ————

Normal Dates: March 12 - April 13 and
September 28 - December 20, some winter
Usual Locale: Eastern portions of the county



Transient

Status since 1990: Snow Geese migrate in large flocks of 100 to 500, flying very high in V-formations, sometimes at night. Occasionally they stop and feed in a field or on a lake but seldom stay more than a day. Smaller flocks ranging ten to fifty tend to stay up to a month even in the middle of winter. A lone Snow Goose can be seen in any month, often accompanying Canada Geese. The Greater Snow Goose is the subspecies normally found in Dutchess County.

The “Blue” Goose, a color morph of the Lesser Snow Goose subspecies and once considered a separate species, is normally farther west but is seen on occasion. Usually one is seen each year mixed with Snow Geese. Up to 25 have been reported, as happened on Dec. 5, 1991, at Salt Point when Marion Van Wagner and Florence Germond saw 25 in a flock of approximately 200 Snow Geese.

Historical Notes: Forbush indicates that the Snow Goose was “abundant” during colonial times from New England to the Carolinas. They would stay five or six weeks in the fall then return in March. But they were victims of hunting, both in migration and near the Canadian breeding grounds. During the twentieth century, the Greater Snow Goose population built up significantly from a low of under 3,000 in 1900 (Godfrey) to over 110,000 in 1970 (Bellrose) and over 600,000 in 1997. The migration corridor used by the Greater Snow Goose apparently expanded westward from New England as the population increased.

Edgar Mearns recorded Snow Geese on the Hudson River off Cornwall on an unknown date in the 1870s. The next report is a flock seen March 28, 1959, at Pine Plains by George Ellsbree. On Nov. 8, 1959, one immature mingled with a flock of

domestic geese at the Douglas Sherow Farm, Pleasant Valley. It became tame enough to follow the domestic flock into the barn at night. It was banded and stayed until April 18, 1960, when it joined a wild flock of Canada Geese. The Snow Goose has been observed in numbers every year since. However, winter records were extremely rare until 1985. The first reported Blue Goose sighting was of two adults and two young on Nov. 11, 1969, at Parshall's pond, Smithfield and seen by many.

——— **Ross's Goose** (*Anser rossii*) ———

Accidental Vagrant

Only Date:

One on March 13-14, 1983, at Round Pond, Amenia, with two Snow Geese and 3000 Canada Geese, found by Dot Fleury and Mary Yegella, seen by Trixi Strauss, Ed Treacy, and many others (*Kingbird*, 1983).

Status: Ross's Geese winter in central California, though they have become established in Texas. They breed in the Canadian arctic; the exact location was not discovered until 1938. A few turn up in the East, normally with Snow Geese, with which they hybridize. The population of Ross's has increased significantly over the past 50 years.

Historical Notes: The 1983 sighting was the first for New York State. The Ross's Goose was with two immature Snow Geese, two White-fronted Geese, and 3,000+ Canada Geese, most of which left the second day. A potential second sighting, not fully identified, was one among fifty Snow Geese on Nov. 12-14, 1994, at Round Pond by Dot Fleury and Mary Yegella, seen by many others. It may have been a Ross's Goose x Snow Goose hybrid. A similar small goose was reported Nov. 24, 2008 also at Round Pond, exact identity uncertain.

Comment: The 1983 report was accepted by NYSARC.

——— **GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE** (*Anser albifrons*) ———

Normal Dates: December 1 - March 15

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
.

Usual Locale: Round Pond and other lakes and ponds

Transient

Status: The White-fronted Goose is most often found singly within a flock of Canada Geese on various ponds in the central and eastern portions of the county. Round Pond, near Sharon Station, attracts a variety of waterfowl, including flocks of Canada Geese. One White-fronted Goose was found there in 1983, 1984, and 1985, at least five sightings occurred in the 1990s, including three White-fronted Geese on March 7, 1997; and three sightings in the 2000s. It is not unusual for White-fronted to stay a few days or longer and move between ponds. The longest recorded stay is two at Sylvan Lake from Dec. 27 to March 3, 1986. One was photographed⁺ on Nov. 2, 2013 along the Salt Point Turnpike.

Historical Notes: Forbush reports that the White-fronted Goose was formerly an uncommon spring and fall migrant that decreased in numbers from 1845 to 1880. Observations in New York State have increased since 1975. The first sighting in Dutchess County occurred April 10, 1977, at the Strauss marsh where many people observed a lone White-fronted amongst approximately five hundred Canada Geese. It

stayed until April 19, the latest spring departure. It had an orange bill and very black belly and was thought to be the Greenland race. The earliest fall arrival is Oct. 10, 1985.

Two populations of the White-fronted Goose, each representing a different subspecies, may be the source of those seen. One in Greenland normally migrates to the British Isles; the other in north central Canada normally winters near the Texas coast. Both subspecies have been seen in New York. The White-fronted Goose is also kept in captivity, and some sightings may be of escapees.

———— **Pink-footed Goose** (*Anser brachyrhynchus*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

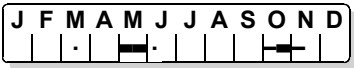
Only Date:

One on Nov. 26-27, 2021, at Wappinger Lake, Wappingers Falls, with about 50 Canada Geese, found by Debbie van Zyl and Anne Swaim, seen by many others. Photographed*.

Status: Pink-footed Geese are a European species nesting in eastern Greenland from where North American sightings are presumed to originate. They also nest in Iceland and islands north of Norway. Their numbers have increased significantly since the 1990s, at least in part presumed due to less hunting in England where many winter. Since 2007 one has been seen almost every year in New York State usually on Long Island.

———— **BRANT** (*Branta bernicla*) ————

Normal Dates: May 1 - 31 and October 11 - November 15



Transient

Usual Locale: Flying over Hudson River

Status since 1990: In spring, Brant migrate later than Canada Geese, with which they might be confused. They are usually seen in flocks of 50 to 300 birds flying north over the Hudson River, occasionally inland. It is very rare to find them on a pond. The latest spring departure is June 1, 2001. A straggler was found June 28, 2002, at Beacon Landing. In fall, they are also normally seen flying south over the Hudson, but in flocks of 100 or less. When on the river itself, only one to ten are usually seen. They often migrate at night and can be easily identified by their call. They fly in irregular long lines.

Historical Notes: Forbush says Brant were one of the most abundant “sea-fowl” before 1840. But in the late 1800s, populations plummeted, principally due to shooting. There was even fear they might become extinct. In the 1930s a parasite destroyed much of the eel grass eaten in the winter by Brant, further reducing populations. Since about 1953 they have increased. The only early Dutchess County record is a comment by Stearns (1880) of “not rare, fall.” Crosby never recorded them. The first recent Dutchess County record was May 14, 1957, by Thomas Gilbert. The first fall record is Oct. 11, 1961. Thirty were reported on Jan. 10, 1988, at New Hackensack, Wappinger, the only winter record. Winter records are still infrequent but since 2007 occurring more often.

———— **BARNACLE GOOSE** (*Branta leucopsis*) ————

Casual Visitor

Only Dates:

One on Feb. 11, 1990, with 500 Canada Geese at Indian Lake Rd., Millerton, by Jane Rossman and others; then March 6-11 at Round Pond, by Dot Fleury and others.

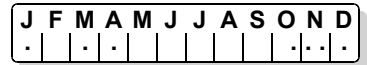
Four from Oct. 27 - Nov. 10, 2003, with 1000 Canada Geese at Domin Farm and Traver Pond, LaGrange, by Jay Domin and Chet Vincent, seen by many. Photograph⁺.

One on March 13, 2007, at Round Pond, by Dot Fleury.

Status: Barnacle Geese breed in northeast Greenland and winter in Europe. They are common in captivity, and escapees often mix among Canada Geese. For the above sightings, origin is uncertain, although they displayed wariness of wild geese. Sightings outside of eastern Canada were normally assumed to be escapees, however in recent years the breeding population has significantly increased along with accepted sightings in the Northeast.

———— **CAKCLING GOOSE** (*Branta hutchinsii*) ————

Normal Dates: late October to November
and March to April



Usual Locale: Open water on ponds, sometimes
along the Hudson River

Transient

Status: The Cackling Goose closely resembles a Canada Goose but is much smaller, nearly the size of a Mallard. It was classified a subspecies of the Canada Goose until 2004. Since being recognized as a full species, it has been reported in the East much more, however it appears to have become more common in the East as well. The Cackling Goose is found yearly in small numbers in the East, normally breeding in Alaska and the Canadian subarctic and wintering in Texas and along the Pacific Coast.

The first Cackling Goose found in Dutchess County was one on March 25-27, 1977, at Bontecou Lake, Stanford, by Jesse Bontecou, seen by at least six others. It gave a very high-pitched call. It was also found in 2002 and photographed⁺. It has been found every year from 2011 to 2015. The 2014 and 2015 sightings were of two individuals, all other sightings have been of one bird. When found, they are often with a flock of Canada Geese.

———— **CANADA GOOSE** (*Branta canadensis*) ————

Normal Dates: All year



Usual Locale: Lakes, ponds, and farm fields

Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: The Canada Goose is found in Dutchess County both as a permanent resident and as a spring and fall migrant. Those migrating leave during March and early April. Those that stay are among the earliest birds to nest. They nest on any pond or stream bank, with young seen by the end of April. They are fond of farm fields and golf courses. During September, large migrating flocks return, many hundreds in October and many thousands in November. The largest flocks are generally in the more agricultural eastern portions of the county. As long as water remains open, thousands of Canada

Geese can be found all winter. When water freezes for an extended period, they leave and return as soon as it opens.

Historical Notes: In colonial times, the Canada Goose was a common migrant. By the 1870s they were known in Dutchess County mostly as a fall migrant, but Crosby, in 1921, gave migration dates as February 7 to March 25 and October 18 to December 12. They were found on the May Census three times in the 1930s, then not again until 1958. They have not been missed since, growing to a maximum of 914 in 2002. During the Christmas and Waterfowl Counts, one was found in 1964. By 1980, the Waterfowl Count exceeded 4000 and has been in the thousands ever since. The 2002 Waterfowl Count tallied 22,422.

The first breeding record is a pair “of possibly feral birds” on Swift Pond, Amenia, in 1956, found by George Decker. This was to be the only known nesting location until 1964, when Canadas were found nesting at Tamarack Swamp and Briarcliff. By 1979 they nested on many ponds in eastern Dutchess County. Winter flocks have been common since 1965.

There was not one specific time or place when geese were intentionally released. Throughout the twentieth century, farms and hunt clubs across the Northeast allowed Canada Geese to range free, and invariably some mated. In the 1950s and 1960s, NYSDEC released geese at a number of locations, and it is believed many of the current breeding pairs are descended from them (Levine). Canada Geese have responded to their management on refuges, contributing to a further increase in population. The Canada Goose hybridizes with many other geese, including barnyard geese. It is not unusual to find an odd looking hybrid goose.

Comment: Given the large flocks regularly seen now, it is interesting to see what others thought in the past. Griscom writes, “Nearly every season both spring and fall, flocks of Canada Geese are noted flying overhead. While the Hudson River is the most frequent route, Geese are often seen inland. I am not aware of any recent record of their alighting in spring, but they do so occasionally in fall, although very rarely on the inland ponds. There is no doubt Geese were more common in preceding generations than now. There are two recent winter records, the latest a single bird on the Hudson near Poughkeepsie, Feb. 15, 1926 [by Frost]. I fear, however, that the great increase in feral or semi-domesticated birds might always explain exceptional occurrences of this nature.” (Griscom, 1933)

Pink and Waterman add, “For a bird that in the 1950s was usually the thrill of the day, it has now become quite commonplace the year around. The call of the true wilderness is still brought to mind, however, when the larger fall flocks noisily follow the Hudson River south on a crisp October day.” (Pink and Waterman, 1980)

———— MUTE SWAN (*Cygnus olor*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Lakes and ponds



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Mute Swans can be found on many lakes and ponds of Dutchess County. They are also found on the Hudson River, particularly in fall and winter, occasionally in a flock in excess of 100 birds. If winter is exceedingly cold with all water

freezing, they move south to open water. They are early nesters and can readily be found sitting on the nest by mid-March, with cygnets seen throughout the summer. North American Mute Swans are sedentary, though they tend to flock in fall and winter.

Historical Notes: The Mute Swan, originally from Europe and Asia, was introduced to North America. In the British Isles, wild Mute Swans were captured as early as the twelfth century and became semi-domesticated. It is from this stock that the North American birds are likely descended, as their first appearance was as ornamental birds on estates and in parks.

Crosby documents the introduction of “a few pairs” at Vandenburg Cove by Jacob Ruppert¹ “several years” before 1920.² They were fed in winter but bred in the wild. By 1920, this “wild” flock numbered 26 birds. However these birds never became established, always living in a semi-domesticated state. The current Swans in Dutchess County are not descended from these Rhinebeck birds. During the 1950s and 1960s, Mute Swans were often seen singly but not every year. They have been seen every year since 1975 with continuously increasing population. The first nesting, excluding the semi-domestic birds at Vandenburg Cove, occurred in 1978 at Lake Ellis, Dover.

Swans were found on the May Census in small numbers from 1922 through 1951 and since 1980, with a peak of 72 in 1992; on the Christmas Count from 1920 to 1928 and since 1981, with a peak of 93 in 1998; and on the Waterfowl Count since 1983, with a peak of 245 in 1991.

[1] Jacob Ruppert, Sr. (1842-1915) was a New York City brewer. His estate, Linwood, was on the north side of Vandenburg Cove, where he had a successful poultry business raising chickens and ducks.

[2] Levine says 216 birds were released at Rhinebeck in 1910. The original source is apparently Phillips, which states 216 were imported in the spring of 1910 but makes no reference to their being destined for or released at Rhinebeck. Ruppert had Mute Swans before 1907 but never a number a fourth this large.

——— TUNDRA SWAN (*Cygnus columbianus*) ———

Normal Dates: March 11 - April 17 and

November 10 - December 20

Usual Locale: Open water on ponds and along the Hudson River

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
	

Transient

Status: A portion of the Tundra Swan population winters in the Chesapeake Bay area and migrates northwest via a route that does not normally pass near eastern New York. The last 1000 miles of fall migration are usually completed nonstop, day and night. Spring migration follows the same route but is somewhat slower with more stops (Bellrose). Weather conditions sometimes force the swans down when otherwise not expected. Since 1972, lone birds or small flocks have been reported regularly along the Long Island and Connecticut shores. While some records are difficult to verify, the frequency of occurrence in Dutchess County appears to be approximately two in the 1960s, five in the 1970s, one in the 1980s, and two in the 1990s. While most sightings are of one bird, on March 11-12, 1995, four were seen at Round Pond by Dot Fleury, Mary Yegella, Helen Manson, and Barbara Butler. Two were photographed* there in March 2016.

Historical Notes: In colonial times, the Tundra Swan wintered along the Atlantic coast at least as far north as Massachusetts (Forbush). Edgar Mearns records one shot in the 1870s on the Hudson River near Newburgh. The first documented record of Tundra Swan in Dutchess County is two on March 25, 1968, at Cruger Island by Czecher

Terhune and Ruth Thomas. The first confirmed record is one immature Nov. 10-12, 1970, at Thompson Pond by Vivian Parkhurst and seen by Davis Finch and many others.

———— **WOOD DUCK** (*Aix sponsa*) ————

Normal Dates: March 10 - November 15

Usual Locale: Wooded ponds and marshes



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: The Wood Duck is certainly one of the most beautiful birds. By March they have returned and can be found in flocks of ten or more on many small ponds in and among the woods. By April some have left to go farther north, while others are paired and stay to breed. Woodies nest in tree cavities and will use large nest boxes suitably placed. In May the young are following mother along the waterways. By late August they form into flocks of 30 or more on some of the larger open marshes and lakes. From the end of October to mid-November, they migrate south. As long as water remains open, a few will linger, some will even stay all winter.

Historical Notes: Originally Wood Ducks were abundant, found wherever there was water near trees, which was almost everywhere in Dutchess County. Stearns recorded them as “not rare” and nesting. Eaton called them rare in 1907. By 1910 they were almost extinct. While Wood Ducks were certainly impacted by land clearing, it was hunting when there was no season or limit that nearly caused their loss for all time. With the introduction and eventual enforcement of hunting laws, including a total ban on hunting Wood Ducks from 1918 to 1941, they made a miraculous comeback. Woodies have increased in population throughout the twentieth century. They are first known to have wintered in Dutchess County during January 1963. A single male wintered with other ducks at Fishkill Cemetery each year from 1977-82.

———— **BLUE-WINGED TEAL** (*Spatula discors*) ————

Normal Dates: March 24 - May 10 and

September 14 - October 15

Usual Locale: Woodland ponds and marshes



Transient, Formerly Bred

Status since 1990: The Blue-winged Teal in spring is normally seen singly or in pairs, occasionally in small flocks of up to ten birds, and always on small woodland ponds. Blue-wings arrive in late March or early April, seldom stay more than a day, and have completely passed through by mid-May. In fall they pass through rather quickly between late September and early October in very small flocks, usually six or less. November sightings are rare.

Historical Notes: The Blue-winged Teal was much more common and probably nested across the Northeast in the nineteenth century (Forbush). In 1880, Stearns called them “not rare in early fall”; Crosby called them a “common transient along the river” from March 30 to May 1 and after September 21; by 1932 Griscom called them uncommon. The earliest spring arrival is March 4, 1964, at Cruger Island. The Blue-winged Teal is a sporadic breeder with four known nestings at two locations in Dutchess County: an adult with five young June 1963 and an adult with five young July 1964, both at Briarcliff Farm, Pine Plains; an adult with seven young August 1967, and an adult with two young

June 1969, both at Strauss Marsh, Amentia. There are other summer sightings without young. The Blue-winged Teal migrates to the West Indies and northern South America, so winter records are extremely scarce, namely: one Jan. 15, 1967, at New Hamburg by James and Mary Key; one Dec. 4, 1973, at Tivoli North Bay by Erik Kiviati; one Jan. 7, 1977, at Stissing Marsh, Stanford, by Thelma Haight; and two Dec. 7, 1985, on Wappinger Lake by James and Mary Key.

———— **NORTHERN SHOVELER** (*Spatula clypeata*) ————

Normal Dates: March 15 - April 20 and
October 22 - December 21

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
.	

Usual Locale: Shallow lakes and ponds

Transient

Status since 1990: Northern Shovelers normally migrate farther west and generally miss Dutchess County. Nevertheless, a few are seen from mid-March through April, rarely in May. They stay a day or longer. Generally only one is seen, but occasionally as many as five may be together. In late October, pairs or small flocks reappear and stay a day to a week. By late December they move south. One male stayed at Stissing Marsh, Stanford, from Nov. 25, 1980, to March 1981, and is the only known bird to stay all winter. Other January and February records exist for at most a few days. Some years, none are seen.

Historical Notes: The Shoveler is generally found in the West, it was more common in the Northeast in Colonial times. Bull says that it increased in New York State after about 1955. The first Shoveler sighting documented in Dutchess County is of two males and one female on April 22 and 27, 1922, at Cruger Island (Crosby). Griscom recorded them as appearing "six years out of ten" and often in small flocks, but no local records are known between 1932 and 1962. From 1968, they have been reported almost every year. The earliest spring arrival is March 1, 1975. The latest spring departure is May 14, 1988. The earliest fall arrival is Sept. 26, 1971. The only summer occurrence is one female on Aug. 26, 1922, at Cruger Island by Crosby.

———— **GADWALL** (*Mareca strepera*) ————

Normal Dates: February 15 - April 9 and
September 11 - December 10

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
.

Usual Locale: Lakes and ponds, in the fall
Wappinger Lake

Transient

Status since 1990: Each spring, two or three Gadwall are sighted, usually on an inland pond, occasionally along the Hudson River. They often stay only a day but have been known to stay as long as two weeks (Feb. 14-26, 1993, at Pleasant Valley). Though seldom found after early April, the Gadwall was reported May 18-26, 1993, at Kays Pond, and July 19, 1998, at Arborio's, Pleasant Valley. In fall, the Gadwall may be seen from mid-September to December, frequently in small flocks of six to ten. As in spring, they seldom stay longer than a day. Wappinger Lake is the most reliable fall location. Winter records are uncommon, although two were found on the 1998 Waterfowl Count, and two were seen during January 2003.

Historical Notes: In the early nineteenth century, the Gadwall may have been more common. Dr. John Bachman¹, a minister from South Carolina for whom the Bachman's

Warbler is named, visited Dutchess County in 1812. He observed Gadwalls raised by a miller from a pair captured in 1809 on a mill pond and sent a letter describing them to his friend John James Audubon. More often seen in the west, the Gadwall was next documented in Dutchess County on April 25, 1920, and seen infrequently during the 1920s and 1930s. Although May is late, they were recorded on the May Census in both 1948 and 1958. They have been seen almost yearly since 1968. They were first recorded breeding on Long Island in 1947 and at Montezuma NWR in 1950. A few winter on Long Island.

[1] Eaton, page 188, misidentifies Bachman as Boardman. Crosby propagated the error. The letter is documented in Audubon’s *The Birds of America*, vol. 6, page 255.

———— EURASIAN WIGEON (*Mareca penelope*) ————

Casual Visitant

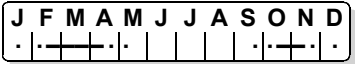
Only Dates:

- Two (pair) in April 1914, at Vandenburg Cove. Reported as “probably domesticated stock liberated by Jacob Ruppert” [see page 65 concerning Ruppert].
- One male on April 3, 1932, at Cruger Island, by John Baker and Allen Frost.
- Two (pair) on May 19, 1946, on Hudson River at Staatsburg, by Ralph Waterman and Ray Guernsey.
- One on Dec. 6, 1960, on Hudson River at Barrytown, by Br. Michael Dougherty.
- One male on April 1, 1967, on Hudson River south of Cruger Island, by John Marsh and Otis Waterman.
- One on Oct. 7, 1995, on Hudson River at Esopus Meadows, by Al Brayton and others.
- One on March 11, 2010 on Wappinger Lake by Ken Harris then by Ed Spaeth.

Status: The Eurasian Wigeon is a resident of Europe and Asia, although birds banded in Iceland have been recovered on the US east coast. From the late twentieth century, more have been seen to the point they are rare though regular on the North Atlantic Coast.

———— AMERICAN WIGEON (*Mareca americana*) ————

Normal Dates: February 11 - April 14 and
October 15 - November 15



Usual Locale: Inland lakes and ponds

Transient

Status since 1990: As soon as ice leaves the lakes and ponds, American Wigeons show up in ones and twos, often pairs, seldom in flocks larger than four. Also known by the descriptive name Baldpate, they stay for a day or two, then move on. After mid-April spring migrants are rare, though some have been seen in May. By mid-October, they stop again for a few days on their migration south, often in flocks of up to ten birds. By mid-November, all but a few have left. They are occasionally sighted in December and there are some January records. In the East, they winter on Long Island and south along the Atlantic coast.

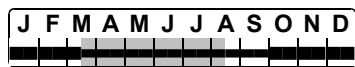
Historical Notes: In 1880, Stearns noted American Wigeons as “quite common, in flocks of 15 to 20.” While Furbush said they decreased into the early 1900s. Griscom considered them common but noted a wide variation in the aggregate of those seen in a season. Flocks of fifty to sixty were reported in the 1970s, mostly at Strauss Marsh, Amenia. While flocks seem smaller since the 1970s, more stragglers have lingered into

the winter. The latest spring departure is June 10, 1968, of a pair seen all during May at Briarcliff Farm. No young were found. The first known breeding in New York State was in 1959 at Montezuma NWR. The earliest fall arrival is Sept. 8, 1973, at Strauss Marsh.

———— **MALLARD** (*Anas platyrhynchos*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Inland lakes and ponds



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: The Mallard regularly winters in Dutchess County, with 100 or more readily found on lakes in fall and winter. In particularly cold winters when all water is frozen, there may be fewer. If there are signs of an early spring, Mallards start to form pairs in February. The first young are seen in late April, many more in May. As summer wanes, it becomes easy to see groups of ten or more, with flocks of 100 possible. Wild Mallards do migrate through Dutchess County in March / April and October / November, but exact migration dates are not easy to discern. A few hunt clubs still release them. The Mallard shares the same breeding habitat as the Black Duck.

Historical Notes: In 1880, Stearns categorized the Mallard as “not rare, fall.” Crosby, in 1921, considered them a fairly common transient from March 30 to May 1 and October 12 to December 7, but also noted, “Many are being raised from semi-domesticated stock and it may become difficult to distinguish the wild from the tame.” Griscom said, “The Mallard is of regular occurrence in very small numbers in fall on the more suitable ponds in the eastern part of the County,” and added they are “five to ten times as numerous in fall as in spring.” The largest flock reported by Baker was 20 on April 3, 1932. It is not clear when the first nesting occurred; the first documented summer record is July 1948 at Salt Point by Ralph Waterman. From then on, they were recorded most summers and with young. On the May Census, the first Mallard was recorded in 1926, a few after, and every year since 1945. The highest count is 284 in 2004. On the Christmas Count, one was recorded in 1923, and sightings increased steadily from the late 1960s, with the highest count 1064 in 2001. The Waterfowl Count maximum is 2118 in 2003.

Mallards have always been the most abundant duck in the West, with their niche in the East filled by the Black Duck. However, by the beginning of the twentieth century, Mallards were commonly raised on farms and by hunt clubs and frequently escaped or were released. Between 1952 and 1956, NYS Conservation Department released more than 20,000 Mallards (NYBBA). Also many marshes were created and protected in the eastern US, allowing Mallards to flourish. Mallards did not breed in eastern New York State before the introduction of released birds. With the Mallard breeding in the East and exploding in population, they sometimes mate with the Black Duck. The Black is much reduced in population, in part due to the introduction of Mallards. Mallard x Black Duck hybrids are seen in Dutchess County from time to time.

———— **AMERICAN BLACK DUCK** (*Anas rubripes*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Inland lakes and ponds to breed; on Hudson River in fall and winter



Permanent Resident, Breeds

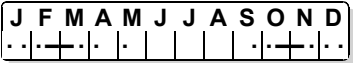
Status since 1990: Beginning in early March, most Black Ducks move north. Those that stay nest in April and are difficult to find until the young are seen following mother in May and June. Slightly larger flocks composed of local broods are seen from July through September. In October migration begins with Black Ducks returning from the north. They will stay through the winter if water remains sufficiently open. Flocks ranging from two to eighty are regularly reported from December through February on inland lakes and ponds as well as coves along the Hudson River, particularly Tivoli North Bay. The population of Black Ducks has been declining in part due to Mallards frequently interbreeding with Black Ducks.

Historical Notes: The Black Duck population was significantly reduced in the late 1800s due to market hunting but quickly rebounded when it ceased. One hundred years ago in Dutchess County, the Black Duck was abundant in migration and a common nester throughout the county but only occasionally was found on the Hudson River in midwinter. Crosby estimated 50,000 to 100,000 Black Ducks would migrate south along the Hudson each fall (Griscom, p.77). The Black Duck is one of the few birds found on nearly every May Census since 1919. The highest number recorded is 81 in 1972, and the lowest is one in 1999 and 2002, which demonstrates the local breeding decline in recent years. The Christmas Count all time highs are 2300 in 1928 and 800 in 1931. John Baker recorded 1500 on April 3, 1932. Recent high counts are 189 on the 1989 Christmas Count, and 659 on the 1992 Waterfowl Count. Griscom (1933, p.51) contains a table of all ducks counted during migration in various years with the following note, “The Black Duck is omitted from these tables, as being far too abundant for accurate counts.”

It was once common to see references to the Red-legged Black Duck as a subspecies of the American Black Duck, including by Crosby and Griscom. It was shown in 1943 that the characteristics of the supposed subspecies are related to age, sex, and season, and not to geographic area (Godfrey).

———— **NORTHERN PINTAIL** (*Anas acuta*) ————

Normal Dates: February 21 - March 15 and
October 19 - November 21



Usual Locale: Woodland lakes and ponds

Transient

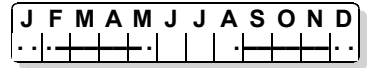
Status since 1990: In late February, the first of the spring migrating Northern Pintails arrive. While the first arrivals may be seen as single birds, soon they are in flocks of five to ten. By mid-March, most have left for the north, although a few may linger into early April. In fall, most Pintails arrive in mid-October. The majority migrate through by mid-November, but one to four may stay all winter on open ponds in all but the harshest winters.

Historical Notes: Bull records the Pintail as “formerly rare in the northeast, but have increased markedly since the early 1920s.” In 1880, Stearns was shown a single Pintail by a hunter and records that many of the “old hunters” had never seen one. In 1921, Crosby called them “fairly common transient along the river, March 23 to April 8,” later than now. Griscom in 1933, called them “more numerous in autumn.” Pink and Waterman, in 1964, said they were uncommon and “more often recorded in Spring.” The earliest fall arrival is Sept. 28, 1992. January sightings have been reported since the 1930s. During 1959, the NYS Conservation Department released Pintails at three upstate

refuges from which they have bred. The only summer record is one female in July 1983 at Stissing Marsh, Stanford, by Thelma Haight.

———— **GREEN-WINGED TEAL** (*Anas crecca*) ————

Normal Dates: February 15 - May 6 and
October 10 - November 29



Usual Locale: Marsh ponds and Hudson River coves

Transient

Status since 1990: Green-winged Teal arrive on their spring migration by early March, sometimes in late February. They are usually in small groups, though up to 20 may be seen together, usually on inland ponds or Hudson River coves. By late April or early May, they have left. They return by in September, and, while most leave in November, some stay through December and may winter.

Historical Notes: The Green-winged Teal has been fairly common for the past 120 years. Generally, more are reported in spring than fall. The first January record is in 1960. There are occasional summer sightings. During the summer, non-breeding Green-winged Teal are often found across the state.

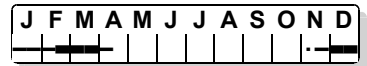
Comment: In 1968, nesting was suspected at Buttermilk Pond, Pine Plains, but no details were apparently preserved. On May 14, 1977, one female and five young were observed on Willow Cross Rd., Hyde Park; however, this exceptionally early date for fledged young, before eggs are normally laid, brings the identification into question.

The Green-winged Teal is a subspecies of the Eurasian Teal, they were formerly considered separate species. Eaton reported a "European Teal" for Dutchess County without details and most likely in error¹. However on March 20, 2019 Chet Vincent found an Eurasian Teal at Round Pond, Amenia. It was seen by at least six others and photographed. It stayed through March 26. Then on April 6 Carena Pooth and Barbara Butler found two Eurasian Teal at the Strever Farm, Pine Plains. Seen by others, they too were photographed⁺.

[1] The Dutchess County list is the only list in Eaton to include the "European Teal" as more frequent than accidental and with no elaboration in the species account. Neither Mary Hyatt nor Lisenard Horton, who developed the list, reported it to Crosby. Griscom ignored it.

———— **CANVASBACK** (*Aythya valisineria*) ————

Normal Dates: November 15 - April 6



Usual Locale: Hudson River and larger inland lakes

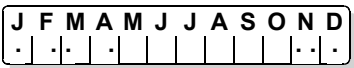
Transient

Status since 1990: Canvasbacks are often found on the Hudson River in large flocks called rafts. Rafts of 500 birds are occasionally seen. A raft moves up and down the river and is not seen in the same place for long. Smaller flocks can sometimes be found on inland lakes, where they tend to stay longer than those on the river. In fall, they arrive any time from early November to late December, and some will remain all winter. In spring, Canvasbacks migrate from mid-February to early April. On Feb. 22, 1991, 2500 were reported from Tivoli Bay by Susan Joseph.

Historical Notes: While apparently more common than in the 1800s, the Canvasback has changed little in their occurrence since the early 1900s. Griscom reported fewer in spring, but they have occasionally wintered since at least the 1920s if not earlier. Three times they have been reported on the May Census (1953, 1972, 1976). The latest spring date is one female on June 20, 1973, at Cruger Island by Erik Kiviat. The earliest fall arrival date is one on Oct. 23, 1972, at Ryder Pond, Stanford. They are regularly recorded on the Christmas and Waterfowl Counts, but the numbers fluctuate widely from year to year. Rafts numbering to 3000 were seen in the late 1970s and early 1980s but have been smaller since, perhaps due to the river being less ice bound.

———— **REDHEAD** (*Aythya americana*) ————

Normal Dates: February 16 - March 16 and
November 1 - 29



Usual Locale: Larger inland lakes and Hudson River

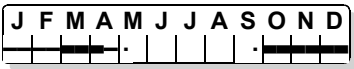
Transient

Status since 1990: The Redhead is not seen in Dutchess County every year. They can arrive as early as the end of November but are more likely from mid-February to mid-March, either singly or in groups of up to four. Stragglers may be found in April. Redheads are more often found on inland ponds than on the Hudson River. Abels Pond, Union Vale, has been the usual location in recent years. Fall transients are generally confined to November and in fewer numbers than spring.

Historical Notes: The Redhead was much more common in the 1880s and drastically declined since the 1920s (Bull). The two latest spring departure dates are April 25, 1926, at Cruger Island and April 22, 1992, on Lake Walton, 66 years apart. The two earliest fall arrival dates are Oct. 4, 1965, at Christie Pond, Union Vale, and Oct. 8, 1926, at Barrytown, 39 years apart. By far the largest flock reported in Dutchess County is of approximately 100 birds from Nov. 9-20, 1975, on Rudd Pond, Millerton, by Helen Manson. Redheads have been found on four Christmas Counts (23 in 1927; 1973; 1975; and 9 in 1988).

———— **RING-NECKED DUCK** (*Aythya collaris*) ————

Normal Dates: October 1 - April 25



Usual Locale: Inland lakes, occasionally the Hudson
River

Transient

Status since 1990: Early in October, Ring-necked Ducks are discovered on lakes and ponds in the county and sometimes on the Hudson River. They come quickly and are generally seen in flocks, some of 150 or more birds. Seldom are they found singly during migration. Once winter sets in, flocks become smaller and single individuals are seen. As long as water remains open, many stay all winter. By early March, numbers again build into the hundreds. By mid to late April, they have migrated north. Only an occasional straggler is found in May. Males tend to leave the breeding areas first, some as early as June. The only summer record from Dutchess County, likely an early migration, is four males on July 9, 2004, at Abel Pond by Barbara Butler.

Historical Notes: The Ring-necked Duck was first recorded in Dutchess County with a pair on April 1, 1922, at Vandenburg Cove by Griscom and Crosby. Through 1934 several spring but only four fall sightings were recorded. The next records are April 1952 by Ralph Waterman at Poughkeepsie and John Baker at Union Vale. By 1957, George Decker reported they were common transients on the lakes of eastern Dutchess County. The first January record is nine on Jan. 19, 1971, on Sylvan Lake during the Waterfowl Count. Winter sightings were sporadic until 1983. They have been reported each winter since, with a maximum of 331 on the 1995 Waterfowl Count. The earliest fall arrival is Sept. 24, 1979, at Stissing Marsh, Stanford. The latest spring departure is a male on June 9, 1975. Through the 1970s, flocks seldom reached 100 birds.

———— **TUFTED DUCK** (*Aythya fuligula*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Date:

One male from March 22-26, 2009, on Hudson River, found by Mark DeDea from Esopus Meadows, seen by many including Chet Vincent from Mills Mansion. Photographed⁺ by Curt McDermott.

Status: The Tufted Duck breeds from Iceland to across Siberia. There are occasional sightings along the east coast south to New Jersey. Sightings increased during the 1970s along the coast but since 2000 sightings also increased inland. In nearly all cases the Tufted Duck is found with Ring-necked Ducks and Scaup.

Comment: A report of the sighting was accepted by NYSARC.

———— **GREATER SCAUP** (*Aythya marila*) ————

Normal Dates: March 21 - April 26 and
November 15 - January 10

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
.

Usual Locale: Hudson River and inland lakes

Transient

Status since 1990: Greater Scaup are found more often in spring than fall and in some years not at all. Occasionally seen earlier, they generally arrive towards the end of March in one or two pairs, although occasionally as many as 30 are seen on the Hudson River. By mid-April they are usually gone, although they have been recorded in May. Fall migrants can arrive as early as September, but they are more likely to be seen singly or as a pair on inland lakes in mid-November, December, and early January if water is open. Greater Scaup stay later in fall and are more likely to be seen in winter than the Lesser Scaup.

Historical Notes: The Greater Scaup has been reported in Dutchess County for the past 120 years. While estimates of their abundance vary, the variation seems a factor of the number of people looking, when they look, and where they look, as much as variations in Scaup population. Unlike before the 1970s, Scaup seen on the Hudson River are now more likely to be Greater Scaup.

———— LESSER SCAUP (*Aythya affinis*) ————

Normal Dates: March 7 - April 10 and
October 7 - November 30

Usual Locale: Inland lakes, not often on the Hudson
River

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D

Transient

Status since 1990: Lesser Scaup are not found every spring and fall. They arrive early in March, sometimes by late February. Usually one or two pairs are seen on inland lakes. They are seldom in large numbers and rarely on the Hudson River. By early April they are usually gone, although they have been seen in May. About equal numbers are reported in fall. They are more likely to be seen in groups of up to six birds on inland lakes from October through November. Lesser Scaup arrive and depart earlier than the Greater Scaup in both spring and fall, although their presence in the county overlaps.

Historical Notes: Lesser Scaup and Greater Scaup were once considered the same species, making early records unclear. Nevertheless it appears the Lesser Scaup was never common in the 1800s. Unlike the Greater, the Lesser Scaup was more common in the 1990s than in prior decades. They are now found more often on inland lakes than the Hudson River, and more often in fall than before 1991. Flocks in excess of 200 were reported only in the 1980s, always Lesser Scaup and always on the Hudson.

Comment: The difficulty identifying the specific Scaup species is well-known. These accounts for both Scaup are based on 60 sightings from 1990 to 2003 by one or more experienced observers who were able to identify the species.

———— KING EIDER (*Somateria spectabilis*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Date:

One female on Dec. 18, 2017 off Norrie Point, Hyde Park, found and photographed⁺ by Peter Stewart.

Status: The King Eider is very uncommon inland although it is regularly found in the winter off Long Island and near Lake Ontario. The eastern population breeds in the Canadian arctic, among the furthest north of any bird species, and normally winter in open water south to New Jersey. First year birds tend to winter the furthest south. Most of their life is spent in shallow seas. They are also found in arctic Europe and Asia.

———— COMMON EIDER (*Somateria mollissima*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Date:

One female on Oct. 15-16, 1979, at Quaker Lake, Pawling, found by Howard Pellet and seen by many. Photographed⁺ by Pellet and Mary Yegella.

Status: The Common Eider is regular off Montauk Point, Long Island, and farther east along the New England coast from mid-November through March. More females and immatures comprise winter flocks along this southern end of the winter range. Though this sea duck is seldom found over land, the 1979 sighting was at least the third New York State confirmed record away from the coast.

Comment: The report of this sighting was accepted by NYSARC.

———— **SURF SCOTER** (*Melanitta perspicillata*) ————

Normal Dates: Most often seen in October

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
			

Usual Locale: Inland lakes

Transient

Status: The majority of Surf Scoters winter on the Pacific coast. In fall, part of the population migrates to the Canadian Atlantic coast then south, but a few migrate from James Bay to Lake Erie and Lake Ontario and then to the Atlantic coast, seldom alighting. When seen on the Hudson River, the Surf Scoter is often with other scoter species.

The Surf Scoter is the least common scoter in Dutchess County. Since 1960 there are eleven county records: one in 1960s, six in 1970s, two in 1980s, one in 1990s, and one in 2000s. They occurred in April (two), May (one), October (six), November (one), and December (one). All sightings since 1977 have been on inland lakes, while before 1977 all but one were on the Hudson River. Records note one to eight birds, except on Oct. 18, 1976, when 80 were seen among 250 White-winged Scoter at Tivoli. One was photographed⁺ on Nov. 10, 2013 at Sylvan Lake.

Historical Notes: Surf Scoters were apparently more numerous in the 1870s. Referring to their occurrence on the Hudson River, Stearns calls them “rather rare, but occasional” and Kent reported “occasional flocks.” The next record is one female with a flock of 61 Black Scoters on Oct. 8, 1927, at Barrytown by Crosby and Griscom. They were not recorded again until 1968.

———— **WHITE-WINGED SCOTER** (*Melanitta deglandi*) ————

Normal Dates: October 11 - December 18

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
			

Usual Locale: Inland lakes and the Hudson River

Transient

Status since 1990: The majority of White-winged Scoters winter on the Atlantic coast, many migrating from central and western Canada. Although they may not always fly directly over Dutchess County, the increased numbers and willingness to migrate over land contribute to finding more White-winged than other scoter species in Dutchess County.

The White-winged Scoter is not seen every year. There were only two spring sightings in the 1990s, one on April 25, 1992, at Sylvan Lake and one on May 23, 1996, at Pawling. Fall sightings are more frequent and tend to be two to six birds on inland ponds, though 21 were reported on Oct. 20, 1991, off of Breakneck Point, Beacon.

Historical Notes: In 1880, Stearns was only aware of one White-winged Scoter specimen, though Kent said there were “great flocks in late November” on the Hudson River in the 1870s. Griscom called them regular fall transients, noting that “one fall only a single bird will be noted, in other [years] fair sized flocks would be seen on half a dozen occasions.” Since the 1960s, there are approximately 10 spring and 26 fall records. The largest flock by far is 250 on Oct. 18, 1976, at Tivoli.

———— **BLACK SCOTER** (*Melanitta americana*) ————

Normal Dates: October 18 - November 25

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
			

Usual Locale: Hudson River and less often on inland lakes

Fall Transient

Status: The Black Scoter’s migration route is similar to the White-winged Scoter’s, although it winters farther south along the Atlantic coast. The Black Scoter was reported yearly during the 1970s, then every other year during the 1980s and less since. However, two recent sightings are one during November 2018 at Sylvan Lake, seen by many; and seven from Beacon on Oct. 26, 2020. Previously, flocks of 20 to 200 birds were seen on the Hudson River with single birds reported from lakes, this is still true but with fewer large flocks. They are generally seen between late October and November.

Historical Notes: Stearns recorded the Black Scoter as “rather rare, but occasionally taken,” while Kent recorded “occasional flocks” on the Hudson in the 1870s. Griscom was aware of only four sightings, all in fall in the 1920s, including Oct. 8, 1927, when Crosby and Griscom recorded a flock of 61 male Black Scoters at Barrytown. There are about 36 fall sightings since 1960. There are less than ten spring records, with 25 on April 21, 2018 on the river at Rhinecliff.

———— **LONG-TAILED DUCK** (*Clangula hyemalis*) ————

Normal Dates: March 27 - April 19 and
November 14 - December 16

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
.		

Usual Locale: Hudson River and inland lakes

Transient

Status since 1990: Formerly named Oldsquaw, the Long-tailed Duck is a sea duck that migrates at night. They are found some years in Dutchess County during migration. When seen in spring, it is normally early April with one or two ducks on an inland lake. They stay for a day or two before moving on. In fall, the pattern is the same from late November to early December. Occasionally, flocks as large as twenty may be found on the Hudson River. Long-tailed Ducks were first found on a Christmas Count in 2005 when one was seen at Sylvan Lake.

Historical Notes: In 1880, Stearns reported Long-tailed Ducks as “rather common,” and Kent reported “flocks in fall.” Yet Crosby did not see his first in Dutchess County until May 13, 1923, at Halcyon Lake, Pine Plains, with Robert Murphy. That is the only time they have been found on the May Census, indeed it is the only May record. Griscom lists six more sightings, all in fall on the Hudson River. Eaton reports their population fell after the 1880s likely due to “wholesale destruction” from fishing nets on the Great Lakes. Forbush similarly described wanton killings in incredible numbers.

After the 1930s, the next record is Oct. 26 to Nov. 6, 1960, when two males were seen by many on the then newly created Kays Pond, Pleasant Valley. Sightings of up to 31 birds became more frequent after 1960 with 13 sightings in the 1960s, 20 in the 1970s, 14 in the 1980s, and 11 in the 1990s. The largest flock recorded was 100+ seen on Oct. 27, 1986, on the Hudson River at Chelsea. The earliest spring arrival is one on Feb. 21, 1976, on Wappinger Lake. The earliest fall arrival is six on Oct. 19, 1972, on the Hudson. There is one January record, one from Jan. 2-23, 1999, at Round Pond, Amenia.

———— **BUFFLEHEAD** (*Bucephala albeola*) ————

Normal Dates: October 26 - April 16

Usual Locale: Inland lakes, Hudson River coves in spring

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
..	..	+	+	..						+	+

Transient

Status since 1990: In fall, Buffleheads make their appearance during late October or early November in small flocks of one to sixteen birds, generally on ponds, rarely on the Hudson River. They may stay a few days or be gone in one day. By mid-November most have moved south. A few will stay through the entire winter, moving between open water. By mid-March, spring migration is underway with pairs and small flocks passing through. By early April, stragglers have moved north, too. There are no summer records.

Historical Notes: Kent remembers the Bufflehead in the 1870s as “at times in great numbers in Spring, rare in Fall.” In 1964 Pink and Waterman noted “one to three birds observed annually in Spring along the Hudson River.” The latest spring departure date is one female on June 11, 1973, at Cruger Island. Only three May records exist. The earliest fall arrival date is Oct. 12, 1979, at Pawling. The Bufflehead has been seen every year since at least 1959. The largest flocks reported are 43 on Nov. 6, 1992, and 35 on Nov. 7, 1994, both on Sylvan Lake. Since 1980, they have been found on either the Christmas or Waterfowl Count in 13 different years.

———— **COMMON GOLDENEYE** (*Bucephala clangula*) ————

Normal Dates: February 22 - March 27

Usual Locale: Hudson River in spring, inland lakes in spring and fall

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
..	..	+	+

Transient

Status since 1990: In fall, Common Goldeneyes are seen almost any time in November but not every year. When observed, they are seen singly or in small flocks of up to ten, generally on an inland lake. While a few may stay all winter, most are only in Dutchess County for a day on their way south. As soon as water opens, usually on the Hudson River, the Common Goldeneye is back. Occasionally as many as fifty are seen. By early April, they have left. The only summer sighting was one on June 19, 2003, in the Hudson River near the Mills Mansion.

Historical Notes: Kent remembered Goldeneyes as “abundant in Newburgh Bay” in the 1870s, while Crosby called them “fairly common transient on the river” in 1921. While there are now more wintering birds than in past years, the Goldeneye has wintered during years with open water since at least the 1930s, if not earlier. In 2005, 102 were recorded on the Waterfowl Count. The earliest fall arrival date is one on Oct. 18, 1975, on the Hudson River. The latest spring departure date is two on May 11, 1968, at Cruger Island, the only time they have been recorded on the May Census. The most recorded is 200 from March 12-16, 1986, along the Hudson between New Hamburg and Esopus.

———— **BARROW’S GOLDENEYE** (*Bucephala islandica*) ————

Casual Visitant

Only Dates:

One on March 25 and 30, 1980, at Vandenburg Cove with a large flock of Common Goldeneyes by Alice Jones.

One male on March 16-20, 1982, on Hudson River, found by Al Brayton, seen from Esopus by seven or more people.

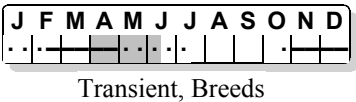
One male on March 26, 1994, on Hudson River from Esopus Flats with 27 Common Goldeneyes by James and Mary Key.

Status: Normally found in western North America, a small part of the Barrow’s Goldeneye population nests along the Labrador coast. This population winters along the Atlantic coast south to Massachusetts and on some rivers, including the St. Lawrence River. There is also a non-migratory population in Iceland. In winter, they are often found with Common Goldeneyes. The female Barrow’s is very similar to the female Common Goldeneye, making extralimital female sightings extremely infrequent.

———— **HOODED MERGANSER** (*Lophodytes cucullatus*) ————

Normal Dates: November 5 - April 28

Usual Locale: Inland ponds and creeks, and Hudson River coves



Status since 1990: The beautiful Hooded Merganser occasionally appears from mid-October on, but more often in early November on a smaller inland pond or possibly a cove of the Hudson River. They are generally seen alone in fall, but groupings up to eight are possible. During mild winters, they can be found throughout the winter months moving between open water. If most ponds and creeks are frozen, they return, generally in pairs, as soon as water opens. By April, most have moved farther north, but a few linger and some nest. The most frequent nesting area is along the Wappinger Creek at Stissing Marsh, Stanford. On May 18, 1998, a female with 14 young was seen on Wappinger Creek at Cary Arboretum by Helen Andrews and Barbara Butler. June and July sightings are very infrequent; occasionally one or a pair are seen on a wooded pond or creek.

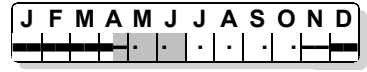
Historical Notes: Kent remembered Hooded Mergansers in the 1870s as “fairly common in the fall” along the Hudson River, an assertion supported by Forbush, who says they were formerly very common but were vanishing from the East due to habitat destruction and over hunting. Crosby did not record his first sighting until March 25, 1922, when he saw three males and two females at Vandenburg Cove. From 1922 on, they were seen most springs but very infrequently in fall until the 1960s. There are early September records but none in August. The first January record is in 1979, with sightings most Januarys since 1993. Flocks of 30 or more are sometimes found. On March 15, 1982, an unprecedented 300 were seen along the Hudson River between Wappinger Creek and Esopus by James and Mary Key.

The first breeding record is an attempt from April 20, 1970, when six eggs were laid in a Wood Duck nest box at Traver Pond, Pleasant Valley; they did not hatch. On May 18, 1977, a female with six young was seen at Stissing Marsh, Stanford, by Paul Haight. They have nested at least six times since then at Stissing Marsh, Dieterich Pond, Cary Arboretum, and Camp Sharparoon, Dover. Levine suggests an increase in beavers, which create more wetlands, and an increase in Pileated Woodpeckers, which create more nest holes, contributed to the population gains of the Hooded Merganser.

———— **COMMON MERGANSER** (*Mergus merganser*) ————

Normal Dates: November 11 - April 29

Usual Locale: Hudson River and inland lakes
and ponds



Winter Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: By mid-November, the Common Merganser is back for the winter. From one to two hundred can be seen on the Hudson River and inland ponds, particularly Norrie Point, Hyde Park, and Round Pond, Amenia. They prefer to winter on fresh water rather than salt water. A few may appear in late October, and there is one recent September sighting. Even with lakes and ponds freezing, the Hudson is kept open enough so that the Common Merganser can usually be found there all winter. The start of spring migration depends on the ice, but most arrive during February and March and most leave by mid-April, with few remaining at month end. A few occasionally linger into May.

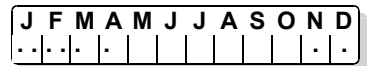
In April 2001, a pair attempted to nest in a Wood Duck box at Tamarack Swamp, Stanford, but was apparently unsuccessful. On May 21, 2002, a female with four young was seen on Wappinger Creek in Pleasant Valley by Eleanor Pink, the first confirmed nesting in the county. On July 26, 2002, a female with one young was seen on Tenmile River, Dover, by Carena Pooth.

Historical Notes: Kent reported that in the 1880s Common Mergansers arrived early in the fall and stayed until there was no open water. They would return in March when the ice broke up. Since the Hudson River has been kept open during the winter, many more are now seen. Howard Pellet reported 1000 from Tivoli on March 2, 1988. In both 1986 and 1990, nearly 1700 were recorded on the Waterfowl Count. Also, one or two have been regularly recorded on the May Census since 1945, indicating a few linger longer. There are no August records.

———— **RED-BREASTED MERGANSER** (*Mergus serrator*) ————

Normal Dates: January 1 - April 13

Usual Locale: Hudson River



Transient

Status since 1990: Fall sightings of Red-breasted Mergansers are very infrequent, with only two sightings since 1990, one on Oct. 30, 1992, and two on Dec. 3, 1994. With the Hudson River kept open during the winter, a few are seen in January and February. They can also be found inland if there is open water. They prefer to winter on salt water. Not enough sightings exist to establish spring migration dates, but a few are seen in March and early April.

Historical Notes: Dutchess County records from the 1870s indicate the Red-breasted was a migrant in both spring and fall. Crosby and Griscom recorded only eight spring and eight fall records between 1912 and 1933. Sightings increased every year from 1967 to 1989. The latest spring departure date is May 13, 1978. The earliest fall arrival date is Oct. 11, 1980. The largest flock reported is 13 on May 2, 1974, at Tivoli North Bay by Erik Kiviat. There was an increase in sightings during the 1970s and 1980s, and a decrease in the 1990s.

———— **RUDDY DUCK** (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) ————

Normal Dates: October 18 - December 26



Transient

Usual Locale: Sylvan Lake and other lakes and ponds

Status since 1990: The Ruddy Duck is most reliably seen in fall, generally from mid-October, though a few may arrive earlier. Always on inland lakes and ponds, fall flocks often number 10 to 30 birds. The largest flock reported is 275 on Nov. 9, 1999, on Sylvan Lake by Barbara Michelin. Over 100 were also reported on Sylvan Lake in October / November 1998 and 2000 to 2002. They stay for days or weeks; by mid-December most leave. A few winter and individuals can be found in January. When the ice melts on inland lakes, the Ruddy reappears but in smaller flocks than in fall. Spring migration is much less pronounced. They seldom stay long and by mid-April are gone.

Historical Notes: Stearns, in 1880, reported the Ruddy Duck as “common in migrations, flocks or singly.” Crosby found his first Ruddy in Dutchess County on March 31, 1921, at Morgan Lake, Poughkeepsie. During the 1920s, Griscom recorded one most years. The next documented record is August 24, 1950, at Cranes Pond, Dover, the only August record. There are four May records: 1967, 1993, 1994, 2002. There are no June or July records. The earliest fall arrival date is one on Sept. 28, 1988, on Wappinger Lake by Barbara Michelin. The first January record is in 1967, with the Ruddy recorded most winters since 1992. By the late 1960s, sightings increased in Dutchess County and have continued to do so through 2004.

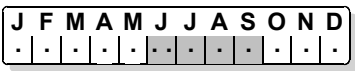
Comment: The recovery of the Ruddy Duck is demonstrated by the following comments. Forbush wrote in 1912, “On account of heavy market shooting ... [the Ruddy Duck] has been decreasing steadily, and is in danger of extinction unless better protected.” Griscom added in 1933, “Should no improvement in the status of this species take place, we may only expect to see an occasional bird with ever increasing infrequency.” Pink and Waterman further added in 1964, “Griscom’s prophecy of ever decreasing numbers of this species seems assured.”

ORDER — UPLAND GAME BIRDS

NEW WORLD QUAILS

———— **NORTHERN BOBWHITE** (*Colinus virginianus*) ————

Normal Dates: All year, heard in spring



Usual Locale: Brushy areas near farm fields in Stanford, Pine Plains, and Northeast

Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: The Bobwhite is difficult to reliably find. When found, they are nearly always in the northeast quadrant of the county, particularly Tamarack Swamp, Stissing, and Millerton. They are most often seen in May and June when they make their namesake call. They are seen singly and in bebies of up to ten. Nests are seldom found, but young are occasionally seen from June into fall. Bobwhite found in Dutchess County are likely all escapees from hunt club releases. They do not survive harsh winters.

Historical Notes: Forbush indicates Bobwhite were not numerous during colonial times but increased in the 1800s as fields were cleared and grain planted. Unregulated hunting soon reduced their numbers. Kent remembered the Bobwhite in the 1870s as “almost exterminated in lower Dutchess County” (Kent, pp.13, 147). Arthur Bloomfield reported they were fairly common at Hyde Park in the 1890s (Griscom). Crosby called them “formerly common, now [1921] uncommon.” Griscom said they were “now [1933] largely extirpated,” with those remaining mostly in the southeastern section of the county. Griscom lamented the introduction of “southern and less hardy stock” as part of the reason for their decrease, along with “excessive shooting.”

It is not clear when farm-bred Bobwhite were introduced into Dutchess County. Peter Wheeler reported to Crosby that the Livingston’s, previous owners of Crosby’s home, “used to introduce quail from the south in great numbers annually, liberating them about a month before the shooting season and then allowing all to come and shoot them.”¹ By the 1880s, individual hunters often introduced a few. The state also made introductions from possibly the 1920s to the 1960s. Hunt clubs similarly introduced birds throughout the twentieth century. Any or all likely contributed birds to Dutchess County. May Census records show sightings for 1922, 1925, and 1936, then regularly from 1958 to the present. John Baker reported Bobwhite on Chestnut Ridge for most years in the 1930s, then only in 1954 and 1961. The NYS Conservation Dept. released a “large number” in the fall of 1960, with some seen the following spring, and another 700+ in August 1964 without any increase in subsequent sightings. This data suggests native Bobwhite were extirpated during the 1930s and releases began perhaps by the 1920s and increased in the late 1950s.

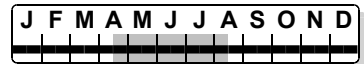
[1] From Crosby’s Bird Journal April 28, 1923, entry. It is not clear what years this refers to, but likely between the 1860s and 1880s.

PHEASANTS

———— WILD TURKEY (*Meleagris gallopavo*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: In fields and along woodland edges throughout county



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Wild Turkeys are regularly reported throughout the year in large numbers. They are most often seen early in the morning feeding in a field, but they can also be seen throughout the day. Their footprints in snow or dirt are very large and unmistakable. Males fan their tails and strut from February through May. From June to August, adult females join flocks with their young. As many as five adults and forty poults are occasionally seen. The largest flocks, in excess of fifty birds, are reported from November through March. Fun to see for many, they are becoming pests to others.

Historical Notes: Turkeys were abundant and widespread during the colonial period. By the 1840s, they were extirpated from much of the Northeast, earlier from Dutchess County¹. Remnants survived in Pennsylvania and by the 1930s were expanding, reaching south central New York State about 1949. From 1952 to 1959, a state game farm raised Wild Turkeys for release. Some were released in Columbia County. The farm-raised birds were unsuited for the wild and the releases failed. Beginning in 1959 and

continuing until 1986, NYS Conservation Dept. captured and successfully transplanted Wild Turkeys as groups (Levine). A release of 42 Wild Turkeys in Fahnestock State Park, Putnam County, occurred in late spring 1959 (Bull). On Jan. 16, 1974, five toms and five hens trapped in Allegany State Park were released in Stissing Mountain State Forest. On Feb. 27, 1974, four toms and seven hens trapped in Sullivan County were released near East Mountain, Dover. Both groups became established, successfully bred, and expanded (John Yonke). The first hunting season was held in Dutchess County in 1978, with ten out of an estimated county population of 700 taken (Pink and Waterman). Currently, about 300 a year are taken.

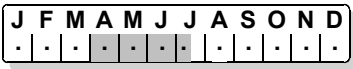
While there were two sightings in the 1950s apparently from releases in Columbia or Putnam Counties, the beginning of regular sightings was two on April 28, 1974, at Tamarack Swamp by Stefley VanVlack, certainly from the Stissing release. From this point, Wild Turkeys were reported each year in increasing numbers and over a wider range until the early 1990s, when they covered the entire county. A “wild” Turkey reported in December 1963 at Poughquag was the only survivor from a setting of eggs raised by a farmer, and left “wild” (*Wings over Dutchess*, Jan. 1964, p.8).

[1] Eaton notes that DeKay reported turkeys from Rockland, Orange, and Sullivan counties in 1844.

———— **RUFFED GROUSE** (*Bonasa umbellus*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: In deep woods



Permanent Resident, Breeds

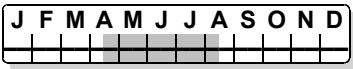
Status since 1990: The Ruffed Grouse is a permanent resident of Dutchess County, usually seen singly or in very small flocks. They are most easily found by hearing, indeed feeling, males drumming from late February through May and sometimes in fall. In June and July, coveys of up to ten young with mother are occasionally seen. Ruffed Grouse are reported least in winter. Reports since 1997 are less frequent.

Historical Notes: During the last half of the nineteenth century, Ruffed Grouse were over hunted and their forest habitat was severely reduced. Some people feared their eventual extinction. The decreasing population was one factor driving the introduction of Ring-necked Pheasants. Kent found “few” in the 1870s, while Stearns reported the Ruffed Grouse was “now [1880] rather rare, formerly nearly common.” Crosby considered them “fairly common ... in wilder parts of county” in 1921. The Ruffed Grouse has been recorded on most May Censuses since the 1920s. Counts increased to over fifty in the 1960s and 1970s. Since 1993, counts have not reached ten. Similarly, Christmas Counts increased in the 1960s, but winter counts seldom exceeded five. Baker recorded Grouse from 1930 to 1966, with no readily apparent change in population.

———— **RING-NECKED PHEASANT** (*Phasianus colchicus*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: In area of hunt clubs and shooting preserves



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: The Ring-necked Pheasant is found throughout the year, primarily in the eastern half of Dutchess County. They are generally found near hunt clubs and

shooting preserves, which regularly release them. Only a few survive to breed. Their young are generally reported in mid-July. There is doubt that the escaped population is self-sustaining, as a particularly harsh winter kills many of them. Populations are more likely sustained through additional releases. They are usually seen singly or in flocks of up to eight. Occasionally very large flocks are seen, but these are newly released birds. Some escapees travel long distances, and thus are seen far from any known club.

Historical Notes: Introduced from Asia to continental Europe then to England, the Ring-necked Pheasant was called the English Pheasant. By the early 1800s, this subspecies was imported to the United States on many occasions. Liberated at various locations in the mid-Atlantic states, they did not become established. The subspecies native to China was successfully introduced in 1881 in Oregon. More were successfully established around the country, particularly in the Northeast to replace much reduced native game birds. They were introduced in New York by the early 1890s. Charles Dieterich released them on his Millbrook estate by 1896, perhaps as much for ornamental reasons as for hunting (*Forest and Stream*). The Clove Valley Rod & Gun Club was founded in 1903 and soon released Ring-necked Pheasants imported from England. One was collected at Hyde Park on Nov. 1, 1901 but details are unknown.

Eaton reported the State Forest, Fish and Game Commission distributed pheasants which were released in the Hudson Valley before 1910. Crosby thought the first release in Dutchess County was in 1913, apparently by Tracy Dows. Nine were found on the 1913 Christmas Count and in small numbers for some years after that. The Ring-necked Pheasant was found on every May Census from 1919 to 2010. John Baker reported pheasants nearly every year from 1931 to 1966, the span of his records. Christmas Count numbers increased dramatically by 1960. They continue to be released yearly in the thousands, with stock supplied by the NYSDEC and other breeders.

———— **PHEASANT SPECIES** ————
(See Miscellaneous Reports, page 246.)

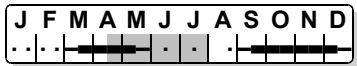
ORDER – DIVING BIRDS / GREBES

GREBES

———— **PIED-BILLED GREBE** (*Podilymbus podiceps*) ————

Normal Dates: March 10 - May 15 and
September 15 - December 15

Usual Locale: Inland water, Hudson River in winter
and spring



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: An early migrant, the Pied-billed Grebe arrives in numbers by mid-March and can be seen on the Hudson River and lakes and ponds of any size. By late March, the few intending to stay are pairing off and looking for quiet ponds and marshes with thick shoreline vegetation and open water access. Pied-billed Grebes have bred in Dutchess County on Wappinger Lake, Traver Pond, Dieterich Pond, and similar lakes. By mid-May, migrants have left and the remaining summer residents are increasingly difficult to find. July sightings are very infrequent. By the end of September,

they can be seen again, apparently in family groups. Fall migration is spread over two months, with no massing for a sudden departure. However, by the end of November, most have left. Some will stay through winter on the Hudson River or on lakes and ponds if they remain open.

Historical Notes: The Pied-billed Grebe has been known in Dutchess County for as long as records have been kept. However, they were apparently less common at the turn of the twentieth century, with many more seen in fall than in spring. Undoubtedly more winter now than in the past. They apparently have always been an uncommon breeder.

———— **HORNED GREBE** (*Podiceps auritus*) ————

Normal Dates: March 15 - April 25 and
October 17 - November 18

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
.	

Usual Locale: Larger lakes and Hudson River

Transient

Status since 1990: The Horned Grebe, when found, is usually seen in April on the larger lakes. Fall migrants are less frequently seen and some years may not arrive until January. Birds that do not migrate until early winter after their lakes freeze can be caught in snow storms as they fly south. This happened in December - January 1984 when three Horned Grebes were caught and brought to Millbrook School Zoo. The 1990s have produced less than one sighting per year, and then usually of only one individual.

Historical Notes: Historically, the Horned Grebe was possibly a bit more common, but numbers have always been small. In the spring of 1881, Mary Hyatt received a report of one shot near Stanfordville. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, flocks of 12 or more were reported on the Hudson River.

———— **RED-NECKED GREBE** (*Podiceps grisegena*) ————

Normal Dates: April 1 - 18 and October 20 -
November 14

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
.

Usual Locale: Hudson River coves plus inland lakes
and ponds

Transient

Status since 1990: Fall sightings of Red-necked Grebe occur most often in November and occasionally in October. They linger on Lake Ontario, but if the lake freezes, they migrate to the ocean in the middle of winter. There are January and February records of exhausted birds found in the snow, though none since 1934 when four were found exhausted, all died (Frost). Some February and March sightings may be southward migrating birds that have simply stopped at open water. It is thus difficult to pinpoint spring migration dates; however, most are seen in April, with a few in March of mild winters. There is one recent May sighting, May 15, 1990, on the Hudson River at Norrie Point by Alan Peterson, and one was photographed⁺ May 17, 2014 at Beacon. This grebe can be unreported locally for up to ten years in a row. Bull says their occurrence is erratic with more during severe winters.

Historical Notes: The Red-necked Grebe has never been common, though it now appears more are seen in spring than Griscom reported. By far the largest number seen in Dutchess County was 25 in one flock on March 6, 1959, on the Hudson River off New Hamburg by Marion Van Wagner, Jean Beck, and Margaret King. One or two apparently

from this flock remained until April 6. This coincided with an incursion in the New York City area (Bull).

———— **EARED GREBE** (*Podiceps nigricollis*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Dates:

- One on Nov. 27, 1970, on Hudson River near Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge, seen within twenty feet by Marion Van Wagner, Eleanor Pink, Jeff Daley, and Philip Smith.
- One on Apr. 21, 1972, at Norrie Point with scope at 300 feet by Alice Jones.

Status: Normally a western US species, since 1956 the Eared Grebe has regularly been seen along the coast of Long Island, most often at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge from September to April (Bull).

ORDER – DOVES

DOVES

———— **ROCK PIGEON** (*Columba livia*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Cities, shopping plazas, and active farm barns



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: The Rock Pigeon is the common city pigeon. They are resident throughout the county, generally in more built-up areas, but also around active barns on many farms. They are reported to breed in all months of the year in New York City (Bull), but in Dutchess County they do not seem to breed during the winter months, though nests may be built. They are generally found in flocks of ten to fifty, though three hundred may be seen feeding when sufficient grain is available. They are mostly seen around downtown streets, city parks, shopping plazas, and nesting under overpasses. On colder days they often mass on the sunny side of a roof.

Historical Notes: Rock Pigeons are native to southern Europe and northern Africa. They were domesticated thousands of years ago and beginning in the 1600s, were brought to North America with other domestic animals. Some escaped and others were left to roam free. Over the years, scattered flocks became feral, with some nesting on cliffs like their wild ancestors. However, it was the growth of cities and railroads, which shipped and stored grain, that sustained pigeons. It is not known when feral pigeons became established in Dutchess County, but they likely were found around grain storage sheds and silos by the mid-1800s.

All early bird lists for Dutchess County ignore Rock Pigeons, considering them domestic birds. Crosby includes them as coming to his feeders during the winter of 1916-17, the earliest reference in Dutchess County (*Third Annual Report of the Rhinebeck Bird Club*, p.30). In 1961, they were first included in the May Census and printed on the county check list.

———— **PASSENGER PIGEON** (*Ectopistes migratorius*) ————

Last Date: Fall 1885

Extinct, Formerly Transient

Historical Notes: In the 1600s, millions of Passenger Pigeons nested throughout the Northeast, likely including Dutchess County. Tales were told of their passage darkening the sky. They may have been the most populous bird in the world. However, by the mid-1800s, they had nearly disappeared from New England and the Hudson Valley, particularly during spring migration, with only a few appearing in the fall (Forbush). The last nesting of Passenger Pigeons in New York State was in western counties around 1875 (Bull), while their last stronghold was in Michigan. By the 1890s, they were uncommon everywhere. The last wild birds were lost sometime soon after 1900. They were driven to extinction by wanton market hunting on their nesting grounds, where few young survived. The survivors were often killed in migration. With an impaired ability to reproduce, flocks dwindled until the last bird died.

Edgar Mearns said Passenger Pigeons bred in Orange County at an unspecified date prior to 1878. In 1880, Stearns wrote, "Not rare in migrations, but I do not know of their breeding, though they probably do occasionally." Kent recorded them near Beacon from the 1870s to 1885, though only in the fall. Mary Hyatt kept records from 1885; Arthur Bloomfield and Lisenard Horton both collected in the 1890s. None of them recorded Passenger Pigeons in Dutchess County. Apparently the last sighting around Millbrook was 1881¹

Comment: The following narrative, the most descriptive known for this area, effectively describes the last years of the Passenger Pigeon in Dutchess County. Edwin Kent was born at Glenham, near Beacon, in 1856. In 1933, from a perspective of 60 years, he described his experiences around Beacon. Kent's bird lists, now lost, established the last documented record for Passenger Pigeons in Dutchess County as the fall of 1885.

"The wild pigeon [Passenger Pigeon] now is but a memory, but it is a memory entwined with the recollection of many happy carefree days... I do not believe that for many years the great flights ever passed over the lower end of Dutchess County, for I never heard the old farmers speak of them. That part of the Hudson River valley must have been just on the fringe of the line of migration. At Fuller's farm, which lies in the valley between North and South Beacon, old Mr. Fuller showed me the remnants of a pigeon net, but it had not been used for many a day. The spring migration missed us entirely. I never saw or heard of a pigeon being seen at that time, nor did any of the old farmers ever tell me of seeing pigeons in the spring. [Referring to about 1872.]

"The birds began to appear about the 1st of August, and their coming was like the spring migration of the warblers. One day none, next day there would be plenty wherever there was food. Then the wave would pass, and for days only scattered ones would be seen. Just to the south of the village of Fishkill Landing, locally known as 'The Corners,' was a hill called Spy Hill², and every evening, just before sunset, pigeons flew over it on their flight south. Every dweller in the neighborhood who liked shooting took a stand there, but there was no certainty as to the flight. On some evenings the birds flew in little detached flocks of six or eight, the flocks following each other rapidly, then there would be days when hardly a flock passed.

"The line of flight lay directly over the centre of the village, and its use showed the conservatism of the birds, for a slight alteration of the line either east or west would have taken them where they would have been free from most of the houses and also most of the guns...

"I cannot tell of any great slaughter of pigeons. As I said before, I believe that we were on the extreme fringe of the line of migration. A dozen or so birds were a good bag for a day's ramble, and were picked up by visiting, when the birds first arrived, the wild cherry trees and the wood lots that were surrounded by wheat and rye stubble. Later in the season we looked for them in the white and pin oaks, and in the years when there was a crop of beech mast, a beech grove was a certain find. The surest place was the woods fringing a buckwheat field; also, they seemed to seek the red berries of the mountain ash.

"... Even then the numbers were diminishing. They no longer flew over Spy Hill, and when hunting I came on them less frequently. During the '80's I saw them only at rare intervals. About the early '80's I began to take an interest in birds as birds and not as things to be shot on sight, and to keep lists of birds seen each year. Looking over the old lists I see that after 1885 I do not mention pigeons [in Dutchess County]." (Edwin C. Kent, *The Isle of Long Ago*, 1933, pp.4-6)

Three Passenger Pigeons remain in Dutchess County. A male and a female are in a display case with other native species at the Grinnell Library, Wappingers Falls. It is possible they were collected locally. One other mounted Passenger Pigeon, a female, is in the collection of the Millbrook School, but its provenance is unknown.

[1] A report in *Forest and Stream* (April 29, 1899, p.325) notes a flight over Poughkeepsie in 1895 consisting of "thousands" and "hundreds were killed." With no accepted report of a flock approaching this size anywhere in the Northeast in the 1890s, it is not considered credible. A follow-up letter was published in *Forest and Stream* (May 13, 1899, p.366) not supporting the previous report, but noting the last Passenger Pigeon near Millbrook was about 1881.

[2] Spy Hill was just east of the present railroad station.

———— MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaida macroura*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Residential areas, farms, and road sides



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Mourning Doves are found throughout the year in all but heavily wooded areas. They are particularly attracted to feeders, pecking the ground for dropped seed. They also flock to farm fields in search of grain. Mourning Doves are early nesters, occasionally starting their relatively flimsy nests in March. They are double or possibly triple-brooded and can be found with recent young in September. The Dutchess County population does not vary significantly from season to season, though large flocks of over 100 doves are seen in winter. Banding recoveries show some migrate to the southeastern states, while others are truly permanently resident (Bull).

Historical Notes: Mourning Doves were hunted extensively during the nineteenth century with a corresponding reduction in numbers until protected early in the twentieth century (Forbush). Stearns reported the Mourning Dove in 1880 as "rare" but "regular." In 1907 Eaton recorded them as common summer residents. Crosby gave migration dates of March 17 to December 7 and one winter sighting of Feb. 13, 1921, at Rhinebeck. Baker saw three on Jan. 18-19, 1941. Winter sightings of one dove, generally for one day, were reported every few years until December 1950, when 100 were counted on the Christmas Count. Ralph Waterman recorded them in January and February 1951. Mourning Doves wintered in increasing numbers and have been recorded continuously since December 1958. Doves have also become more abundant in summer than during

the first half of the twentieth century. The Christmas Count maximum is 1024 in 1995, while the May Census largest count is 521 in 1987.

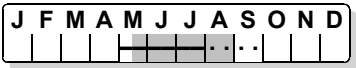
ORDER — CUCKOOS

CUCKOOS

——— YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO (*Coccyzus americanus*) ———

Normal Dates: May 12 - September 20

Usual Locale: Brushy wet areas near streams and ponds



Summer Resident, Breeds

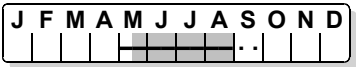
Status since 1990: The Yellow-billed Cuckoo is more of a southern bird than the Black-billed. Nevertheless, they nest in Dutchess County. They usually appear by mid-May; by August they are difficult to find, although a few are seen into September. As with the Black-billed, they are usually heard first then seen singly or in pairs.

Historical Notes: Crosby reported Yellow-billed Cuckoos as common summer residents from May 3 to September 22. Mary Hyatt recorded them nearly every year from 1885 to 1905. However, Baker recorded them during only 13 years, from 1931 to 1966, often only once per year, which probably implies they did not nest near Chestnut Ridge. Griscom noted their scarcity in fall, saying they slipped away after breeding, with few migrating from farther north. Their earliest spring arrival date is April 29, 2001, and their latest fall departure date is Oct. 15, 1959. May Census counts are very similar to the Black-billed's.

——— BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO (*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*) ———

Normal Dates: May 5 - September 11

Usual Locale: Forests with brushy undercover



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Black-billed Cuckoos arrive the second week in May. While many continue migrating north, some remain to nest. Often heard first, they are generally seen singly or in pairs. Young are seen in June. As summer progresses, fewer are seen, and by September they have left. In fall they call less, and sightings during migration are less frequent.

Historical Notes: Given the changes exhibited by other birds over the past century, it is surprising how little the Black-billed Cuckoo has changed. Crosby considered them common summer residents from May 7 to October 3. Baker recorded them every year from 1931 to 1966, the span of his records. Black-billed Cuckoos marginally outnumbered Yellow-billed Cuckoos. There are no April records for the Black-billed Cuckoo. October records are very scarce with the latest fall departure dates Oct. 12, 1921 and 1961. May Census counts follow a pattern of five or more found some years, none found in others. However, in some years they do not arrive until after the census has been taken.

ORDER — NIGHTJARS

NIGHTJARS

——— COMMON NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles minor*) ———**Normal Dates:** May 16 - June 6 and

August 20 - September 7

Usual Locale: Overhead in the evening

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
				+			+	•			

Transient, Formerly Bred

Status since 1990: Common Nighthawks usually appear in mid-May, although there is one sighting on April 30, 1997, the earliest spring arrival date. While a few may still nest, the vast majority migrate through by the first week in June. There were no breeding reports during the 1990s. Nighthawks are usually seen singly or in small flocks of up to ten, there are occasional spring flocks of 30. They are crepuscular, frequently seen in the evening hawking insects, oftentimes over water. Seldom are the same birds seen for more than a few hours. In the fall, Nighthawks appear about August 20 in flocks larger than in spring, often 20 or more, though also singly. As in spring, they move through quickly, with most gone by the first week in September. Stragglers may be seen until October. The latest fall departure date is Oct. 29, 1994.

Historical Notes: Stearns called the Nighthawk common and regular. Eaton added that they bred. Crosby noted breeding near Poughkeepsie without being more specific as to location. The last July record is 1989 near the former Luckey Platt & Co. department store in downtown Poughkeepsie, where they were seen regularly in the summer for many years. It is not known when they last bred in Dutchess County, but most likely it was in the 1980s. They often favor gravel roofs for nesting. The largest flight reported is 200 on Aug. 28, 1979, over Dover Plains and the Tenmile River by Jim and Bonnie Fiedler at 7:15PM on a night particularly heavy with mosquitos.

——— EASTERN WHIP-POOR-WILL (*Antrostomus vociferus*) ———**Normal Dates:** Heard April 24 - June 15, likely
present to September**Usual Locale:** Eastern half of county on wooded
hillsides

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
				•	•	•		•			

Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Whip-poor-wills are not often seen, but their distinctive call uniquely identifies them. They are first heard the last week of April. Strictly nocturnal, their call, repeated over and over, is usually heard a few hours after sunset and before sunrise. By dawn they are quiet. Few are heard beyond mid-June. With eggs laid in May, perhaps those calling in June represent nesting pairs. It is difficult to know how many pairs remain in Dutchess County to breed, perhaps a half dozen or a few more. It is not clear exactly when fall migration begins, but a few are occasionally seen in September. Reported approximately three times per year from 1985 to 1996, there are only three reports since 1996, apart from the May Census when they are generally heard at Dover Furnace and Stissing Mt. Nearly all reports come from the eastern half of the county, often on wooded hillsides.

Historical Notes: Stearns referred to the Whip-poor-will as “rather common” in 1880. Mary Hyatt recorded one on April 22, 1885, near Stanfordville, her earliest arrival date. Eaton called them locally common and said they bred. Griscom gave the latest fall departure date as Oct. 8, 1927, at Cruger Island by Crosby and Griscom. It is still the only October record. Baker recorded the Whip-poor-will regularly in May and June from 1931 to 1942, but only three times after that. From 1961 to 1984, they were reported approximately five times per year.

The earliest spring arrival date is April 20, 1967, at Pleasant Valley by Emilie Becquet. Nesting records are infrequent. One of the few is June 1967 of a nest with two eggs near Amenia found by Kathie Hahn. The most Whip-poor-wills seen at one time is six on June 20, 1971, at Stissing by Thelma Haight. There are only two August records, Aug. 19, 1950, and Aug. 27, 1961. There are relatively few September records, but Ralph Waterman recorded one perched on a house roof from Sept. 12-14, 1950, near Poughkeepsie. Whip-poor-wills have been recorded on nearly all May Censuses.

ORDER – SMALL-FOOTED BIRDS

SWIFTS

CHIMNEY SWIFT (*Chaetura pelagica*)

Normal Dates: April 21 - September 20

Usual Locale: Overhead, often near water or large chimneys, and over Millbrook and Pleasant Valley



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Chimney Swifts appear on or soon after April 21. Numbers grow as nesting birds return, with flocks of 20 or more commonly reported. They nest in colonies primarily inside large unused chimneys. During June and July, flocks are seen swooping in the air as they feed. By August, the breeding colonies join together in very large flocks, often over 100, and begin to migrate south. With migration well underway in September, an occasional large flock as well as many single stragglers are seen. The last swifts are seen from mid-September to the first week of October. They winter near the Peru - Brazil border.

Historical Notes: Stearns and Eaton both called Chimney Swifts abundant. Crosby gave breeding dates from June 17 to August 12. The earliest spring arrival date is one on April 7, 1977, by Marion Van Wagner. The latest fall departure date is Oct. 28, 1919, by Allen Frost. The largest number recorded is an estimated 1,000 reported twice, first on Sept. 3, 1965, at 7:30PM over Main St. in downtown Poughkeepsie by Czecher Terhune, and again on Sept. 15, 1968, around the Knauss Brothers meat packing plant chimney on Fulton St. at North Rd., Poughkeepsie, by Jan Reese and Alice Jones. Sightings from 100 to 500 occur every few years. Chimney Swifts have been recorded on every May Census from 1919.

HUMMINGBIRDS

——— RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Archilochus colubris*) ———

Normal Dates: April 29 - October 6

Usual Locale: Lightly wooded areas with flowering plants



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Ruby-throated Hummingbirds arrive the last week of April or the first week of May. When defending territory, including feeders, the males are very feisty. They are usually seen singly except when flowers are in bloom or multiple feeders are present, then multiple hummingbirds are seen. Nests are very small and not easily found. By August the young have fledged. Adult males leave first, migrating south in late August. Females and young leave by mid-September, with occasional stragglers reported into the first week of October.

Historical Notes: The early lists all agree that Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were common summer residents. Crosby gives breeding dates from May 21 to August 18. Griscom gives earliest to latest dates as May 5, [1894] to Oct. 5, [1929]. The earliest spring arrival date is April 14, 1991, when Maryanne Pitts observed one on a red azalea in Dover Plains. April arrival dates were very infrequent until 1980, but have occurred about every other year since. The latest fall departure date is two to three hummingbirds from Oct. 17-28, 1977, at Arnold Blvd., Poughkeepsie, by Marie Murphy. They left with the first freeze. The abundance of hummingbird feeders and flowering plants have contributed to an increase in breeding hummingbirds since 1977. Prior to 1977, June reports were few, and some years absent, in Dutchess County.

Normal sightings are of one to three hummingbirds except during fall migration when groups of six to ten occasionally are seen. The most reported was during spring migration when fifteen or more were seen on May 21, 1967, at Stormville. The following is excerpted from Enid Butler's report, "Sunday morning Ethel Gotsch wanted me to go to her yard. I hurried and she pointed to her lovely flowering cherry tree. I saw the tree was full of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. We were able to count 15 at a time, but are sure there were more. They kept arriving and departing in two's and three's. Some would leave for a drink at the brook, then return. The remaining ones would scold and chase for a moment then settle to feeding once more. All made their little chattering sounds constantly as they fed from the blossoms. This happened about 9:00AM and kept on until noon, when they left. The next day in the morning five were feeding, then on the 23rd only two remained." (*Kingbird*, 1967)

——— RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD (*Selasphorus rufus*) ———

Accidental Vagrant

Only Date:

One first fall female from unknown date in October to Dec. 5, 2012, at the home of Angelo and Barbara Giaimo, Wappingers Falls. Banded by Bob Yunick and Bill Lee, photographed⁺ by Angelo Giaimo on Nov. 9 and by Steve Golladay on Nov. 12 when also seen by Barbara Butler, subsequently seen by others.

Status: Rufous Hummingbirds nest in the Far West to Alaska, the furthest north of any hummingbird. They winter in Mexico with up to half their life spent in migration. During the 1970s Rufous Hummingbirds expanded to also winter along the northern coast of the Gulf of Mexico. Records in the Midwest suggest some now migrate east from Western Canada. From the 1970s and particularly since the 1990s, they have been recorded numerous times in the Northeast. The first New York report was in September 1980.

Comment: The sighting was accepted by NYSARC. A possible second sighting in 2015 was later identified as a juvenile Ruby-throated Hummingbird.

ORDER — MARSH DWELLERS

RAILS

———— CLAPPER RAIL (*Rallus crepitans*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Date:

One found dead on Aug. 30, 2004, at Baird State Park near the west entrance, by Jude Holdsworth. It is preserved at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology.

Status: Clapper Rails prefer salt marshes and are seldom found inland. They breed along Long Island Sound in Connecticut and Westchester County, and on Long Island. Hurricane Charley progressed along the Atlantic Coast, passing over Long Island on Aug. 15, 2004. It may have pushed this rail inland. This record is the furthest inland specimen for New York and the Northeast.

Comment: This report was accepted by NYSARC.

———— KING RAIL (*Rallus elegans*) ————

Last Date: May 14, 1990

Casual Spring Transient

Status: The best observed sighting in Dutchess County was the single King Rail seen by a few and heard by many from May 18 to June 8, 1977, at Millbrook School marsh. Bob Smart called it the “most vocal King Rail he had ever heard.” One was again found there the following year on May 13, 1978. The earliest spring arrival date is April 27, 1974, at Thompson Pond, while the only fall record is Sept. 20, 1974, at Ryder Pond, Stanford, both heard by Bob Smart. The most recent reports are of two heard by Art Gingert on May 13, 1990, at Thompson Pond, and one seen by Russ O’Malley on May 14, 1990, at Fishkill.

Historical Notes: The King Rail was first reported in Dutchess County on May 10, 1925, by Baker, Crosby, and Griscom who heard one calling at Thompson Pond. On May 20, 1928, it was heard at Cruger Island by Crosby along with Eaton and three others. The first recorded *sighting* was by Baker also at Thompson Pond on May 15, 1932. They were then recorded 17 times on the May Census between 1931 and 1956, most, if not all, from Thompson Pond. The King Rail nests in New York State, but there is no evidence of breeding in Dutchess County. The only summer record is one calling on July 15, 1971 at North Bay. Since 1950 they have been reported approximately twice per decade.

Comment: The first 1990 report was not accepted by NYSARC. The second 1990 sighting was not submitted.

———— **VIRGINIA RAIL** (*Rallus limicola*) ————

Normal Dates: April 12 - August 19

Usual Locale: freshwater marshes

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
		

Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: By far the most common rail in Dutchess County, the Virginia Rail returns from mid-April to early May. As with other rails, they are normally heard rather than seen, although the Virginia Rail does call during the day. A few stay and breed, but call less often after breeding so are harder to locate. Young are seen from June into August. The southward migration starts in mid-August. They are infrequently seen in the fall with five records since 1990, one in each month from September to January. Although often found at Thompson Pond and a marsh near Sharon Station, they do occur in many marshes around the county, particularly during migration.

Historical Notes: The Virginia Rail was not recorded in Dutchess County in the late 1800s, although they undoubtedly were present and likely bred here (Eaton). Kent specifically says that none were known in the 1870s around Beacon. Griscom notes a nest found June 10, 1914, at Poughkeepsie by Frost contained seven eggs¹. In 1921 Crosby called them an “uncommon summer resident May 11 to Sept. 20.” They were recorded on nearly every May Census from 1921 to date, with a maximum of 14 reported on the 1976 census. The first winter record is one on Jan. 17, 1962, at St. Peters Cemetery, Salt Point Turnpike, Poughkeepsie, and seen by five people. Winter records were quite common during the 1970s, but have lessened significantly since then.

[1] Crosby’s 1921 list notes “no nest has been recorded in the county,” while his 1917 Nesting Dates list notes the Virginia Rail as “probably nests.” Crosby may have mis-recorded Frost’s 1914 record as a Sora, q.v., and Griscom corrected this.

———— **SORA** (*Porzana carolina*) ————

Normal Dates: May 10 - June 4

Usual Locale: Fresh water marshes in northern portion of county

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
	

Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Sora arrival dates are generally in May, although there are a few April records. The earliest spring arrival date is April 11, 1990. Summer records are very infrequent and of single occurrences. The Sora, like other rails, is often only heard and migrates mainly at night. The Sora breeds in Dutchess County, but is difficult to locate, being reported less than once per year on average. The last confirmed breeding was one young with an adult on Aug. 5, 1985, at Stissing Marsh by Thelma Haight. Fall sightings are very infrequent but one was seen on Sept. 25, 2002, at Sharparoon, Dover on a Waterman Bird Club field trip.

Historical Notes: Stearns recorded the Sora as “not rare” on migration in October 1870s, while Kent reported hundreds in summer at Fishkill Creek (p.10). It is assumed Kent was writing about migrating birds. The next records are from Crosby in October 1910 and 1918. By 1921, Crosby called them a “common transient in the marshes on the [Hudson]

river Aug. 16 to Oct. 19.” Griscom says, “In the fall Soras are exceedingly abundant in the wild rice marshes in the coves of the Hudson River, where they do not breed. They ... are in maximum numbers in September before the opening of the hunting season.” Eaton and Forbush both considered the Sora the most abundant rail in the Northeast during the nineteenth century, often congregating in the fall in flocks of over a thousand birds. The Sora is found much less often in fall than previously, likely due to decreased numbers, less frequent early morning observation, and they call less in fall. In spite of their drastic decline, Soras and Virginia Rails are still hunted.

Soras have been found on the May Census 56 times since 1923, with a maximum of seven in 1977. Griscom notes breeding¹ at Brickyard Swamp, Poughkeepsie, at Thompson Pond, and at other smaller marshes. Erik Kiviatt found them breeding at Tivoli North Bay in the early 1970s. The only winter records are one each on Dec. 27 and 29, 1976, at Stissing Marsh, Stanford; Feb. 22, 1977, at Tivoli South Bay; and Dec. 17, 1978, near Millerton.

[1] Crosby's 1921 list notes a nest containing five eggs found at Poughkeepsie by Frost on June 10, 1914, but did not record the Sora as nesting in his 1917 list. Griscom appears to record this nest as associated with the Virginia Rail, q.v., although with seven eggs.

———— COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*) ————

Normal Dates: April 25 - October 22

Usual Locale: Fresh water marshes in northern portion of county

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
			

Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: No Common Gallinule had been reported anywhere in Dutchess County since 1996, however on May 4, 2013 Chet Vingent saw one off the Harlem Valley Rail Trail. Two were then seen again on May 16, 2014 at Mashomack by John Askildsen. Carena Pooth photographed two young off the Rail Trail on Oct. 1, 2014, possibly having nested there. However on Aug. 3, 2015 young were photographed, two possibly three pair nested in a beaver created backup. Previously, they normally arrived from late April to early May and were usually seen singly or in small groups of two to four. Two were found on March 18, 1995, the earliest spring arrival date, at Travers Pond, Pleasant Valley by Marion Van Wagner. Those that stayed to breed generally remained to mid-October, rarely into November. More recently Dot Fleury found one on Dec. 31, 2015 where they had bred. They are secretive in June during nesting, but young can be seen by the end of June and remain identifiable into the fall. Gallinules are more easily seen than other rails, even with young. Favorite locations in Dutchess County included Stissing Marsh, Stanford; Craft Marsh, Webatuck; and Traver Pond, Pleasant Valley. Dieterich Pond, Millbrook was a prime location until the pond was drained and dredged in the mid-1990s.

Historical Notes: Stearns thought the Common Gallinule was “apparently rare” in 1880; however, Crosby estimated “at least a dozen pair” nesting at Cruger Island in 1921. Erik Kiviat reported six to eight breeding pairs there until the early 1970s. The previous last known breeding report was of young seen in 1992 at Dieterich Pond. The only previous winter record is from Dec. 1 to Jan. 29, 1975, at Traver Pond, observed by many. The Gallinule was found regularly on the May Census up to 1991, since then one was reported in 2006 only. Throughout New York State their population is drastically reduced, and they no longer nest at Jamaica Bay NWR (Levine). A few still nest at Bashakill, Sullivan County (Valerie Freer, pers comm).

———— **AMERICAN COOT** (*Fulica americana*) ————

Normal Dates: October 7 - April 10

Usual Locale: Sylvan Lake, Abel Pond, and other
inland lakes

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D

Winter Resident

Status since 1990: American Coot migrate to Dutchess County between late September and mid-October. By the end of October, they can be found on various lakes and ponds, sometimes reaching 100 or more in number. Most will stay all winter if water remains open. When the lakes freeze, they drift farther south. By early April they have left, migrating back north. Infrequently one is found in May. Wintering Coot have increased significantly during the 1990s.

Historical Notes: For the 1870s, Stearns reported several specimens, but apparently never saw any American Coot himself, and Kent did not mention them. Crosby noted the Coot as a fall transient, from October 1-21 with a Nov. 19, 1921, late sighting. Griscom added two spring sightings, but considered them rare in spring. By 1959, up to ten were found every spring. The first record of a flock of 100 is in November 1969, at Vandenburg Cove. During the 1970s, there was an increase in numbers found on inland lakes and a decrease in reports from the Hudson River. The first winter record is 16 on Jan. 7, 1966, on Sylvan Lake. The Christmas Count and Waterfowl Count have exceeded 100 most years since December 1994. The only summer records are one on July 22 and two on August 28, both 1934 by Baker near Chestnut Ridge. Baker felt they had bred.

———— **YELLOW RAIL** (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*) ————

Possible Casual Transient

Only Date:

One at 8:30AM September 16, 1992, on the causeway at Cruger Island, by Mark DeDea.

Status: The Yellow Rail is one of the more elusive birds, extremely difficult to see at any time. Their range is not well known, but they do appear in New York State during migration, generally April to mid-May and late August to December (Levine). They migrate and call mostly at night. They are not known to breed in New York, but do breed in adjacent areas of Canada.

Comment: The report of this sighting was accepted by NYSARC.

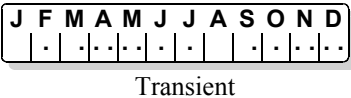
———— **BLACK RAIL** ————

(See Miscellaneous Reports, page 247.)

CRANES

SANDHILL CRANE (*Antigone canadensis*)

Normal Dates: April - May and late Fall
Usual Locale: most often seen flying high over the Hudson River



Status: When first seen, the Sandhill Crane attracts attention. They are large. The first New York breeding record was near Montezuma NWR in 2003. The next closest breeding areas are Pennsylvania and recently Quebec and New England. They have appeared in the eastern states with increasing frequency after a few sightings in the 1970s. It is thought these eastern birds winter in Florida and Georgia. They have been seen yearly since 2010, a February 2014 sighting was photographed* by Christina Baal.

Forbush believed Sandhill Cranes were common in the Northeast during migration in colonial times, but were likely extirpated by the early 1700s. A Dutchess County record from 1918 was thought by Crosby to be of a bird which escaped from a Connecticut preserve. Erik Kiviat next reported one on May 4, 1983 which flew overhead calling at Tivoli North Bay. It was accepted by NYSARC.

Comment: See also Miscellaneous Reports, page 247.

ORDER — SHOREBIRDS & COSTAL SEABIRDS

Most shorebirds, particularly sandpipers, are infrequently seen in Dutchess County primarily due to lack of proper habitat, but perhaps also lack of frequent observation at less accessible locations such as Hudson River coves during a low tide. When conditions are right, plovers and sandpipers congregate. At one time, Fallkill Park Lake, Poughkeepsie, was drained each fall, and Alice Jones regularly checked the resulting mud flats. Twelve species of shorebirds were identified in September and October, 1968, including both Yellowlegs, Semipalmated, Least, and Pectoral Sandpipers, plus the second county record of a Baird’s Sandpiper, and the county’s first record of a Stilt Sandpiper. September and October, 1972, were similar with nine species of shorebirds recorded, including the first county Buff-breasted Sandpiper.

For spring, a large variety of shorebirds were seen in May 1979. On May 13, five inches of rain fell. North of Amenia on Sharon Station Road is the McEnroe Farm, which often has a “mud puddle.” The occasional sandpiper is seen there during migration when the puddle is not dry. Knowledgeable people must look, find, identify, and report the birds. This occurred there on May 14, 1979, when Florence Germond and Eleanor Pink found Semipalmated Plover, both Yellowlegs, Least Sandpiper, and Short-billed Dowitcher. A relay call was started and other Waterman Bird Club members found an uncommon Baird’s Sandpiper, the county’s second White-rumped Sandpiper, and the county’s first Marbled Godwit.

It should also be noted that a large variety of gulls have been found along the river near the Beacon train station and Waterfront Park, but it does take time to look.

These examples demonstrate the value of suitable habitat and the reward of always looking at the birds around us.

AVOCETS

AMERICAN AVOCET (*Recurvirostra americana*)

Accidental Vagrant

Only Dates:

Two on Aug. 7, 2013, at Newburgh, flew across river to Beacon, photographed by Melissa Fischer, also seen by Karen Kearney.

One on Aug. 11, 2021, at Beacon waterfront park. Found by Kyle Bardwell, seen by about 30 or more birders, photographed⁺.

Status: American Avocets, among the prettiest of shorebirds, are usually found in the South during the winter, from Georgia through Mexico; or the West in summer. However they have been seen more frequently along the Atlantic Coast since mid-1970s particularly from August to October. In colonial days they nested in southern New Jersey and at other spots near the coast. However from the mid-1800s they became exceedingly rare at any time in the East. It has only been with the preservation of coastal marshes that Avocets have been able to slowly expand their post breeding wanderings. Nevertheless they still do not breed in the East but they now occur along the coast to New England every fall.

PLOVERS

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*)

Normal Dates: May 4 - 24 and September 19 -
October 24

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
				••				•	•		

Transient

Usual Locale: Open areas often near water

Status: Black-bellied Plovers are occasionally found in May and again in September or October. All sightings have been of one bird, with two exceptions. Three were seen May 17, 1986, near Amenia, and in 1928, as noted below. Sightings occur about two to four times per decade. A Sept. 28, 2018 sighting in Amenia was photographed⁺ still in breeding plumage.

Historical Notes: The first Black-bellied Plover record was of three seen on Sept. 17, 1928, at the State Hospital Reservoir, Poughkeepsie by Allen Frost. The first May Census record was on May 13, 1978.

AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER (*Pluvialis dominica*)

Normal Dates: September 12 - October 24

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
							•	•			

Usual Locale: Open grassy areas near water

Fall Transient

Status: Golden-Plovers are reported in Dutchess County about once or twice per decade. In spring, they migrate through the central part of the continent to northern Canada. In the fall they migrate to the Atlantic coast, occasionally being seen in Dutchess County, on their way to southern South America. Usually small flocks are found and they often

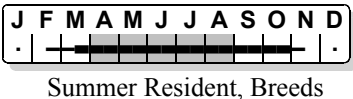
stay for two or three days. Seventeen were found on Oct. 14-17, 1964, at Briarcliff Farm, Pine Plains by Vivian Parkhurst. Fifteen were found on Sept. 14-17, 1977, at Dutchess County Airport by Dan Nickerson. For both sightings, many others were able to see them.

Spring sightings are occasionally reported in the East. The only Dutchess County spring record is April 8-10, 2006 on a small pond off Strever Farm Rd., Pine Plains. It was found by Carol Fredericks and Chet Vincent, seen by at least five others, and photographed⁺. The most recent fall reports were one on Sept. 18, 1998, at Pine Plains; one on Nov. 4-6, 2015 at Ryder Pond; and one on Sept. 20, 2021 at Millerton.

Historical Notes: Like other shorebirds, by the 1890s American Golden-Plovers were reduced to near extinction. They have now recovered significantly. The first Dutchess County record is one found on Sept. 20, 1921, at Cruger Island by Crosby.

———— **KILLDEER** (*Charadrius vociferus*) ————

Normal Dates: February 15 - November 12
Usual Locale: Throughout county near grassy and gravelly areas

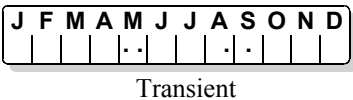


Status since 1990: The Killdeer is a hardy “shorebird” and among the first birds to return in the spring. By mid-February the first one or two Killdeer are heard calling. In March they continue to arrive, building in numbers towards the end of the month. In April they are easily found and have started to nest. Occasionally young are seen by the end of April. By May and June the parents may be seen feigning a broken wing to defend their young. As summer ends, flocks build to 20 or 30 individuals, often seen on grassy fields. From mid-October and continuing in early November, they migrate south. One or two are occasionally reported in December and even January, but none seems to actually stay all winter.

Historical Notes: According to Forbush, the Killdeer was common in the early 1800s, but declined after about 1850 in southern New England, at least partially due to shooting. In 1880 Stearns considered the Killdeer “rather rare.” Eaton in 1907 said, “In the lower Hudson valley it is practically unknown as a summer resident.” Lisenard Horton apparently identified the Killdeer as a fairly common summer resident, arriving about March 22 and breeding, yet Mary Hyatt did not see one at Stanfordville until 1925. Frost recorded a late date of Dec. 26, 1920, at Poughkeepsie. Griscom noted in 1933 that the Killdeer was then “much commoner and more widely distributed than formerly.” The largest flock recorded is 104 counted by Crosby and Griscom at Halcyon Lake on an unknown date in the 1920s. They have been reported on three Christmas Counts (1988, 1993, 1994). One or two also may have wintered during 1963-64 and 1974-75.

———— **SEMI PALMATED PLOVER** (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) ————

Normal Dates: May 12 - 24
Usual Locale: Muddy shores including wet farm areas



Status since 1990: Since 1989, the Semipalmated Plover was found only in spring, normally in mid-May but since 2013 they have been again found in fall. Usually one to three are found, staying only one or two days. Semipalmated Plovers are reported about every other year. There is no particular location to find them other than wet muddy areas. When found on their southward migration, they are generally seen from mid-August to mid-September.

Historical Notes: As with other shorebirds, Semipalmated Plovers were hunted excessively and suffered a decline in population during the late 1800s. The first documented record of a Semipalmated in Dutchess County is Aug. 6, 1916, at Rhinebeck by Crosby. However Eaton's 1907 list includes them as transients, without details. Subsequently, Crosby and Griscom recorded at least seven additional sightings during the 1920s, with Griscom commenting that they were more often found in fall. Found on the 1934 May Census, they were not reported again until August 29-30, 1964, from Sheafe Road, Poughkeepsie. The most recent fall report is 12 on Aug. 19, 1989, at the McEnroe Farm, Amenia. The latest fall departure date is three on Oct. 1, 1972, at Red Oaks Mills, Poughkeepsie.

SANDPIPERS

——— **UPLAND SANDPIPER** (*Bartramia longicauda*) ———

Normal Dates: April 23 - August 16

Usual Locale: Farm fields in northeastern portion of county

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
				.	.		.				

Transient

Status: Upland Sandpipers are infrequently seen in Dutchess County. The last report was one on April 17, 2001, at Millbrook by Jesse Bontecou. Prior to that, three were seen on April 23, 1989, at the McEnroe Farm, Amenia. Sightings are more likely in April or May during migration, but a few are reported from June to August. Upland Sandpipers require dry grassy fields, such as farm hayfields and old pastures that remain uncut into July. Sightings by decade are five in 1960s, four in 1970s, eight in 1980s, none in 1990s, one in 2000s.

Historical Notes: The Upland Sandpiper was first recorded in Dutchess County from a specimen collected on July 16, 1919, at East Hyde Park by Arthur Bloomfield, who said the species had been present at that location for "several" years. Griscom recorded four more in the 1920s, presumably all during fall migration. The first recorded spring sighting, and only May Census record, is May 11, 1941, by Allen Frost. The latest fall departure date is Oct. 18, 1967.

Griscom felt the Upland Sandpiper might breed in the eastern sections of the county. In New York, eggs are laid in May and young fledge from mid-June. In mid-June 1959 at Newton Deuel Farm, Standfordville, Richard Schwartz reported two with young. One bird was seen by a number of people through July 20, but breeding was not confirmed. Additionally, up to four were seen between June 11 and July 9, 1979, off Route 22 north of Amenia. One was also seen on June 26 and July 1, 1984, on Downey Rd., Millerton. It is possible any or all of these June sightings represented breeding birds. The Upland

Sandpiper breeds in scattered locations from New England to the West. However, they have drastically decreased their eastern range in the last 30 years.

——— **WHIMBREL** ———
(See Miscellaneous Reports, page 247.)

——— **HUDSONIAN GODWIT** (*Limosa haemastica*) ———

Casual Visitant

Only Dates:

One on Nov. 10-15, 2002, at Rhinebeck, found by Herb Thompson and Carena Pooth, seen by many, photographed⁺.

One on Aug. 28, 2011, at Hitchcock Estate, Bangall Rd., Millbrook, found by John Askildsen and photographed by Deborah Kral. This was during the rain from Hurricane Irene.

One on Nov. 5-8, 2016, at Strauss Marsh, Haight Rd., Millerton, found on Waterman field trip, seen by many, photographed.

Status: Hudsonian Godwits nest in northern Canada and are reported to fly from there to the Atlantic Ocean then directly to South America. Fall sightings in New York are regular along the coast but very infrequent inland. Spring migration is through the middle of the continent.

——— **MARbled GODWIT** (*Limosa fedoa*) ———

Casual Visitant

Only Date:

One on June 2-6, 1979, at Sharon Station, found by Dot Fleury and Trixi Strauss, seen by many, photographed⁺.

Status: Normally found in the west, Marbled Godwits are found in very small numbers on the south shore of Long Island in fall. They are infrequently seen there in spring. Inland records are exceptional. Seriously reduced in numbers at the turn of the twentieth century, they recovered slowly from the 1940s.

Comment: The report of this sighting was accepted by NYSARC.

——— **RUDDY TURNSTONE** (*Arenaria interpres*) ———

Casual Visitant

Only Dates:

One on Aug. 7, 1921, at Brickyard Swamp, Poughkeepsie, by Allen Frost.

One on May 20, 1928, at New Hamburg, by Allen Frost, George Gray, and Ray Guernsey.

Two on June 2, 1973, at Cruger Island, by Doug Zwick.

One on Sept. 17 and one other on Sept. 19, 2008, at Chelsea Yacht Club by Dot Fleury.

Status: Ruddy Turnstones are common migrants along the coast and are more common in spring than in fall. Some winter on Long Island. Inland sightings are occasional, generally near the Great Lakes. As with other shorebirds in the late nineteenth century,

its numbers were drastically reduced by hunting. They increased after protection by migratory bird laws.

———— **RED KNOT** (*Calidris canutus*) ————

Historical Visitor

Only Dates:

One immature on Aug. 21, 1921, at Halcyon Lake, Pine Plains, by Crosby, Frost, and Griscom.

One immature on July 30, 1922, at Halcyon Lake, Pine Plains, by Crosby and Frost.

Status: Red Knots regularly occur in large numbers along the shore of Long Island, particularly in migration. Inland they are more often found near the Great Lakes. The first sighting is well-documented in Crosby's "Supplementary Notes on the Birds of Dutchess County, N.Y."

———— **STILT SANDPIPER** (*Calidris himantopus*) ————

Casual Fall Transient

Only Dates:

Three from Sept. 25 - Oct. 8, two from Oct. 9-10, and one from Oct. 11-13, 1968, at Fallkill Park Lake, found by Alice Jones and seen by Otis Waterman, Davis Finch, and many others. The lake had been drained to mud flats.

One from Aug. 26-28 then three from Aug. 29-30, 2017, at Strever Farm, Pine Plains, found by Mathew Rymkiewicz and seen by many, photographed*.

Status: Stilt Sandpipers migrate primarily through the center of the continent. However, in fall some migrate along the Atlantic coast, generally from points south of New England.

———— **SANDERLING** (*Calidris alba*) ————

Casual Transient

Only Dates:

One on Aug. 4, 1918, at Brickyard Swamp, Poughkeepsie, by Allen Frost.

Two on Aug. 22, 1920, at Jackson Pond, East Fishkill, by Allen Frost.

One on Sept. 1-2, 1922, at Morgan Lake, Poughkeepsie, by Allen Frost.

One on May 26, 1924, at Brickyard Swamp, Poughkeepsie, by Crosby and Griscom.

One on July 31, 1925, at Cruger Island, by Maunsell Crosby.

Five on Aug. 10, and two on Sept. 11, 1963, at Briarcliff Farm, Pine Plains, by James and Mary Key, Alice Jones, and five others.

One on Oct. 20, 1967, at Hyde Park, found injured along railroad tracks, captured by Alice Jones, cared for by Mary Key, and released Nov. 6.

Two on July 26 and 30, 1973, off Shunpike, Washington, by Forrest and Aline Romero.

One on Sept. 9, 2019, at Dennings Point, found by Ryan Van Manen. Others found along the Hudson River with two photographed near Kingston on the same day.

One on Aug. 7, 2021, at Beacon waterfront, found by Sean Camillieri and Kyle Bardwell, photographed*. Also seen by Carena Pooth and Debbie van Zyl. Seen again Aug. 24 by Debbie van Zyl, although likely a different individual.

Status: Sanderlings are found on Atlantic Ocean beaches and are most common in New York during spring and fall migration. Inland they are usually found on fall migration near the Great Lakes.

———— **DUNLIN** (*Calidris alpina*) ————

Normal Dates: April 16 - May 18

Usual Locale: McEnroe’s Farm mud puddle in
Amenia

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
				.	.				.		

Transient

Status since 1990: Dunlins are seen in Dutchess County mostly in spring from the middle of April to the middle of May. The most reliable location has been a large, normally wet, mud puddle on McEnroe’s Farm. Usually only one Dunlin is seen, but 14 were found from May 11-14, 1996, at McEnroe’s Farm by Jane Rossman and many others. Two were found by Barbara Mansell and Liz Martens and photographed on Oct. 23, 2004, at a farm off VanWagner Rd., Pleasant Valley.

Historical Notes: The first recorded Dunlin in Dutchess County was found dead on Oct. 3, 1961, by Br. Michael Dougherty on the railroad tracks at Cruger Island. The first spring report was one on May 16, 1967, at Briarcliff Farm by Thelma Haight and Vivian Parkhurst. There have been approximately twice as many spring sightings as fall sightings. Prior to 2004, the most recent fall sighting had been one on Oct. 30, 1984, at Hunns Lake by Marion Van Wagner, Eleanor Pink, and Mary Yegella. Following are sightings by decade: 1960s - eight, 1970s - nine, 1980s - five, 1990s - five, and 2000s - two.

———— **BAIRD’S SANDPIPER** (*Calidris bairdii*) ————

Casual Fall Transient

Only Dates:

One adult and one immature on Sept. 9-17, 1922, at Morgan Lake (then mostly drained), by Crosby, Frost, and Griscom. Adult collected and determined to be a female. Skin at American Museum of Natural History (*Auk*, 1923).

One on Sept. 19 - Oct. 4, 1968, at Fallkill Park Lake (then drained), found by Bill and Trixi Strauss and Helen Manson, verified by Davis Finch, seen by many.

One on Sept. 3-30, 1972, at Fallkill Park Lake (then drained), by Alice Jones.

Two on Sept. 9, 1973, at Beaver Dam, by Helen Manson.

Three from May 31 - June 1, 1979, at Sharon Station, found by Trixi Strauss, Helen Manson, and Eleanor Pink, seen by many, photographed by Mary Yegella.

One on Sept. 2, 2016, on the edge of South Hills Mall parking lot, found and photographed* by Ken Harris.

Status: Baird’s Sandpipers migrate generally in small groups or singly through the center of the continent to and from their northern Canada breeding grounds. However, in the fall, some juveniles follow the coast south. The 1979 sighting was the first substantiated spring record for New York State and possibly the entire Northeast. It was accepted by NYSARC.

———— **LEAST SANDPIPER** (*Calidris minutilla*) ————

Normal Dates: May 6 - 23 and August 12 -
September 21

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
				—	—	—	—	—	—		

Usual Locale: Shores of ponds and creeks,
particularly on mud flats

Transient

Status since 1990: Rarely found at the very end of April, Least Sandpipers normally make their spring appearance in mid-May. They may be seen singly or in flocks of 20 or more. Fall migration is much more spread out. As with most sandpipers, the adults migrate first and the juveniles about a month later. Most are reported during August, but three were seen on July 27, 1990, at Kay's Pond by Alice Jones. Some are also seen in September and early October. Fall flocks usually number four or fewer.

Historical Notes: The Least Sandpiper was not recorded on the early county bird lists, most likely due to limited observations in proper habitat. Crosby called them fairly common from May 11-28 and August 22 to September 6. Fifty-one were found Sept. 13, 1925, by Crosby at the mill pond in Rhinebeck, which had been emptied and turned into a mud flat. Over 200 were found May 13, 1978, at Cruger Island by Erik Kiviat. The earliest spring arrival is three on April 26, 1990, at Round Pond. The latest spring departure date is one on June 2, 2001, off Salt Point Turnpike. The latest fall departure date is Oct. 18, 1978.

———— **WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER** (*Calidris fuscicollis*) ————

Casual Visitant

Only Dates:

One from Oct. 20-27, 1972, at Beaver Dam, found by Bob Smart and seen by many.

Two on June 1, 1979, at Sharon Station, by Alice Jones and Florence Germond, photographed⁺.

Status: In spring, most White-rumped Sandpipers migrate north through the interior of the United States. They migrate later than other sandpipers, making June records more likely. In fall they leave northern Canada and migrate along the Atlantic coast so are less often found inland.

Historical Notes: In his 1844 book, *Birds of Long Island*, Jacob P. Giraud, Jr. records a White-rumped Sandpiper shot on an unspecified date at Poughkeepsie. This is one of the oldest bird records for Dutchess County. It is not known if the skin was in the collection he gave to the Vassar College Museum.

———— **BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER** (*Calidris subruficollis*) ————

Casual Vagrant

Only Dates¹:

One from Oct. 1-11, 1972, at Fallkill Park Lake, found by Alice Jones and seen by James and Mary Key, Helen Manson, and many others.

One on Oct. 17, 1973, at Thompson Pond on a Waterman Bird Club field trip.

One juvenile from Sept. 5-10, 2015, at Red Hook Soccer Field found by Matthew Rymkiewicz, photographed⁺ by Bill Case and Deborah Kral, seen by many others.

Status: In both spring and fall, Buff-breasted Sandpipers migrate through the center of the continent. In fall a few, usually juveniles, are occasionally seen, generally along the mid-Atlantic coast. The year 1973 was exceptional with two flocks of over 40 reported from Long Island in August and September (Bull).

[1] Two Semipalmated Sandpipers records in August 1973 were mistakenly documented as Buff-breasted Sandpiper in *Bird of Dutchess County 1964-1979*.

———— **PECTORAL SANDPIPER** (*Calidris melanotos*) ————

Normal Dates: May 17 - 30 and August 17 -
October 8

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D

Transient

Usual Locale: Wet fields, marshes, and shores of
ponds

Status since 1990: Pectoral Sandpipers pass quickly in spring. If seen at all, they are usually seen in mid to late May, generally in small flocks of six or less. In fall, their migration is more spread out, extending from August to early October. They are found approximately two out of three years.

Historical Notes: Eaton recorded Pectoral Sandpipers as transients in Dutchess County, but gave no dates. Crosby reported them on May 14, 1911, and Oct. 23, 1916. Griscom called them irregular, noting their presence when water was low, exposing muddy edges. Spring sightings increased significantly in the last half of the twentieth century. The first May Census report was in 1945. The earliest spring arrival date is March 12, 2019. There are occasional late July reports of returning migrants. The latest fall departure date is Nov. 13, 1983. Flocks of over ten are infrequently reported, usually in the spring.

Comment: Forbush describes the circumstances of the Pectoral Sandpiper, which are similar to those of other sandpipers, “Formerly this bird arrived on our coasts in great flocks, and was extremely abundant in our meadows. In olden times it was not much noticed or hunted, for there was an abundant supply of larger and better game, but for the past fifty years [1860-1910], during the growing game scarcity, most gunners found the little Grass-bird one of the most numerous species commonly met with in the meadows and marshes, and it was much sought for the market. ... but its numbers have decreased greatly, and since the decline of the Curlew, Godwits, Willets and larger Plover this little fellow has come to be reckoned with as one of the ‘big birds’ which helps to make out a bag. Now not even a ‘Peep’ is too small to shoot.” (Forbush, 1912).

———— **SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER** (*Calidris pusilla*) ————

Normal Dates: April 28 - May 22 and
August 9 - September 15

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D

Transient

Usual Locale: Shores of ponds and creeks,
particularly on mud flats

Status since 1990: Semipalmated Sandpipers are found about every other year from the last days of April through mid-May. They are generally found in small flocks of up to four. They migrate south from early August to mid-September.

Historical Notes: The first documented Semipalmated Sandpiper in Dutchess County is one on Aug. 6, 1916. However, they undoubtedly were in Dutchess County many years

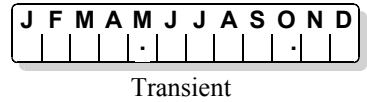
previously. Crosby called them fairly common transients from May 14 to June 5 and August 6 to September 28. There are a few early June records of late spring migrants, as well as late July records for early fall migrants. The latest fall departure date is Oct. 17, 1964. The largest flock reported was 25 on Aug. 20, 1970, at Briarcliff Farm, Pine Plains, by Otis Waterman and Eleanor Pink.

——— **WESTERN SANDPIPER** ———
(See Miscellaneous Reports, page 248.)

——— **SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER** (*Limnodromus griseus*) ———

Normal Dates: May 11 - 24

Usual Locale: Muddy pools and pond edges



Status since 1990: Short-billed Dowitchers are infrequently seen in May during spring migration. They are usually found in small flocks of three to twelve. The most recent sighting is three on May 11 and five on May 14, 1996, at McEnroe's Farm by Jane Rossman and many others. Fall sightings are even less frequent; the most recent is twelve on Oct. 28, 1989, at Thompson Pond by James and Mary Key. One was photographed⁺ on July 10, 2016 at a small pond in Pine Plains.

Historical Notes: The first Short-billed Dowitchers recorded in Dutchess County are one on Aug. 15, another on Aug. 17, and two on Aug. 19, 1964, at Briarcliff Farm, all found by Vivian Parkhurst and Thelma Haight and seen by others. The first spring sighting was 62, the most seen in Dutchess County, on May 27, 1967, also at Briarcliff Farm by Vivian Parkhurst and Thelma Haight. On the same day, seven were seen in East Park by Tom Gilbert and five other birders. The following are sightings by decade: 1960s - four, 1970s - six, 1980s - seven, 1990s - two, and 2000s - none.

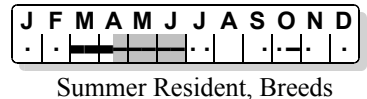
Identification of the Short-billed Dowitcher is fraught with difficulty. There are three subspecies as well as overlap with the Long-billed Dowitcher, which is unknown in Dutchess County. While most New York records are of the Atlantic subspecies, no determination is made for the Dutchess County records.

——— **AMERICAN WOODCOCK** (*Scolopax minor*) ———

Normal Dates: February 24 - April 26 and

October 16 - November 4

Usual Locale: Any marsh, swamp, or wet field

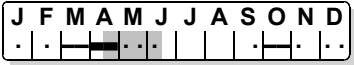


Status since 1990: Woodcocks arrive early, with the first sighting often by the end of February. On a March evening, they may be heard displaying. It is well worth locating them on an early spring evening to see their display flight and hear their unique call notes. Generally seen singly, they are occasionally found in groups of up to eight. They continue to display into April but then move farther north. While some are seen in May, they are likely those that stay to breed. Young can be found in late May and into June. During the summer, July to September, they are not often found. However, in late October they are on their return migration, passing through quickly. A few linger into November, and occasionally one attempts to over-winter in an unfrozen bog.

Historical Notes: Kent recalled hunting Woodcock in the 1870s noting, “see 20 per day, migrates mid-October, a few stay until December.” Mary Hyatt recorded them in spring six times from 1885 to 1905, her earliest spring arrival being March 25, 1905. She also recorded four eggs on May 3, 1887, at Stanfordville. Crosby, in 1921, called them “formerly common, now uncommon summer resident” and gave dates from March 18 to November 2. Baker recorded them annually from 1931-39 at Chestnut Ridge, after which he only saw them about every four years, usually in the fall. It seems hunters, particularly with dogs, find many more fall Woodcock than birders find. Winter sightings have always been very infrequent, perhaps once per decade, although February sightings of early migrants have increased to about every other year since 1990.

———— **WILSON’S SNIPE** (*Gallinago delicata*) ————

Normal Dates: March 9 - May 1 and
September 19 - November 1



Usual Locale: Any marsh, swamp, or wet field

Transient, Infrequently Breeds

Status since 1990: By early March, Wilson’s Snipe are seen in ones and twos. By the end of March, groups usually of three to ten are seen, although up to 20 have been seen together. They are readily found in proper habitat during most of April. Some leave after mid-April, and all but a few stragglers are gone by the first of May. June sightings are very infrequent, though Wilson’s Snipe do occasionally nest in Dutchess County. Jesse Jaycox from NYSDEC found a nest in the town of North East with four eggs on May 4, 2000, and photographed+ it on May 9. By May 25, the eggs had hatched, but one nestling was dead. In fall, there is no mass migration. A few show up after mid-September and more in October. Seen in flocks of five or less, they often stay only a day. A few will occasionally winter, thus some are reported from November into February but not every year.

Historical Notes: Wilson’s Snipe were known in Dutchess County by Smith in the 1870s. In 1880, Stearns said they were “not rare” in the fall. Kent, however, recalled seeing them only once, five or six in October about 1879 (Kent, p.149). In 1907, Eaton reported them as fairly common transients in April and a rare summer resident but did not indicate breeding in Dutchess County. Crosby recorded migration dates of April 3 to May 13 and September 24 to December 5, but did not note any summer sightings. Crosby and Griscom both called them fairly common transients, while Griscom notes an Aug. 2, 1925, sighting at Brickyard Swamp by Frost.

As with other game birds, Forbush documents a tremendous drop in abundance during the late nineteenth century. It seems quite likely Wilson’s Snipe bred in Dutchess County in earlier times, but direct evidence is lacking. Dutchess County is near the southern limit of their breeding range. The first documented nesting in Dutchess County is by Evan Evans, a New York City doctor, and his son who found a nest containing four eggs on May 2, 1936, near Wassaic while fishing on the Ten Mile River. He observed the nest again on May 9 and photographed it (*Auk*, 1936). The next confirmed breeding record is of one adult and three young on May 30, 1962, at Wingdale by James and Mary Key. In June and July 1963 and 1964, snipe were observed at Briarcliff Farm. Summer sightings are reported approximately once per decade.

Snipe were seen on the May Census from 1960 to 1985 and periodically in other years. Their latest spring departure dates are not more than a day or two after the May Census, nor are they seen before mid-September, except as noted for possible breeding. The first winter record is seven snipe observed monthly by Allen Frost from December 11, 1920, to February 13, 1921,¹ at Brickyard Swamp. The next winter records are for January 1960 and 1968. On average snipe have wintered one in three years since and are frequently found on the Christmas Count. The largest flock recorded is over fifty seen on April 15, 1972, in a flooded cornfield by Bill and Trixi Strauss.

[1] Griscom incorrectly records this as 1921-22. Crosby fully documents the record in "Supplementary Notes of the Birds of Dutchess County."

———— **SPOTTED SANDPIPER** (*Actitis macularius*) ————

Normal Dates: April 23 - October 13

Usual Locale: Throughout county on banks of ponds and creeks



Summer Resident, Breeds

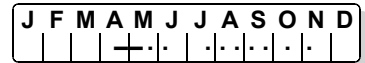
Status since 1990: The Spotted Sandpiper often arrives during the last days of April and is usually first seen singly then in pairs. More are seen during spring migration, which is concentrated in time, while fall migration may involve an equal or greater number of birds but is spread over a longer period. This sandpiper breeds in Dutchess County, and normally lays eggs before the end of May. Spotted Sandpipers are regularly seen all summer. Apparently the first to migrate south leave in August. They continue to be seen in ones and twos in September and sometimes the first week of October.

Historical Notes: Stearns recorded the Spotted Sandpiper as common in 1880. Franklin Roosevelt shot one on May 25, 1896, at Hyde Park. Crosby also called them common and provided dates of April 10 to September 11. Lisenard Horton reported a nest at Poughkeepsie with four eggs on May 18, 1899. Vivian Parkhurst found a nest with four eggs at Briarcliff Farm, Pine Plains, on July 3, 1966. The largest number reported in one area is generally about ten, always in May. They have been found on all May Censuses from 1919, with a maximum count of 60 in 1973. The latest fall departure date and only November record is one on Nov. 3, 1976, at Ogden Mills State Park on a Waterman Bird Club field trip.

———— **SOLITARY SANDPIPER** (*Tringa solitaria*) ————

Normal Dates: April 21 - May 20 and July 14 - October 3

Usual Locale: Throughout county on banks of creeks in generally wet, wooded areas



Transient

Status since 1990: The Solitary Sandpiper regularly arrives at the end of April or early May. They stay a short time and leave, although a few can linger to the first days of June. They are generally seen alone or in twos and threes. By mid-July, the first are on their way south again. They are seen sporadically until early October, with some sightings as late as the first week of November.

Historical Notes: There are no nineteenth century records documenting Solitary Sandpipers in Dutchess County, although they undoubtedly occurred. Solitary

Sandpipers are regularly found inland more often than along the shore. In 1921 Crosby considered them common transients from May 5-27 and July 18 to September 28. The largest flock recorded is “about two dozen” on May 14, 1922, at Jackson Pond, East Fishkill. This large number was not exceeded in spring for inland New York until 1973 at Montezuma NWR. They have been found on almost all May Censuses from 1919.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*)

Normal Dates: April 20 - May 18 and October 3 - 18



Usual Locale: Throughout county in shallow wet areas and banks of ponds and creeks

Transient

Status since 1990: The Lesser Yellowlegs is slightly less common than the Greater Yellowlegs. In the spring, they arrive about the same time, the last half of April, and leave by mid-May. Although frequently seen as a single bird, small flocks of up to eight have been reported. In the fall, the Lesser Yellowlegs is much less common than in spring, often passing through quickly in October. There are some August and late September records and one record on July 12, 1995, off Van Wagner Road, Poughkeepsie.

Historical Notes: As with other shorebirds that were regularly hunted, the Lesser Yellowlegs was much rarer at the turn of the twentieth century. Eaton in 1907, listed them as a transient without further comment. Crosby called them more common in late summer than spring, with dates of August 6 to September 1, and one on May 3, 1914. Griscom added few records and considered them very rare and irregular. Often found on the May Census, the maximum count is 17 in 1984. The largest flock recorded is 20 on Aug. 17, 1970, at Briarcliff Farms, Pine Plains. Since 1960, July and November sightings are reported about once per decade.

WILLET (*Tringa semipalmata*)

Casual Visitant

Only Dates:

- Five on Sept. 1, 1922, at Morgan Lake, Poughkeepsie, by Allen Frost.
- One on May 18, 1957, off Van Wagner Rd., Poughkeepsie, by Eleanor Pink, Emilie Becquet, Florence Germond, and Thelma Haight.
- One on May 13, 1979, at Cruger Island, by Otis Waterman, Marion Van Wagner, Eleanor Pink, and Bill Ghaney.
- Two on Oct. 24, 1990, at Roosevelt Cove, Hyde Park, by David Hayes.

Status: In the East, the Willet is a coastal migrant, while the western subspecies is regularly found inland. The above sightings are of unknown subspecies. The five found in 1922 were the most seen inland in New York State until 1968. Willets extended their range north along the coast and began breeding again on Long Island in 1966 and in Connecticut in 1978. They previously bred along the New York and New England coasts in the early 1800s (Forbush).

———— **GREATER YELLOWLEGS** (*Tringa melanoleuca*) ————

Normal Dates: April 17 - May 20 and

October 1 - November 16

Usual Locale: Throughout county in shallow wet areas and banks of ponds and creeks

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
			+	+			+	+	+	+	

Transient

Status since 1990: The Greater Yellowlegs is seen slightly more frequently than the Lesser Yellowlegs. They arrive during the last half of April, although there are sightings for early April. By mid-May they have moved farther north. Three seen on June 8, 1997, near Stringham Road, LaGrange, is late. Spring sightings are usually one to three birds in a shallow wet area. In the fall, fewer are normally seen. They pass through during October and the first week of November. Every few years, one or two will be seen in August or September.

Historical Notes: Stearns had one specimen brought to his attention in 1880. Crosby in 1921, listed the Greater Yellowlegs as a common spring transient from May 5-15 and noted one record on Aug. 6, 1916. Griscom added July and October dates, but noted they were found only in very small numbers. The Greater Yellowlegs is regularly found on the May Census, with a maximum count of 32 in 1972. The most recorded in one flock is ten on multiple occasions.

———— **WILSON'S PHALAROPE** (*Phalaropus tricolor*) ————

Casual Spring Visitant

Only Dates:

One female on May 15, 1965, at Karl Ehmer's Farm, LaGrangeville, found by James Key, seen by seven others.

One on May 14, 1983, at Karl Ehmer's Farm, LaGrangeville, found by James and Mary Key, seen by many others.

One on May 11-12, 1987, at McEnroe's Farm, Amenia, by Art Gingert and Trixi Strauss.

One on June 1, 1989, at McEnroe's Farm, Amenia, found by Dot Fleury, seen by Mary Yegella.

Status: Wilson's Phalaropes breed in western United States and Canada. In 1974, they expanded breeding to Quebec, and in 1993 to New York near Lake Champlain. They winter in South America. While infrequently found in New York, Wilson's Phalarope are the most frequently seen phalarope in the spring.

———— **RED-NECKED PHALAROPE** (*Phalaropus lobatus*) ————

Casual Fall Visitant

Only Dates:

One on Sept. 7, 1924, on a pond near Amenia, by Alfred Gross¹ and Edward Spingarn (*Bird-Lore*, 1924).

One from Aug. 17-25, 1970, two on Aug. 21, at Buttermilk Pond / Briarcliff Farm, Pine Plains, found by Thelma Haight and Vivian Parkhurst, seen by many. Photographed. (*Kingbird*, 1970).

Status: Red-necked Phalaropes breed across northern Canada and migrate along both coasts to wintering grounds at sea. Those that migrate on the Atlantic Ocean winter off

Africa. They are infrequently found inland and when found it is more often during fall migration.

[1] Alfred Otto Gross (1883-1970) was an internationally known ornithologist and professor of biology at Bowdoin College, Maine. He wrote the definitive history of the Heath Hen.

———— **RED PHALAROPE** (*Phalaropus fulicarius*) ————

Casual Visitant

Only Dates:

- One in bright breeding plumage on May 13, 2006, on a pond off Strever Farm Rd., Pine Plains, by Art Jones and Jane Rossman, and seen by five others.
- One from Oct. 8-11, 2011, at Greig’ Farm, Red Hook, found by Peter Schoenberger and Susan Rogers, also seen by Deborah Tracy-Kral, Frank Murphy and many others. Many photographs⁺.
- One adult on Oct. 12, 2014, off the Harlem Valley Rail Trail north of Sharon Station Rd., by Chet Vincent.
- One on Oct. 23, 2016, at Hunns Lake, Stanford, found by Carena Pooth and Herb Thompson, seen by many. Photographed.

Status: Red Phalaropes normally migrate far out to sea. Inland sightings are uncommon, particularly in spring, and are usually associated with storms. For the 2006 sighting, heavy rains with onshore winds pounded New England for days prior with many other Red and Red-necked Phalaropes reported at the same time across New England.

SKUAS

———— **LONG-TAILED JAEGER** (*Stercorarius longicaudus*) ————

Historical Vagrant

Only Date:

- One immature on Sept. 7, 1929, near Millbrook, flew into a car windshield and was killed. The driver turned the body over to Allen Frost for the Vassar Brothers Museum.

Status: Long-tailed Jaegers breed in northern Canada and winter at sea in the southern hemisphere. They are seldom seen over land, even from the coast. There are a few inland New York and Great Lakes records (Levine).

ALCIDS

———— **DOVEKIE** (*Alle alle*) ————

Historical Vagrant

Only Dates:

- Two on Dec. 29, 1901, on the Hudson River at Hyde Park, by Arthur Bloomfield.
- One on Nov. 20, 1932, at Millbrook, by Howard Dunn and shown to Allen Frost.
- One on Dec. 4, 1932, at Hopewell near Fishkill Creek, found dead by T.R. Pell.

Status: The Dovekie is an unusual bird to find in Dutchess County, yet it has been collected three times. Dovekies are found in the open ocean well off the Northeast coast. Occasionally storms drive them onshore in large numbers, and some are found inland. When a great storm struck on Nov. 19, 1932, “thousands” of Dovekies were seen offshore and many found over land, some up to 100 miles inland. Many died or were found emaciated and soon died. The Millbrook bird was found alive, but it is not known if the skin was saved. (*Auk*, 1933)

Arthur Bloomfield collected both of the Dovekies he found and mounted them for his natural history collection. One was presented to Maunsell Crosby, likely in 1924, and ultimately passed to Allen Frost for display in the Vassar Brothers’ Institute Museum. Their subsequent disposition is unknown.

———— **THICK-BILLED MURRE** (*Uria lomvia*) ————

Historical Vagrant

Only Dates:

One on Dec. 1, 1894, at Pleasant Valley, by Lisenard Horton.

Two on Nov. 30 and one on Dec. 1, 1897, on Hudson River at Hyde Park, by Arthur Bloomfield.

Status: Thick-billed Murres are normally found in winter at sea along the northeast coast. When found inland, it is often the result of storms. However, from 1893 to 1903, upstate New York sightings were reported yearly. Eaton lists three other inland sightings in December 1894. Bull suspected the birds came down the St. Lawrence River and then the Great Lakes froze. For December 1897, Eaton also lists a record in western New York.

All four Thick-billed Murres listed above were collected. The three by Bloomfield were mounted for his natural history collection and determined to be one male and two females. He presented one to Maunsell Crosby, who bequeathed it to Allen Frost for the Vassar Brothers’ Institute Museum. The final disposition of all skins is unknown.

———— **ATLANTIC PUFFIN** (*Fratercula arctica*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Date:

One immature on Sept. 27, 1963, at Rhinebeck, found by Mrs. Conrad Giersch (*Kingbird*, 1964). Photographed⁺ (*NY Conservationist*, 1964).

Status: Atlantic Puffins nest on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, breeding as far south as Maine. They spend the winter at sea, seldom farther south than Massachusetts. They take to sea by the end of September; of all the alcids, they wander the least.

The above Puffin was picked up emaciated in the Giersch backyard on Old Albany Post Rd. and kept overnight. William Hollister responded for the NYS Conservation Department and turned the bird over to Heinz Meng, professor of ornithology at New Paltz State Teachers College, where it died the following day. It was mounted and remains in the college collection. This was the only inland record for New York State until May 2014 when one was found at Ft. Ann, NY in similar condition.

GULLS AND TERNS

————— **BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE** (*Rissa tridactyla*) —————

Casual Fall Visitor

Only Dates:

- One immature on Nov. 20, 1969, at Rhinecliff, by Davis Finch.
- One immature on Oct. 17, 1971, from IBM, South Rd., Poughkeepsie, by James and Mary Key.
- One immature on Sept. 5, 1974, from Franklin D. Roosevelt NHS, Hyde Park, by Helen Manson and Alice Jones.
- One immature on Nov. 1, 1997, at Ehmer’s Farm, Noxon Rd., LaGrange with a flock of Snow Geese, by Tom Burke.

Status: Black-legged Kittiwakes are pelagic birds, seldom found over land, although a few are seen regularly over the Great Lakes. A portion of the population winters on the Atlantic Ocean and are seen on pelagic trips from November to February. While some are occasionally blown onshore during storms, the above sightings for Dutchess County suggest the possibility of aberrant fall migration. First-year (immature) kittiwakes have very distinctive plumage.

————— **BONAPARTE’S GULL** (*Chroicocephalus philadelphia*) —————

Normal Dates: April 12 - May 11 and
October 15 - November 17

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
			

Usual Locale: Hudson River

Transient

Status since 1990: Bonaparte’s Gulls winter along the coast and the Great Lakes, breed in Canada, and are normally found in Dutchess County only as transients. They are usually seen along the Hudson River either singly or in flocks of less than ten birds. They are seen inland infrequently. There are about ten sightings reported per decade, from late April to early May and from mid-October to mid-November.

Historical Notes: One immature Bonaparte’s Gull was reported to Stearns as shot in the fall of 1871. Eaton recorded them in 1907 as transients without specifying dates. Crosby saw his first one on April 12, 1912. Griscom listed dates from April 3 to Nov. 21 for eleven sightings. The largest flock reported is 68 on May 4, 1968, at Cruger Island on a Waterman Bird Club field trip. The earliest spring arrival is March 5, 1977, by Ken McDermott. The latest spring departure is May 27, 1960 and 1989. The earliest fall arrival is July 28, 1999, by Valerie Freer. July and August dates may represent wanderings of non-breeding birds. The latest fall departure is December 27, 1975. The first inland report was nine on April 13, 1985, at Abels Pond by Barbara Butler.

————— **LAUGHING GULL** (*Leucophaeus atricilla*) —————

Normal Dates: April 27 - May 11 and
August 20 - October 30

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
				

Usual Locale: Hudson River

Visitor

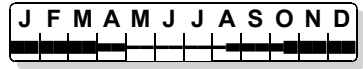
Status since 1990: Two to four sightings of Laughing Gulls per decade are reported. Since 1990, three were seen on July 30, 1995, and one on July 2, 1997, both on the Hudson River and the first July sightings. The most recent are one on May 8, 1999, at Fishkill and one on Nov. 5, 2002, at Poughkeepsie, the latest fall departure date. They wander up the Hudson River usually singly or in very small groups.

Historical Notes: Laughing Gulls are normally found along ocean shores and occasionally inland, particularly after storms. They were common on Long Island in the 1800s, but by 1900 had all but disappeared. The oldest local record is by Mearns of one shot at Cornwall in the 1870s. Laughing Gulls returned to New York Harbor about 1921 and were once more seen on the Hudson River. They again nested on Long Island in 1978. The first Dutchess County sighting was an adult on May 10, 1924, on the river above Poughkeepsie by Allen Frost. They are seen irregularly in spring and fall. The largest number reported is 14 on Aug. 27-28, 1975, at New Hamburg.

———— **RING-BILLED GULL** (*Larus delawarensis*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Hudson River, larger lakes, and shopping malls



Permanent Resident, does not breed

Status since 1990: Ring-billed Gulls are primarily winter residents in Dutchess County; however, non-breeding gulls are present throughout the summer. By October they are seen in large numbers along the Hudson River and around shopping mall parking lots. Flocks of over 200 can be found anywhere in the county, though they are often near water for evening roosts. As spring approaches, they are more frequently seen in fields, particularly if recently plowed. By April and May, their numbers are greatly reduced, though they remain the most frequently seen gull. During August and September, their numbers again grow, reaching the hundreds in October. Being scavengers, they were often found around open dumps and now frequent fast food outlets.

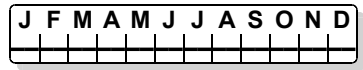
Historical Notes: By the late nineteenth century, Ring-billed Gull nest sites were nearly eliminated in eastern Canada due to human disturbance and egg gathering. Subsequent to being protected, they expanded their Canadian breeding range eastward, reaching New York State in 1936. By 1965, over 75,000 *pairs* were estimated nesting on Little Galloo Island, Lake Ontario, New York (Bull).

Ring-billed Gulls were first documented in Dutchess County on March 21 & 29, 1915 at Rhinecliff by Crosby. After that, they were seen infrequently and only in spring. The first fall sighting is one on Sept. 5, 1960, at Barrytown by Br. Michael Dougherty. Ring-billed Gulls were seen yearly in small numbers beginning in 1956, with winter sightings from December 1965. Regular sightings in eastern Dutchess County began in 1977. July sightings began in 1989. The maximum May Census count is 182 in 1990; the maximum Christmas Count is 782 in 1998.

———— **HERRING GULL** (*Larus argentatus*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Hudson River and larger lakes



Permanent Resident, does not breed

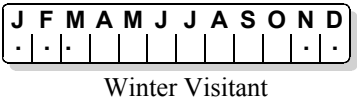
Status since 1990: Herring Gulls are seen throughout the year in Dutchess County; however, summer residents do not breed. Usually small groups of up to ten may be found along the Hudson River. Occasionally larger groups to 25 are seen on inland lakes, such as Sylvan Lake. Recent censuses show slightly smaller counts in summer than in winter. Often a few Herring Gulls are seen mixed in flocks of Ring-billed Gulls around mall parking lots. Very large flocks are uncommon. However, 1500 were reported on Feb. 22, 1991, off Rhinecliff by Alice Jones. They are less frequently found in eastern Dutchess County.

Historical Notes: Before the earliest records, Herring Gulls were winter residents. Stearns called them abundant. They arrived in September and remained as long as the Hudson River was open. When the river froze, they moved farther south, only to return as soon as it opened, leaving again by May. June and August records occur but are infrequent. July records are practically nonexistent before the 1970s. Garbage dumps invariably attracted many Herring Gulls, usually flocks of over 100. However, by 1982 most dumps were closed, and large flocks have all but disappeared with their closure. Where once Herring Gulls were the most common Dutchess County gull, now Ring-billed Gulls are the most populous. The maximum Christmas Count is 217 in 1983; the maximum May Census count is 150 in 1968.

———— **ICELAND GULL** (*Larus glaucooides*) ————

Normal Dates: February and March

Usual Locale: Hudson River, occasionally inland lakes



Status: Iceland Gulls normally winter farther north along the coast. However, first and second year (immature) birds often wander farther south. Many of the Dutchess County sightings had other gulls nearby for size comparison generally Herring Gulls. Found twice in the 1980s, one on Jan. 7, 1983, at the Van Wagner Rd. dump, Poughkeepsie, and one adult on March 7, 1988, flying up the Hudson River at Esopus. A recent sighting is one first-year bird Jan. 17, 2012 on the Hudson River near the Beacon RR Station, found by Curt McDermott and photographed⁺.

Historical Notes: The first records of Iceland Gulls in Dutchess County are one on April 18, 1926, by Crosby and Griscom, and one on May 3, 1930, by Crosby, both at Vandenburg Cove. These sightings were regarded as possible Kumlien’s Gulls, at one time a separate species, now considered a subspecies of Iceland Gull. There were also four sightings in the 1960s and two in the 1970s, most by multiple people. No subspecies determination is made for the more recent sightings.

Comment: On Jan. 14, 2021 a brown first year gull was photographed⁺ from the Beacon Riverfront Park by both Tony Macchiarola and Barbara Thomascall. This gull appears to be a Thayer’s Gull, a subspecies of the Iceland Gull and once a separate species. It breeds in arctic Canada but in winter is found around Lake Erie and in western New York. Not normally found inland it has been submitted to NYSARC.

——— **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL** (*Larus fuscus*) ———

Normal Dates: November to February

Usual Locale: Hudson River

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
..

Winter Visitant

Status: Lesser Black-backed Gulls are native to northern Europe, expanding to Iceland in the 1920s and to Greenland in the 1990s. Since 1954, they have been seen regularly on Long Island and have expanded southward beyond Florida. While nesting has been suspected, there are no known North American nest sites beyond southwest Greenland. They have been found in all months in New York State, particularly during fall and winter. Summer sightings are increasing (Levine).

The first Lesser Black-backed Gull in Dutchess County was one from about June 26 to July 1, 2002, at Chelsea Yacht Club, found by Dot Fleury and seen by six others. However photographs were not conclusive. The next sighting was one on Feb. 26, 2006, on the Hudson River at Hyde Park, by Chet Vincent. More sightings were in 2007, 2009, 2011 and most years since, usually one for only a day. One adult was reported Jan. 16 to Feb. 1, 2012 on the Hudson River near the Beacon Railroad Station by Curt McDermott, photographed⁺, and seen by many others.

——— **Slaty-backed Gull** (*Larus schistisagus*) ———

Accidental Vagrant

Only Date:

One on Jan. 21, 2012 on the Hudson River near the Beacon Railroad Station by Curt McDermott and Clara Montenegro. Photographed⁺.

Status: The Slaty-backed Gull is normally found in Eastern Asia, particularly Japan, but in recent years has been found far out of range usually in winter. The first record east of the Mississippi was in November 1992 near Niagara Falls. Since then it has been seen twice in Sullivan County, in 2002 and 2007.

This Dutchess sighting was observed for approximately 30 minutes around 4:30PM in a flock of over 500 gulls which roosted on river ice late each afternoon. It was accepted by NYSARC.

——— **GLAUCOUS GULL** (*Larus hyperboreus*) ———

Normal Dates: mid-December into March

Usual Locale: Hudson River

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
..	.	.									.

Winter Visitant

Status: The Glaucous Gull is very similar to the Iceland Gull, differing mainly in size, and may be easily misidentified. First and second year (immature) birds are often seen near the southern end of their wintering range.

The first Glaucous Gull seen in Dutchess County was found on March 23, 1963 south of Beacon by Jan Reese on a Waterman Bird Club field trip, it was seen by eight others. By far the latest spring sighting was May 10, 1969 at Rhinecliff, found by Eleanor Pink also on a Waterman field trip. Sightings have since been reported about once per decade. All sightings have been of a single individual, sometimes a pure white immature. One was photographed⁺ Jan. 17, 2012 at Beacon.

———— **GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL** (*Larus marinus*) ————

Normal Dates: November to March, but
present all year

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D

Usual Locale: Hudson River

Permanent Resident, does not breed

Status since 1990: Anyone watching long enough from almost any point along the Hudson River will see one or two Great Black-backed Gulls pass by. During the winter months, December to early March, they are more readily seen, occasionally in flocks of ten and rarely up to 25. There are far less frequent sightings during spring and summer, late March to October, but a few may be found. The Great Black-backed is seldom seen far from the river, except for a few found at Sylvan Lake during the winter.

Historical Notes: Great Black-backed Gulls expanded their breeding range southward, first nesting on eastern Long Island in 1942 and on western Long Island in 1960 (Bull). The first Great Black-backed Gull seen in Dutchess County was found by George Decker, Helen Manson, and Otis Waterman on Dec. 27, 1958, over the Hudson River from Barnagat Rd., Poughkeepsie. Next, five were seen from January to April 1959 at the Beacon dump. They have been regularly recorded every year since. They were first reported during May in 1963, and on most May Censuses since 1965, with a maximum count of 42 in 1980. The largest flock is 100 on Jan. 31, 1988, at Rhinecliff. One was reported from the Amenia dump in April 1983 and 1984.

———— **SOOTY TERN** (*Onychoprion fuscatus*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Dates:

Up to six adults and two immatures on Sept. 7-9, 1979, at New Hamburg, found by James and Mary Key, seen by at least eight others, and photographed. Two adults on Sept. 7 at Vandenburg Cove by Forrest and Aline Romero.

One adult on Aug. 4, 2020 found injured in her backyard at Clinton Corners by Cathy Brady. Picked up and taken the next day to Sharon Audubon where it died. Photographs⁺ taken.

Status: Sooty Terns are found throughout the West Indies. When seen in the northeast, it is usually the result of a recent hurricane. The 1979 sightings were associated with Hurricane David, which hit the area on Sept. 6, 1979. Approximately 20 Sooty Terns were seen along the Hudson River as far north as Albany, while nearly 100 were reported from various points on Long Island. The 2020 sighting was associated with Hurricane Isaias. Others were reported along the southern New England coast with a few inland.

Comment: Reports of these sightings were accepted by NYSARC.

———— **CASPIAN TERN** (*Hydroprogne caspia*) ————

Normal Dates: April 14 - May 15

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D

Usual Locale: Along Hudson River

Transient

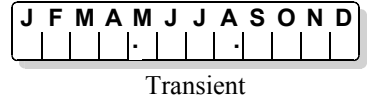
Status: Since 2011 Caspian Terns have been regularly recorded in the spring passing north along the Hudson River, more often from the west side. They apparently declined in the Northeast during the late nineteenth century and have slowly increased in New

York State from about 1915, especially since 1970. The closest Caspian Tern nesting area is around the Great Lakes, a population which has been expanding to the east with the first nesting in New York State in 1986. They are regularly seen particularly in fall along the Atlantic coast but less frequently inland, possibly from the Maritimes and St. Lawrence populations which are also increasing.

———— **BLACK TERN** (*Chlidonias niger*) ————

Normal Dates: May 5 - 20

Usual Locale: Small ponds in northeast portion of county



Status: Black Terns are very infrequently reported in Dutchess County. They were reported 15 times in the 1960s, six in the 1970s, and once in the 1980s. The last recorded sighting was three on May 4, 1983, flying north at Tivoli North Bay by Erik Kiviat; then one was photographed⁺ on May 15, 2014 at Pine Plains. Most sightings have been of one or two birds in early to mid-May. There is a record of one in late June and two records for September. The majority of sightings are from ponds in the northeast portion of the county. Two August 2021 sightings over the Hudson were both photographed.

Historical Notes: Black Terns migrate through the Mississippi valley and nest primarily west of the Great Lakes. A few nest in upstate New York and east to New Brunswick. In fall, some wander eastward and migrate south along the Atlantic coast. Dutchess County is not on their flyway. Since 1967, the breeding population in the Northeast has declined significantly, with fall migration numbers correspondingly reduced (Levine). The decline is attributed to wetland habitat changes, pesticides, and human disturbance.

The first recorded sighting in Dutchess County was of one on May 14, 1914, at the mill pond in Rhinebeck. Maunsell Crosby watched an adult in full breeding plumage for some time, fascinated by its erratic hither and thither flight. That was the first spring record for the greater New York City region. They were recorded four times in the 1920s, once in the 1930s, twice in the 1940s, and once in the 1950s. The most reported is 15 on May 16, 1967, near Salt Point.

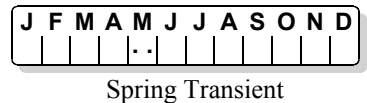
———— **ROSEATE TERN** ————

(See Miscellaneous Reports, page 248.)

———— **COMMON TERN** (*Sterna hirundo*) ————

Normal Dates: May 10 - 19

Usual Locale: Hudson River



Status: Common Terns are not at all common in Dutchess County. There were six sightings in the 1960s, four in the 1970s, three in the 1980s, and two in the 1990s. The following comments apply to records since 1960. Nearly all sightings are in May, for one day, and of one to four birds. There are three fall records: one on Sept. 22, 1983, four on Oct. 20, 1979, and two on Nov. 5, 1989. Nearly all sightings have been over the Hudson River, except for one on May 16, 1967, at Briarcliff Farms and one on Sept. 22, 1983, at a pond in Salt Point. One was photographed⁺ on May 5, 2016 at Stanfordville.

Historical Notes: Common Terns nest along the Atlantic coast, breeding in May, as well as inland near the Great Lakes, breeding in late April. Bull speculates that the inland population migrates through the Mississippi Valley. Like some other sea birds, by the end of the nineteenth century, there were fewer breeding colonies in the Northeast. While they made a comeback after 1920, since the 1970s, they have again been in decline due primarily to habitat changes and gull predation.

Kent recorded Common Terns in the 1870s, but only infrequently. Crosby and Griscom recorded Common Terns in both spring and fall, also infrequently. The earliest spring arrival date is March 20, 1949, at Poughkeepsie by Ralph Waterman. Allen Frost collected one in Clove Valley on May 17, 1929. All other sightings were from the Hudson River. The earliest fall arrival date is August 1, 1911.

Comment: While most sea birds, including terns, are not regularly found in Dutchess County, it is important to understand their perilous history. “Thanks to the movement for the protection of our birds, Terns, which fifteen years ago [1896] seemed to be doomed to extinction, are now increasing, and there is reason to hope that our shores may again be enlivened by these beautiful, graceful creatures.” (Chapman, 1912 edition)

“Dull indeed and insensible is he who does not appreciate the graceful beauty of these swallows of the sea, as they stream down our coasts or hover over our beaches. ... Few of our local birds have suffered more from persecution, and twenty years ago [1903] they were on the verge of extinction.” (Griscom, 1923)

———— **FORSTER’S TERN** (*Sterna forsteri*) ————

Casual Visitant

Only Dates:

- One on May 16, 1986, at Baird State Park pond, by Erik Kiviat. Photographed⁺.
- Seven in winter plumage from Oct. 26-28, 1987, at old Beacon Ferry Dock, found by Steve Stanne and seen by James and Mary Key and Barbara Michelin. Alice Jones saw them on Oct. 28 from Chelsea.
- One changing to winter plumage on Sept. 22, 2003, on the Hudson River off Dennings Point, by Barbara Butler, Dot Fleury, and Binnie Chase.
- One on May 26, 2008, by Tom Fiore, flying over Hudson River at Beacon.
- Two on Aug. 28, 2011, over the Hudson River near Beacon from Newburgh, by Ken McDermott. This was during the rain from Hurricane Irene.
- Six on May 4-5, 2016, over the Hudson River by Staatsburg area, first two found by Susan Joseph then seen by Barbara Mansell and Barbara Butler, photographed by Carena Pooth.

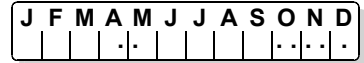
Status: Forster’s Terns are normally found along the Atlantic coast, generally south of New Jersey and west of the Great Lakes. They were mostly unknown in New York between the 1880s and 1925. Since then, they have been seen increasingly, at first mostly in the fall, now also in spring. They are occasionally seen on the lower Hudson River and have bred on Long Island since 1981, principally at Jamaica Bay.

ORDER — NORTHERN DIVERS

LOONS

RED-THROATED LOON (*Gavia stellata*)

Normal Dates: May 1 - 17 and
October 23 - December 14



Usual Locale: Along Hudson River and some inland ponds

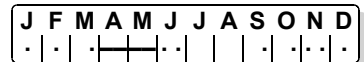
Transient

Status since 1990: The Red-throated Loon is most often found singly or in groups of two to four, and generally along the Hudson River. Spring sightings are concentrated in the first two weeks of May, whereas fall sightings are slightly more numerous and spread from late October through early December. The earliest fall arrival date is Oct. 2, 1991, on the Hudson River off Breakneck Point. The latest fall departure date is Dec. 29, 1980. The Red-throated Loon may be reported two or three years in a row and then not be seen for up to ten years. When seen they are nearly always in winter plumage, which may hinder identification. Two recent sightings, both photographed, were on Nov. 23, 1992, on a very small pond near Millerton by Dot Fleury; and on Nov. 18-25, 2003, on a farm pond in Millbrook by Alan Peterson. The Red-throated winters as close as Long Island Sound. They migrate through the Great Lakes.

Historical Notes: The Red-throated Loon is infrequently seen in Dutchess County with the exception of a noticeable peak between 1970-75, when sixteen sightings were reported. They were recorded as far back as Nov. 14, 1876, when one was collected at Low Point (Chelsea). Griscom adds two more sightings, including eight flying over the Hudson River at Barrytown on Oct. 19, 1924, the most ever recorded. The earliest spring arrival date is one on April 15, 1962, at Kay's Lower Pond, Pleasant Valley. On Dec. 29, 1980, one was found on the Pierson's Farm in Skidmore Valley, LaGrange in a frozen stream with bloody feet from trying to get off the ice. It was taken to New Hamburg and released on the river where it swam away.

COMMON LOON (*Gavia immer*)

Normal Dates: April 1 - May 22 and November 1 - 30



Usual Locale: Larger lakes in spring, Hudson River in fall and winter

Transient

Status since 1990: Each spring a few Common Loons are seen, generally singly, on the larger inland lakes, Sylvan Lake being a reliable location. The lucky few will hear their haunting call some evening during spring migration. The earliest spring arrival date is March 27, 1991, on the Hudson River and, coincidentally, the same date in 1992 at Sylvan Lake. The latest spring departure dates are June 13, 1978, on Hunns Lake and June 23, 1979, near Amenia. Fall sightings are much less frequent, with most occurring in November, though records exist beginning in September. By far the earliest is one first summer bird on the Hudson River near Tivoli on Aug. 9, 2014 and photographed by Susan Rogers. Still less frequent are birds found during the winter months, often along the Hudson and generally for only a day. These December through February records may

be for birds that lingered until their lakes froze. The Common Loon is sometimes found on the May Census, but rarely on the Christmas Count or January Waterfowl Count.

Historical Notes: Dutchess County Common Loon records exist regularly back to the 1870s (Stearns, Kent). Spring sightings have always out paced fall sightings. Winter sightings have been recorded only since 1990. No trend in abundance is discernible given the small numbers.

ORDER — TUBE-NOSED SEABIRDS

STORM-PETRELS

———— LEACH’S STORM-PETREL ————
(See Miscellaneous Reports, page 248.)

PETRELS

———— MANX SHEARWATER (*Puffinus puffinus*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Date:

One on Aug. 7, 2013, on Hudson River near Chelsea, by Walter Joseph, photographed⁺.

Status: Manx Shearwaters are normally found in the North Atlantic well off the coast of New England and east to Europe during all months. This is the first inland record for New York. It was accepted by NYSARC.

ORDER — FULL-WEB FOOTED SEABIRDS

BOOBIES

———— NORTHERN GANNET (*Morus bassanus*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Dates:

- One immature on Oct. 7, 1964, flying south over Hudson River off Cruger Island, by James and Mary Key.
- One immature on Oct. 27-28, 1986, on Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery pond. Had an injured wing, captured by Jon Fells in woods at the cemetery and turned over to NYSDEC. Apparently released in New Jersey. Photographed⁺ by James Key.
- One immature on Nov. 16, 2021, flying south over the Hudson River about 8AM from Long Dock Park, Beacon by Kyle Bardwell and Debbie van Zyl, photographed. Also reported and photographed about 9:30AM from northern Manhattan.

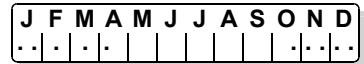
Status: Northern Gannets breed in Newfoundland and adjacent areas. Immatures migrate south by October and are generally found far offshore from Long Island. When found inland, which is rare, it is often an immature.

CORMORANTS

——— GREAT CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) ———

Normal Dates: November 16 - March 30

Usual Locale: Hudson River



Winter Visitant

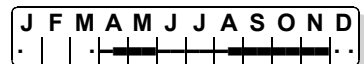
Status since 1990: In Dutchess County, the Great Cormorant is seen along the Hudson River during migration or as a wandering winter visitant. With the increase of wintering birds along the Atlantic coast, they are most often seen along the lower Hudson River below Dutchess County. Sightings were reported in 1992 and 1993 but the winter of 2006-07 reported one or two most months (photographed*). The largest group being nine on Jan. 12, 2007 at Bannerman's Island by Berna Lincoln They will likely continue to be seen at infrequent intervals, though they remain rare inland everywhere along their range.

Historical Notes: The Great Cormorant may have been plentiful along the coast in the 1800s but decreased drastically. In the 1930s, wintering coastal populations began to slowly increase. They favor rocky shores and, with reduced threats from man, are often found on bridges, jetties, and buoys. Since the 1960s, they have expanded their breeding range into New England and their wintering range into Florida. The first Dutchess County record was one immature on May 11, 1966, perched on a buoy, observed from Cruger Island, by Alice Jones, Czecher Terhune and four others. One adult was seen from Oct. 19, 1969 at Cornwall Bay, shot by hunters on Nov. 2, it was seized by conservation officers and is preserved in the State Museum at Albany. It was the first inland record confirmed via a photograph or specimen for New York State.

——— DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT (*Nannopterum auritum*) ———

Normal Dates: April 9 - November 30

Usual Locale: Hudson River



Visitant

Status since 1990: The Hudson River is a migration corridor for those Double-crested Cormorants that breed on eastern Lake Ontario and Lake Champlain. They normally arrive early in April, with the earliest spring arrival date March 26, 2003. The migration peaks during May. Spring birds are occasionally seen on inland lakes, particularly at Tamarack Swamp, while summer birds are more often seen on the Hudson River. The number that stay over the summer increased during the 1990s. The closest breeding areas are on a navigation light tower in the Hudson River just north of Dutchess County, new in 2001, and by Putnam Lake south of Pawling, new in 2005. In fall, the migration south is underway by August 20, and continues through the end of November. There are a scattering of December and January records but none in February. Most sightings are of one to four individuals, occasionally a few more.

Historical Notes: During the colonial period, Double-crested Cormorants were abundant nesters in northeastern US coastal areas but retreated with the advance of human population (NYBBA). Sightings were rare until the 1920s when they slowly began a rebound. They again nested on the Massachusetts coast in 1937, on eastern Lake Ontario in 1945, and are now expanding on western Long Island and the Hudson River. They

were also impacted by pesticides after World War II but have fully recovered. Some people now consider them a nuisance due to their numbers and life style.

Edgar Mearns noted one Double-crested Cormorant taken at Cornwall on Oct. 10, 1883, and “others seen on the Upper Hudson, Nov. 4, 1889.” The first sighting in Dutchess County was one on Sept. 30, 1923, at Cruger Island by Crosby and Carter. Griscom listed just four more records, all in October, from 1923-27 for one or two individuals. The first spring record is May 12, 1960, at Cruger Island. The first Double-crested Cormorant found on the May Census was in 1965, with intermittent records into the 1990s and a peak of 63 in 1996.

ORDER — WADING BIRDS AND ALLIES

PELICANS

———— AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Dates:

- One on May 11-12, 1994, along Hudson River near Rhinecliff. On May 11, Rosa Corbeels and Jean Murphy saw it high overhead from Ferncliff Forest Preserve in Rhinebeck. That evening Richard Popp, a NYSDEC biologist, saw it at the mouth of Rondout Creek. The next day, May 12, Chuck Nieder and several others from the Bard College Field Station saw it fly 40 feet directly overhead at Tivoli South Bay. It is presumed these three sightings were of the same bird.
- One on July 8-10, 2009, along Hudson River between Kingston Point and Rhinecliff. Found by Jack Haber, photographed by Peter Schoenberger, seen by Rodney Johnson, Liz Martens, Susan Joseph, and others.
- One on Jan. 5, 2011 flying over Chelsea by Rodney Johnson. Possibly same bird reported Jan. 6 at Floyd Bennett Field, Brooklyn.
- One on June 9, 2013 on the Hudson River near the Poughkeepsie Yacht Club, Staatsburg by many members, photographed[†] by Alison Merritt-Kaase. This or perhaps another was reported at various points along the river outside of Dutchess County both before and after this date.
- One on May 2, 2019 on the Hudson River on a channel marker in at the mouth of Rondout Creek. Seen from the Rhinecliff dock by Susan Joseph. Found by Mark Dedea and photographed on the west side.

Status: A portion of the White Pelican population winters along the Gulf Coast and nests west of Ontario province. While they do not normally migrate through the northeastern US, there are some spring records. They tend to wander in the late summer and fall, and more northeastern US records exist for that period. One was photographed from Rondout Creek, Kingston, on July 14, 2005.

Historical Notes: According to DeKay, White Pelicans were “formerly numerous on the Hudson River.” To whatever degree they migrated through the Hudson Valley in colonial days, they were apparently gone by the mid-1700s if not earlier. The few Northeast records from the nineteenth century are always of vagrants.

——— **BROWN PELICAN** ———
(See Miscellaneous Reports, page 248.)

HERONS

——— **AMERICAN BITTERN** (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) ———

Normal Dates: April 18 - May 16 and
August 25 - November 13

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
			+	+	•	•	•	•	•	•	

Usual Locale: Marshes in northern Dutchess County

Transient, Formerly Bred

Status since 1990: The American Bittern is an uncommon, secretive bird and easy to miss. Sightings are nearly always of single birds and generally early or late in the day. The American Bittern is most often found in April and May; their “pumping” call, often heard at dusk, allows detection. The earliest spring arrival date is March 24, 1961, at Stissing Marsh, Stanford. While most continue to migrate farther north, some may stay to breed in secluded marshes, as a few are discovered during the summer months. By August they are seen a little more frequently and then for the most part are gone. Very infrequent sightings are reported until late November. The latest fall departure date is Dec. 4, 1973, at Tivoli North Bay. The bittern is most often found at Thompson Pond and Tivoli Bay, and is generally found in one or both locations during the May Census.

Historical Notes: The American Bittern was definitely more common from the 1880s to the 1980s. They have decreased significantly over the past 50 years, most dramatically since 1980. Even during spring migration, sometimes only one bird is reported, and that is with more people looking, though admittedly not always at the optimal time of day. The last *confirmed* breeding in Dutchess County was July 1963 at Strauss Marsh, Amenia.

——— **LEAST BITTERN** (*Ixobrychus exilis*) ———

Normal Dates: May 4 - 20 although present into
August

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
				•	•	•	•				

Usual Locale: Tivoli North Bay and Thompson
Pond

Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: As it is one of the more difficult birds to find, describing the Least Bittern’s status is formidable. The earliest spring arrival date is April 26, 1974, by Erik Kiviat at Tivoli North Bay. The latest departure date is a juvenile on Aug. 31, 1977, by Tom Storey in a small stream at East Fishkill. They are most often found during May, very few summer records and no fall records exist. Thompson Pond and Tivoli North Bay are the most reliable locations to look for this small heron that prefers cattail marshes. Erik Kiviat sees them regularly during June and July at Tivoli North Bay foraging along the creek and pool margins during low tide. The Least Bittern is usually found on the May Census, probably due to looking at dawn, but they were still missed on half of the censuses during the 1990s. One was photographed* on May 5, 2015 along the Harlem Valley Rail Trail.

According to Bull, the Least Bittern is rarely reported during migration. Given that they migrate at night and are reclusive, this is understandable. It is possible May sightings represent resident birds on breeding territory. The first egg date for New York State is mid-May. Apparently they continue to nest in Dutchess County. On July 30, 2000, John Balint closely approached one at Tivoli North Bay while kayaking. Fall migration starts by late August.

Historical Notes: The Least Bittern has always been recorded as rare and local. The first May Census record was in 1931, and sightings occurred almost every year through 1948. Since then they have been missed some years. They were regularly recorded from Brickyard Swamp, now 44 Plaza. Franklin Roosevelt reported the first documented nesting at Hyde Park in 1906.

Comment: Griscom put it best, “This secretive little heron requires special search and study. Breeding pairs or colonies are best located by visits to likely places at dawn or dusk in late May and June to listen for the cooing notes. Unless such efforts are made, the Least Bittern is found only by happy accident at long intervals. ... The bird deserves more careful study.” (Ludlow Griscom, *Birds of Dutchess County*, 1933). This applies as much today as it did in 1933.

———— **GREAT BLUE HERON** (*Ardea herodias*) ————

Normal Dates: February 27 - November 28, some winter



Usual Locale: Shores of all water, often seen flying

Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Non-birders tend to associate the Great Blue Heron with Florida, mostly seen on trips south. However, the Great Blue is found in Dutchess County throughout the year, except possibly during the harshest of winters when snow is deep and all water is frozen. In most winters, a few creeks remain open where the Great Blue can be found hunkered down nearby. In January 1994, one was found on Wappinger Creek in Pleasant Valley with its feet frozen to the ice. It was freed and recovered.

As with most herons, the Great Blue nests in colonies called heronries, comprised of large stick nests in clusters of trees, often in swampy areas. Numerous heronries are located in the county; however, they are occasionally abandoned and new ones started. Recent locations include near Baird Park, West Pawling, Pine Plains, and Red Hook. Great Blues return to previous heronries in February and March. They lay eggs in April, with young active by June. As the need to feed young increases, adults are seen hunting day and night throughout the county. Forbush says they often travel twenty miles from the nest for food. By August, the immatures are wandering, some going farther north, a few starting to fly south. Migration continues until early December. Hardy ones stay through winter. Those that leave return by late February and early March.

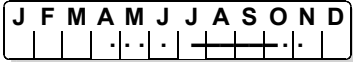
Historical Notes: Great Blue Herons were common nesters throughout the Northeast during colonial times, before swamps were drained, trees cut, and their plumes became fashionable. Mary Hyatt saw one on April 25, 1891, near Stanfordville, an early spring record. Eaton records a heronry in Amenia that was abandoned before 1900. In the 1910s, they were common in August and September, when up to 20 immatures could be seen feeding along the Hudson River banks (Crosby). In 1921 Crosby considered them common spring and fall transients and suspected they might breed locally, but by 1933,

Griscom was unaware of any heronry. Winter sightings include Jan. 8, 1894, at Hyde Park by Arthur Bloomfield and Jan. 30 - Feb. 14, 1922, near Vassar College by Frost.

Summer as well as winter sightings grew year after year. In 1960, the first twentieth century heronry in Dutchess County was found at Tamarack Swamp. Two nests produced four young. This heronry remained active through 1976, by which time other heronries had developed. Nesting in Connecticut resumed in 1975. By 1989, Great Blue Herons were observed through the entire winter in increasing numbers, making spring arrival dates difficult to discern. Fewer large concentrations are now observed in the fall. The May Census began recording Great Blues regularly in 1929 and continuously since 1960. The highest count was 84 individuals in 1989. Christmas Counts have recorded Great Blue Herons continuously since 1985, with a high of 26 in 1999.

———— **GREAT EGRET** (*Ardea alba*) ————

Normal Dates: April 20 - May 24 and July 14 -
October 18



Usual Locale: Anywhere near water, usually smaller
ponds and creeks

Visitant

Status since 1990: The Great Egret breeds south of Dutchess County along the Atlantic coast from late May to late July. A few tend to wander before nesting and many after. Some are invariably seen each spring. The earliest spring arrival date is the last week of March 1991 at Wappinger Lake. From April 20 to May 24, one or two have been sighted, often inland, most years since 1967. There are a few June records, but by July 14, post-breeding birds have begun wandering north. Four to six are sometimes seen together in any part of the county near water. By the end of September, they are leaving, with sightings continuing until mid-October. The latest fall departure date is November 7, 2001, when Chet Vincent and Barbara Michelin sighted one on Wappinger Lake.

Historical Notes: A victim of shooting for millinery fashions, the Great Egret declined drastically in numbers during the late 1800s. While they apparently never bred as far north as Dutchess County, they were likely summer visitants during the colonial period. The first documented occurrence in the county was Aug. 4, 1918, at Jackson Pond by Allen Frost. The next record is from July 15, 1925, when several birds remained into August near Poughkeepsie and were photographed⁺. At about that time they began to increase along the coast, having received legal protection in 1913. In late summer 1948, well over one thousand were reported across New England. On Sept. 12, 1948, 240 were reported along the Hudson River from Rhinecliff to Albany (Bull). On Aug. 2, 1960, fifty were reported at Tamarack Swamp. Prior to 1983 it was unusual to see egrets past mid-September. They first bred in New York in 1953.

Comment: The following quote shows how close the Great Egret was to extinction in Florida, "Tourists who went to Florida prior to 1880 have told me of prairies white with Egrets, of bushy islands glistening in the sun like snow banks. Now you may look for miles along a lake shore and perhaps in the distance see a solitary Egret ..." (Chapman, 1912 edition).

———— SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*) ————

Normal Dates: July 29 - August 30

Usual Locale: Small ponds and creeks

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
							

Visitant

Status: Since the 1960s, the Snowy Egret has been recorded approximately five times per decade with sightings in early May, late July, and August. September and October records exist but are few. Normally single birds are seen, although up to four were seen off and on during August 1986 at Tamarack Swamp. A Snowy Egret can be confused with an immature Little Blue Heron, which retains white plumage for the first year and is occasionally seen in Dutchess County.

Historical Notes: The Snowy Egret is yet another heron to have suffered over-hunting for the millinery trade. By 1910 they were nearly extinct. During the colonial period, they probably wandered as far north as Dutchess County. The first modern sighting occurred on Aug. 2, 1929, when Allen Frost observed two Snowy Egrets on Sprout Creek, Fishkill Plains, and documented the observation in *Auk* (1930). The next sighting was of one on Sept. 30, 1962, on the Ten Mile River at Dover Plains by James and Mary Key. The earliest spring arrival was April 13, 1964, at Cruger Island; the latest fall departure was Oct. 21, 1999, on Wappinger Creek. The Snowy Egret first nested on Long Island in 1949 and in Connecticut in 1961.

Comment: The following quote highlights the low point in the persecution of herons, “The ‘curse of beauty’ has numbered the days of this the most dainty and graceful of Herons. Formerly it was abundant in the South, now it is the rarest of its family. The delicate ‘aigrettes’ which it donned as a nuptial dress were its death warrant. Women demanded from the bird its wedding plumes, and man has supplied the demand. The Florida Egrets are near the verge of extermination...” (Chapman, 1912 edition).

———— LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*) ————

Normal Dates: April 24 - May 24 and July 25 - August 23

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
					

Visitant

Usual Locale: Small ponds and swamps

Status: Little Blue Herons wander north of their breeding areas on Long Island in late April and early May, then disappear only to return in late July and August. Though rarely, some have been seen as late as October. Blue adults are usually seen singly, while white immatures may be in small flocks, often around the smaller ponds or along creeks. There are records of sightings along the shores of the Hudson River but none recent. The immature retains white plumage for the first year and must be checked to ensure they are not Snowy Egrets.

Historical Notes: Spared the slaughter of other herons because they do not grow long plumes, the Little Blue Heron was first recorded in Dutchess County on July 21, 1929, when two birds were seen on the Grasmere Mill Pond in Rhinebeck by Helen Crosby.¹ On Aug. 14, 1929, Allen Frost found 48 around the county, all immature; and on Aug. 29, 1929, a flock estimated at more than 60 birds was seen near Fishkill Plains (*Auk*, 1930). The next year on June 21, 1930, 14 Little Blues were observed at Tivoli. John Baker also saw 12 on Aug. 27, 1933. Flocks of this size have not been seen since. Baker

saw Little Blues again in August 1937 and 1956. Four sightings were reported in the 1960s, eight in the 1970s, thirteen in the 1980s, but only three in the 1990s. They have bred in very limited numbers on Long Island since 1958, and on the Connecticut coast since 1971. The earliest spring arrival date is April 7, 2001; the latest fall departure date is Oct. 11, 1983.

[1] Helen Elizabeth Crosby McCabe Glendening (1911-1995), daughter of Maunsell Crosby.

———— **TRICOLORED HERON** (*Egretta tricolor*) ————

Casual Visitor

Only Dates:

- One on April 13, 1978, at Tivoli North Bay, by Bob Smart.
- One adult on April 14, 1994, at Tivoli North Bay, by Mark DeDea and on April 17 by Al Brayton.
- One adult on April 21-22, 2019, at along Cruger Island causeway, by Liz Martins, Susan Rogers, and Barbara Mansell, also seen by others. Many photographs⁺.

Status: The Tricolored Heron, like other herons, wanders before and after nesting. They breed on Long Island in very limited numbers.

Historical Notes: Tricolored Herons did not suffer from over-hunting as the color of their feathers was not popular. Apparently they did not breed in the Northeast in colonial times, although they have recently expanded north from North Carolina. The Tricolored first nested in New Jersey in 1948, on Long Island in 1955, and in Connecticut in 1976, always along the coast. In the East, they are very infrequently observed inland.

Comment: The 1978 report was not accepted by NYSARC. The 1994 and 2019 reports were accepted.

———— **CATTLE EGRET** (*Bubulcus ibis*) ————

Normal Dates: April 13 - May 21 and
September 2 - November 7

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
				•	•			•	•	•	•

Usual Locale: Pastures and roadsides

Visitor

Status since 1990: Cattle Egrets are found every few years, normally in farm pastures, with or without cattle, and along roadsides where they forage for insects and small amphibians. Like other herons, they wander considerably. They are continually on the move and seldom seen in the same place for more than a day. Their nearest breeding location is Long Island. Cattle Egrets are seen both alone and in flocks of ten or more. Twenty were seen May 21, 1995, at Dickson Farm in Verbank by Helen Manson and Barbara Butler.

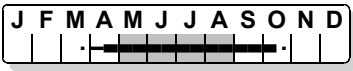
Historical Notes: Of the many birds that have extended their range during the recent past, the Cattle Egret has traveled the farthest. Originally native to Africa, by the 1880s they invaded northern South America on grasslands created by cutting forests. They expanded to Florida by 1942, to New York State in 1954, and bred on Long Island in 1970. The first Dutchess County sighting was June 11, 1957 of a single second year non-breeding individual on the Walter Vogel farm in Rhinebeck by Paul Buckley. The next report was April 20 to May 2, 1960, at Pine Plains, found by Lois Palmatier and Vivian Parkhurst and seen by many. The earliest spring arrival date is April 13, 2001,

while the latest fall departure date is Dec. 1, 1970. Although they have been seen in all months from April to December, they have only been seen once in July (1974). On May 2, 1977 fourteen were found on Titusville Rd., Poughkeepsie and photographed⁺.

———— **GREEN HERON** (*Butorides virescens*) ————

Normal Dates: April 23 - October 15

Usual Locale: Swamp areas



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: A small heron, Green Herons are usually seen hunting alone in late April, though they have been seen in March. By May, they are readily found in marsh and pond edges where they are a common breeder. Though their nests are not often located, the birds themselves are seen fishing throughout the summer. In September, one is more likely to observe multiple Green Herons together, possibly family groups or flocks preparing to migrate. By mid-October they have begun migrating to Central America or the West Indies. While some have wintered in the north, there are no Dutchess County records of wintering birds. The latest fall departure date is Nov. 28, 2019, off Reagan Rd., Millerton by Chet Vincent.

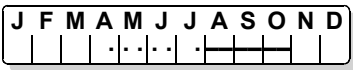
Normally Green Herons nest individually but very infrequently they will be found in colonies. In 2019 a colony of at least five or six pairs nested on a very small island within Dutchess Park Lake, Fishkill, reported by Laura Facchin and photographed⁺. They had been seen in 2017 and may well have been there earlier. They returned in 2020 and 2021.

Historical Notes: As far back as the 1880s, the Green Heron was of common abundance and bred in Dutchess County.

———— **BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) ————

Normal Dates: August 18 - October 27

Usual Locale: Hudson River, south of Poughkeepsie



Transient, Formerly Bred

Status since 1990: Black-crowned Night-Herons are usually seen between August and October, although they are infrequently found as early as mid-April. In fall they are normally found near the Hudson River below Poughkeepsie. In spring they are sometimes found on inland water as well. Night-Herons are nighttime hunters and are often found roosting during the day. It is not unusual to see up to nine birds roosting in one area. Once fledged, young Night-Herons are often seen in the summer as they scatter up to one hundred miles in all directions from their breeding colony. Nesting colonies exist both north and south of Dutchess County. Juvenile plumage evolves over the first year, making it difficult to distinguish newly fledged young from one-year-old birds.

Historical Notes: Edgar Mearns recorded a heronry at Low Point (Chelsea) in the 1870s. In 1921 Crosby called the Black-crowned Night-Heron fairly common but of irregular occurrence, although they bred in Dutchess County. Griscom called them uncommon and a very local summer resident, breeding at Brickyard Swamp and “several places near the city [Poughkeepsie] and southeast of it.” Helen Manson found two or three nests at Hillside Lake, East Fishkill, in July 1949 and again in 1950. These nests were not present in 1948. This is the last confirmed breeding in Dutchess County. The Black-crowned

Night-Heron was found on most May Censuses through 1953, but very sporadically since then. The latest fall departure date is Dec. 18, 1993, from Kays Pond. The only winter record is one on Feb. 28, 1988, at Beacon Park. Habitat change has undoubtedly been the major cause of breeding decline.

——— **YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** (*Nyctanassa violacea*) ———

Normal Dates: April 24 - June 26 and
August 21 - October 14

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
				•	•			•	•		

Usual Locale: Roosting near water

Visitant

Status: Yellow-crowned Night-Herons breed on Long Island in relatively small numbers from May through June. Long Island is near the northern edge of their range, but like other herons, they wander. They feed primarily at night but occasionally are seen feeding during the day. For the first year, immature birds retain a distinctive plumage that is very similar to the Black-crowned Night-Heron. Recent sightings are one on Oct. 1, 2018 at Beacon, and one photographed on April 11, 2021 at Tivoli Bay. One was also photographed⁺ in May 1992 in Poughkeepsie.

Historical Notes: The Yellow-crowned Night-Heron has increased in abundance in the Northeast since the 1930s. They first bred on Long Island in 1938 and on the Connecticut shore in 1953. The first Dutchess County record is one adult on June 26-30, 1967, at Stissing Rd., Stanfordville, by Donna Haight and many others. There are eleven county records, all of one bird: two in 1960s, two in 1970s, two in 1980s, three in 1990s, and two in 2000s.

IBISES

——— **WHITE IBIS** (*Eudocimus albus*) ———

Accidental Vagrant

Only Date:

Five juveniles seen July 15-28, 2017 then two on July 29 and one on Aug. 1 in Salt Point on land closed to the public, photographed⁺ by the owner and Adrienne Popko. Five were also seen in Orange County July 13-17 at an evening roost and then two on Cape Cod from July 28, all juveniles, unknown if the same individuals.

Status: Like other herons, White Ibis wander after breeding. While most White Ibis are found in Florida and into South America, they have very slowly expanded to the north, to South Carolina in 1922, North Carolina in 1950, and Virginia in 1977. New York is about as far north as they regularly wander with most sightings being juveniles along the coast. While it is normal to see Ibis in flocks, some in the hundreds, sightings in the Northeast are generally of one individual.

Comment: The report of this sighting was accepted by NYSARC.

———— **GLOSSY IBIS** (*Plegadis falcinellus*) ————

Normal Dates: Most often seen in May

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
					

Usual Locale: Marsh and swampy areas

Visitant

Status: The Glossy Ibis was first seen in Dutchess County on May 15, 1966, at Cruger Island by Eleanor Pink, Brad Whiting, and Marion Van Wagner. Since that time, they have been seen at approximately five-year intervals, with the most recent sighting and the earliest spring arrival date March 25, 2003, photographed⁺. They are normally seen in spring, generally May. The latest fall departure date is Aug. 24, 1975, at Karl Ehmer Farm, LaGrangeville. Reported sightings by month are: two in March, two in April, five in May, none in June, one in July, and two in August. While often seen in small flocks, all Dutchess County sightings have been of one or two birds. The closest nesting sites are on Long Island and coastal Connecticut.

Historical Notes: The Glossy Ibis has a complex history. Found in southern Europe and Africa, the Glossy Ibis, like the Cattle Egret, appears to have invaded westward across the Atlantic Ocean to the West Indies, perhaps as recently as the early 1800s (Bull). There are records of large flights of Glossy Ibis in New England in 1850 and 1878 associated with coastal storms (Forbush), and of upstate New York specimens from 1854 and 1907. They are not known to have bred north of Florida until the early 1940s. The ibis expanded north in the 1940s and 1950s, with the first breeding record for New York in 1961 at Jamaica Bay. They have continued to expand along the coast and now breed in Maine. Inland records remain uncommon.

———— **Roseate Spoonbill** (*Platalea ajaja*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

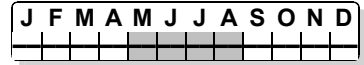
Only Date:

One juvenile seen July 18-28, 2021 on the Casperkill near South Rd., Poughkeepsie, found by Vin Bihn. Barbara and Allan Michelin verified and arranged access for others. Seen by many and photographed⁺. At least three or four other juveniles were also seen in New York and Pennsylvania.

Status: Roseate Spoonbills are found along the Gulf Coast and through South America. Nearly extirpated from the United States by 1920, they have slowly increased in number. Like herons, Spoonbills wander after breeding but rarely north of South Carolina. However since 2018 they have been found north of Virginia with most sightings being of one juvenile.

ORDER — NEW WORLD VULTURES

VULTURES

——— **BLACK VULTURE** (*Coragyps atratus*) ———**Normal Dates:** March 8 - November 15**Usual Locale:** Soaring over eastern and southern mountains and hills

Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Black Vultures steadily increased during the 1990s. The early 1990s sightings were often of one individual either amongst Turkey Vultures or alone. Since 1998, it is common to observe flock sizes of two to twelve, with up to 40 seen on July 31, 2003, at the Trevor Zoo, Millbrook School. They also established a roost at the Trevor Zoo in November 2004. Two were found on the 2001 Christmas Count. They have been seen irregularly in both January and February. The first Black Vulture nest in Dutchess County was found at Wassaic by Pat Redmond in June 2002.

Historical Notes: Prior to the 1990s, the Black Vulture was rarely found north of Maryland. Their range now extends to Maine where they are casual. The first Black Vulture reported in Dutchess County was one on May 2, 1960, near Pine Plains by Marion Van Wagner, Jean Beck, and James and Mary Key. The next sightings were April 1976, September 1983, and May 1991. They were reported yearly in the 1990s and from 2000 nearly monthly. They first nested in New York State at Mohonk in 1997.

——— **TURKEY VULTURE** (*Cathartes aura*) ———**Normal Dates:** March 1 - October 26**Usual Locale:** Soaring over eastern and southern mountains and hills

Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: One or two Turkey Vultures can usually be seen soaring over the mountains of southern Dutchess County during January. A few more are seen farther north in the eastern half of the county in February. By March it is not unusual to see up to fifty. While some pass through, many stay and some breed. Throughout the summer, Turkey Vultures can usually be seen floating high in the sky from nearly any point within the county. They may also be seen early in the morning at a communal roost in a dead tree or feeding on carrion. By November only a few can be found as most have migrated south. December sightings are the least common. A few appear to winter, as a roost of 53 birds was found on Dec. 18, 1977, at Quaker Hill, Pawling, by Mildred Hoffman. It was used again the winter of 1979-80.

Historical Notes: Forbush says that Turkey Vultures were more common in colonial times. He speculates that they were too easy a target and thus extirpated through shooting. The earliest documented records for Dutchess County are one on July 12, 1882, at Stanfordville by Mary Hyatt and another Sept. 12, 1899 apparently by LS Horton. Clinton Abbott reported one at Rhinebeck on May 7, 1917. They were considered accidental until the 1930s when they became annual visitants to Mt. Beacon. Griscom wondered if they nested there. They also wandered farther north within the county; John Baker reported them yearly from 1931 at Chestnut Ridge, Union Vale. The first Turkey

Vulture on the May Census was one in 1928. May sightings continued to be limited through the early 1960s, with only one found as late as 1961. By 2002, 151 were recorded on the May Census. Summer reports started in the late 1940s and continually increased.

The first breeding record for New York was in 1925 in Westchester County. There had been suspected breeding in eastern Dutchess County near Stissing Mountain, with immatures seen in July 1981. However, no nest was found until May 1992 when Carrie and Charles Gray discovered one at Cruger Island. Turkey Vultures have wintered most years since 1977 but are not regularly found on the Christmas Count because the southern portion of the county is outside of the count area. Bull speculates that the expansion of their range north was supported by increased small mammal road kills and more recently by an increase in winter deer carcasses.

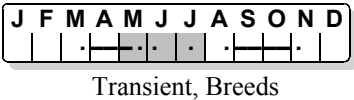
ORDER – DIURNAL RAPTORS

OSPREY

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*)

Normal Dates: April 5 - May 15 and
September 1 - October 31

Usual Locale: Primarily Hudson River in spring,
almost anywhere in fall



Status since 1990: Occasionally in the last days of March, but more often early in April, Ospreys are seen over the Hudson River. They are found by looking for a single bird overhead with the Osprey’s distinctive wing shape and pattern. During peak migration, an average of one or two per hour may be seen. Often one is seen flying with a fish in its talons or perched in a tree eating a fish. By mid-May they have migrated beyond Dutchess County. June and July reports occur about once per year, generally inland. Fall migration begins by the end of August and continues through October, with an occasional Osprey seen in early November. Unlike spring migration, the Osprey in fall is often seen inland. It is very unusual to see one in winter anywhere in the north, as their usual wintering area is the Caribbean to South America.

Ospreys were again found nesting in Dutchess County on a Hudson River navigation buoy south of Beacon on June 3, 2016. Photographed with two young on July 14 by Carena Pooth. A second nest also on a navigation buoy but off Cruger Island was photographed with young on June 25, 2018 by Susan Rogers.

Historical Notes: Ospreys have been regular transients since county records were kept in the 1880s. Mary Hyatt recorded one killed at Stanfordville in August 1900. Nesting was recorded in 1896 at Hyde Park by Franklin Roosevelt, and in 1923 at Tyrrel Lake, Pleasant Valley by Crosby and Frost. There is speculation that Ospreys nested overlooking Tivoli South Bay during the late 1950s. There was no confirmed record of recent breeding in Dutchess County until 2016, although birds had been reported intermittently in June and July since the early 1970s. The pesticide DDT effected nesting success dramatically, reaching a low point in the early 1970s. Ospreys have recently expanded their breeding area. November records occur first in 1990, and every two or

three years since. There are unconfirmed January records in 1960 and 1979. The earliest spring arrival date is March 5, 1970, at Cruger Island.

HAWKS

——— **WHITE-TAILED KITE** (*Elanus leucurus*) ———

Accidental Vagrant

Only Date:

One adult on April 26-27, 1983, on Shenandoah Rd., East Fishkill, found by Chuck Roda, seen by James and Mary Key, Vaughn Morrison, Ken McDermott and two others (*Kingbird*, 1983).

Status: Found on the Texas coast, and from California to South America, White-tailed Kites tend to wander in winter. They expanded to Florida in the 1960s and bred there in 1986. This East Fishkill sighting was the first, and so far only, record for New York State. There are subsequent records from Virginia and Massachusetts.

Comment: The report of this sighting was accepted by NYSARC.

——— **SWALLOW-TAILED KITE** ———

(See Miscellaneous Reports, page 249.)

——— **GOLDEN EAGLE** (*Aquila chrysaetos*) ———

Normal Dates: November 13 - March 14

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
..

Usual Locale: Stissing Mountain

Winter Visitant

Status since 1990: Golden Eagles became winter residents at Stissing Mountain, Pine Plains but since 2014 are generally found near a hunting preserve in Dover. They normally arrive in early November and stay until early or mid-March. Others are seen occasionally in migration as a single sighting from September to December, and even less frequently in April or May. They have been photographed[†].

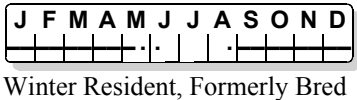
Historical Note: The first record of a Golden Eagle in Dutchess County was Rex Brasher recording his friend Ed Chase seeing one in the spring of 1930 attempt to catch a Black Duck on a pond in the mountains of eastern Dover. The next tentative sighting was April 9, 1960, over the Hudson River. Since then, excluding the winter residents at Stissing Mountain, Golden Eagles are reported less than once per year.

The first record from the Stissing Mountain / Thompson Pond / Briarcliff Farm area of Pine Plains was one immature found on December 21, 1969, by Rich Guthrie, and seen intermittently until April 4, 1970, by many people. The next sightings there were February 1972, and November 1973, then two were seen from December - January 1975, and November - March 1976. From January - March 1978, two were 20 miles south in Clove Valley. None were seen at Pine Plains from November 1983 until January 1990, when two were again sighted on Stissing Mountain. They have been seen each year since 1990. A few birders report seeing subadult birds, and rarely three or four (November -

December 2002). Levine attributes a nest built in a pine tree the winter of 1992-93 to pair bonding. This was repeated in 2005-06. There is no evidence the birds bred in the area.

———— **NORTHERN HARRIER** (*Circus hudsonius*) ————

Normal Dates: August 17 - May 9
Usual Locale: Fields in eastern Dutchess
County

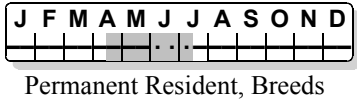


Status since 1990: The Northern Harrier is primarily a winter resident, arriving towards the end of August and staying until early May. They are often found gliding low over fields, generally in the eastern portion of the county. The Harrier is often seen alone or as a pair hunting the same general area. Eight or more may winter around the county. Summer sightings are very infrequent.

Historical Notes: Stearns called the Northern Harrier “rather common” in 1880. Eaton called them “fairly common,” arriving from the south March 25, remaining as a summer resident, and departing in November. Griscom noted that they occasionally wintered near Poughkeepsie, but not at Rhinebeck, which had no record from November 11 to March 15. He also noted that scattered pairs bred throughout the county. Nests are built on the ground, generally in or near marshes0. The last breeding record is a nest with five eggs photographed by George Decker on June 6, 1956, at Dover Plains. Harriers have always migrated through Dutchess County. Winter sightings have been reported periodically throughout the twentieth century, and each year since 1984.

———— **SHARP-SHINNED HAWK** (*Accipiter striatus*) ————

Normal Dates: August 7 - May 12
Usual Locale: Forested areas and near heavily
used bird feeders



Status since 1990: Sharp-shinned Hawks make their appearance by early August and increase with migration into October. Some continue south while others stay for the winter, frequenting backyard feeders. It is not difficult to find ten or more around the county; likely many more are present. While not really backyard feeder birds, they do take advantage of the birds attracted to feeders for their own meals. When not looking for feeder birds, they inhabit forested areas. During April they migrate north, however, a few stay and nest. Summer sightings are much less frequent, but a few are seen each month.

Historical Notes: Crosby noted the Sharpie as a common transient from March 24 to May 20 and September 10 to October 24. Griscom called them “very rare in winter” with Crosby noting one January 1921 record. Ralph Waterman noted December 1948, 1949 and February 1950, 1951 records. The winter population slowly increased, with the Sharpie reported every winter since 1970. As for breeding, Griscom noted a few breed in “the wilder sections of the county.” John Baker noted sightings many summers from 1931 to 1951, mostly at Chestnut Ridge, Union Vale. The next summer record is June 1978, from which time they continue to slowly increase. The last confirmed breeding was June 1929, at Dover by Allen Frost, though it appears they bred into the 1930s. The next confirmed breeding was July 29, 2002. May Census records show Sharp-shinned

Hawks from 1919 to 1937 and 1982 to date with few years missed. However, in the 44 years from 1938 through 1981 they were only found eight times.

———— COOPER’S HAWK (*Accipiter cooperii*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Forested areas and near heavily used bird feeders



Permanent Resident, Breeds

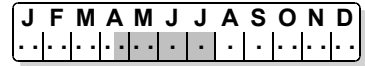
Status since 1990: The Cooper’s Hawk is a permanent resident, found in nearly equal numbers every month. The Cooper’s lives in forested areas, but like the Sharp-shinned, has become a regular visitor to backyard bird feeders to catch the smaller birds feeding there. They are found throughout the county including residential areas. By April, Cooper’s are building their stick nest high in a tree. They are usually seen singly or occasionally in pairs. The Cooper’s Hawk is a migrant, and likely the birds nesting in the summer are replaced by wintering birds from farther north. However, there is no significant observable migration in Dutchess County. Due to the size overlap with the Sharp-shinned Hawk, identification can at times be difficult.

Historical Notes: The Cooper’s Hawk is little changed as a nesting bird from one hundred years ago. The 1960s and 1970s saw a down turn in the number of Cooper’s reported, particularly of nesting birds, but by the late 1980s they rebounded. However, as a wintering species, Griscom was only able to record three winter records. They have wintered regularly since the late 1970s. The Cooper’s was heavily persecuted by farmers, as they enjoy chicken dinners.

———— NORTHERN GOSHAWK (*Accipiter gentilis*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Heavily forested areas



Permanent Resident, Breeds

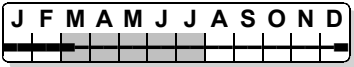
Status since 1990: While the Northern Goshawk is found year around in Dutchess County, it is one of the more difficult birds to see. A bird of deep forests, they aggressively defend their nest and will attack humans who, perhaps unknowingly, intrude into their nest area. They are most often reported in March and April and nearly always as a single bird, rarely a pair. Summer nesting birds may not be the same ones that winter.

Historical Notes: Crosby and Griscom, noting few records, classified the Goshawk as a “rare winter visitor” from mid-November to late March, with additional records in October and May. In New York State, only four nest sites were known prior to 1952. From 1952 to 1971, 52 additional nest sites were discovered (Bull). One of these was the first reported nesting in Dutchess County, a nest with two young was found on a Waterman Bird Club field trip on June 23, 1968, on Brace Mountain, north of Millerton. Another nest was found on June 15, 1970, on Stissing Mountain by Bill and Dora Santella, subsequently two young were seen. Since then the Goshawk has been reported regularly, but infrequently, all months of the year in Dutchess County.

———— **BALD EAGLE** (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) ————

Normal Dates: December 20 - March 8

Usual Locale: Hudson River



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: The Bald Eagle may be seen any month in Dutchess County, but they are most easily found in winter when large numbers visit to fish along the Hudson River. Some arrive near the first of December, but most arrive by December 20. With persistence or luck, they can be seen flying over the river from almost any spot with a river view. They are also found sitting on ice flows or in trees overlooking the river. There are certain areas where they tend to congregate. One or two can often be seen on the island in mid-river south of Norrie Point, best viewed from the Environmental Museum. Another spot is around New Hamburg and lower Wappinger Creek, where one to five are often found. Chelsea and Bowdoin Park can be good too. Wintering birds are of all ages; not all have a white head and tail. High counts include ten adults and nine immatures from Feb. 7-27, 1989, at Tivoli Landing by Howard Pellet, and up to 14 from Jan. 9-30, 2000, at Chelsea by Dot Fleury.

Bald Eagles can also be seen inland during the winter, but sightings are less frequent and usually of flying birds. By the middle of March, most have migrated north. April and May sightings are regularly reported inland and over the river, mostly of birds flying north. June and July sightings were absent until about 1999, and are now generally along the Hudson River. In 1999 the first Bald Eagles in nearly eighty years nested in Dutchess County. They continue to expand in Dutchess County with at least three active nests. From August to November Bald Eagles wander, with infrequent sightings that increase towards November.

Historical Notes: Bald Eagles were regularly seen during the 1870s, especially in spring as soon as the river opened of ice. Kent remembered seeing 20 at one time in March from Dennings Point, Beacon (Kent, p.25), and Edgar Mearns 25 at one time from Cornwall. During the 1960s, only two or three eagles were reported each *year*. Enjoying a resurgence, Bald Eagles have wintered each year since 1985, with ten or more reported each winter *month*.

The Vassar College Museum contained two eggs taken by Frederic Stack in Dutchess County on March 25, 1891¹. Eaton reported nesting at Whaley Lake² in 1904. A pair bred at Whaley Lake for an undetermined number of years prior to 1921. Breeding declined throughout the East for most of the twentieth century. Bull lists shooting, trapping, eggging, removal of nest trees, and pesticides in fish as the chief reasons for the decline. Between 1976 and 1988, NYSDEC reared and released 198 nestlings at four sites, the nearest being Alcove Reservoir south of Albany. While about 16 of the released birds were shot, enough survived to breed, the first in 1980 and 29 pairs in 1996 (Levine).

[1] The location is not recorded, but Bull presumed it to be Whaley Lake. Griscom records the date as March 25, Crosby as Feb. 25. Bull says eggs are normally laid from March 16, Eaton “in February or early March.” The disposition of the eggs is unknown.

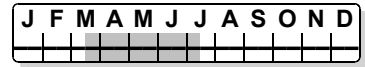
[2] Eaton records the location as “Whelby Pond,” an unknown name. Whaley Lake is called Whaley Pond on old maps and is assumed to be the location meant. Frost and Crosby reached the same conclusion in an article in *Auk* (1920).

——— **MISSISSIPPI KITE** ———
(See Miscellaneous Reports, page 249.)

——— **RED-SHOULDERED HAWK** (*Buteo lineatus*) ———

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Forests near wet areas, including residential groves, mostly in southern Dutchess County



Permanent Resident, Breeds

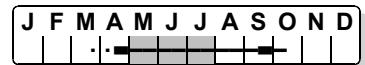
Status since 1990: There are perhaps six or more pairs of resident Red-shouldered Hawks reported each year in Dutchess County. Many reports are apparently of the same pair year after year. Based on consistent observations by Mary Key of one pair nesting since 1991 on Tree Tops Lane, Poughkeepsie, the adults stay in the area all year. By early March they occupy their previous year's nest, lay eggs by the end of March and have three or four young hatched in April and fledged in June. Another one wintered each year from 1989 to at least 1995 on North Jackson Rd., Poughkeepsie, and was consistently observed by Otis Waterman. It arrived by October and stayed until the end of March, but may have nested locally as sightings occurred during May and August. A few more are observed during migration in September, but there is no noticeable migration in spring, only an increase in apparently local birds.

Historical Notes: The Red-shouldered Hawk has been a permanent resident since local records started in the 1880s. Both Eaton and Forbush considered them more abundant than the Red-tailed Hawk. They were, however, rare during winter in the northern portions of the county. John Baker's extensive records show Red-shoulders every year from 1931 to 1966, generally one or two birds in spring and summer. They were found on the May Census from 1919 to 1962 in all but three years, yet from 1963 to 1990, they were found only five times. Since 1991 they have been found each May. With May being the middle of their breeding cycle, this highlights both their decline as a nesting species from the 1960s to 1980s and the beginning of a comeback. The low point was 1978, when the only recorded sightings were in September. They have been reported each winter since 1989, although they are still less frequently reported in northern Dutchess County.

——— **BROAD-WINGED HAWK** (*Buteo platypterus*) ———

Normal Dates: April 16 - September 20

Usual Locale: Forests and soaring



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: The Broad-winged Hawk may first appear in the last days of March, but is more often found after mid-April. They generally migrate in large flocks that periodically spiral upward on air currents, called kettles, to regain altitude and glide farther towards their ultimate destination. During spring migration over Dutchess County, kettles of 30 or more are reported. When single Broad-wings are seen, they are likely local birds. Immediately upon returning, they occupy a nest site. Fledged young are seen in July. During the 1990s, the breeding population in Dutchess County dropped from perhaps ten pairs to much less. By mid-September the southward migration is in full swing. More are seen during fall migration than in spring, with ten to over one hundred

at one time, and thousands passing in a few days. Dutchess County does not have long ridges like the Shawangunks, so kettles of hundreds of birds are not often seen in Dutchess County. By October only stragglers are seen. The Broad-winged Hawk winters in South America. Verified winter records are exceptional.

Historical Note: The Broad-winged Hawk is not listed in the earliest county records. Crosby called them an “irregular transient.” The first suspected breeding record is one at Hammersley Lake, Pawling on June 7, 1922, by Crosby, Frost, and Gray; although Mary Hyatt identified one from a specimen that had been shot on July 31, 1912, in Stanfordville. The Broad-wing may well have bred in Dutchess County in the 1800s, but became less common as forests were cleared. They have been regularly found on the May Census since 1950, but were only found five times from 1919 to 1949. The highest census count is ten in 1971. The earliest spring arrival date is March 11, 1999, and the latest fall departure date is Oct. 24, 1964 and 1968. The maximum seen in one day is 6000 on Sept. 19, 1971, from Cream St. Hill, Hyde Park; and 2000 on April 21, 1985, most between 11-11:35AM over Pleasant Valley. A well documented winter record¹ is one on Jan. 30, 1977, on Reagan Rd., Millerton by Art Gingert (*Kingbird*, 1977, p.113 and *Wings over Dutchess*, March 1977).

[1] Eaton’s statement, “In southeastern New York the Broad-wing often remains throughout the winter ...” was discredited by Bull.

———— **RED-TAILED HAWK** (*Buteo jamaicensis*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Field edges and soaring, throughout county



Status since 1990: Some Red-tailed Hawks remain resident year around, while others winter then migrate north to breed. It is likely others migrate from the south to Dutchess County to breed. Certainly many are simply transient and migrate through the county. It is impossible to determine proportions.

The Red-tailed Hawk is the hawk most often seen soaring high overhead, or sitting on an exposed tree limb along the edge of a field. They particularly like highways with wide grassy medians, which increases their likelihood of finding small mammals. Most winter and spring months, forty to seventy are reported with a slight decrease in reports during summer. Migration is generally during October and November and again in March, when fifty or more, in ones and twos, may pass high overhead in a day. Breeding starts in March, the young hatch in May and fledge in June.

Historical Note: Griscom recorded the Red-tail as chiefly a winter resident near the Hudson River, from mid-October to mid-April, with only three known breeding locations, all in the eastern portion of the county. Christmas Counts consistently record two to four until 1950. By the early 1970s, monthly reports and census records show a population increase in all seasons. The highest Christmas Count is 61 in 1993, while the highest May Census count is 99 in 1999.

Peter Devers studied Red-tailed Hawk nests in the Millbrook area from 1974 to 1977. He still checks a few in spring and has generally found their territories to be very well established and virtually unvarying from the 1970s. Following are number of nests

and number of young for the years studied: 1974 - 27 nests, 36 young; 1975 - 27, 24; 1976 - 26, 32; 1977 - 30, 48. (Peter Devers, letter)

Albino, or leucistic, Red-tails are often reported. An albino female wintered and nested from 1967-81 at Verbank, photographed⁺ (Devers). Another wintered at Pine Plains from about 1994-2001. Others have also been reported.

Comments: The Red-tail usually seen in Dutchess County is the Eastern Red-tailed Hawk, subspecies *borealis*. However there is a Northern Red-tailed Hawk, *abieticola*, which is not universally accepted as a separate subspecies. The Northern is characterized by rich coloration and heavy streaking, including a much darker belly band, a black throat, and buff-orange extending through the breast; often simply a darker Eastern Red-tail although there is much variation in Red-tails. It breeds in boreal Canada.

———— **ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK** (*Buteo lagopus*) ————

Normal Dates: November 11 - March 15

Usual Locale: Open areas in eastern and northern portions of county

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
		•	•	•						•	•

Irruptive Winter Resident

Status since 1990: The Rough-legged Hawk is a transient as well as a winter resident, arriving anytime between early November and January. There are a number of older October records. They are also irruptive, seen more some years than others. Usually found singly, they glide over a field or sit in a tree overlooking a pasture. They are often active in fading twilight. Occasionally, two or three are seen together. Some leave in February, others in March. Most have left by the middle of March, but a few stragglers may be found in April. The Rough-legged occurs as a light or a dark morph; both are seen in Dutchess County.

Historical Note: Griscom recorded the Rough-legged Hawk as an irregular winter visitor. On Christmas Counts, they were first found in 1920, next in 1960, and since 1960 every other year on average. Their irruptive nature is apparently a function of the food supply in Canada. The earliest fall arrival date is one on Sept. 1, 1983. The latest spring departure date is three on May 18, 1974. The most reported by far is an incredible 10 to 15 from Jan. 28 to Feb. 1, 1990, at Briarcliff Farm, Pine Plains by many observers.

ORDER – NOCTURNAL RAPTORS

BARN OWLS

———— **BARN OWL** (*Tyto alba*) ————

Normal Dates: May 12 - October 20

Usual Locale: Nest in barns, silos, church steeples, and similar structures, occasionally in hollow trees

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
				•	•	•	•	•	•		

Summer Resident, Formerly Bred

Status since 1990: Since 1990 there have been three reports of Barn Owls: one each on July 25, 1992, at Stissing; Nov. 19, 1997, on Spackenkill Rd., Poughkeepsie; and Dec. 15, 2001, at Southlands Farm, Rhinebeck, the first December record. Being nocturnal,

Barn Owls are not easily located except by their call, which is quite variable, occasionally terrifying, and more often heard with young. It is thought most occurrences in the county, which may be few, go unreported. The young tend to wander hundreds of miles, while adults tend to be more resident, although northern birds may migrate south short distances in winter (Bull).

In September 2020 a Barn Owl was reported and thought to have possibly nested. The location and details were not announced.

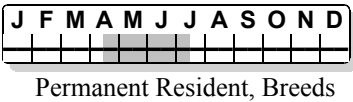
Historical Notes: Barn Owls expanded their range north early in the twentieth century. The first documented record for Barn Owls in Dutchess County is of recently fledged young from Sept. 22 to Nov. 30, 1916, at Greenvale Farms, Poughkeepsie, by George Gray (*Year Book of the Rhinebeck Bird Club, 1921*). Since then, the Barn Owl has been reported an average of three times per decade and in every month. January records are from 1925 and 1952; February records are from 1921, 1928, and 1959. Eggs have been found as early as May 23, in 1926 at Greenvale Farms, with fledged young normally seen from August to October. Nesting has been reported on average every other decade. The last known nesting was of four eggs in a silo, with three fledged and banded in October 1980 at the Strauss Farm, Amenia. They have been recorded on the May Census nine times, never on the Christmas Count. Two were photographed⁺ in September 1953 in Stanford.

TRUE OWLS

EASTERN SCREECH-OWL (*Megascops asio*)

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: In wooded areas often near water



Status since 1990: Eastern Screech-Owls are relatively common in Dutchess County, though not readily located. Yet once located, they are often repeatedly seen, as they generally use the same nest or roosting hole for multiple years. They also use nest boxes mounted high in trees, including boxes for Wood Ducks. Eggs are laid in April, and young fledge through July. As with most owls, they are nocturnal and are usually heard calling at night, mostly from late April into September. During the day, they are often seen sitting in a tree opening sunning themselves. While present all year and not migratory, they tend to disappear from favorite spots only to reappear at some future time. One to three are normally reported every month, but many more are present in the county. Two color morphs, gray and red (sometimes brown is considered a third morph), are found in Dutchess County in approximately equal numbers.

Historical Notes: The earliest reference to Screech-Owls in Dutchess County is by Philip Smith. Around 1875, he wrote, it “utters a harsh, disagreeable noise in the vicinity of barns and dwellings during the still hours of darkness,” a description more apt to the Barn Owl call. Stearns, Eaton, Crosby, and Griscom all considered them common residents without added comments. The maximum number found on the Christmas Count is seven in 1990. Fewer are usually found on the May Census.

———— **GREAT HORNED OWL** (*Bubo virginianus*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: In wooded areas anywhere in county
generally away from cities

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D

Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Great Horned Owls fill the same niche and are nearly as common as Red-tailed Hawk, except they are active at night. They call all year and, being nocturnal, are often heard rather than seen. Great Horned Owls are the first to nest, beginning by the end of January and reusing stick nests built by hawks or crows. They incubate through snow storms and can sometimes be seen on their nests exposed through bare winter branches. Usually two eggs are laid by February and hatch in March or April; young fledge in April or May. While two adults are often heard calling, generally only one is seen except when with young.

Historical Notes: Great Horned Owls were much less common in the late nineteenth century due at least in part to so much cleared land. As land returned to forest, the Great Horned increased in population. In 1933 Griscom considered them rare to uncommon, though more common in winter. They were regularly shot, with ten killed in one winter at Tracy Dows' Rhinebeck estate. Crosby was unable to establish breeding dates. The first documented nesting is March 30, 1930, at Rhinecliff by Leanard Allen, though they were assumed to have bred in the 1800s. They were first found on the May Census in 1930. Sightings increased during the 1940s and 1950s. Baker recorded his first sighting at Chestnut Ridge in September 1964. Great Horned Owls have been regularly reported almost every month since 1968, a rather enviable record.

———— **SNOWY OWL** (*Bubo scandiacus*) ————

Normal Dates: December and January

Usual Locale: Open areas, perching on light poles or
buildings but seldom in trees

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
·	·	·	·	·						·	·

Irruptive Winter Visitor

Status since 1990: Snowy Owls descend from Canada when their food supply is low. In Dutchess County, they are seen singly, normally in December or January. They are usually seen for only a day, sometimes a few days. However, an immature arrived about Dec. 7, 1996, and stayed until March 25, 1997. Found by Judy Atwood, this owl stayed near the K-Mart adjacent to 44 Plaza, Poughkeepsie, and was reliably seen and photographed* during its entire stay, apparently finding plenty of mice and pigeons to dine on. Normally living in the high Arctic with light all summer, they hunt both day and night. The most recent record is one seen on January 8, 1998, on the Hyde Park Drive-in Theater ticket booth.

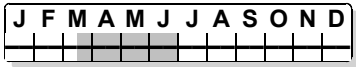
The Snowy Owl is an impressive bird. Often when non-birders see one, they know it is unusual, but are not sure what it is or whom to tell — then it is gone before anyone else sees it. Such was the case in December 1997 when possible Snowy Owls were seen twice by different people at different places. Neither bird stayed long enough for others to confirm. Thus, counts of Snowy Owls are assuredly understated.

Historical Notes: Snowy Owls are seen more frequently along the coast than inland. Occasionally there are flight years with many reported over a wide area. Then years may pass with no sightings. The first Dutchess County record is from an unknown date in 1899. Records by decade are as follows: 1900s - one, 1910s - two, 1920s - six, 1930s -

none, 1940s - three, 1950s - one, 1960s - twelve, 1970s - seven, 1980s - six, 1990s - three, and 2000s - none. While not every bird is seen and reported, the rise in observers since 1960 is unlikely the cause for the increased records in the 1960s. The largest flight year was 1926-27 when four were shot in Dutchess County. The earliest fall arrival date is Oct. 12, 1923, when one was shot at Hyde Park. The latest spring departure date is April 17, 1962, at Roosevelt High School, the only April record.

———— **BARRED OWL** (*Strix varia*) ————

Normal Dates: All year



Usual Locale: In woods near wet areas

Permanent Resident, Breeds

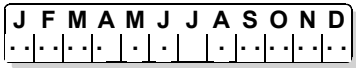
Status since 1990: Barred Owls are found all year in Dutchess County. They call year-round, though less during December and January, and are quite vocal in spring and summer. While nocturnal, they often call during the day. Seen singly or in pairs, they begin nesting by April, and by July young are occasionally seen. Found throughout the county, including the suburbs, they prefer woods, particularly those near wet areas.

Historical Notes: Stearns called Barred Owls “not rare,” while Eaton called them “rare.” Crosby felt they were common. Franklin Roosevelt shot one on April 25, 1896, at Hyde Park. Records exist for all years, but they may have been more abundant in the last half of the twentieth century than in the nineteenth century. Undoubtedly more people are reporting them now, which makes any prediction of real population change less certain. They were reported on most, but not all, May Censuses and Christmas Counts.

———— **GREAT GRAY OWL** ————
(See Miscellaneous Reports, page 249.)

———— **LONG-EARED OWL** (*Asio otus*) ————

Normal Dates: September 7 - March 21



Usual Locale: Roosting in evergreen trees

Winter Visitant, Formerly Bred

Status since 1990: Long-eared Owls are not easily located in Dutchess County. They are found once or twice in two out of three years, more often in December and January. They can show up almost any place, usually to be seen for minutes to a few hours. Like other owls, they are nocturnal, roosting in evergreens during the day. From Nov. 29, 1992 to March 21, 1993, up to three roosted in the same hemlock at Thompson Pond. Tom Gilbert had one in Red Hook off and on from Sept. 7, 2001 to Jan. 1, 2002. Chet Vincent found five Long-eareds at Domin’s Farm, LaGrange, on Feb. 27, 2004, with one remaining until April 28, 2004. Summer sightings are extremely infrequent, with no recent evidence of breeding. Long-eared Owls are mostly non-migratory, implying there is a larger Dutchess County population than shown by sightings. However, they flock more in winter, so winter sightings may include birds from outside the county.

Historical Notes: The early records of Long-eared Owls are all nesting records:¹ a nest with four eggs on March 27, 1898, near Poughkeepsie and a nest with young on May 17, 1903, at Hyde Park, which was photographed⁰. Lisenard Horton found both nests.

Crosby, Frost, and Griscom found a nest in Poughkeepsie, also with four eggs, on April 10, 1921. On May 21, 1953, Frank Trevor banded four young at the Millbrook School for Boys. The last confirmed nesting was a pair with four young from June 25 to July 10, 1974, at the home of Henry Allen, Salt Point. They may have also nested there in 1976. Summer reports are received about twice per decade. James and Mary Key reported seeing two Long-eared Owls and hearing up to four July 4-12, 1980, on Tree Tops Lane, Poughkeepsie, perhaps an unconfirmed nesting.

Generally seen singly, on two occasions, up to 18 Long-eared Owls have roosted for a month or more. From Nov. 9 to Dec. 14, 1967, up to eight Long-eared Owls were seen at the Freeman residence on Travis Rd., Pleasant Valley. Then from before Jan. 20 to at least Feb. 10, 1968, a roost was at the Overdorf residence on Bedell Rd., Poughkeepsie. These two residences are in rural country about 4½ miles apart “as the owl flies.” On January 21, Davis Finch and Noble Proctor counted 18 owls. The second large roost was from December 1971 to March 31, 1972, at the Bueche residence on Diddell Rd., Wappinger. On March 7, Davis Finch again counted 18 owls.

Long-eared Owls have been found 12 times on the May Census, all in the 22 years from 1935 to 1956. They have been found six times on the Christmas Count.

Comment: “We know far too little about the Long-eared Owl in Dutchess County, as no one has ever searched for it specially except in winter, when it may be found anywhere... The paucity of breeding records has no real significance, and I am confident that if an expert ‘owler’ should really work Dutchess County, the Long-eared Owl would prove to be widely scattered throughout.” (Griscom, 1933). The summer presence of the Long-eared Owl remains largely uncertain.

[1] Bull also lists Rhinebeck as a known nest site but gives no details. It is possible this was assumed from Crosby’s 1917 nesting list that includes the 1898 nesting without specifying a location.

———— **SHORT-EARED OWL** (*Asio flammeus*) ————

Normal Dates: December 17 - March 20

Usual Locale: Open areas, such as marshes, old fields, and meadows

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
..

Winter Visitant

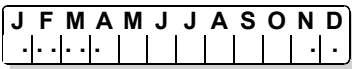
Status: Short-eared Owls are not regularly seen in Dutchess County. Recent sightings are one on Jan. 29, 2005, on Rockefeller Lane, Red Hook, and three on Jan. 29, 1995, at the Karl Ehmer Farm on Noxon Rd., LaGrange. One was also seen on March 28, 2004, on Pugsley Hill Rd., Stanford. Following are sightings since 1960 by decade: 1960s - twelve, 1970s - three, 1980s - one, 1990s - three, 2000s - four, and 2010s - three.

Historical Notes: Eaton lists the Short-eared Owl as uncommon, implying sightings before 1907. Griscom provides four Short-eared sightings he states are all the Dutchess County records: one for several days early in December 1908 south of Rhinebeck by Crosby; one shot on Oct. 15, 1909, at Hyde Park by Arthur Bloomfield, the earliest fall arrival date; one on May 24, 1925, at Amenia by Edward Spingarn, the latest spring departure date; and one on Jan. 25, 1931, at Wingdale by John Baker. Baker saw another on April 28, 1935, at or near Chestnut Ridge. The next recorded sightings are from the May Census in 1953 and 1955. The only Christmas Count sighting was one in 1978. Normally only a single owl is seen in Dutchess County, but three Short-eared Owls were seen at the Strauss residence north of Amenia in an evergreen stand from January to mid-March 1962, the only extended stay recorded.

———— **BOREAL OWL** ————
(See Miscellaneous Reports, page 249.)

———— **NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL** (*Aegolius acadicus*) ————

Normal Dates: January 16 - March 27



Usual Locale: Roosting in evergreen trees

Winter Visitant

Status since 1990: Saw-whet Owls are the smallest owls in the Northeast and, like all owls, hard to find, particularly during daylight. They are found dead often and more frequently than other owls. The earliest fall records since 1990 are three in November (1990, 1995, 1999). Each had been killed by a motor vehicle, probably while migrating. Fifteen records since 1990 occur from December 31 to March 27, three of which had met similar fates. One was seen at Thompson Pond from January 30 to March 4, 1992, found by James and Mary Key and seen by at least four others. Another one was found by David Arner and seen by many at Thompson Pond from February 14 to March 27, 2004, with three present on March 14. There are no confirmed summer sightings.

Historical Notes: The oldest Saw-whet Owl records for Dutchess County are one on Oct. 2, 1896, at Hyde Park, collected by Arthur Bloomfield; one Feb. 28, 1915, at Rhinebeck by Crosby; and one on April 2, 1922, at Cruger Island by Crosby and Griscom. After 1922, none are recorded until Oct. 26, 1949, when Ralph Waterman found one dead on Raymond Ave., Poughkeepsie. The following are records by decade: 1950s - four, 1960s - ten, 1970s - four, 1980s - eleven, 1990s - fourteen, and 2000s - six.

Saw-whet Owls nest in tree cavities in or near swamps and wet areas, which, coupled with their nocturnal habits, makes finding a nest mostly due to persistence or exceedingly good luck. In recent years, outside of Dutchess County, Saw-whet Owls have been mist-netted at night, showing their presence in relatively large numbers where they were previously thought to be far less common. In 1978, three pairs nested in the Sharon, Conn. area (Zeranski and Baptist). It seems unusual that if they do nest in Dutchess County, no roadkill has been found in the summer months. Perhaps there is a smaller population present during the summer or their movement is more restricted. There may also be less traffic during the summer hours of darkness than in the winter when darkness falls by late afternoon. Griscom wrote in 1933, "It should be found nesting in the wilder hills of the eastern part of the County," but there is still no confirmed nesting.

ORDER — KINGFISHERS

KINGFISHERS

———— **BELTED KINGFISHER** (*Megasceryle alcyon*) ————

Normal Dates: All year



Usual Locale: Near almost any water

Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Belted Kingfishers are usually seen fishing singly or in pairs along almost any creek or river as well as many lakes and ponds. Their chattering call as they fly along the shore attracts attention. They dig a burrow in April, usually near the shore but sometimes in gravel banks distant from water. Young are born in June and seen from July to September. In Dutchess County, many are found through the winter as long as water remains open.

Historical Notes: Early lists classify Belted Kingfishers as common. Grsicom noted they were more common during migration from late March to mid-May, and again from August through October. They tended to winter as long as water was not frozen, although water was generally frozen in January and February. They have been found on nearly all May Censuses and most Christmas Counts. Maximum counts of 26 in May 1992 and 14 in December 1990 and 1999, coupled with an increase in June reports suggests an increasing population.

ORDER – CLIMBING BIRDS

WOODPECKERS

————— RED-HEADED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) —————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Generally northern portion of the county, particularly Norrie State Park

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
·	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	·

Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Dutchess County is near the eastern edge of the Red-headed Woodpecker's range. While uncommon, with luck and persistence, one can find them at Norrie State Park. Since 1990 they have also been reported from Amenia, Hyde Park, Millerton, Red Hook, and Rhinebeck. Occasionally they are seen at backyard feeders. Nearly all sightings are of single birds. Undoubtedly some May sightings are migrants. Breeding is reported infrequently; the last confirmed breeding records are July 2000 south of Millerton, and May to July 2002 at East Kerley Corners Rd., Red Hook. August through October sightings are the least frequent. Winter sightings are more often birds in first-year plumage. There were no reported sightings from June 1993 to May 1997.

Historical Notes: Mary Hyatt quotes her father saying, "This species was rather common here [Stanfordville] from 1838 to 1850." In 1880 Stearns did not see any Red-headed Woodpeckers, but was aware of a specimen shot locally. Franklin Roosevelt shot one on May 8, 1896, at Hyde Park. Eaton called them fairly common summer residents that bred. Crosby thought they were common as transients from May 6-27 and August 18 to October 18. He said they bred locally and also noted they wintered on occasion. The most reported at one time is eight during the winter of 1914-15 at Rhinebeck in an oak grove with a "good acorn crop" by Crosby (Bull). Grsicom referred to them as "erratic summer residents chiefly southeast of Poughkeepsie," although noted breeding in Rhinebeck and Red Hook.

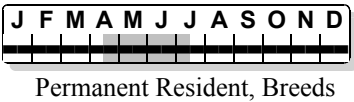
From the 1930s through the 1950s, records are few. There were no May Census sightings from 1934 to 1957. John Baker recorded sightings in May 1934 and 1935 and September 1940. Ralph Waterman recorded sightings in September 1950 and April 1952. Another was seen from May 10-20, 1952, at Dover Plains, probably by George Decker.

One was seen for nearly the full month of July 1953 at Stanfordville (*Poughkeepsie New Yorker*, July 21, 1953). Eleanor Pink recorded one on May 5, 1956, and Marion Van Wagner recorded one May 18, 1958, both at Hyde Park. Another one was reported from April 29 to August 1960 just south of Pine Plains. From 1960 they were reported yearly, usually in winter or May. The first confirmed breeding since the 1920s is May 1988 at Creed Ankony Farm west of Rhinebeck village by Susan Joseph. After declining for most of the twentieth century, Red-headed Woodpeckers increased from about 1960 to about 1984, only to decline again in the 1990s.

———— **RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER** (*Melanerpes carolinus*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Throughout county



Status since 1990: Red-bellied Woodpeckers are among the most frequently seen and heard woodpeckers in Dutchess County. An unprecedented increase has occurred in recent years. They readily visit backyard feeders and are found throughout the county from residential to rural areas. They start nesting in April, with young seen in May and June.

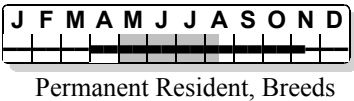
Historical Notes: The Red-bellied Woodpecker was a southern species, nesting north to Delaware until the 1950s, when they first nested in New Jersey. The first Long Island nesting was in 1969. The first sighting in Dutchess County was one female on January 16 and 22, 1961, at a feeder by Elsie Browne in Millbrook. The second sighting was one female from Dec. 31 to May 2, 1963, at the feeder of Newton and Betty Deuel near Stanfordville, seen by many and photographed. Red-bellied Woodpeckers were reported five more times in the 1960s, each sighting was of one bird. Until the early 1980s, they were mostly absent from the eastern side of the county, but have since expanded north then east. The first confirmed breeding in Dutchess County was a pair on May 30, 1973, at a nest hole on Newbold Rd., Hyde Park, found during a Waterman Bird Club field trip. The first July sighting was not until 1977.

First found on a Christmas Count in 1969, the maximum count is 76 in 2003. First found on the May Census in 1972, the maximum count is 137 in 2004. Beginning in 1989, their population exploded across the entire county.

———— **YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER** (*Sphyrapicus varius*) ————

Normal Dates: September 24 - May 19,
some breed

Usual Locale: Generally forested areas, breeds along
the eastern side of the county



Status since 1990: Although found in all months, the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker is mostly a transient in Dutchess County. Some stay to breed, but most leave in April and May to nest farther north. About the third week of September, they start to migrate through with a few staying for the winter. Sightings are of one, sometimes two birds except during fall when as many as five may be found in an area.

The first July records, not confirmed as nesting, are one on July 8, 1990, on Old Camby Rd., Union Vale by Barbara Butler and two on July 27, 1990, at Dover by Dot

Fleury. The first confirmed nesting in Dutchess County was May 1994 at Depot Hill MUA, Beekman, by Carena Pooth. Two young fledged about June 20 and were photographed. Another pair nested in 1994 at Bog Hollow, Amenia, found by Dot Fleury. They have nested in Dutchess County each year since 1994, using additional nest sites. This southern extension of the breeding range is the farthest south that Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers breed in New York. Fewer reports are received during August, suggesting they disperse after nesting. The first August record was not until 1999 at Pawling Nature Reserve where the sapsucker had been observed since May, possibly nesting.

Historical Notes: Stearns saw only one Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, which he shot on April 19, 1880. Griscom gave migration dates of April 13 to May 10 and September 25 into January. February and March sightings were uncommon, suggesting sapsuckers may not actually have stayed the entire winter. More sapsuckers are seen inland during winter than along the coast (Bull). Griscom implies spring sightings of 20 to 30 sapsuckers in one day, but gives no specific record for Dutchess County. Found 17 times on the May Census from 1919 to 1992, they have been found yearly and in increasing numbers since 1993, a result of breeding expansion. They are found periodically on the Christmas Count. A maximum of five were found on the 2004 count.

———— **BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER** (*Picoides arcticus*) ————

Casual Winter Visitant

Only Dates:

One female on Oct. 11, 1960,¹ at St. Joseph's Normal Institute, Barrytown, found by Br. Michael Dougherty.

One female from Jan. 16 to April 5, 1965, at St. Joseph's Normal Institute, Barrytown, found by Br. Francis Gary; also seen on Feb. 6 by Rich Guthrie and seven others. Possibly two seen on Feb. 13 by Br. Michael Dougherty. One from April 24 to May 1, 1965, nearby at Cruger Island, seen by ten members on a Waterman Bird Club field trip.

One female from Feb. 9 to April 6, and May 5-13, 1965, at Cedar Valley Rd. and Tree Tops Lane, Poughkeepsie, seen by James and Mary Key and four others; on Feb. 11 nearby at Redondo Dr., found by Julie Worden and seen by 15 Waterman Bird Club members. Seen intermittently from both locations. Photographed.

One male from Oct. 19 to Dec. 21, 1965,² at Redondo Dr., Poughkeepsie, by Julie Worden and many others. Stripped bark from several large trees.

One female on April 8, 1967, south of Rhinecliff, by Marion Van Wagner, Otis Waterman, and Eleanor Pink.

One on Nov. 15, 1977, at Vassar College, by Scott Warthin.

Status: Black-backed Woodpeckers are non-migratory, but at long intervals they irrupt south of their normal Canadian and northern United States range. Recent irruptions in New York State were in 1960-61 and 1965-66.

[1] *Birds of Dutchess County 1933 - 1964* includes a duplicate of this record attributed to 1961, with incorrect day and gender copied from *Wings over Dutchess*, December 1960. Correct details are in a letter in Waterman Bird Club files from Br. Michael Dougherty who documented the sighting.

[2] *Birds of Dutchess County 1964 - 1979* includes a duplicate of this record attributed to 1966.

———— **DOWNY WOODPECKER** (*Dryobates pubescens*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: In forests and wood lots, and at feeders



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Downy Woodpeckers are common throughout the year and throughout the county. During the winter, as many as eight may visit a backyard feeder, although two to four is more typical.

Historical Notes: There has been no noticeable change in the distribution or abundance of Downy Woodpeckers. Crosby noted nesting from May 14 to July 5. The May Census averages three times as many Downy as Hairy Woodpeckers.

———— **HAIRY WOODPECKER** (*Dryobates villosus*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: In forests



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Hairy Woodpeckers are common all year in the more heavily wooded areas, and less common in built-up residential areas. During the winter as many as five may visit a backyard feeder, although usually only a pair visits.

Historical Notes: There has been no noticeable change in the distribution or abundance of Hairy Woodpeckers. Crosby noted nesting from April 23 to June 6. The Christmas Count averages one-fourth as many Hairy as Downy Woodpeckers.

———— **NORTHERN FLICKER** (*Colaptes auratus*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Forest edges and residential areas



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Yellow-shafted Flickers, a subspecies of the Northern Flicker, are found all year throughout the county. They are readily seen on lawns and tree trunks, often in residential areas. During migration in early April, their numbers increase. Many stay to nest. By late September their numbers increase again, and they are often seen flying overhead in loose flocks. A few can usually be found during all but the harshest winters.

Historical Notes: Northern Flicker abundance has changed little over the past century. Stearns and Eaton both called the flicker common, while Crosby noted normal dates of March 10 to January 2, with a few wintering. Crosby also noted nesting dates of May 14 to July 22. The May Census often finds over 100. Christmas Count numbers have increased since 1984, reaching a maximum of 62 in 1998.

———— PILEATED WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus pileatus*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: New or old growth forests

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D

Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: With the increase in maturing forests from formerly cleared land, the Pileated Woodpecker has increased significantly. They are resident, found in all months and throughout the county, even in built-up areas as long as there are forested tracts available. A drive along almost any road, even Route US-9, can yield a Pileated crossing overhead. Usually seen singly or in pairs, 10 to 20 are reported every month. They nest in May, with young seen in July. Their distinctive large oblong feeding holes in trees are often seen on walks through the woods.

Historical Notes: Thought to have been relatively common in the colonial period, Pileated Woodpeckers disappeared as land was cleared. Neither Stearns, Eaton, nor Crosby recorded them in Dutchess County. Griscom thought they were winter visitants prior to 1900, and provides two records, Feb. 6, 1891, and Feb. 28, 1894, at Hyde Park, both shot by Arthur Bloomfield.

By the 1920s, Pileateds were slowly recovering their range. They were seen on Oct. 5 and Dec. 14, 1923, at Hyde Park, and Jan. 12 and 28, 1924, at Amenia. Baker recorded one in April 1934, April 1938, and November 1941 at Chestnut Ridge. Allen Frost recorded one April 4, 1941, at Staatsburg. Ralph Waterman recorded a possible pair on May 19, 1945, at Boy Scout Camp Nooteeming, Pleasant Valley. Art Halpin regularly saw a pair from March to May 1946 in Hyde Park. In July 1947, Waterman again recorded them at the Scout Camp. It is not known when the first Pileated Woodpeckers nested again in Dutchess County, but it appears to have been by the 1940s. First recorded on the May Census in 1948 and on the Christmas Count in 1950, they have continued to increase.

Comment: The dramatic change in status is illustrated in the following quotes. “It is unfortunate that the large size, loud note, conspicuous black and white coloration, and flaming scarlet crest of this bird attract the attention of all hunters that visit the forest to such an extent that its numbers are continually diminished almost to the point of extermination. This calamity, together with the fact already stated that it disappears with the destruction of the forest, is gradually depriving us of one of the most interesting of our native birds.” (Eaton, 1914)

“I predict that it will only be a question of time before a pair of Pileated Woodpeckers is located in one of the wilder sections of the County.” (Griscom, 1933).

ORDER — FALCONS

FALCONS

———— CRESTED CARACARA ————
(See Miscellaneous Reports, page 250.)

———— **AMERICAN KESTREL** (*Falco sparverius*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Along the edges or over open fields



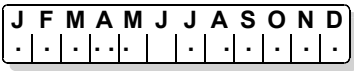
Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: The American Kestrel can be found every month in Dutchess County. However, there is a noticeable increase during spring migration from mid-March to the end of April. At least ten pairs, possibly more, are regularly reported breeding. In April, pairs look for nest sites in a hollow tree or old flicker hole along a field margin. They also use nest boxes. Young are seen in June and July. Fall migration is less noticeable in Dutchess County; but by November fewer are seen. Ten or less are reported in winter, others migrate south.

Historical Note: Eaton called the Kestrel a common summer resident, breeding in April. Griscom called them a very common transient, less common in summer, and recorded nearly every winter from Poughkeepsie southward. He also said, “The bird is distinctly less common now [1932] than twenty years ago.” Mary Hyatt did not record any Kestrel sighting between 1885 and 1925 in Stanfordville. Monthly reports and census data seem to indicate an increase in population during the 1970s and 1980s, with a corresponding drop from 1992. Interestingly, Zeranski and Baptist report Connecticut populations increased early in the twentieth century, and decreased during winters in the 1970s and 1980s.

———— **MERLIN** (*Falco columbarius*) ————

Normal Dates: April 5 - 19 and September 12 -
October 14



Usual Locale: Told by fast direct flight, often near
an open area

Transient

Status since 1990: Merlins are less frequently reported, partially due to their scarcity in the East and partially due to difficulty identifying them. There are fewer sightings during spring migration, generally early April, than fall, from mid-September to mid-October. Nearly all sightings are of a single bird one time. Some reports indicate it chased and caught a smaller bird, a titmouse, mockingbird, warbler, or House Sparrow. There is no indication of even possible breeding in Dutchess County although it seems to be slowly expanding southward for breeding.

Confirmed inland winter records are scarce throughout New York State, though a number of sightings have been reported in Dutchess County, mostly in January. One is well documented by Steve Stanne on Nov. 9, 1990, on Market St., Poughkeepsie of a Merlin catching and eating its meal in a tree, unperturbed by passing pedestrians (*Wings over Dutchess*, Jan. 1991).

Historical Note: The Merlin has always been rarely reported. Crosby noted they passed through Dutchess County from April 24-30 and September 28 to October 3. Such narrow date ranges are clearly based on few observations. Dutchess County is not on major hawk migration routes, but when day-long hawk watching events have been held, results include four Merlin on Sept. 21 and three on Sept. 22, 1975, from Dutchess Hill, Hyde Park, and three on Sept. 22, 1979, from Quaker Hill, Pawling.

———— GYRFALCON (*Falco rusticolus*) ————

Casual Winter Visitant

Only Dates:

- One white morph on Feb. 3, 1928, at Cruger Island, by Crosby and William Vogt.¹
- One gray morph from Jan. 10 - March 12, 1987, at various points between Johnnycake Hollow Rd. and Briarcliff Farm, Pine Plains, found by Neil Pell and seen by many, photographed⁺.
- One immature female on Dec. 4, 1987, on Prospect Hill Rd., Pine Plains, found by Ralph Nason. It had a broken wing and was taken to Dr. Michael O'Neill, a veterinarian, who pinned the bone and turned it over to Heinz Meng at New Paltz.
- One gray morph on Feb. 23, 1988, at Cruger Island, by Rich Guthrie.
- One gray morph from Jan. 10-24, 1993, along various roads in Fishkill and at Stony Kill, found by Henry Turner and seen by at least six others.

Status: The Gyrfalcon resides in northern Canada, but on occasion comes south ostensibly for food. Immatures tend to come the farthest south. The Gyrfalcon has three color morphs plus intermediate shades: dark, light or gray, and nearly all white. They like an open habitat.

Comment: The January 1987 report was initially rejected by NYSARC but accepted after a photograph was submitted. The January 1993 report was not accepted. The 1988 sighting was not submitted.

[1] William Vogt (1902-1968) became editor of *Bird-Lore* and an ardent conservationist. Roger T. Peterson dedicated his field guide to him.

———— PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: All Hudson River bridges



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: The Peregrine Falcon is a permanent resident of Dutchess County, nesting on all three Hudson River highway bridges. They are generally found along the river in the area of each bridge, but on occasion may be seen inland from the river. At any time of year, Waryas Park, Poughkeepsie is an excellent location from which both the highway and railroad bridges can be scanned. After eggs are laid in April, Peregrines are less readily seen while the eggs are incubated. The young are regularly banded and photographed⁺ by NYC Environmental Protection personnel

Historical Note: The Peregrine Falcon is another species that declined with man's presence, particularly with the use of the pesticide DDT. While Peregrines were never common, Crosby recorded migration dates of April 9 to May 2, and October 18 to December 9, based on very limited sightings. The first nest in Dutchess County was found on May 10, 1925 in a quarry on Little Stissing Mountain, Pine Plains by Baker, Crosby, and Griscom. On April 18, 1926, three eggs were found in the nest. It is not known when the site was first used, but apparently it was used until 1933, possibly later. Bull also notes an eyrie on Breakneck Cliff, but without dates of use. The last known active nest in New York State was reported in 1958 (Bull). In Dutchess County, from the 1950s through the 1980s, sightings during migration were reported every few years, including occasional December and January reports, but no summer sightings.

Between 1974 and 1988, NYSDEC reintroduced 168 young by hacking at more than a dozen sites. The closest sites to Dutchess County were cliffs in the Shawangunks and a building in New Paltz. In 1983 the first two pairs nested on their own on New York City bridges. By 1996, 26 pairs bred in New York State (Levine); while in 2003, 49 pairs bred. A few thousand Peregrines of various subspecies have been reintroduced across the US and Canada. In 1994 Peregrines built a nest on one of the Beacon - Newburgh Bridges. They first nested on the Mid-Hudson Bridge in 1996, although the Museum of the Hudson Highlands had placed a nest box there in the late 1980s. Though often seen on the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge, they have not been known to nest there. They began nesting on the Kingston - Rhinecliff Bridge in 1997, possibly in 1996. While the Canadian population is migratory, it is not clear to what degree the introduced population migrates.

ORDER – PARROTS

PARROTS

MONK PARAKEET
(See Miscellaneous Reports, page 250.)

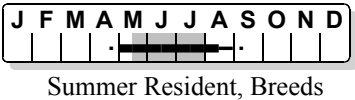
ORDER – PERCHING BIRDS

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS

GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus crinitus*)

Normal Dates: April 28 - September 4

Usual Locale: Wooded areas including suburbs



Status since 1990: The Great Crested Flycatcher is first heard in the last days of April or early May. Their call from high in a tree draws attention, though usually only one is seen. They arrive throughout the county nearly simultaneously. They nest in June, with young by July when families of five or more are found. The mature, open woods in the river estates such as Ogden Mills State Park is a favorite habitat. They head south by the end of August, with very few seen in September.

Historical Notes: The Great Crested Flycatcher has been a common summer resident since before the 1880s. They have been found on every May Census in relatively constant numbers, although there are two peaks of 100 in 1964 and 110 in 2004. The earliest spring arrival date is April 5, 1963. The latest fall departure date is Sept. 23, 1972 at Thompson Pond.

WESTERN KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus verticalis*)

Accidental Vagrant

Only Dates:
One on Oct. 8, 1927, at Thompson Pond, by Maunsell Crosby and Ludlow Grsicom.

- One on Oct. 14, 1927, at Barrytown, by Maunsell Crosby.
- One on Aug. 20, 1951, at Hyde Park, by Arthur Halpin.
- One on Sept. 4, 1958, at Millbrook School for Boys, by Eleanor Pink and Emilie Skidmore.
- One on Nov. 21, 1965, at Todd Hill and Bushwick Roads, LaGrange, found by Helen Manson and seen by James and Mary Key, Otis Waterman, Eleanor Pink, and Pat Garthwaite.
- Two on Sept. 20-21, 1979, at Wigsten Rd., Pleasant Valley, found by Marion Van Wagner and seen by more than six others.
- One on Aug. 10, 1982, at Bangall Rd., Washington, found by Marion Van Wagner and Helen Manson.
- One on Oct. 9, 1985, at South St., Pawling, found by John McIlwaine and Sibyll Gilbert.
- One on Dec. 5, 2007, at Uphill Farm, Stanfordville, found by Alan Peterson.

Status: A few Western Kingbirds migrate each fall along the Atlantic coast, which they have done since at least the nineteenth century. They are infrequently recorded inland.

Comment: Only the 1979 and 1985 sightings were reported to NYSARC; both were accepted.

———— **EASTERN KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus tyrannus*) ————

Normal Dates: April 24 - September 4
Usual Locale: Throughout county in open areas
 along tree lines, roadsides, and fences



Status since 1990: The first Eastern Kingbirds arrive on the last days of April, with many more following in early May. They are seen throughout the county singly and in pairs. By June they have begun to nest, and in July young are out and about. In August they begin to flock and then migrate south. By the first week of September, nearly all have left. A few may linger or are late migrants from farther north.

Historical Notes: Eastern Kingbirds were regularly recorded in the 1880s. Stearns called them abundant, and both Eaton and Crosby called them common. They have been found on all May Censuses with an apparent increase since 1986. The maximum count is 140 in both 1964 and 1993. The earliest spring arrival date is April 12, 1965, at Lithgow. There are two October reports. Single large flocks are not common, most include ten or fewer birds. However, on Aug. 28, 1965, 25 were seen in one tree at Millbrook School for Boys.

An albino Kingbird, found by Florence Germond and Otis Waterman, was seen by many and photographed on Route 82 south of Stanfordville from June 10 to Aug. 27, 1967 (*Kingbird*, 1967). The bird had a yellow bill and legs and a dark eye but otherwise was pure white. There was a normal Kingbird in the same area that the albino frequented. The gender was not positively known, but Florence felt it was a female who had been nesting and thus was not seen earlier or during much of June. If so, the nesting was unsuccessful, as during July and August “she” would feed in the air over a small marshy area, then perch on low branches of oak and wild cherry, preening and feeding alone. On other occasions, she was located by hearing the apparent male bird call and seeing her fly

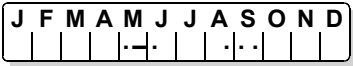
towards him. Most of the time, she perched on a dead bush close to the edge of a fence along the roadside. She was not seen the following year.

———— SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER ————
(See Miscellaneous Reports, page 251.)

———— OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER (*Contopus cooperi*) ————

Normal Dates: May 11 - 28 and August 22 -
September 25

Usual Locale: Often perched on a high dead tree
limb in or near a forested area



Transient

Status since 1990: During spring migration, Olive-sided Flycatchers pass very quickly through Dutchess County in very small numbers. Seldom is more than one seen for more than a few hours. Usually seen during the last two weeks of May, they are sometimes reported a week earlier or a week later. In fall, migration is similar, lasting from late August to the first week of September. They are less regularly recorded in the fall, with the most recent fall sighting a particularly early Aug. 6, 2000 on Tracy Rd., Pawling by Bill Purcell. Chet Vincent reported one on July 14, 2020 at Buttercup West, a very unusual date, yet one was photographed a few days later in western Massachusetts.

Historical Notes: The first documented Olive-sided Flycatcher in Dutchess County was on May 22, 1914, although they undoubtedly occurred in the previous century. On the May Census, they were first seen in 1921 and not again until 1969, likely due to the census being held before their arrival. Beginning about 1986, the first sighting each spring is often between May 11-15, nearly a week earlier than previous years. One has been recorded on most May Censuses since 1986. The small number of records from the 1940s to the early 1960s appears related to few observers. The earliest spring arrival date is the first week of May. There are very few June records, the latest by far was well described on June 20, 1969, on Penny Rd., Pawling, by Mary Key, Helen Manson, and Enid Butler. Olive-sided Flycatchers have never been known to nest in Dutchess County, although they have nested in northwest Connecticut and the Catskills. In fall the earliest arrival date is the first week of August, three reports. The only October record is Oct. 5, 1974, by Eleanor Pink, it is also well described. Five were seen on Sept. 5, 1958, and Aug. 28, 1982, the most recorded at one time.

———— EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE(*Contopus virens*) ————

Normal Dates: May 13 - September 20

Usual Locale: Throughout the county in forested
areas



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: The Eastern Wood-Pewee arrives about the second week in May, although a few are occasionally seen slightly earlier. Their plaintive call is frequently heard all summer as one walks in wooded areas. Parents are seen feeding young from the end of June into August. During September, they prepare to migrate south, with most leaving by the third week. October sightings are infrequent. While usually only one is heard or seen, up to six may be found in one general area.

Historical Notes: Philip Smith listed the Wood-Pewee as a commonplace bird in the mid-1870s. They have nested in Dutchess County longer than records have been kept. Pewees have been found on nearly all May Censuses, missed only when the census is held prior to their arrival. The maximum census count is 39 in 1993. The earliest spring arrival date is April 20, 1962; the latest fall departure date is Oct. 31, 1969.

———— **YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax flaviventris*) ————

Normal Dates: May 13 - 29 and August 22 -
September 20

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
				••			••				

Transient

Usual Locale: Thickets and woodlands

Status since 1990: Yellow-bellied Flycatchers are reported about every other year, historically much more often in spring but lately often in fall, as well. Being *Empidonax* flycatchers, they are a challenge to identify, which certainly adds to the paucity of reports. Spring sightings are usually in May; fall sightings occur from mid-August to mid-September. On their breeding grounds, boreal forests in the Adirondacks and Canada, their song and habitat identifies them.

Historical Notes: The Yellow-bellied Flycatcher has been in the Northeast for hundreds of years. The first one documented in Dutchess County was on Aug. 17, 1913. One is found on the May Census on average every four years, although they often pass through after the census date.

Comment: Griscom noted, "I have not hesitated to omit sight records 'way beyond the normal dates shown by collected specimens." This advice continues to be applicable.

———— **ACADIAN FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax virescens*) ————

Normal Dates: May 16 - August 29

Usual Locale: Deciduous forests, often ravines with
water, particularly at Deep Hollow and Pawling
Nature Preserve

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
				••	■	■	••				

Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Acadian Flycatchers nest in Dutchess County, allowing their song (*pizza*) to be heard and identification to be confirmed. They arrive mid to late May and are immediately on territory and singing. Nesting areas are predominately in the heavily wooded portions of the eastern half of the county, including the Pawling Nature Reserve, Pond Gut, and Deep Hollow, where three pairs have been heard. Once their young are raised, they leave quickly, usually before the end of August.

Historical Notes: During the late nineteenth century, the northeastern nesting limit of the Acadian Flycatcher was Dutchess County and nearby Connecticut. They last nested on Long Island in 1926 and by the 1950s were no longer found north of central New Jersey. The only nesting record for Dutchess County from this period is June 23, 1913, when Frost found a nest with eggs near Poughkeepsie. On July 7, the nest contained young. Noting that Acadian Flycatchers are not found north of their breeding grounds and are difficult to identify, Griscom accepted only two May 1925 records for Dutchess County.

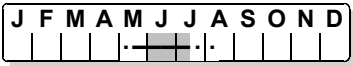
From 1925 until 1973, there are no confirmed Acadian Flycatcher sightings, although they were thought to be heard singing in the early 1960s at Tivoli. On June 12,

1973, Margaret Bowman and Patricia Bunce found two pairs singing. During the following week, at least one pair built a nest in Deep Hollow, Amenia (*Kingbird*, 1976). That nest was the first found in New York State since the Acadian had retreated farther south. They have nested in Dutchess County each year since 1973, expanding to additional locations in eastern Dutchess County and elsewhere in New York and New England.

———— **ALDER FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax alnorum*) ————

Normal Dates: May 17 - July 26

Usual Locale: Alder swamps and wet thickets in
southeastern portion of county



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: As with the other *Empidonax* flycatchers, the Alder Flycatcher arrives from mid to late May. They are heard singing their *fee-BEE-o* song as they immediately establish breeding territory. Although normally only one is heard, often a pair or more can be found by looking in neighboring areas. They are generally located in lightly wooded, wet habitat in the southeastern portion of Dutchess County, such as the Great Swamp or near Dover Furnace, but show up elsewhere during spring migration. Sightings diminish through summer with few reported beyond July. Some undoubtedly pass through as late as September, but without singing are not identifiable.

Historical Notes: Until 1973, the Alder and Willow Flycatchers were considered a single species called Alder or Traill’s Flycatcher. The following notes refer only to what is now named Alder and are based on state and local data. The Alder Flycatcher was found in Dutchess County during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Lispenard Horton found nests with three eggs on June 26, 1897, at Gretna, Pleasant Valley, and with four eggs on June 15, 1902, near Poughkeepsie. Eaton (Part 1, p.20) includes a map showing their presence in all but southwestern Dutchess County. They also bred in 1930 and 1931 near Chestnut Ridge according to John Baker’s records. Griscom called them fairly common summer residents in the interior of the county, noting they did not linger on their breeding grounds after mid-August.

After 1937 there are no unquestionable summer records, as the Alder withdrew from the southern limit of their breeding range. John Baker lists yearly May sightings until 1945, which could be either Alder or Willow Flycatchers. However, in 1980 Jim Utter and Tom Morgan found an Alder Flycatcher nest north of Pawling, which confirmed breeding again in Dutchess County. Several other Alder Flycatchers were subsequently found in the Pawling area. They have since been found in other parts of the county. Having been found on the May Census five times through 1934, they reappeared in 1990, with one to four recorded most years. It is uncertain if May Census records from the 1940s represent Alder or Willow Flycatchers.

———— **WILLOW FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax traillii*) ————

Normal Dates: May 15 - August 3

Usual Locale: Bushy swamps and field edges
throughout county



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: The Willow Flycatcher is more common than the Acadian and Alder Flycatchers, though less common than the Least Flycatcher. They also arrive between

mid and late May and are seen or heard usually in ones and twos throughout the county. Their *FITZ-bew* song is the best means of identification. They breed in many locations including Thompson Pond, Buttercup Farm Sanctuary, and Cary Arboretum. By August they begin to migrate. Any seen into September are not identifiable.

Historical Notes: Until 1973, the Willow and Alder Flycatchers were considered a single species called Alder or Traill's Flycatcher. In the nineteenth century, the Willow Flycatcher's range was the West, eastward to Ohio. During the twentieth century, the Willow spread east and then north, reaching southern Maine by 1980. It is not clear when Willow Flycatchers were first found in Dutchess County. There are June and July records from 1948 when they appear to have nested in Dutchess County. However, the first confirmed nesting is on July 20, 1959, when two nests were found near Upton Lake, Stanford, by Florence Germond and Thelma Haight. They were also found at Thompson Pond, Millbrook School for Boys marsh, and Briarcliff Farm during the 1960s. The Willow has been found on the May Census 33 times since 1953. It is not clear if the sightings during the 1940s represent Alder or Willow Flycatchers.

———— **LEAST FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax minimus*) ————

Normal Dates: May 1 - September 3

Usual Locale: Forest and orchard edges along fields or streams, including residential areas



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: The Least Flycatcher is the most common *Empidonax* Flycatcher in Dutchess County and normally the first to arrive in spring. A few Least Flycatchers are found in April, but most arrive in early May. While often seen alone, it is not unusual to see three or four at a time. Their *che-bek* song is readily heard. They nest primarily in June. Less easily seen in July, some leave by late July, although sightings of migrants are reported into the first week of September. A few pairs can often be found at Tymor Forest Park.

Historical Notes: Mary Hyatt recorded Least Flycatchers each spring beginning in 1891. Eaton, Crosby, and Griscom all called them common summer residents. They have been recorded on every May Census from 1919 with no noticeable change in population, although more are found with more people participating. The largest counts are 67 in 1988 and 65 in 1966. The earliest spring arrival date by far is April 10, 1915, at Poughkeepsie by Frost. The latest fall departure date is Oct. 6, 1929, at Cruger Island by Crosby and Frost. In fall, late dates are particularly hard to ascribe to a specific *Empidonax* Flycatcher.

———— **EASTERN PHOEBE** (*Sayornis phoebe*) ————

Normal Dates: March 20 - November 1

Usual Locale: Around buildings and near small streams, often under bridges



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: The Eastern Phoebe can actually be found year-round in Dutchess County as one will occasionally winter; however, in reality, they are summer residents. They normally winter from Virginia south and are a harbinger of spring, with one or two arriving the second or third week of March. The majority of Phoebes arrive in late March

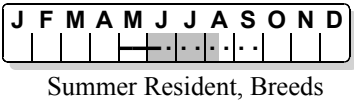
or early April. By that same time, Chickadees are singing their *phoe-be* song, which is a clear whistle compared to the rough or hoarse *phoe-be* of the Eastern Phoebe. By May they are nesting, often in backyards. Florence Germond watched a Phoebe building a nest on May 5, 1963. On May 12 one egg was laid, on May 15 a second egg, and on May 18 there were five eggs. They all hatched by May 31 and fledged on June 19. Phoebes are seen all though the summer as many nest a second time. It is only by the end of October that they finally return south. Invariably, a few are seen in November, and one may try to spend the winter but often does not make it to February.

Historical Notes: The Eastern Phoebe seems little changed over the past one hundred years. They were commonplace in the mid-1870s. Eaton called them abundant, and Crosby noted one straggler on Dec. 1, 1915. They have appeared in every May Census with a maximum count of 130 in 1993. All May Censuses since 1987 include over fifty. They have been found five times on the Christmas Count, all since 1959. The first February record was in 1951 at Pleasant Valley by Ralph Waterman and Eleanor Pink.

VIREOS

WHITE-EYED VIREO (*Vireo griseus*)

Normal Dates: May 1 - September 27
Usual Locale: Tall bushes and thickets, often near wet areas or overgrown fields

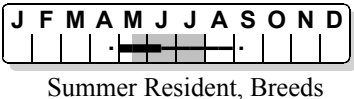


Status since 1990: White-eyed Vireos return the first week in May. Often hidden in overgrown fields, they draw attention with their song. While they are never very common, a pair may be found near wet thickets. In recent years, Nellie Hill has been the most reliable location to find them. Dutchess County is near the northern limit of their breeding range. Nesting during June and July, they sing all through the summer. By late August and through September, they move south again.

Historical Notes: The White-eyed Vireo had been a fairly common to uncommon summer resident from at least the nineteenth century. Mary Hyatt recorded them most springs from 1889 to 1900. Griscom noted the number of nesting pairs decreased between roughly 1920 and 1930, and they remained mostly south of Poughkeepsie. Pink and Waterman said this decrease continued, with the last nesting in Dutchess County probably in 1950. Sightings of migrants also decreased. However, by 1971 sightings increased, and nesting was again confirmed in 1980 along Yellow City Rd., Amenia. The May Census averages one to three every other year except from 1956 to 1966 when none were recorded. The earliest spring arrival date is April 28, 1993, while the latest fall departure date is Oct. 2, 1979.

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO (*Vireo flavifrons*)

Normal Dates: April 26 - September 6
Usual Locale: Tree tops, including near residences



Status since 1990: Yellow-throated Vireos arrive from the last week in April to the first week in May. They begin to nest quickly, and young are seen in June. They are more common than the White-eyed Vireo but not as common as the Red-eyed Vireo. Seen singly or in pairs, they are usually high in deciduous trees, most often in the rural areas of the county. They depart in August, with the last leaving by the first week in September.

Historical Notes: The Yellow-throated Vireo has been a common summer resident from the earliest times in relatively unchanged numbers in Dutchess County. They have been recorded on nearly every May Census, with multiple peak counts near fifty since 1987. The earliest spring arrival date is April 12, 1922, and the latest fall departure date Oct. 21, 1962.

———— **BLUE-HEADED VIREO** (*Vireo solitarius*) ————

Normal Dates: April 17 - October 17



Summer Resident, Breeds

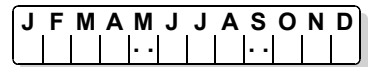
Usual Locale: Forested areas, usually seen in the canopy

Status since 1990: Blue-headed Vireos, the earliest arriving vireo, arrive the third week of April. They also stay the latest. Like other vireos, they are seen singly or in pairs, seldom more. During migration, they are seen in any wooded area; during nesting, they are mostly found in cooler deep woods. They build their nests in May in such locations as Thompson Pond, along Deep Hollow Rd., Ferncliff Forest, and Pawling Nature Reserve, among others. They migrate south in the first half of October, sometimes a few stragglers are seen later.

Historical Notes: The Blue-headed Vireo was an uncommon migrant in the late nineteenth century. Stearns did not see one in 1880, but a local skin from an unknown year was seen. Mary Hyatt recorded her first Blue-headed Vireo on May 2, 1900, and most years following. Crosby considered them common transients, then on June 8, 1922, he and Frost discovered the first nest in Dutchess County in Turkey Hollow. It contained four eggs. While additional nest sites were soon discovered on the summit of Bald Mountain and in Washington Hollow Glen, the Blue-headed Vireo may not have continued nesting. They were recorded on only one-third of the May Censuses between 1930 and 1958; John Baker also reported fewer transients during that time. June and July records reappear from 1968 at locations where they currently nest. However, it was not until June 11, 1988, at Thompson Pond that a nest was actually found, thanks to Vivian Parkhurst. The earliest spring arrival date is April 12, 1922, and the latest fall departure date is Nov. 24, 2004.

———— **PHILADELPHIA VIREO** (*Vireo philadelphicus*) ————

Normal Dates: May 8 - 21 and September 1 - 23



Transient

Usual Locale: On outer branches of deciduous trees

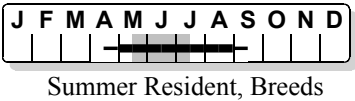
Status since 1990: The Philadelphia Vireo is very uncommon in Dutchess County. They are reported on average every other year, often only one is sighted on one day. They migrate through in May and again in September, with more reported in the fall. During the 1980s they were regularly recorded in the last week of August.

Historical Notes: The first documented record of the Philadelphia Vireo in Dutchess County was May 18, 1909. However, according to Griscom, Crosby had doubts about the validity of his spring records and suggested none be accepted until a spring specimen was collected. There is no record of a spring specimen ever being collected in Dutchess County, although a number have been collected in spring in other regions of New York. John Baker recorded one on May 22, 1937, his only spring record. There are no May Census records until 1958, and then one every few years. The Philadelphia Vireo was collected in fall on Sept. 10, 1922, at Rhinebeck. Griscom provides other fall records to 1930, however the next fall record is in 1959.

Comment: Identification of the Philadelphia Vireo is challenging. They are few in number, pass through quickly, when seen are often obscured by tree leaves, and can resemble the Warbling Vireo or Tennessee Warbler. Even their song, not normally sung on migration, can be mistaken for the Red-eyed Vireo. For these reasons, Crosby was reluctant to accept spring records. If seen well with sufficient time for study, they can be correctly identified. As Roger T. Peterson put it, "... anyone unable to tell a Vireo from a Warbler is hardly qualified to recognize this species." (*A Field Guide to the Birds*, 1st and 2nd editions only).

———— **WARBLING VIREO** (*Vireo gilvus*) ————

Normal Dates: April 28 - September 10
Usual Locale: Large deciduous trees, from forested to residential areas

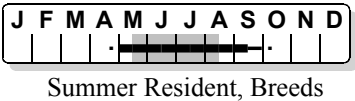


Status since 1990: Warbling Vireos are slightly more common than other vireos except the Red-eyed. They arrive the last week of April or the first week of May, their extended warbling song drawing attention to them in the tree tops. By the end of May, they have built their nest, with young hatching in June. They start to slip away in August and have left by mid-September.

Historical Notes: The Warbling Vireo has been found in Dutchess County from the earliest times. Crosby called them common in 1921. They have been found on most May Censuses in slowly increasing numbers, from an average of 23 in the 1960s to an average of 52 in the 1990s. The maximum count is 122 in 2004. The earliest spring arrival date is April 23, 1993, and the latest fall departure date is Oct. 4, 1974.

———— **RED-EYED VIREO** (*Vireo olivaceus*) ————

Normal Dates: May 3 - September 25
Usual Locale: Large deciduous trees, from forested to residential areas



Status since 1990: The Red-eyed Vireo is the most common vireo in Dutchess County and New York State. Their song, repeated many times, is frequently heard from the cover of tall trees, making it difficult to find the singer. They are also the vireo most likely to nest in a backyard. They first appear in late April or early May, usually singly or in pairs, certainly not in flocks. However, it is no longer an unusual experience to see a large number in a general area. Such was the case on May 31, 2003, when fifteen were found scattered through Pawling Nature Reserve on a Waterman Bird Club field trip. Nesting

takes place in June, with young by the end of the month and in July. They are very frequently a host for Brown-headed Cowbirds. By August numbers start to drop as they prepare to migrate. Most leave by the end of September, with one or two stragglers reported in early October.

Historical Notes: The population of Red-eyed Vireo fluctuated over the past two centuries as forests were cleared then regenerated. They have been slowly increasing since the 1960s as shown by the May Census. They have been recorded on all May Censuses, first reaching a count of 100 in 1986 and a maximum of 199 in 2004. The earliest spring arrival date is April 22, 1995, and the latest fall departure date is Nov. 2, 2000.

SHRIKES

———— **LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE** (*Lanius ludovicianus*) ————

Last Date: Feb. 15, 1992

Extirpated, Formerly Transient

Status: Loggerhead Shrikes have withdrawn from their former breeding areas beyond Dutchess County, consequently sightings of migrants have declined. The last sighting was one on Feb. 15, 1992, on Brooklyn Heights Rd., Milan, by Susan Joseph. Prior to this, one was seen on March 3, 1981, at Millerton by Seward Highley, and one on March 31, 1981, at Tamarack Swamp by Marion Van Wagner and Eleanor Pink. The shrike was seen well for all three sightings. One may have wintered in January and February 1972 in Dover Plains, as it was seen multiple times by Mary Yegella, Helen Manson, and Jim and Bonnie Fiedler. On January 30, it spent one and a half hours consuming a House Sparrow! Loggerhead Shrikes seen by decade are 12 in 1960s, 13 in 1970s, two in 1980s, and one since 1990. All sightings have been of one bird.

Historical Notes: Loggerhead Shrikes apparently expanded from west to east into southern Ontario, New York, and New England prior to 1870 (Eaton). They became fairly common breeders in much of New York through the early 1900s (Bull), with Eaton suspecting breeding in the lower Hudson Valley. Shrikes return year after year to a favored location as long as it remains suitable, particularly apple orchards and areas with thorn bushes. Breeding declined in the Northeast during the 1940s and 1950s. The last confirmed nesting in New York was in 1988 (Levine).

Loggerhead Shrikes were first recorded in Dutchess County each August from 1896 to 1899 in an apple orchard just north of Rhinebeck village by Dr. William Wiegmann, who vacationed nearby. Crosby¹ never confirmed a Loggerhead Shrike in Dutchess County. The next documented sighting is Aug. 30, 1934, near Pine Plains by Frost, who adds "first sighting in 8 years" (*Bird-Lore*, 1934). However, this apparent 1926 record was not found or was ignored by Griscom. The next reports are Sept. 10, 1955, on Chestnut Ridge by John Baker and Dec. 13, 1958, in Amenia by George Decker. Decker shot the shrike and confirmed it was a Loggerhead, the skin is now at Columbia-Greene Community College. During the 1960s and 1970s, sightings increased significantly, possibly due to more observers. After 1975 sightings dropped abruptly. The following are the number of Loggerhead Shrikes seen by month since 1955: January - three; February - two; March - six; April - eight; May, June, and July - none; August - one; September - three; October - three; November - three; and December - one.

Comment: These sightings all appear valid with many seen by multiple people, not in haste, and well described. The most doubtful sightings have been excluded. Nevertheless, differentiating between Northern and Loggerhead Shrikes can be difficult, and it is possible some sightings are incorrectly attributed.

[1] Crosby lists five dates prior to 1921: April 2, 1903, March 29 and April 8, 1914; and March 22 and Dec. 4 in unspecified years. But his 1922 "Supplementary Notes" say these records are "probably erroneous." Griscom did not include them.

———— **NORTHERN SHRIKE** (*Lanius borealis*) ————

Normal Dates: November 15 - April 7
Usual Locale: In open fields, often at Vassar College Farm or James Baird State Park, occasionally near bird feeders

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
.

Irruptive Winter Visitant

Status since 1990: Northern Shrikes come down from Canada when the food supply is low. They normally arrive in late November or early December, and are occasionally seen near a bird feeder where they look for a small bird to filch. Many years none are seen, some years one, and some years many. The winter of 1999-2000 was the most recent irruption with at least five reported, probably more. Seen singly and usually only one time, some will stay for a month but only be seen sporadically. Fewer are seen in midwinter. The last report may be any time from December to early April.

Historical Notes: Northern Shrikes have been reported since records were kept in Dutchess County. They irregularly appear on Christmas Counts, where the most recorded is two in 1977 and 1995, both irruptive winters. Other irruptive winters have been 1949-50, 1968-69, and 1972-73. The earliest fall arrival dates are Aug. 22, 1965, off Sharon Turnpike; Sept. 24, 1967, at Salt Point; and Oct. 1, 1961, at Red Oaks Mill.

JAYS AND CROWS

———— **CANADA JAY** (*Perisoreus canadensis*) ————

Casual Visitant

Only Dates:

- One on March 27, 1949, at Pleasant Valley, by Emilie Skidmore.
- One on Oct. 16, 1960, near Boy Scout Camp Nootemung, Pleasant Valley, by Pete Katsaros.
- One from Oct. 15 to Nov. 1, 1963, coming to a suet feeder on Mill Rd., Rhinebeck, found by Harold Kotzum and seen by many. Photographed. What is presumed to be the same bird was then seen from late November to February 1964 on Nine Partners Rd., Clinton, by Frank Bowman and Mr. and Mrs. Donald Bowman. Also seen on Slate Quarry Rd. near Route 9G.
- One from Nov. 3 to May 5, 1976, at Sky Acres Airport on North Smith Rd., Union Vale, found by Marion Van Wagner and seen by many. Also visited a suet feeder across the street, particularly after February. Photographed+.
- One from Dec. 15-27, 1975, on Allen Rd., Salt Point, found by Czecher Terhune and seen by many. Not the same jay as above, as this jay was missing a tail feather. Also seen on the same day as previous jay during the Christmas Count.

One from about Jan. 19 to about Feb. 10, 1976, on Skyview Dr., Poughkeepsie, found by Pat Grunbok. This jay had only one leg. Captured and released, it disappeared.

Status: Canada Jays, which look like very big chickadees, are normally found in Canada but nest as far south as the Adirondacks. They infrequently wander short distances. When found beyond their normal range, they often linger weeks or longer.

——— **BLUE JAY** (*Cyanocitta cristata*) ———

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: In deciduous woodlands, including residential areas



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Blue Jays have a beauty often ignored by local residents. They are one of the most want-to-see birds for westerners coming east. The Blue Jay is present all through the year, although some migrate great distances while others remain sedentary (Bull). Spring migration takes place in April and May. They build their nests in May, with young seen in June. While nesting they become quiet, especially near their nest, and are not seen as often in large numbers. In September and October, those that migrate are seen moving south, while those that stay begin to form flocks looking for winter food sources. Migrating flocks regularly contain thirty to fifty jays. They are attracted to backyard feeders, especially in winter when it is not unusual to see a dozen at one time.

Historical Notes: Stearns called Blue Jays abundant in 1880. In 1932, Griscom called them common residents but sometimes abundant on migration. Census numbers are very similar between May and December. The May Census average count is 259 since 1959, with peaks of 400 in 1972 and 500 in 1998. The Christmas Count average is 221 since 1958, with peaks of 402 in 1992 and 445 in 1966. May migration has often recorded 100 jays passing over a point in a short time, while September migration has often recorded 200. These numbers have not changed from at least the 1930s.

Comment: “The Blue Jay is handsome, noisy, mischievous, and inquisitive. It adds life to the woodlands at any time of the year, especially in winter when so many other birds have moved to warmer climates. Its raucous calls are heard at all times of the year, but it is often noisiest in the quiet of autumn when most birds are silently hurrying south. It is practically omnivorous, eating fruits, insects, grains, acorns, and, unfortunately, sometimes the eggs and nestlings of other birds. Although economically of dubious value, it is surely one of the most beautiful and interesting of birds.” (Godfrey, 1966)

——— **BLACK-BILLED MAGPIE** ———

(See Miscellaneous Reports, page 251.)

——— **AMERICAN CROW** (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) ———

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: In deciduous woodlands, including residential areas



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: American Crows are abundant, especially in their winter roosts. During fall and winter, they can be seen late in the day streaming from all directions to a

common point. Prior to entering the evening roost, they often fill the trees at some nearby point and are very boisterous. As it gets darker they descend to the roost, which drifts about from week to week. The largest and longest used roost in Dutchess County is at varying points along the Hudson River between the Hudson River Psychiatric Center, Vassar Brothers Hospital, and east to College Hill Park in Poughkeepsie. The roost population peaks in February. Crows from colder regions migrate in large numbers, while others remain resident. It is not known what proportion of crows breeding in Dutchess County actually migrate. Spring migration is in March when flocks of 30 or more are often seen flying north. They nest in April and May, with young in May and June. The fall migration is mostly in October. By the end of October, roosts are forming again for the winter.

Historical Notes: In 1880, Stearns noted that American Crows were abundant, but only a few wintered at Beacon. Griscom also called them abundant but commented that few wintered in the rural eastern half of Dutchess County. Emlen’s study of crow roosts notes that a roost is used for many years. He indicated a roost at Blue Point, across the Hudson River from the Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery, was in use during the winter of 1911-12 with possibly as many as 10,000 crows. The roost population decreased around 1917 apparently due to annual shooting. By the winter of 1932-33, the population was estimated at 3000 (Emlen).

By 1963, the roost was near the Hudson River State Hospital on Route US-9, Poughkeepsie. Alice Jones estimated that roost to have 3000 to 5000 crows each year through the 1980s, possibly fewer after 1990. Dan and Beth Nickerson attempted to count them on February 18, 1977, and reported 8000 coming primarily from the northwest and fewer from the northeast. At the peak, crows were arriving at the rate of 180 per minute. Tim Baird estimated a peak of 10,000 crows using the roost in mid-February 1978. Over the years the roost moved south short distances. A second smaller roost was known for a few years after 1964 at Matteawan, near Beacon. The Christmas Count maximum was 5614 in 1960, and has been slowly decreasing since. It has always been over 1000 except in 1995 when only 826 were recorded.

Griscom mentions crow migration in late March and late October, when he and Crosby counted over one thousand in half an hour forming a line “at least three miles long.” Bull records a nestling banded in late May 1948 near Poughkeepsie, and shot in September 1948 on the coast of Georgia, indicating late summer movement. The May Census has shown an increase since 1986, reaching a maximum count of 662 in 2002.

———— **FISH CROW** (*Corvus ossifragus*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Along Hudson River



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Fish Crows look like American Crows. To identify them one must hear their call, which is much more nasal than the adult American Crow and very similar to the juvenile American Crow. They are found along the Hudson River from Tivoli to Beacon and short distances inland, including around Vassar College. They are also heard near shopping centers in Pleasant Valley, Millbrook, and elsewhere and infrequently are reported as far inland as Pawling. They are generally heard singly or in small groups to ten. While Fish Crows are present in Dutchess County all year, from October to March

their population is reduced They nest in April and May but are seldom reported nesting due to confusion with American Crows.

Historical Notes: Predominately a southern coastal species, Fish Crows apparently expanded to the Long Island and Connecticut coasts and the lower Hudson River prior to the 1870s (Bull). Stearns did not record them at Beacon in 1880. Fish Crows were primarily migrants, present in Dutchess County from March 5 to October 15 (Griscom), although the oldest record is Feb. 8, 1901 at Hyde Park by Margaret Ashton. Crosby recorded them during the winter of 1910-11 near Poughkeepsie (*Rhinebeck Birds and Seasons*, 1916, p.18; Griscom). Although Crosby thought they bred in Dutchess County, he never found a nest. There were no reported sightings from 1935 to 1959.

On Jan. 17, 1960, one was heard and seen at the Beacon dump. Since then they have been reported every year along the Hudson River. By 1971 there were June, July, and August reports. The first *confirmed* breeding in Dutchess County was not until 1989 at Vassar College Farm, although nesting was suspected by the 1970s. While found on half the May Censuses between 1927 and 1934, none were recorded again until 1964, albeit regularly since then. The first Christmas Count record is one in 1963, with scattered records since then. From the 1970s, Fish Crows expanded north to Albany and New England as well as through central New York following river systems.

———— **COMMON RAVEN** (*Corvus corax*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: High overhead along ridges in the eastern half of the county

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D

Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Common Ravens are seen in every month and from many areas of Dutchess County, although the eastern half produces the most reports. Usually one or two birds are heard or seen, but groups of up to six have been reported in June after nesting. Their hoarse call draws attention as they often fly overhead. They nest on cliffs or in tall trees. For several years they have nested at Stissing Mountain and are now seen and heard on most visits to Thompson Pond.

On March 23, 2005 Marge Robinson found a pair of ravens nesting at the Mills Mansion. The nest was built on netting placed on the mansion for renovations. By April 1 one was sitting on the nest, but on April 4 there was no activity. Then on April 5 Bill Case photographed⁺ a Fish Crow eating the eggs out of the nest.

Historical Notes: Common Ravens were common in colonial times but were heavily persecuted and soon retreated to less accessible locations. It is possible Common Ravens were in Dutchess County in the early nineteenth century, but no record is known. By the beginning of the twentieth century, they were found only in isolated areas of the Adirondacks and soon disappeared from there. During the 1960s, they began to expand from Canada and were again found nesting in the Adirondacks in 1968. They continued to spread south.

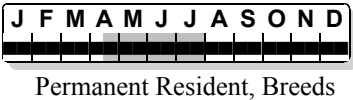
Prior to 1987, there were only three reports of Common Ravens in Dutchess County: one each on Aug. 27, 1959, near Rhinecliff; May 3, 1969, at Cruger Island; and March 1970, at Freedom Plains. By the late 1980s, they were seen near Sharon, Conn. It is believed they spread to Dutchess County from there. Dave Rosgen and Jane Rossman saw two being mobbed by crows on Feb. 14, 1987, at Stissing Mountain. Five different sightings were reported in 1990. In April 1992, nest building was observed near the

Appalachian Trail. By 1995, sightings were regularly reported from the Stissing Mountain area. During the first week of June 1996, Pat Redmond observed five young fledged near Wassaic for the first known successful nesting in Dutchess County. They have been found on most May Censuses since their first in 1990, usually numbering four to seven. One or two have been recorded on four Christmas Counts since 1993.

TITS

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE (*Poecile atricapillus*)

Normal Dates: All year
Usual Locale: Throughout county, often at
sunflower and suet feeders



Status since 1990: Black-capped Chickadees are commonplace, almost tame, and frequently heard vocalizing their namesake call. Indeed, most feeders may have a dozen or more chickadees in the winter. Their flitting in and out makes counting extremely difficult. In April they look for nest sites, such as tree cavities and occasionally a bird house, including Bluebird boxes. Eggs are laid in May, with young by June. By October they are again at backyard feeders, which they will go to all summer if the feeders are kept clean and filled. In fall and winter they are often in small flocks accompanied by titmice, kinglets, or lingering warblers.

Historical Notes: While Stearns called Black-capped Chickadees abundant at times in 1880, Eaton called them abundant, and Crosby common. There is no reason to believe abundance has changed significantly in over one hundred years. Horton found a nest on May 14, 1899, and on May 21 it contained ten eggs, an exceptionally large number. Census counts are reasonably constant over time, although twice as many Chickadees are recorded on the Christmas Count as the May Census, reflecting their presence at feeders.

An albino Chickadee returned for four winters to multiple homes around Stanfordville. First found at the home of Ruth Walling, Lawler Lane, from Feb. 14 to March 3, 1962, it returned from Dec. 14 to March 4, 1963, and again on Dec. 6 through at least February 1964. During the winter of 1963-64, it was seen at three different feeders in the same area. Finally, it was seen for the fourth year at the home of Dr. Mustonen, Knight Rd., on Dec. 2, 1964, but was not reported again.

BOREAL CHICKADEE (*Poecile hudsonicus*)

Last Date: Nov. 4, 1983 Irruptive Casual Visitor

Status: Boreal Chickadees are normally confined to the Adirondacks and Canada. In Dutchess County, they are seen between late October and early April during flight years, which vary widely in occurrence. The last flight year in New York was 1983-84, during which only one Boreal Chickadee was reported in Dutchess County, on Nov. 4, 1983, at Gleason Blvd., Pleasant Valley, by Marion Van Wagner. None has been recorded in Dutchess County since. When present, they are often in multiple groups of one to three Boreal Chickadees each. Sometimes they are seen only once; other times they stay the entire winter, often visiting suet feeders.

Historical Notes: The first report of Boreal Chickadees in Dutchess County is three from Nov. 20, 1912 to March 29, 1913 at Vassar College by Prof. Ella Freeman (*Bird-Lore*, 1914). The earliest flight year is 1913-14 when Crosby recorded three from November to March at Rhinebeck and two from January to April at Poughkeepsie. Very few Boreal Chickadees were reported in southern New York before 1913. Eaton and other early writers do not mention flight years. Flight years in New York, with the number of Boreal Chickadees seen in Dutchess County, are the winters of: 1913-14 (5 Chickadees), 1916-17 (8, photograph[†]), 1941-42 (none), 1951-52 (2), 1954-55 (4), 1961-62 (about 11), 1969-70 (5), 1975-76 (13), and 1983-84 (1). Very few have been reported in non-flight years.

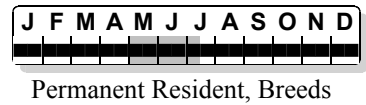
Helen Manson found three Boreal Chickadees in a spruce grove at Moores Mills from March 16-21, 1964,¹ the same location where three were recorded from January to March 1962. In a non-flight year, this and 1912-13 are the only times more than one was recorded for more than a single day. George Decker collected one on Feb. 25, 1955, at Dover Plains.

[1] *Birds of Dutchess County 1964-1979* mistakenly records the year as 1963.

———— **TUFTED TITMOUSE** (*Baeolophus bicolor*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Residential areas with trees and feeders



Status since 1990: The Tufted Titmouse, a frequent visitor to feeders, is found in most backyards. During the winter months, many people have two to six sharing a feeder, though more are occasionally seen. They are found throughout the county. Nesting starts early, by April, with the first young seen towards the end of May. Families are especially noticeable during June and July. Titmice do not migrate any appreciable distance and will return to backyard feeders as soon as sunflower seed is provided.

Historical Notes: The Tufted Titmouse was a southern species found as far north as New Jersey in the nineteenth century and reaching New York City about 1930. The first record for Dutchess County is Oct. 28, 1929, at Rhinebeck by Crosby, and he collected it. The next sighting was one on May 1, 1950, at Dover Plains by Jack Newlin. The third record was May 11, 1953, the first on the May Census. From that point, they were seen yearly, with around 20 reported in 1958. Although they may have nested as early as 1955 along Boardman Rd., Poughkeepsie, the first confirmed nesting in Dutchess County was July 5, 1960, on the Shunpike, Washington, when Florence Germond found a recently fledged family of six. A second clutch fledged Aug. 5. They continue to expand and are now regularly found in Maine. They have steadily increased on the censuses, the peaks are 239 in December 1995 and 185 in May 1996.

LARKS

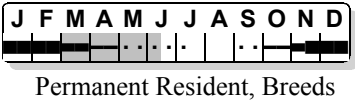
———— **EURASIAN SKYLARK** ————

(See Miscellaneous Reports, page 251.)

———— **HORNED LARK** (*Eremophila alpestris*) ————

Normal Dates: November 3 - March 22

Usual Locale: Agricultural fields in northern half of county, especially Greig Farm, Red Hook



Status since 1990: Horned Larks are primarily winter residents; however, a few may be found breeding in spring at Red Hook. Horned Larks arrive in late October or early November; the date varies from year to year. Flocks grow as winter approaches. Greig Farm, Red Hook, is the most reliable location, but fall arrivals may also be found on larger farms from Dover, Verbank, and Stanfordville to Red Hook. By December, flocks occasionally number up to 300. January and February reports are similar to December unless the snow is too deep and pushes the larks farther south. Horned Larks are always seen on the ground, never in trees. March sightings are of much smaller flocks, as they move north early. Horned Larks nest in March and April. June sightings are very infrequent and in recent years have been limited to Greig Farm. On July 2, 2005, adult and young Horned Larks were seen at Greig Farm, the first breeding evidence found in many years.

Historical Notes: Horned Larks are separated into many subspecies. The migratory Northern (*alpestris*) subspecies winter in Dutchess County and breed primarily in Canada. The essentially sedentary Prairie (*praticola*) subspecies breed in Dutchess County, although they wander after breeding.

As the forests were cleared, the Prairie Horned Lark spread east from the Midwest, first breeding in New York State in 1875 and reaching Troy in 1881 (Eaton). The Prairie Horned Lark was first recorded in Dutchess County on Jan. 27, 1898, at Hyde Park when Arthur Bloomfield shot one. The first recorded nesting in Dutchess County was April 30, 1900, at Gretna, Pleasant Valley, where Lisenard Horton found a nest with six eggs. Bloomfield also shot a Northern Horned Lark on Jan. 26, 1892, and again in the winters of 1911 and 1915. While the subspecies are distinguishable in the field in some cases, most records have not indicated subspecies. However, records do exist to substantiate the presence of these two subspecies.

The breeding population has always been relatively small, although formerly the breeding range in Dutchess County was much more extensive than it is now. Former breeding sites from the 1960s and 1970s include Winchell Mountain Rd., Millerton; Canoe Hill Rd., Washington; Gretna Rd., Pleasant Valley; and Green Haven, Beekman. Even the Dutchess Golf and Country Club and the fields between IBM and Route US-9 were used in 1941 and 1961, respectively. There are regular breeding records until about 1978. Currently the only known breeding site is Greig Farm, Red Hook.

The winter population has always been variable. Although not found extensively within the Christmas Count area, the maximum count was 510 in 1961. With the breeding population much smaller than in winter, fewer are seen on the May Census. The maximum count is 16 in both 1965 and 1966. By the 1980s, both winter and summer populations were reduced across the county as land use and cover changed. The largest flock recorded is approximately 500 on multiple occasions. Crosby and Griscom give no size estimate, saying only, "Horned Larks sometimes appear in large flocks."

SWALLOWS

———— **BANK SWALLOW** (*Riparia riparia*) ————

Normal Dates: April 14 - August 12

Usual Locale: In sand and gravel banks generally away from towns



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Bank Swallows are colonial nesters, normally nesting in a variety of sand and gravel banks. They change sites as the banks become unusable. They arrive from mid-April generally in flocks of ten or less, although breeding colonies of fifty or more do occur. By May they are nesting, and by July they prepare to migrate, leaving by mid-August.

Historical Notes: Bank Swallows were noted as common transients with scattered breeding colonies in the early records. May Census averages, which seem to depend on knowing where an active colony is, have slowly decreased since 1960. The maximum count is 432 in 1968. The last large colony was an estimated 500, reported on May 15 and 22, 1988, and June 3, 1993, at the Washington town dump. During the 1960s and 1970s, colonies in the hundreds were normal. There are no March reports, although spring arrival is now about one week earlier than it was before 1970. Similarly, last departure dates prior to 1990 were often in September, two to three weeks later than now.

———— **TREE SWALLOW** (*Tachycineta bicolor*) ————

Normal Dates: March 22 - September 26

Usual Locale: Throughout county in open fields and in bluebird nest boxes



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Tree Swallows are the most common swallows in Dutchess County. They are the first swallow to arrive, coming shortly after mid-March. At first only one or two are seen, but by April their numbers have increased to flocks of fifty. If severe cold sets in, many may perish from lack of insects. By May they have found a place to nest, often in Bluebird boxes. In June and July, Tree Swallows are seen throughout the county feeding their young and darting through the air. On the Waterman Bird Club Bluebird Trail alone, which has over 300 monitored nest boxes, Tree Swallows generally fledge over 300 young each year, second in number only to Bluebirds. In August they flock in preparation for their migration, often being seen in many hundreds. They continue to be seen in migration through the second week of October. Their fall migration is long in duration with a few possibly leaving in late July and others into October.

Historical Notes: Until 1921, Tree Swallows were only transients in Dutchess County. Crosby listed spring dates from April 3 to May 27, and fall dates from July 9 to October 2. However, on June 12, 1921, Frost and Crosby found and photographed* a nest in a dead tree stub on the edge of Grassy Lake (Grass Pond) north of Millerton, the first confirmed nesting in Dutchess County. Through 1932, Griscom was aware of nesting only in that one area, though by a number of pairs. Tree Swallows normally nested farther north and locally on Long Island. George Decker reported them breeding in the 1940s and early 1950s at Swift Pond, Amenia. Ralph Waterman recorded Tree Swallows

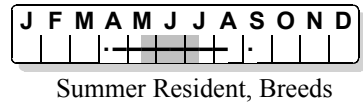
each June and July from 1947 at Boy Scout Camp Nooteming, Pleasant Valley. Baker recorded his first nesting at Chestnut Ridge in 1953. By the early 1960s, they were well established as a nesting species in Dutchess County, using five of the first 22 Bluebird boxes placed on the Waterman Bird Club Bluebird Trail in 1962.

The earliest spring arrival date is Feb. 9, 1990, at Red Hook, and the latest fall departure date is Nov. 21, 1976, at Rudd Pond. Estimating the size of very large flocks is difficult, but flocks of 1000 are periodically reported, and flocks of 4000 or more were estimated on Sept. 29, 1973, at Belaire Farm, Amenia, and on Oct. 1 and 7, 1981, on power lines by the Shunpike, Washington.

—— **NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW** (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) ——

Normal Dates: April 12 - August 13

Usual Locale: In stream or river banks and under bridges



Status since 1990: Unlike other swallows, which are often seen in large flocks, Rough-winged Swallows are usually seen singly, in pairs, or in small groups. The first one or two appear during the second week of April. They always nest along or near water, often under bridges in various holes. They are regularly seen through July then quickly leave. A few continue to be seen to mid-August but seldom later.

Historical Notes: Rough-winged Swallows expanded their range north and east into New York State during the 1870s, apparently first nesting in 1872 at Highland Falls. Eaton shows a map for 1906 indicating breeding along the Hudson River in both northern and southern Dutchess County. However, Lisenard Horton apparently never found a Rough-winged Swallow nest. They are not often seen during migration, which generally follows rivers. The first documented Rough-winged Swallow in Dutchess County was on July 4, 1904 by Crosby and Abbott at Grasmere. The first known nesting was on June 6, 1916, when Crosby and Louis Fuertes¹ found three eggs in a former Kingfisher hole. Subsequently, several pairs nested in holes in stone retaining walls along the railroad between Rhinecliff and Barrytown. They continued to expand inland to other waterways in Dutchess County during the 1940s and 1950s.

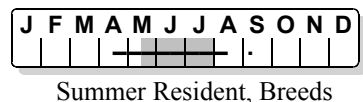
There are no March records, although there are multiple reports the first week of April. There are also multiple early September records, with Sept. 17, 1996, the latest fall departure date. The largest flock is about ten. Occasionally a few more are reported, but are possibly mixed swallow flocks. The May Census count has increased from an average of just over 10 prior to 1990, to over 40 since.

[1] Louis Agassiz Fuertes (1874-1927), famed bird illustrator, painted the plates for Eaton's *Birds of New York*. He spoke to the Rhinebeck Bird Club on the evening of this sighting.

—— **PURPLE MARTIN** (*Progne subis*) ——

Normal Dates: April 20 - August 5

Usual Locale: Verbank



Status since 1990: Purple Martins, originally cavity nesters, now nest exclusively in man-made birdhouses, normally multi-compartment units. The old nests should be removed before they arrive in the third week of April. They nest in May, with young in

June. By early August they begin their migration south. Normally Purple Martins will return year after year to the same yard and the same house as used the previous year. As colonies increase in size, some Martins leave to begin a new colony. In Dutchess County there are now very few Purple Martin colonies. One on Milewood Rd., Verbank, has used three different houses and been present since 1978 with four to eight pairs of Martins. Another colony on Prince Rd., Hyde Park, began in 1975 but apparently moved about 1994. A colony on Bedell Rd., Poughkeepsie, was used from 1994 to 2001. Another colony is on Woodstock Rd., Washington. A few Purple Martins are occasionally seen migrating in September.

Historical Notes: The oldest record of a Purple Martin colony in Dutchess County is from the 1860s¹ at Poughkeepsie. Mary Hyatt wrote that Purple Martins disappeared from Stanford about 1875 (*Bird-Lore*, 1920). Edgar Mearns also noted the Poughkeepsie colony in the 1870s saying their numbers were down due to House Sparrow competition. Crosby was aware of only two colonies, both in Poughkeepsie and at least one in 1905. Griscom only knew of the two Poughkeepsie colonies in the 1920s but suspected another in Hyde Park. The two areas in Poughkeepsie were on Cherry St. and Garden St. / Market St. Both near Main St. In 1929 Starlings took over both nest sites forcing the Martins to move. They moved to the Hudson River Freight Terminal building on the river front. However when that building was torn down they moved to the nearby Poughkeepsie - Highland Ferry house and were reported there by Maxwell Knapp in both May 1932 and 1933. This building was razed in November 1943, so Frost asked Frank Gardner to construct a Martin house. It was two-stories three-feet square, mounted by the adjacent Dayliner dock, and occupied within 24 hours (*Poughkeepsie New Yorker*, April 19, 1944 and May 25, 1947). Ralph Waterman's records include, "Purple Martins came to their house at Ferry Slip, foot of Main St. April 23, 1945, 2 males 1 female." Thirty or more Martins comprised the colony during the 1940s. George Decker noted they nested at the Dayliner dock, but did not return in 1953. By this time too the Martin house was in poor condition. From 1952 to 1954 a few pair nested in a Martin house at 238 Church St. In 1965 Pink and Waterman noted four colonies in Poughkeepsie. It appears the Poughkeepsie colony existed for at least 100 years in the same general area.

During the 1960s, more colonies were established or discovered in Dutchess County. They include St. Joseph's Normal Institute in Barrytown from 1960 to 1967; Briarcliff Farm, Pine Plains, from 1961 to 1973; Sherman Hill Rd., Dover Plains, from 1965 to 1980; Timothy Heights, Pleasant Valley, from 1966 to 1977; and shorter lived ones near Poughkeepsie. Since then other colonies have come and gone at Grist Mill Rd., Stanfordville, from 1974 to 1984; Salt Point Turnpike from 1975 to 1988; and a few for shorter periods of time. The earliest spring arrival date is one on March 24, 1920, at Poughkeepsie. The latest fall departure date is Oct. 10, 1958, near Poughkeepsie.

[1] Griscom does not give this date, but says "since the days of Giraud." Jacob P. Giraud, Jr. (1811-1870) published *Birds of Long Island* in 1844, which does not include the Purple Martin in Poughkeepsie. However, about 1860 Giraud moved to Poughkeepsie where he lived until his death. It is assumed the Martin record comes from this period.

———— **BARN SWALLOW** (*Hirundo rustica*) ————

Normal Dates: April 15 - September 1

Usual Locale: Throughout the county, often in barns
or open structures



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Barn Swallows arrive about mid-April. Sometimes the first one is seen alone, in other years ten or more might be seen together. Barn Swallows nest both singly and in colonies, which can reach 30 in number. By May they are busy building their mud nests, often on inside rafters of barns and other buildings. By July they are seen constantly swooping over fields for insects, as the young are being fed and fledged. By the end of July, they begin to flock in preparation for migration. Many are often seen perched on electric lines, sometimes with other swallow species. Most leave by mid-August, although some migrants are recorded in September.

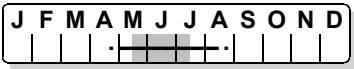
Historical Notes: The Barn Swallow population is basically unchanged from the earliest records. Stearns, in 1880, called them common, as did Crosby in 1921. Pink and Waterman called them very common in 1965. The earliest spring arrival date is April 6, 1981, with multiple reports immediately following. The latest fall departure date is Oct. 16, 1966 and 1972, with multiple records for the first week of October. Since 1961, the May Census shows relatively constant counts averaging 170.

Flocks of mixed swallows are not uncommon. Five swallow species, Tree, Rough-winged, Bank, Cliff, and Barn, were present on one wire on May 5, 1957, at Pleasant Valley, and again on May 2, 1959, at Cruger Island during a Waterman Bird Club field trip.

———— **CLIFF SWALLOW** (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*) ————

Normal Dates: May 4 - August 10

Usual Locale: Under the eaves of buildings,
particularly unpainted barns, in the eastern half of
the county



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Cliff Swallows are uncommon in Dutchess County. Frequently fewer than ten are seen all year. As with other swallows, they arrive late in April or early May. Those that stay build mud nests under the eaves of buildings by late May or June. Unlike nesting areas with relatively large colonies, only one to three pairs nest together in Dutchess County. Recent nesting locations have been at Wassaic, Smithfield, and the McEnroe Farm in Amenia. In 2004, Rodney Johnson discovered nests near Rhinebeck. During early August Cliff Swallows normally depart. As fall migration builds, they are sometimes found in large mixed swallow flocks.

Historical Notes: Cliff Swallows were common in the nineteenth century, but declined by the early twentieth century primarily from House Sparrow aggression and fewer buildings with rough wood for nest adhesion (Eaton). The decline reversed, with the first spring sighting by Crosby on April 20, 1914. On June 10, 1922, Crosby and Frost found three nests under the eaves of a barn near Brace Mt. Griscom noted increased breeding as far south as Pawling by 1932. Baker recorded nesting in 1936 at Chestnut Ridge.

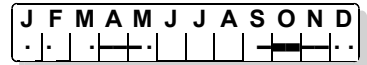
By 1959 the only reliable nesting location was on the Germond Farm near Upton Lake. Up to eight nests were found there through 1970, when they abandoned the site. While there may have been other isolated nesting locations, it was not until 1985 that Cliff Swallows were again found nesting, this time at Luther’s Livestock Auction Barn in Wassaic, where they continue to nest. Scattered small colonies generally nest in the eastern half of the county. The largest flock recorded by far is over 300 on Sept. 1, 1963, near Bangall by four Waterman Bird Club members. Since 1970, Cliff Swallows are usually found on one out of two May Censuses.

KINGLETS

——— RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET (*Corthylio calendula*) ———

Normal Dates: April 8 - May 15 and

September 20 - November 15



Usual Locale: Throughout county along brushy edges
and in forested areas

Transient

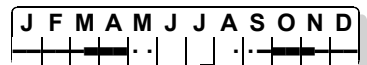
Status since 1990: Ruby-crowned Kinglets arrive in late September or early October. The earliest arrivals are of single kinglets, then small flocks appear, usually less than ten but occasionally as many as 20. Often found in mixed flocks with warblers or chickadees, they are told by their constant fluttering. Sightings in November are more often of single kinglets. A few stragglers may be found in December, and infrequently one will try to winter. As spring approaches, a few may arrive in March, but the majority appear in April in small loose flocks. Most have moved north by early May.

Historical Notes: The Ruby-crowned Kinglet seems little changed over the past 125 years as a migrant, but more winter than formerly. Stearns called them “not rare” in spring and fall, Eaton called them common transients, and Crosby called them abundant transients, recorded in winter and once in August (Aug. 15, 1916). The May Census records the Ruby-crowned Kinglet three out of four years, with usually less than five reported, although 47 were reported in 1967. The Christmas Count first recorded them in 1911 and not again until 1950. Since then one or two are found on half the counts, but 11 were reported in 1963 and 1976. There are a few unconfirmed summer reports.

——— GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET (*Regulus satrapa*) ———

Normal Dates: October 10 - April 23

Usual Locale: In forested areas, especially
plantations of conifers



Transient, Formerly Bred

Status since 1990: Golden-crowned Kinglets are mostly transients in Dutchess County. However, a few stay all winter. The first transients arrive the first few days of October or infrequently the last days of September. They are normally in loose flocks of less than ten. Depending on food and weather, they may leave in mid-November or stay through December. Golden-crowned Kinglets are usually seen singly in January and February. At all times they prefer coniferous forests. By the middle to end of March, some transients reappear, leaving again by mid-April. They are found least frequently in summer.

Historical Notes: In 1880 Stearns called the Golden-crowned Kinglet common except in summer. Mary Hyatt tracked spring arrivals between 1885 and 1905 at Stanfordville, noting Golden-crowned Kinglets in early April in nine years. Crosby gave dates from September 24 to May 5, calling them common transients and uncommon winter visitants. He noted one record at Turkey Hollow on Aug. 22, 1920. Griscom comments that few Kinglets made it to February or March, which is no longer true. Ralph Waterman, saying they are “so tame they came within 6 feet of me,” recorded 75 during Christmas week 1950 with the Dutchess County Bird Club. They have been found on just under half the May Censuses since 1959 and on only four before then.

Traditionally nesting in the Adirondacks, Catskills, and Berkshires, Golden-crowned Kinglets expanded their breeding range to Salisbury and Sharon, Conn., in the mid-1930s. They continued to expand, with one found singing on May 18, 1974, at Camp Sharparoon, Dover Plains, by Helen Manson. The following year, on May 17, 1975, in the same general area, a nest was being built in a spruce tree. It was completed by May 23. The nest was observed in June with no activity. On May 22, 1976, two Golden-crowned Kinglets were observed singing in the same area, but no nest was located. None was observed in 1977. On May 18, 1984, two Golden-crowned Kinglets were found at Quaker Lake, Pawling, by Sibyll Gilbert. In June one was seen feeding young. They were also observed in July. The following year, Sibyll Gilbert found six on June 21, 1985, on Quaker Lake Rd., two pairs feeding their young. The next June records were in 2005 and 2009, both on Quaker Lake Rd., there have been no July records since 1984 and no breeding evidence since 1985.

WAXWINGS

BOHEMIAN WAXWING (*Bombycilla garrulus*)

Casual Winter Visitant

Only Dates:

- One from Nov. 26 to Dec. 5, 1963, near Rochdale, first on the LaGrange side, later on the Poughkeepsie side; variously with ten to fifty Cedar Waxwings. Found by Pat Garthwaite, seen by Mary Key, Alice Jones, Dorothy Lloyd and Marion Van Wagner.
- Five on Nov. 18, 1983, at Buttercup Farm Sanctuary with twenty Cedar Waxwings, found by Marion Van Wagner, Helen Manson, and Mary Yegella.
- One on Dec. 12, 1987, at Tamarack Swamp by Marion Van Wagner.
- One on April 1, 1994, near Red Oaks Mill by Jim Key, with Cedar Waxwings.
- One on Jan. 29, 2005, along Tower Hill Rd., Washington, by Chet Vincent, with Cedar Waxwings.

Status: Traditionally a western species, they were formerly found in the East during infrequent winter irruptions. Since about 1970, they have become more regular and have been seen every year in northern New York and northern New England (Levine). They are often seen farther south in large flocks, sometimes staying until April.

CEDAR WAXWING (*Bombycilla cedrorum*)

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Throughout the county in small-fruit bearing trees



Status since 1990: Cedar Waxwings are normally seen in flocks of ten to fifty, though up to two hundred have been reported. They love berries and other fruit and move from area to area to feed. Their sleek, clean look presents a certain dignity. By May, flocks are smaller as some migrate and others prepare to nest. They are late breeders, with nests built in June and young first seen in July. In September, flocks increase in size until the

following summer. There is no noticeable movement during migration, as they wander when not nesting, especially during the winter.

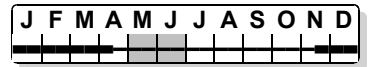
Historical Notes: Stearns noted Cedar Waxwings were abundant in flocks in spring and fall and that “several flocks” remained all winter in 1880. However, Crosby felt they mostly migrated in fall, noting only a few through early February. Found on Christmas Counts only twice before 1930 (in 1920 and 1927), sightings increased sporadically until 1970. Since 1970 they have been regularly found, although with a fluctuation in counts, from 21 in 1990 to 612 in 1994. The May Census shows the same variability as the Christmas Count, though Cedar Waxwings are found more years and in smaller breeding season flocks. There has been a gradual increase in reports of Cedar Waxwings since at least the 1960s, showing more flocks, larger flocks, and more wintering. The largest flock reported is 350+ on Dec. 16, 1980, at Vassar College by Otis Waterman. Flocks of 200 were reported on many occasions, usually in late winter or fall.

NUTHATCHES

——— RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH (*Sitta canadensis*) ———

Normal Dates: All year, though more common in winter

Usual Locale: Coniferous forests and residential feeders in winter



Irruptive Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Some Red-breasted Nuthatches are permanent residents and can be found any month, while others are transients or winter visitants, subject to irruption. The permanent residents are relatively few in number; less than ten are seen and heard in any particular month. Red-breasted Nuthatches are usually seen singly or in pairs. However, when an irruption occurs, the winter months may yield 30 or more around the county, many visiting backyard feeders and being more visible. They are also quite vocal and have a distinctive call.

The largest recent irruption was the winter of 1989-90, with smaller irruptions in 1990-91, 1992-93, and 1999-2000. The largest “flock” was recorded on Oct. 30, 1989, at Turkey Hollow by James and Mary Key. Mary reported “20+++,” writing, “Turkey Hollow was so full, I would like to say 40 or 50, but don’t dare.” The spring following an irruption often results in more remaining and breeding. Nesting begins in April, with young by the end of May. Winter visitants may arrive as early as September, though usually from late October to early December.

Historical Notes: The first report of a Red-breasted Nuthatch in Dutchess County is the winter of 1895-96, although some were likely present in previous years (*Auk*, 1896). Crosby called them “fairly common transient[s],” which Griscom expanded to “remarkably erratic transient; sometimes abundant in the fall, a few birds wintering [into January]; often unrecorded in the spring and never common.” He noted no record between February 7 and May 4. February and March records first appeared in 1952. Infrequently recorded on early censuses, Red-breasted Nuthatches have been found on approximately half of the May Censuses and Christmas Counts since 1958. The maximum counts are 26 and 23 in December 1977 and 1989, and 12 and 11 in May 1993 and 1991.

The first year of nesting is unclear.¹ A pair attempted to nest in a pitch-smeared cavity of a dead maple near conifers on the lawn of Bard College, Barrytown, on May 23, 1975. House Wrens used it afterwards. Nuthatches may have nested in a pine plantation at Sharparoon in 1975 or 1976; however, the nest tree fell down. Nesting apparently occurred in 1980 near the Pawling Nature Reserve. Subsequently, Red-breasted Nuthatches have been recorded throughout the summer and have nested in a number of scattered areas of Dutchess County, including Pawling Nature Reserve, Sharparoon, Hitchcocks, and Mack Rd, Union Vale.

[1] The 1976 *Supplement* to Bull's *Birds of New York State* states the first nesting was on May 23, 1975, at Dover Plains. This is thought to be at Sharparoon, an area where they did nest during the 1980s; however, no supporting documentation is known for 1975. Or possibly the nesting was confused with the attempt at Barrytown on this date.

——— **WHITE-BREADED NUTHATCH** (*Sitta carolinensis*) ———

Normal Dates: All year



Usual Locale: Residential areas and forests

Permanent Resident, Breeds

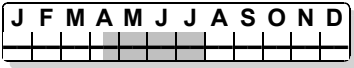
Status since 1990: White-breasted Nuthatches are truly permanent residents, as they are generally non-migratory. They are reported throughout the year in approximately the same numbers, although census counts are higher in winter when they are more conspicuous. One or two can usually be found in every residential or forested area, with more at winter feeding stations. They readily come to feeders, each taking a seed and landing upside-down on a nearby tree to open it. Nesting is in May, with young fledged in June. As cavity nesters, they occasionally use bird houses for their nest.

Historical Notes: White-breasted Nuthatches seem little changed since the earliest records. The May Census average since 1959 is 36, while Christmas Count average since 1958 is 77.

TREECREEPERS

——— **BROWN CREEPER** (*Certhia americana*) ———

Normal Dates: All year



Usual Locale: Forested areas

Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Brown Creepers are found throughout the county and throughout the year, but are not necessarily easy to locate. They always creep *up* tree trunks, starting low, blending perfectly with the tree bark. Their call is not often given and is so high-pitched that some people cannot hear it. Though most frequently seen singly, during April migration they may be in loose groups. Nests are tucked under loose bark and are difficult to find. The young look like their parents. Fewer are reported from July through September.

Historical Notes: In 1880, Stearns called the Brown Creeper rare and irregular. Mary Hyatt recorded spring arrival for nine years between 1885 and 1905. Eaton called them

common transients in 1907. Crosby called them common winter visitants with Christmas Count records from 1902 and suspected they may have nested in 1920. Griscom noted their wintering but called them more numerous on migration from April 2 to early May and September 24 to November 1. Griscom also felt certain they nested along the Swamp River between Pawling and Wingdale, as Creepers were recorded from mid-May to August, but a nest was never found. However, they nested in Putnam County by 1931 (Bull) and in Kent, Conn. in 1936, likely earlier (Zeranski and Baptist). By 1947, they nested on Long Island.

The first documented Brown Creeper nest in Dutchess County was found on May 31, 1958, on the Shunpike, Washington, by Florence Germond. Brown Creepers were recorded on the May Census from 1925 to 1929, four times from 1944 through 1956, and continuously since 1958. The Swamp River area was not included in the census in the 1930s and 1940s, which may account for the absence of records during those years. The average May Census count is seven since 1958, with a peak of 30 in 1966. The Christmas Count average is five since 1958, with a peak of 15 in 1962.

GNATCATCHERS

——— **BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER** (*Poliioptila caerulea*) ———

Normal Dates: April 20 - September 6

Usual Locale: Woods often near water



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Blue-gray Gnatcatchers arrive just after mid-April, although occasionally one is earlier. Usually seen singly or in very small groups, by May loose flocks up to ten are seen, while others are building nests. They are found in many places, including Nuclear Lake and Ferncliff Forest. In June young are first seen, and parents stay busy and visible finding insects. They remain through July and August, although some years sightings diminish. They leave by early September.

Historical Notes: The Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was formerly a southern species, nesting to southern New Jersey and occasionally wandering farther north. From the 1940s they expanded, initially along the coast. The first sighting in Dutchess County was on Sept. 10, 1922, at Rhinebeck by Crosby, Frost, and Griscom. It was a female, which was collected and deposited with the American Museum of Natural History. The second record is one on March 13, 1929, at Cruger Island by Frost. The next records were not until 1958. Three were seen on May 18, 1958, at Thompson Pond by five people on the census, and one on Aug. 8 and 14, 1958, at Stissing. They have been seen yearly since 1958.

On May 7, 1961, Gerald Kelly found a pair building a nest at Cruger Island, but on May 13 the nest was completely gone and the pair were building a new nest. The second nest was gone by May 30, but a pair was seen repeatedly carrying food. No nest or young were seen, although on June 3 they were still carrying food. In 1963 and 1964, only one gnatcatcher was found at Cruger Island. On May 10, 1964, two gnatcatchers were seen building a nest at Innisfree, but on May 13 that nest was gone, although the pair was still

present. During the 1970s, gnatcatchers were first seen in July and September. Each year a few were seen and sometimes a nest was found, but no young were actually seen until June 3, 1980, at Ferncliff Forest where a pair was seen feeding young. The proclivity of the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher to build, destroy, and then rebuild nests is well documented.

The earliest spring arrival date is two gnatcatchers on March 30, 2002, in Poughkeepsie. The latest fall departure is one exceptionally late on Nov. 30, 1983, at Vassar Lake. First found on the May Census in 1958, they steadily increased with a maximum of 74 found in 1996. The Blue-gray Gnatcatcher has continued to expand into northern New England.

WRENS

HOUSE WREN (*Troglodytes aedon*)

Normal Dates: April 23 - September 25

Usual Locale: Suburban residential areas throughout the county



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: House Wrens are migrants and begin arriving from mid-April. Like other wrens, they are most often seen singly or in pairs. The male sings a very bubbly song throughout the summer. In May, the male builds a number of nests in odd nooks and cavities using small sticks, half of which seem to fall below the nest. They also build nests in Bluebird houses, even occupied ones. Young are born in June, but House Wrens are also double-brooded and have young in August as well. They begin migration in September, with migrants from farther north seen into October.

Historical Notes: The House Wren population has not changed much in the past 125 years. They were commonplace in the 1870s and remain so today. They have been found on all May Censuses at relatively constant levels, with a maximum of 115 in 1991. There are three unconfirmed winter sightings of one day only.

WINTER WREN (*Troglodytes hiemalis*)

Normal Dates: April 11 - November 18

Usual Locale: Cool ravines such as Deep Hollow and Pawling Nature Preserve, also Thompson Pond, usually on the ground



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Winter Wrens can be found in Dutchess County every month but are only seen sporadically in winter. From the second week of April, migrants return to a few areas to breed. Their wonderful song simply goes on and on betraying their presence. They breed at Deep Hollow / Turkey Hollow, Thompson Pond, Pawling Nature Reserve, Pond Gut, and possibly a few other places. They nest in May. By August they are no longer singing and are much harder to find. They migrate in October and November and can be seen just about anywhere, though only briefly. A very few attempt to stay the winter.

Historical Notes: Edgar Mearns noted Winter Wrens wintering at Rhinebeck in the 1870s, while Stearns collected one on April 2, 1880, and saw others. Mary Hyatt lists them in January 1888 and subsequent years, always in winter. Eaton called them occasional winter visitants. Crosby called them common transients, giving dates from March 13 to May 8 and September 18 to December 17, and noting one January 1917 record in Poughkeepsie from Frost. Griscom says, "In a good fall one can see 6 or more birds in a day and 25-30 in the course of the season." While not rare, current sightings are far fewer.

Winter Wrens continued to be reported in winter and as transients until 1960 when the first June sighting occurred, two on June 25, 1960, at Thompson Pond by Otis Waterman and Brad Whiting. Since then Winter Wrens have been recorded at Thompson Pond after mid-May, with possible breeding in 1963. Occasional summer records have also come from Deep Hollow / Turkey Hollow starting in 1964, and regularly from 1969. The first *confirmed* Dutchess County breeding record was from Deep Hollow on June 10, 1981, when John Hickey found a nest with six nestlings. Winter Wrens have been recorded on May Censuses in 1925, 1934, and 1947, and on most since 1959, with a maximum count of 14 in 1989. One or two are normally recorded on about half of the Christmas Counts.

———— SEDGE WREN (*Cistothorus stellaris*) ————

Casual Visitant, Formerly Bred

Only Dates Since 1950:

One on May 11, 1953, on May Census, by Ralph Waterman, Ray Guernsey, and Frank Gardner.

One on May 14-18, 1980, on the Shunpike, by Florence Germond, seen by Otis Waterman, Eleanor Pink, Marion Van Wagner, and others.

Two on July 30, 1986, at Millbrook School, by Seward Highley.

One on June 9 and again on June 29, 2001, off State Line Rd., Millerton, by Brian Kane and Barbara Butler.

One on Sept. 13-15, 2012, at Stony Kill Farm, by Steve Golladay, photographed⁺. Also seen by Jim Clinton.

Status: Sedge Wrens are secretive birds normally found in damp meadows. If conditions are too wet or too dry, they will move to another area. They have always been uncommon and since early in the twentieth century have been decreasing in the Northeast. They do still breed in western New York and points farther west. Not often seen on migration, they are best found by their song.

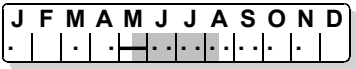
Historical Notes: There are relatively few records of Sedge Wrens in Dutchess County, although prior to the 1930s they bred in multiple locations. Lisenard Horton found nests on June 23, 1897; June 5, 1902, with seven eggs; and Aug. 22, 1902,¹ with five eggs. It is not clear exactly where those nests were located, but likely in the greater Poughkeepsie area. At least one was photographed⁺. Crosby provides migration dates from May 20 to October 3. Griscom notes multiple pairs found, probably breeding, east of Lafayetteville from 1912-20; near Brace Mt. from 1923-25; and at New Hackensack, Swamp River, and Amenia in the late 1920s and early 1930s. John Baker recorded one from June 6-26, 1941, and heard it singing on July 10 at Chestnut Ridge with no indication of nesting.

[1] There is some confusion on the Aug. 22 date. Crosby’s 1921 list has July 22 without the year as the latest nesting, but his 1917 list of late nesting dates has Aug. 22, 1902 and this was used by Griscom. Although Bull notes egg dates from May 28 to July 30, Sedge Wrens often nest twice and August dates are not uncommon. Recently found, the Yale Peabody Museum has a nest with three eggs collected by Horton on Aug. 22, 1902.

———— MARSH WREN (*Cistothorus palustris*) ————

Normal Dates: May 8 - August 3

Usual Locale: Large stands of cattails, such as at
Tivoli North Bay, Vandenburg Cove, and along
the Harlem Valley Rail Trail



Summer Resident, Breeds

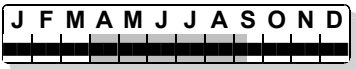
Status since 1990: Marsh Wrens generally arrive the second week of May. They quickly set about building nests, often many. While canoeing on Tivoli North Bay on May 28, 2000, Rich Nord found 18 nests. While Marsh Wrens nest in multiple locations in Dutchess County, they are more readily found at Tivoli North Bay, Vandenburg Cove, and along the Harlem Valley Rail Trail. Generally they remain concealed and are difficult to see but usually can be heard; however, four or five may be seen in the larger breeding colonies. They remain until early August then migrate mainly at night. Transients are occasionally recorded in September or the first days of October. There are two recent January records.

Historical Notes: Stearns found a Marsh Wren nest with five eggs on June 2, 1880, in the marsh at Dennings Point. Eaton does not list the Marsh Wren for Dutchess County, nor does Crosby include nest records from Lisenard Horton. Apparently Horton never found a colony. Crosby called Marsh Wrens abundant at Cruger Island, finding nests with eggs on July 2, 1917, and June 8, 1920. Griscom adds a large nesting colony at Thompson Pond and smaller ones at Pink’s Pond in Milan, Rudd Pond, and Grassy Lake. John Baker recorded ten to twenty Marsh Wrens a number of times between 1932 and 1952 at an unspecified location, but not Chestnut Ridge. They have been found on all May Censuses at a relatively constant ten, except for an increase to 40 from 1975 to 1986 when Erik Kiviat canoed Tivoli North Bay for the census. The earliest spring arrival date is April 13, 1974, and the latest fall departure date is Dec. 4, 1973, both at Tivoli North Bay by Erik Kiviat.

———— CAROLINA WREN (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Low elevation wooded and residential
areas



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Carolina Wrens are readily found year-round in low elevation wooded areas near water and around residences. Their lovely, loud song is readily heard most months. It is unusual to see more than two together, except for families and occasionally in winter. They come to suet feeders but only occasionally to seed feeders. In April they build their nests in everything from a clothespin bag to a flower pot. They are also double-brooded. A particularly cold or snowy winter will reduce their population considerably, as was the case in 1995-96 when 20 inches of snow fell on January 8 in a cold winter, although in two years their population was fully recovered.

Historical Notes: The first record of a Carolina Wren in Dutchess County is May 5-6, 1891, at Stanfordville by Mary Hyatt.¹ The second record is one on May 5, 1897 near Poughkeepsie by Lisenard Horton. Then on May 14, 1922, at Jackson Pond by Allen Frost. Griscom gives four more records, including May 24 to Nov. 21, 1930, at Cruger Island by Crosby and others, with no indication of suspected nesting. These records are followed by one on May 19, 1946, during the census; two on Oct. 7, 1950, at Boy Scout Camp Nooteeming, seen by many; and most years until 1959. After 1959, there are multiple records per year until May 1963, after which there are no records until April 1966, possibly due to a bad winter. Carolina Wrens are recorded continually on the May Census from 1973 and on the Christmas Count from 1974. The first nesting² in Dutchess County was May 1975 at Rochdale in a flower pot in the garage of Marianne Schuessler (*Wings over Dutchess*, June 1976, p.5). Carolina Wrens first became established in the western third of the county. It was not until the late 1980s that they expanded to the eastern third. Since then they have expanded tremendously and have nested throughout the county.

[1] This first record is recorded on Hyatt's accidental list and by Eaton. Crediting Eaton as his source, Crosby incorrectly copied the year as 1897. Griscom propagated this error and incorrectly attributed the record to Horton.

[2] Bull includes a map of nesting locations with Rhinebeck apparently indicated. No confirmed nesting is known up to the 1974 publication date. It is assumed to be Crosby's 1930 summer record.

MIMICS

———— GRAY CATBIRD (*Dumetella carolinensis*) ————

Normal Dates: April 24 - November 4

Usual Locale: Bushy areas anywhere in county,
including suburban residences



Summer Resident, Breeds

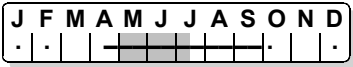
Status since 1990: Gray Catbirds, frequently found in backyards, signal spring has arrived when their cat-like call is first heard in late April or in May. One report called them “thick as fleas” in May. They build their nest, and in June the young are first seen. They like bushes, and the more one looks the more one finds. Twelve is a common number to find on a walk around a suburban neighborhood. During October they begin their fall migration. A few always linger, with one or two found each November and December. Some make it to January, often near a bird feeder, but only one is seen about every third year in February or March.

Historical Notes: In the mid-1870s, Philip Smith called the Gray Catbird “the noisiest of our song birds.” In the 1880s the Gray Catbird was common. Crosby said they were present from April 22 to November 10 and noted two December records (1915). Griscom added a Jan. 6, 1925, record at Rhinebeck. The first Christmas Count report is from 1950; normally one is recorded every other year. Always found on the May Census, the maximum count is 500 in 1993. Since 1990 the average May Census count (386) is approximately twice the average of the 1960s and 1970s. Winter Catbirds, while still not occurring every year, became more frequent by the late 1950s.

———— **Brown Thrasher** (*Toxostoma rufum*) ————

Normal Dates: April 15 - September 25

Usual Locale: Thickets and brushy areas



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Brown Thrashers are somewhat secretive, normally found on or near the ground. Usually only one is seen either digging among leaf litter under a bush or perched on a prominent exposed tree limb singing his heart out. They arrive about mid-April and quickly nest. Six were seen on July 4, 2003 in a powerline cut in East Fishkill. They begin their fall migration by late September, with the last sighting occasionally in October. A few attempt to winter, perhaps one every five years, but few survive to February.

Historical Notes: During the 1870s and 1880s, Brown Thrashers were considered common. Eaton called them fairly common and Crosby locally common. Pink and Waterman in 1965 called them very common. The first January report was in 1960. They were reported most winters during the 1970s but less frequently since then. The only Christmas Count report was one in 1971. Brown Thrashers have been found on all May Censuses in varying numbers. The maximum count was 150 in 1966; the second highest was 60 in 1965 and 1967. The reason for this three-year peak is unknown. They subsequently decreased each year to three in 1985 then jumped to 42 in 1986 only to decrease again to six in 2004.

———— **NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD** (*Mimus polyglottos*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Brushy areas including suburban residences



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Northern Mockingbirds are usually seen along hedge rows, often in residential areas. Their mimicking calls of other birds and their extended singing make them entertaining to hear, unless they call too early, which they often do. They also occasionally sing at night. They are mostly non-migratory residents found in nearly equal numbers all year. Usually one to four are seen at a time. Young fledge in June. In winter, they will defend a multiflora rose bush for food and shelter. A stunning albino Mockingbird was photographed+ Dec. 23, 2014.

Historical Notes: During the early nineteenth century, Northern Mockingbirds nested on Long Island and sometimes farther north, but apparently severe winters eliminated them. They were also seen as a result of attempted introductions (none known in Dutchess County) and as escaped cage birds. Stearns was told Mockingbirds were present at times near Fishkill Landing, but he did not find any in 1880. The first documented Mockingbird in Dutchess County was identified on May 7, 1919,¹ on College Ave., Poughkeepsie, near Vassar College by Prof. Frederick A. Saunders. It apparently stayed at least a few days, and a number of people heard it sing. The next records were on July 6, 1930, north of Millbrook by John Kieran,² and March 16, 1931 at Poughkeepsie (*Bird-Lore*, 1931). The next sighting was of one on April 12, 1946, at Shekomeko by Edward Spingarn (*Auk*, 1946). Two were present from Dec. 26 to March 13, 1948, on

Ziegler Ave., Poughkeepsie. Another was seen coming to a feeding station and bath for some period around Nov. 10, 1950, on Overocker Rd., Poughkeepsie.

Northern Mockingbirds first nested on Long Island in 1956 and in Putnam County in 1959. In 1960 they were reported in Dutchess County each month except January and September. These sightings comprised at least eight different Mockingbirds from Poughkeepsie to Red Hook. None stayed longer than a few weeks except one seen sporadically in Pleasant Valley. By 1963 they were recorded in eastern Dutchess County at Wassaic. The first nesting was on June 18, 1961, when three nestlings were discovered in a spruce at the home of Lee Estes, Pumpkin Lane, Clinton Corners. They were banded by Thelma Haight and photographed. From this point their population grew very quickly then leveled off around 1980. The severe winter of 1993-94 significantly reduced the population. They were first found on the Christmas Count in 1960; subsequent change is shown in ten year increments, 36 in 1970, 107 in 1980, 82 in 1990, and 44 in 2000. The first May Census record was in 1961; since then 19 were found in 1970, 90 in 1980, 109 in 1990, and 44 in 2000.

[1] Griscom records the date as May 17, 1919; it is not clear which is correct.

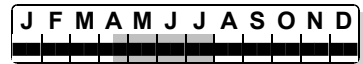
[2] John Kieran (1892-1981) was a noted naturalist, sports writer, radio personality, and television host. He wrote *A Natural History of New York City*.

STARLINGS

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*)

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Shopping centers, residential areas,
and farm fields where food is available



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: During late fall and into winter, European Starlings form flocks ranging from 100 to 500 birds. These flocks gather together to roost at night, totaling thousands. The flocks start breaking up in March, and by April they are nesting in any natural or man-made cavity, often beating native birds to the best nest sites or evicting them. Young are seen begging by late May and in June. Flocks with young start to form in August and are generally seen in farm fields and less frequently in residential areas. As winter nears, the flocks increase in size, often mixing with other blackbirds, and move to more residential and commercial areas where food is present.

Historical Notes: European Starlings were introduced to North America on April 16, 1889, when 72 were released¹ at Central Park, New York City, by Eugene Schieffelin (1827-1906), Maunsell Schieffelin Crosby's great-uncle. More were released in April, 1890 and April, 1891. Releases had been made as early as 1873 in other cities, but these all failed. Schieffelin released House Sparrows and numerous other European birds at other times² (Phillips).

While Eaton notes that Starlings were "established" in Newburgh by 1905, they were first recorded in Dutchess County on Oct. 24 and Nov. 3, 1909, at Grasmere by Crosby. They were next seen on Feb. 25, 1910, and have been present ever since. By 1921, Crosby called them abundant. The first documented nesting is from 1914, although they likely nested earlier. Starlings were first found on the 1910 Christmas Count when one was recorded. Eight were counted in 1911, 1000 in 1940, and seldom fewer since,

with over 5000 recorded a number of times. They have been recorded on every May Census, the time when they nest. The maximum count has approached but not surpassed 1000. While census counts fluctuate, there is no discernible trend. During the 1960s and 1970s, large roosts of five to ten thousand formed first near the Hudson River State Hospital then near the Mid-Hudson Bridge, usually mixing with crows.

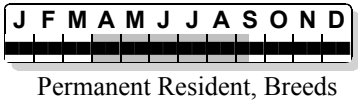
[1] Most reports mention Schieffelin releasing Starlings in 1890 and 1891 but he also released them in 1889. (*Forest and Steam*, vol. 32, p.273).
[2] See *Why Things Bite Back* by Edward Tenner, 1996, pp.119-21 for details about Schieffelin and birds he released.

THRUSHES

EASTERN BLUEBIRD (*Sialia sialis*)

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Near fields and pastures along fence lines



Status since 1990: Eastern Bluebirds, the state bird of New York, are found in Dutchess County throughout the year. The Waterman Bird Club provides nest boxes for a Bluebird Trail, with members regularly cleaning and monitoring the boxes. There are currently over 300 boxes on the trail, but there have been over 500 as recently as 1996. They are not in one linear trail, but rather anywhere Bluebirds are expected, primarily along fence lines and edges of fields. The boxes are usually mounted about four feet off the ground on posts with predator guards. The trail has resulted in Bluebirds again becoming common residents.

Beginning in March, Bluebirds that migrated south return and scout for suitable nesting cavities or boxes. The Bluebird has one of the longest spans of nesting times for any species in Dutchess County. They lay eggs in early April, with some hatched by the end of the month. If severe cold weather sets in, many perish. In May, Bluebirds are busy raising their brood. By June many start a second brood. The last fledge in early September, possibly from a third brood. Bluebirds will flock in October and November, resulting in groups occasionally as large as fifty but more often ten to twenty. Large numbers of Bluebirds winter in Dutchess County, but January and February may find fewer if the winter is especially harsh. Fifty Bluebirds were seen on Oct. 26, 1996, resting on a wire at Vassar College Farm by Joan and Stan DeOrsey, Carol and Peter Nelson, and Manuel Liu.

Historical Notes: In the nineteenth century, Eastern Bluebirds were particularly numerous due to fields being cleared and orchards planted. They suffered due to competition for nest sites from House Sparrows and Starlings, and finally from land use changes. Stearns called them abundant in 1880 and noted a few wintering in sheltered areas. Eaton called them common summer residents, arriving from February 16 and nesting by April 16. Crosby noted in 1921 that a few were seen “even in the dead of winter.” John Baker’s extensive records from 1930 to 1966 show a decline in both Bluebird sightings and fall flock size beginning in the late 1930s, with a slight increase in the late 1950s. Ralph Waterman did not record Bluebirds every winter or summer month during the late 1940s. The Bluebird has been found on every May Census. Since 1959,

the lowest count is six in 1960, and the maximum is 187 in 2001. The Christmas Count last recorded none in 1972, and a maximum of 248 in 1999. Baker reported a flock of 75 on Sept. 6-7, 1931, at Chestnut Ridge, the largest flock recorded.

Florence Germond began the Waterman Bird Club Bluebird Trail in Dutchess County in 1962 with 22 nest boxes. The trail was primarily in the center of the county from Pleasant Valley to Stanfordville. That first year, Bluebirds used one box to raise two broods and fledged six young (*Poughkeepsie Journal*, March 6, 1966). By 1965, 32 boxes were used by Bluebirds, 176 eggs were laid, 144 hatched, and 112 fledged. Each year more boxes were placed over a wider area of Dutchess County and more club members and others helped maintain and monitor them. In 1979, Bluebirds used 57 boxes and fledged 235 young. By Florence's death in 1994, over 400 boxes were placed and a high of 1022 fledged in 1992. Since the first box in 1962, nearly 20,000 Eastern Bluebirds have fledged from this trail, and many other boxes have been placed but not regularly monitored. Certainly Florence's efforts contributed significantly to the increase in Bluebirds in Dutchess County.

———— **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD** (*Sialia currucoides*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Dates:

One adult male from about March 10-21, 1978, on Fiddlers Bridge Rd., Schultsville, found by Francis VanAuken and seen by approximately 75 people. Photographed⁺.

One female from Dec. 27 to Jan. 27, 1999, on Mill Rd., Millerton, found by Elaine Anderson, Rich Nord, and Dot Fleury and seen by at least six others.

Status: Normally a bird of the far west, the Mountain Bluebird appears in the East sporadically, often in small irruptions. The 1978 sighting was the fourth record for New York State (Levine) and was preceded by one in November at Jones Beach State Park on Long Island. In addition to the Millerton sighting, the winter of 1998-99 yielded two other females, one each in Westchester and Orange Counties.

Comment: Reports of both sightings were accepted by NYSARC.

———— **TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE** (*Myadestes townsendi*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Dates:

One young female from March 4-16, 1953,¹ one mile northeast of Dover Plains, found by George Decker and collected by John George. The skin was at Vassar College but is now at the American Museum of Natural History. (*Kingbird*, 1957).

One from Jan. 7 to March 13, 1990, on Duell Hollow Rd., Dover, found by Marion Van Wagner, Mary Yegella, Dot Fleury, and Jean Beck and seen by over 100 others. Photographed⁺.

One from Jan. 2-3, 1995, on Harmony Rd., Pawling, found by Sybill Gilbert.

One on Nov. 29, 2013, near Hopeland, Staatsburg, found by Jim Clinton.

Status: The Townsend's Solitaire is a far western species subject to erratic wandering. Levine lists six state records, including the three from Dutchess County. The first state record was on Nov. 25, 1905, from Long Island; the second was the 1953 record above. In 1953 these two were the only known records east of Ohio.

Comment: The 1990 report was accepted by NYSARC; the 1995 and 2013 records were not submitted.

[1] Pink and Waterman, Bull, and Levine all give the earliest date as March 14. Decker's notes say, "first seen here during the first week of March," then "As found later on March 4 ..."

———— **VEERY** (*Catharus fuscescens*) ————

Normal Dates: April 29 - August 31



Usual Locale: Large, moist, forested tracts

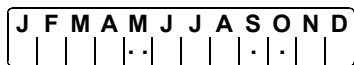
Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: The Veery, named after its call note, arrives in the last days of April or the first days of May after migrating from the neotropics. They have a wonderful descending flute-like song, which reveals their presence. Eight or more may be heard on a spring walk through the woods. Their nests are on or near the ground and not easily located. They breed soon after arrival, with young seen in June. Fewer are seen or heard as summer wanes. Many leave by the end of August, although a few migrants from farther north are seen in September and even into October.

Historical Notes: Stearns was not able to find a Veery in 1880 near Fishkill, likely due to the absence of moist, forested tracts. Mary Hyatt regularly recorded their arrival from 1887. In 1907 Eaton called them abundant summer residents. Crosby called them common summer residents. Found on all May Censuses, the maximum count is 160 in 1992, and the average is over 100 since 1992. The 1970-79 average was 52. The earliest spring arrival date is April 5 in 1962 and 2000. The latest fall departure date reported is Oct. 29, 1991.

———— GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH (*Catharus minimus*) ————

Normal Dates: May 7 - 29



Usual Locale: Heavily wooded areas

Transient

Status since 1990: Gray-cheeked Thrushes are not often seen in Dutchess County because they migrate at night and breed primarily in northern Canada. When observed, it is usually during migration in May. They are less frequently seen during fall migration. Since 1990 there are eleven spring reports, all in May, and only one fall report, which was of two on Oct. 27, 2001, at Reese Sanctuary. More recently, one was photographed* Oct. 17, 2016 by Maha Katnani in LaGrange, and again on Oct. 26, 2017 at Buttercup West.

Historical Notes: Early records of the Gray-cheeked Thrush are sparse. Crosby called them rather uncommon transients, giving dates of May 2 to June 9 and September 23 to 29. The oldest Dutchess County record is May 16, 1909, by Crosby. John Baker recorded Gray-cheeked Thrushes eight times at Chestnut Ridge between 1930 and 1966, seven times in May, and once in September. He also reported 25 on May 19, 1940, during the May Census. Gray-cheeked Thrushes are found on the May Census in cycles, with one to three found most years for five to ten years then absent most years for another five to ten years. The earliest spring arrival date is April 30, 1974. The only June record is June 9,

1912, in Poughkeepsie. The few fall records are spread between August 7 (1960) and December 1 (1976).

———— **BICKNELL’S THRUSH** (*Catharus bicknelli*) ————

Casual Transient

Only Dates:

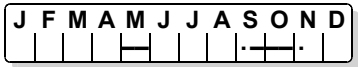
- Aug. 9, 1914, and Sept. 4, 1914, at unknown locations by Maunsell Crosby.
- One on May 27, 1923, at Hyde Park, collected by Arthur Bloomfield. Disposition of the skin is unknown.
- One on May 23, 1929, location unknown, by Maunsell Crosby (from Crosby’s hand updated “Ten All-Day Bird Censuses” with Griscom’s papers).
- Three on Sept. 29, 1940, at Chestnut Ridge, noted by John Baker without comment.
- One on Oct. 7, 2020, at Depot Hill, Poughquag, by Carena Pooth, photographs not conclusive. Not submitted to NYSARC.

Status: Bicknell’s Thrushes breed in high elevations of New York, northern New England, and eastern Canada. They are very similar in appearance to the Gray-cheeked Thrush, distinguished primarily by song and nesting location. The Bicknell’s Thrush is slightly smaller and has differences best told with bird in the hand. Until 1995 the Bicknell’s Thrush was classified a subspecies of the Gray-cheeked Thrush.

Historical Notes: Explaining his 1914 sightings, Crosby wrote, “The Bicknell’s thrush ... summer range is south of the [Gray-cheeked Thrush] and it therefore generally reaches us sooner.” (*Rhinebeck Birds and Seasons*, Rhinebeck Bird Club, p.47). Crosby noted in 1921, “Probably not rare transient, but a difficult [sub]species to recognize.” In 1922 he changed his 1914 sightings to hypothetical until a specimen was obtained, which happened the following year. Griscom, supporting the difficult identification, said, “Birds I have shot as possible Bicknell’s turned out to be Gray-cheeked.” It is likely any Bicknell’s Thrush seen in Dutchess County is identified as a Gray-cheeked Thrush, although Bicknell’s are known to migrate through eastern New York, and the specimen from Bloomfield clearly demonstrates that they occasionally pass through Dutchess County. However, except the one shot by Bloomfield in 1923 and examined by both Crosby and Griscom, the other sightings listed may be incorrectly identified.

———— **SWAINSON’S THRUSH** (*Catharus ustulatus*) ————

Normal Dates: May 9 - 25 and September 26 -
October 19



Transient

Usual Locale: Forested areas and an occasional lawn

Status since 1990: Swainson’s Thrushes breed from New York into Canada. They migrate north in May, with an occasional sighting in late April. Reports vary but seldom exceed a total of ten during the month. Fall reports are normally in October with some in September and November.

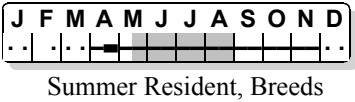
Historical Notes: Swainson’s Thrushes were common transients throughout the twentieth century. Griscom reports seeing 98 during May 1929. Though Swainson’s Thrushes are usually found on the May Census, counts can fluctuate considerably. The highest count was 28 in 1972; other years only one or two are seen. Spring migration is

concentrated in May, there are no June or early April reports. Fall migration is spread out, with an occasional late August report, and three December records, one each in 1952, 1974, and 2003. Bull notes all December reports are unsatisfactory as there has never been a specimen taken in December anywhere in the Northeast.

———— **HERMIT THRUSH** (*Catharus guttatus*) ————

Normal Dates: April 10 - November 20

Usual Locale: Forested areas and an occasional lawn during migration; nest in highest elevations



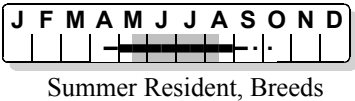
Status since 1990: A few Hermit Thrush may spend the winter in Dutchess County, but they are predominantly migrants and arrive in numbers in April. On a spring walk through the woods, one can normally find one or two or at least hear their lovely song. They are never seen in flocks. While many continue to migrate north, a few do breed in Dutchess County, mostly in the eastern half in places such as Pawling Nature Reserve and Deep Hollow. They nest in May, with young seen in June. They continue to sing throughout the summer but by August and September are quiet and reported less. Most migrants are seen in October, while stragglers continue to be seen in November and December. Most years at least one is reported during each winter month.

Historical Notes: The Hermit Thrush was recorded by Stearns in 1880 as a common transient and apparently wintering. Eaton, too, recorded them as transients, but Crosby and Frost found them nesting on both Brace Mt. and Bald Mountain in June 1924. Nesting had been suspected in 1920. They first nested in Connecticut in 1893. While some stayed late in the fall and arrived early in spring, no February sightings were recorded until Feb. 2, 1947, when Ralph Waterman recorded one. Another one was reported Feb. 27, 1949, at Brickyard Swamp. The number of February records has increased since the 1990s. One to four have been counted on about a third of the Christmas Counts since 1958 and most counts since 1991. Hermit Thrushes have been found on most May Censuses since 1959, the maximum count is ten in 2002.

———— **WOOD THRUSH** (*Hylocichla mustelina*) ————

Normal Dates: April 22 - September 20

Usual Locale: Deciduous forested areas



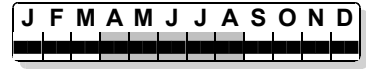
Status since 1990: Wood Thrush arrive the last week of April when their most beautiful song fills the woods. Listening to their song into the evening is one of the delights of spring and summer. Jim Southward referred to it as “the woodland flute.” By May up to ten are recorded on most walks through the woods. Young are reported by the end of June. Their migration begins in August with most gone by the second week of September. Occasionally stragglers are recorded in October.

Historical Notes: Stearns called the Wood Thrush “common, almost abundant” and noted they bred. Eaton, Crosby, and Griscom also called them common. The Wood Thrush has been found on all May Censuses with an apparent increase since 1989, contrary to an apparent decrease in breeding statewide. The maximum count is 318 in

2001. The earliest spring arrival date is April 3, 1963, while the latest fall departure date is a very unusual Dec. 7, 1969. There are also three late sightings in early November.

———— **AMERICAN ROBIN** (*Turdus migratorius*) ————

Normal Dates: All year



Usual Locale: Wood edges and backyards

Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: The perennial symbol of spring, American Robins are actually present in Dutchess County in numbers every month of the year. During the winter months, Robins flock around a food source, often multiflora rose bushes or other berry-bearing plants. Vassar College Farm is a typical wintering area. Winter flocks range in size from tens to hundreds. On Jan. 27, 2004, Chet Vincent estimated 2500 in the evening going to a roost of perhaps ten acres near Overlook and Cramer Rds., LaGrange, the largest flock recorded in Dutchess County. By the end of February or early March, true migrants from the south appear, and the large flocks break up. Some start nesting in April, others in May, with young by June. Many pairs will raise a second brood into August. By October they leave their nesting sites in forests and suburban yards and again congregate in large flocks, with many migrating south. A few flocks settle near a food supply and remain in Dutchess County all winter. It is not known if any individual Robins both nest and winter in Dutchess County.

Historical Notes: Although population numbers have not changed appreciably, American Robins altered their habitat preferences from forests in colonial times to more open areas as forests were cut during the nineteenth century. In 1880, Stearns recorded Robins as “very abundant” with “a few” remaining all winter and feeding on cedar berries. Crosby called Robins abundant from March 1 to December 25, noting “a few” sometimes winter. Crosby also noted nesting dates from April 20 to August 30. A few Robins wintered sporadically until 1948-49. Since then, some have wintered almost every year. From 1974-75, the wintering population increased significantly. The Christmas Count has averaged 254 since 1990 with a maximum count of 816 in 2001. The May Census has averaged 518 since 1990 with a maximum of 900 in 1993.

OLD WORLD FLYCATCHERS

———— **NORTHERN WHEATEAR** (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Date:

One in winter plumage, possibly female, from Sept. 27-30, 1981, at Cruger Island, found by Al Brayton and seen by 18 members of the John Burroughs Natural History Society and nine members of the Waterman Bird Club.

Status: A portion of the Northern Wheatear population breeds in the northeastern Canadian arctic, migrates through Europe, and winters in west Africa. However, some migrate, intentionally or otherwise, along the Atlantic coast, yielding over 40 records in New York State (Levine). They are most often seen in September and October.

Comment: The report of this sighting was accepted by NYSARC.

OLD WORLD SPARROWS

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*)

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: City or village centers, shopping malls,
farms



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: House Sparrows are abundant in some areas (city and village centers, malls, farms) and absent in others (areas away from humans). The common element where House Sparrows are present seems to be buildings with nooks and crannies.

Historical Notes: House Sparrows, native to Europe, were introduced numerous times into North America, first in the early 1850s at Brooklyn, NY followed by other cities into the 1870s. In some cases, they were introduced as a control for cankerworm caterpillars. They were apparently found in Poughkeepsie by the mid-1860s, possibly due to a local release (Alfred Hasbrouck in Barrows, p.20). They expanded their range across the state by the 1870s. In 1914 Allen Frost backed a program of their elimination (*Daily Eagle*, April 10, 1914).

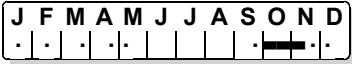
An early record for Dutchess County includes this comment, "... [the House Sparrow] multiplies so rapidly, and is of such a contentious disposition ... that the smaller native birds will be driven out" (Smith, 1877). It turned out that the species of caterpillars consumed by these smaller native birds whose populations were reduced became more troublesome than those eaten by House Sparrows (Forbush). Griscom says in 1933, "Formerly an abundant permanent resident; steadily decreasing since 1910, but still fairly common." The decline reversed and by the 1950s the House Sparrow was again considered a pest. The House Sparrow competition for nesting sites was a particular problem for Eastern Bluebird, and other species. During the 1970s, there was a decrease on the Christmas Count corresponding to a sharp increase in the population of House Finches.

PIPITS

AMERICAN PIPIT (*Anthus rubescens*)

Normal Dates: October 4 - November 15

Usual Locale: Plowed or harvested farm fields,
especially Greig's Farm, Red Hook and Rombout
Rd., LaGrange



Transient

Status since 1990: American Pipits are primarily seen during fall in flocks of ten to fifty. They arrive in early October and are usually seen on harvested farm fields. They may stay a few days or longer. Their plumage blends with the earth making it very difficult to repeatedly find them. By mid-November migration has ended. A few occasionally are seen in December, very rarely January or February. Spring migration is very erratic and

can occur from late March through May. Since 1990 very few have been seen in spring. Spring flocks also seem about half the size of fall flocks.

Historical Notes: There are no nineteenth century American Pipit records for Dutchess County, although they undoubtedly passed through. Crosby considered them rare in spring, noting sightings from March 2 to April 7, plus May 15, 1921. He considered them very common in fall from September 10 to November 24. The first December report is from Dec. 17, 1951, at Millbrook by Ralph Waterman. The first January report is two at Salt Point in 1977. They have never been recorded in February in Dutchess County. They have been recorded on the May Census seventeen times since 1956, and four times on the Christmas Count (1967, 1976, 1994, 2001). The largest flock is approximately 200, reported multiple times.

TRUE FINCHES

———— BRAMBLING (*Fringilla montifringilla*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Date:

One immature male on March 1-27, 1984, in Pleasant Valley at the home of Earl Brockway (*Kingbird*, 1984). Photographed*.

Status: Earl Brockway, a resident of Pleasant Valley and great friend of Ralph Waterman, found a different bird in his yard. A visit from Otis Waterman, Marion Van Wagner, Eleanor Pink, and Mary and James Key resulted in the identification of a Brambling. This Eurasian species is a vagrant to western North America. Reports and photographs taken by Otis Waterman were submitted to NYSARC. The record was accepted with this comment, "Many other Bramblings were found at widely scattered points in the United States and Canada during the winter 1983/84. The distribution of records of this and of other Palaearctic species suggests a Siberian origin for this bird. This was the eastern-most bird reported, although there are earlier records from western Massachusetts and New Jersey." This was the first documented New York State record for Brambling.

———— EVENING GROSBEAK (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*) ————

Normal Dates: October 16 - May 30

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
.	.	.	.	—	—	.

Usual Locale: At feeders, usually with sunflower seeds

Irruptive Transient, Bred Once

Status since 1990: Evening Grosbeaks are quite variable in numbers year to year. They normally arrive in October and stay through November, often visiting sunflower feeders. They are now scarce or absent through the winter. Flocks of ten or less return in April and May. The fall of 1995 had a good flight; 180 were reported throughout the county in November after a good October. Over 175 Evening Grosbeaks were sighted at 15 locations from mid-October to Dec. 1, 1997; the largest flock was 35 at Cary Arboretum. During other winters, observers reported one flock of up to 20 birds or none at all. The only recent summer records are in 1993 on July 5 at Salt Point and July 8 at Rhinebeck.

Historical Notes: Evening Grosbeaks were rare in New York in the nineteenth century. As the population expanded eastward in the twentieth century, numbers increased and peaked during the 1970s. By the 1980s declines were noted in the size and frequency of incursions (Levine). This statewide historical pattern applies in Dutchess County. The winter of 1889-90 saw a phenomenal incursion throughout the Northeast, resulting in many first records for the New England states. None were recorded in Dutchess County, but the first Connecticut record is on March 10, 1890, just over the state line in New Milford. The next large flight was 1910-11. That winter, Crosby recorded one on Dec. 25, 1910¹, at Rhinebeck, and Arthur Bloomfield reported two in Hyde Park on Feb. 24, 1911. He collected one of them. Mary Hyatt at Stanfordville recorded Evening Grosbeaks only one time from 1885 to 1925, on Dec. 29, 1916. Records slowly became more frequent. During February and March 1950 flocks of three to twenty-five were widespread in the county. There are records for most years in the 1950s and most winter months in the 1960s, 1967 being an exception. Throughout the 1970s, Evening Grosbeaks were regularly reported in flocks of ten, occasionally up to fifty, almost every month from October to April. The largest flock recorded is 250-300 on Nov. 9, 1972, at Quaker Hill by Mildred Hoffman. In 1978 there were 214, the maximum for a Christmas Count. None have been found on the Christmas Count since 1990. The May Census takers found them 14 times, all between 1955 and 1987.

The first summer occurrence in New York was in 1942; the first breeding in the state was in 1946 in Franklin County. An invasion occurred in the fall of 1961; 211 were recorded on the Christmas Count, the second highest for Dutchess County. The following summer established numerous breeding records in the Northeast. On June 17, 1962, Thelma Haight had a male at her feeder in Stissing, then a female regularly. On July 4 and 7, she saw the female feeding one young (*Kingbird*, 1963). This is the southernmost breeding record for New York and the only Evening Grosbeak breeding record for Dutchess County.

[1] This first record for Dutchess County is on the 1910 Christmas Count, but incorrectly recorded in *Bird-Lore* as a Pine Grosbeak. Griscom corrects this error on the bottom of page 177. However, in Crosby's "Preliminary List of Birds" it is again in error; it is listed chronologically first, but as 1919. Griscom propagates this error. It is correctly recorded in Crosby's "Autumn Migration" list.

———— PINE GROSBK (Pinicola enucleator) ————

Normal Dates: October 17 - March 28

Usual Locale: Throughout the county

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
.

Irruptive Winter Visitant

Status: When present, Pine Grosbeaks can be found in many places in small flocks of up to ten or twenty. However, they are infrequently in Dutchess County. The last good Pine Grosbeak invasion was the winter of 1985-86. The previous invasion was 1981-82. For both, Grosbeaks were seen from November through early March, and the largest flock was 25. There have been a few sightings since then, but only of one or two small flocks that have not stayed. A Christmas Count group found 35 in 1989, but no others appeared that year. None have been found in the county since February 2011.

Historical Notes: A countywide invasion of Pine Grosbeaks is recorded for the winter of 1895-96. At age 14, Franklin Roosevelt reported them as abundant from Jan. 27 to April 4, 1896, collecting four for Frank Chapman at the American Museum of Natural History. Mary Hyatt saw some east of Stanfordville on January 2 and February 8, and Caroline

Furness reported them all winter at Vassar College (*Auk*, 1896). Pine Grosbeaks staged widely spaced small invasions during the first half of the twentieth century. From 1961-82 they appeared every year except 1970 and 1974. The largest flock, over 100, was found on Jan. 7, 1969, at Clinton Hollow, but flocks of 30 to 50 were occasionally seen during this period. The last two decades have had more years of no reports, and the invasion years have had much smaller numbers. The earliest arrival is Oct. 13, 1957, and the latest departure April 26, 1964.

———— **HOUSE FINCH** (*Haemorrhous mexicanus*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Generally around houses and feeders



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: House Finches are abundant in areas of human habitation. Any yard with filled bird feeders has some. There are more at feeders in winter than in summer, when they disperse somewhat to nest. Winter feeders attract 10-20 birds per yard.

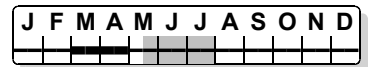
Historical Notes: House Finches, native to the western US, were introduced to the East on Long Island in 1940. They were released by pet dealers who had been selling them as “Hollywood Finches” or Linnets (*Auk*, 1953).

The first recorded sighting in Dutchess County was of a singing male in Millbrook by Paul Buckley and Walter Sedwitz on July 14, 1956. Next is from Marion Van Wagner’s records for April 12, 1960, “House Finch or Linnet feeding in yard — has been here for a while.” The third recorded sighting in Dutchess County was April 5, 1962, along Overlook Road near Rochdale, a suburban area. By 1965, they appeared on both the May Census and the Christmas Count, and had been found to nest at a few places in Poughkeepsie. Numbers exploded through the 1970s and 1980s. The population peaked in the mid-1990s and has declined somewhat. The May Census count exceeded 400 from 1992-94, but in some recent years is less than 100. The Christmas Count peak of 859 occurred in 1994. Recent Christmas Count tallies are about 200. Several observers reported birds with an eye disease in the mid-1990s and some noted a sharp decline in the number at their feeders.

———— **PURPLE FINCH** (*Haemorrhous purpureus*) ————

Normal Dates: Migration mostly March and April,
but timing is erratic

Usual Locale: Often at feeders



Permanent Resident, Breeds

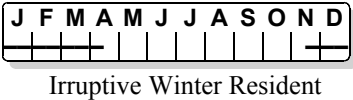
Status since 1990: The Purple Finch is found year-round in the county in small numbers. During spring migration, large flocks of 20 to 40 can be found some years, while intervening years may produce very few. Even the timing of the migration is erratic, with large numbers occurring in February some years and not until April in others. In 1994, the March records noted, “Where are they?” Then April records said, “Over 70 reported throughout the county from [April] 10th on. Almost like invasions of former springs in the sixties.” Winter numbers are also erratic. Summer populations are smaller, but more regular.

Historical Notes: Purple Finch numbers have always been erratic, showing peaks every five years or so. Marion Van Wagner found hundreds singing in Forbes Swamp on Feb. 10 and March 2, 1954, and Helen Manson found fifty near Moores Mills in February of that year. Marion found hundreds again at Forbes Swamp March 3, 1959, the next peak year. Purple Finches have generally been declining, and the peaks are lower. Christmas Count peak years had fifty through the 1970s. After that (with the exception of 132 in 1982) the peaks are about twenty. During the 1960s, flocks of more than 100 occurred a number of times during migration. A large flock of 200+ was found on April 14, 1975, on Kennels Road, Town of Washington.

The few summer records prior to 1900 were from Mary Hyatt. Scattered summer records occurred through the early part of the twentieth century and showed a gradual increase. Breeding was presumed to have occurred. No explicit breeding evidence is recorded until July 1959, when a nest with young was found in a spruce on Hollow Road, Town of Clinton. There have been June records every year since 1956, and Purple Finch is now regularly found in the county in summer.

———— **COMMON REDPOLL** (*Acanthis flammea*) ————

Normal Dates: November 6 - April 14
Usual Locale: At feeders and in brushy or wooded areas, especially birches



Status since 1990: Common Redpolls appear about every other winter. Generally, only a few are reported around the county throughout the season. Once or twice a decade, they are widespread and abundant in some places. The winter of 1997-98 was such a winter. Barb Mansell’s yard in Salt Point hosted twenty to fifty all winter, and in February she twice counted one hundred. Large flocks were regularly reported at Thompson Pond, the largest one 600 on March 7, 1998. Redpoll flocks of five to forty were found all over the county that winter. The next winter none were reported.

Historical Notes: Common Redpoll records back through the twentieth century maintain the pattern. Griscom noted the absence of any significant flights during the 1920s. Marion Van Wagner’s records mention hundreds at Vassar College Feb. 13, 1953, and a huge flock of about 1000 in late February 1960. Otis Waterman’s records for March 1960 state, “Redpolls are more abundant than any of us can ever remember, nearly everyone you talk to has them at their feeder.” The latest departure date is May 10, 1972, when an injured bird was found by James and Mary Key at Red Oaks Mill. The earliest arrival is at Hughsonville on Oct. 4, 1961.

———— **HOARY REDPOLL** (*Acanthis hornemanni*) ————

Casual Winter Visitant

Only Dates:
One on March 8, 1912, in Rhinebeck, by Maunsell Crosby.
One from Jan. 19 through March 15, 1969, found by Bill and Trixi Strauss on Coleman Station Road, Amenia. Also seen by many other observers.
One on Feb. 11, 1976, found by James and Mary Key on Spackenkill Road with 125 Common Redpolls.
One on March 19-20, 1982, at Marion Van Wagner’s feeder in Pleasant Valley with one Common Redpoll. Also seen by about ten others.

- One on Feb. 1, 1994, Game Farm Road, Pawling, found by Sibyll Gilbert. Accepted by NYSARC.
- One on Dec. 6, 2012, by Adrienne Popko at her home, N. Mabbettsville Rd., Millbrook, photographed.
- Two, male and female, on Feb. 17-21, 2021, on Fox St., Poughkeepsie, found by Kyle Bardwell with about 12 Common Redpolls. Seen by many, photographed*.
- One on March 8-19, 2021, Allen Rd., Salt Point by Barbara Mansell at her feeder often with ten Common Redpolls, photographed. Also seen by others.

Usual Locale: With Common Redpoll flocks

Status: There is much discussion that the Common and Hoary Redpolls are really one species. Differentiating between them in the field can be controversial due to the overlap of characteristics. Listed here are the documented reports of birds with the characteristics of a Hoary Redpoll. The description of the 1912 bird is from Crosby's "Supplementary Notes on the Birds of Dutchess County, N.Y." The bird was found in a flock of Common Redpolls, perched in a linden sapling. Crosby notes, "Its general coloring was a great deal whiter than that of the other birds in the flock, so much as to keep it constantly distinguishable from the rest, and it was apparently both larger and fluffier." Eleanor Pink and James Southward wrote accounts of their sightings of the 1969 bird, noting the paler "frosted" redpoll with a white rump and less streaking on the sides than other redpolls. Other reports are less convincing.

———— **RED CROSSBILL** (*Loxia curvirostra*) ————

Normal Dates: March 14 - May 12

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
.

Usual Locale: At feeders or in conifers

Irruptive Winter Visitant

Status: The only report since 1990 is one in Claudius Feger's yard in Fishkill on March 14, 1993. During the previous decade, Red Crossbills were reported only in May 1984 and April 1988. Red Crossbills appeared to the north and west of Dutchess County during the winters of 2000-01 and 2001-02 but were not reported in the county.

Historical Notes: Early records include only a few sporadic reports of small numbers of Red Crossbills. They are completely absent for several years and then appear in numbers, as fits the definition of an irruptive species. Stearns felt that "it doubtless occurs frequently and in winter", yet cited only one local record, October 1877. Mary Hyatt records a visitant on Feb. 10, 1888. The flight years since 1960 are 1961, 1964, 1966, 1969-70, and 1972-73. A flock of 45 seen on Nov. 26, 1969 by Mary Key and Roz Davis was the largest on record. Typical groups were of ten or fewer. The only October records are from the start of the 1972-73 flight year, October 26-28 from Millbrook School, Cary Arboretum, and Dutchess Hill. The latest departure was in 1970 when they stayed at several feeders in Pleasant Valley until the end of May. Red Crossbills occurred on the May Census only four times; two in 1964, 13 in 1970, three in 1973, and one in 1984. They also appeared on four Christmas Counts; three in 1950, four in 1964, one in 1969, and five in 1975. During the peak years of the 1960s and 1970s, the birds frequented feeders in addition to the more traditional conifer sites.

——— WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL (*Loxia leucoptera*) ———

Normal Dates: November 10 - April 26

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
.

Usual Locale: At feeders or in conifers

Irruptive Winter Visitor

Status since 1990: Incursions of White-winged Crossbills occur during three or so winters each decade. In 1990, there were two sightings of flocks of 15-25. On March 3, 1990, a flock of 25 was in a line of spruces along a roadside in Verbank. Several had been hit by cars. There are also reports from March and April 1998 and a few from November and December 2001.

Historical Notes: A large flight of White-winged Crossbills occurred in the Northeast during 1916-17, moving as far south as Washington, D.C. There were few New York sightings, one of them in Rhinebeck on Dec. 1, 1916. Only scattered records exist until 1953, when a large flock of unknown size was noted in Poughkeepsie Feb. 5-9, 1953. The flock was part of a massive incursion. That same year, flocks of over 200 were reported on Long Island, and flocks of up to fifty at several locations in New Jersey (Bull). The only Christmas Count to find White-winged Crossbills was in 1968; six were sighted. The 1970s had a couple of reports every other year. Five frequented a feeder from early April until May 17, 1974. The winter of 1981-82 had a number of reports from November through March of flocks of up to 20. Four other winters in the 1980s had a few reports each.

——— EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH ———

(See Miscellaneous Reports, page 251.)

——— PINE SISKIN (*Spinus pinus*) ———

Normal Dates: October 10 - May 31

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D

Usual Locale: At feeders, usually thistle feeders, or in conifers

Irruptive Winter Resident

Status since 1990: The 1990s saw two winters with large numbers of Pine Siskins (1989-90 and 1993-94), and two winters with no reports (1994-95 and 1998-99). The largest flock in 1990 was 100+ in February. Many other flocks that year were 20-40 birds. They stayed longer than usual; five were reported through June. During the next flight winter, 1993-94, the largest flocks contained about 20 birds. During more typical years, a few lucky people had small numbers (1-10) at their feeders for some or all of the season. Peak numbers occur in late October through November and again in March and April; a few remain through the winter. The earliest arrival is one that stayed just an hour at a feeder on Sept. 23, 1990. Most depart by mid-May, but a few remain, some into June. One visited Barbara Mansell's feeder, Salt Point, off and on from June 28 to August 14, 2021.

Historical Notes: Griscom's description of the Pine Siskin in the county still fits today, "... sometimes common in April and November; rarely recorded in spring, unless present the preceding fall or winter; never wintering in any numbers." Pine Siskins are recorded on about a third of the post-1958 May Censuses; the 1988 census has the peak count of 95. They were found on only seven of the earlier May Censuses. About half of the Christmas Counts find any siskins at all. The highest counts were in 1963 (168) and 1977

(163). There are at least six reports of 100+ since the mid-1960s, the largest is the flock having 300+ birds found on the Vassar College golf course on Oct. 15, 1971. March 1972 had "20-50 at most feeders - probably over 5000 in county". There are a few summer records. The first was one female Aug. 4-16, 1982, at Florence Germond's feeder in Washington. Other summer records: one July 23, 1986; one July 18, 1988; three July 1-15, 1990; and several Aug. 20, 2000. They have nested (rarely) in the northwest hills of Connecticut.

———— **AMERICAN GOLDFINCH** (*Spinus tristis*) ————

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: At feeders, usually thistle feeders, and in open and brushy areas



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Anyone who has a thistle feeder has at least a few goldfinches. Some have as many as fifty at the feeders. Except in deep woods, every field trip has some calling goldfinches fly over. Visits to weedy fields, especially during the late summer breeding season, can turn up large numbers. American Goldfinches are regularly seen year-round. The numbers increase during the spring and fall as migrants pass through.

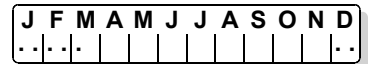
Historical Notes: Stearns called them abundant and noted a "great many passed the winter (1880) here." Griscom notes that, while they were always common in spring, summer, and fall, they could be scarce in winter. Historical nest records show the late nesting pattern of this bird. In general, observers found American Goldfinches building nests in late July, young hatching in August, and feeding young in September. The five eggs found on July 18, 1899, by Lisenard Horton is considered an early date. The latest date of eggs hatched is Sept. 16, 1901, also found by Horton. The date range for feeding young is Aug. 21, 1988 (earliest) to Oct. 16, 1964 (latest). While fifty at feeders is not uncommon, the maximum reported was 170 at Carena Pooth's feeders on March 18, 1993. Away from feeders, the largest flock of 200+ was reported on Peach Road in Pleasant Valley on Oct. 2, 1984, and again on Sept. 28, 1986.

LONGSPURS

———— **LAPLAND LONGSPUR** (*Calcarius lapponicus*) ————

Normal Dates: December 14 - March 5

Usual Locale: Agricultural and other open fields in northern half of county



Irruptive Winter Visitant

Status since 1990: Dutchess County lies within the wintering range of the Lapland Longspur, an Arctic-nesting bird. They visit but only occasionally stay long in the area. When present, they travel with Snow Buntings and Horned Larks in open fields. The winter of 1989-90 was a good season for Lapland Longspurs. Helen Manson and Susan Joseph reported nine, the highest count, on Dec. 19, 1989, at Red Hook Flats. Longspurs were reported through the winter in Red Hook. No more were found in the county until 2002. Chet Vincent found one at a farm in LaGrange with Killdeer on April 2, 2002. This is a new late date for Dutchess County but within the normal departure range for the

state. In December 2003, a few appeared at Greig Farm and in the Millerton area. The Waterman Bird Club field trip to Southlands Farm found one on Feb. 14, 2003.

Historical Notes: The earliest record of Lapland Longspur details a specimen collected by Arthur Bloomfield in Hyde Park on March 4, 1892, after a snowstorm. Griscom knew of only three more reports through 1932. Five were banded at the Millbrook School for Boys during 1940 and 1941. Between 1961 and 1990, longspurs were reported almost annually in small numbers (one to four). The earliest fall arrival date is for three on Oct. 23, 1965, at Briarcliff Farm. Pink and Waterman speculate that “the few records prior to this time [1961] may only indicate fewer winter observers.” An outstanding year was 1978, when up to four Lapland Longspurs were observed at each of five different county locations from January 14 through March 5.

———— **CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPUR** (*Calcarius ornatus*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Date:

One male Nov. 5, 1968, south of Rhinecliff along the railroad tracks, by Helen Manson and Alice Jones.

Status: Unlike this Dutchess County report, the accepted reports for Chestnut-collared Longspur elsewhere in New York were either collected or found in breeding plumage, which distinguishes it from the more common Lapland Longspur. Although normally found in the central United States, this species has also been recorded along the Atlantic Coast. A specimen was collected in Connecticut on Aug. 29, 1968.

Comment: Two experienced birders observed this bird from 11:30AM to 1:00PM feeding in a patch of foxtail grass. Their notes describe the bird as follows:

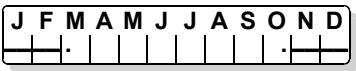
- Tail much white with black triangle when in flight.
- Feet with definite long spur, legs pinkish brown.
- Striped crown, finch-like bill but not as strong and more tapered, eye ring.
- White chin, dark vertical lines each side of neck from lower mandible to top of breast.
- Flight call a two note musical twitter, heard each time he flew.
- At times a definite white and black shoulder patch particularly after alighting, when bird fluffed feathers this area disappeared.
- Breast and belly dusky with an under blackish color when feathers were ruffled.
- Back streaked light and dark brown.

Although found before the formation of NYSARC, a report was submitted to NYSARC in 2006 and accepted.

———— **SNOW BUNTING** (*Plectrophenax nivalis*) ————

Normal Dates: October 30 - March 15

Usual Locale: Agricultural and other open fields
usually in northern half of the county



Irruptive Winter Resident

Status since 1990: Snow Buntings spend the winter on windswept open fields, often with Horned Larks. Greig Farm on Rockefeller Lane in Red Hook is the most often reported location. Snow Buntings also frequent a number of other places, including Southlands Farm, Baird State Park, and the northeastern part of the county, especially in manured fields. During a typical year, flocks of up to fifty are found in a few places

around the northern half of the county. Some years, the numbers are much lower, five or fewer. Once a decade or so, there is a peak year. The most recent was the winter of 1989-90. During February, Marion Van Wagner watched a “blizzard of Snow Buntings” at Greig Farm, 1000-1500 seen several times. The earliest arrival in recent years is Oct. 20, 1994 at Stony Kill, yet there were few other reports that winter. They usually leave toward the end of February. Occasionally a few stay until March. In years when few are seen, they might not be found after January.

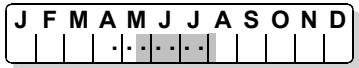
Historical Notes: Griscom considered the Snowflake (a lovely, early name) to be an irregular winter visitant seen occasionally after snowstorms for a few days. The winter of 1928-29 marked the first time they stayed through the season. A Snow Bunting banded by Frank Trevor at the Millbrook School for Boys on Jan. 20, 1941, was recovered alive on a westbound ship 20 miles off Iceland on April 18, 1941 (*Bird-Banding*, 1945). The first Christmas Count Snow Bunting occurred in 1956. The species was found on most counts from 1966 to 1980, but only on three (1989, 1995, and 2003) since then. The earliest fall arrival date is Oct. 17, 1965, on Mt. Beacon. The latest spring departure date is March 27, 1977, at Swift Pond. Flocks of 500 have been reported numerous times; the 1000-1500 seen February 1990 is by far the largest.

SPARROWS

———— **GRASSHOPPER SPARROW** (*Ammodramus savannarum*) ————

Normal Dates: May 5 - July 27

Usual Locale: Grasslands in the north and eastern parts of the county



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status: In 2005 two Grasshopper Sparrows were found June 4, 15, and 21 at Greig Farm, Red Hook. Six were at Greig Farm on July 2, 2005. None appeared to be young. However on July 8, 2006 one young Grasshopper Sparrow was seen there with eight adults on a club field trip. Since 2008 they have also been recorded on Schultz Hill Rd., Pine Plains. Prior to these sightings, there had been only eight reports of Grasshopper Sparrows since 1990, usually of one individual. The previous confirmed breeding was a young bird found in 1982 on the Rickes farm on Oswego Road in Union Vale, where adults were seen and heard all season. Since 1974, there has been only one August record (1982), one September record (1974), and one October record (1988).

Historical Notes: While the earliest documented Dutchess County record is of a nest with five eggs on June 1, 1901, there is no reason to believe Grasshopper Sparrows were new to the county then. They increased in population as fields were cleared during the nineteenth century. Griscom considered them common summer residents but noted a decline in the 1920s. The earliest spring arrival and latest fall departure dates recorded by Crosby are April 19, 1914, and Oct. 29, 1915. Baker found them at Chestnut Ridge, commonly in the 1930s and fewer in the 1940s. After not recording them a number of years in the 1950s, he found six in May 1959 and then a few per year until 1966, when his records end. According to Pink and Waterman, in 1965 Grasshopper Sparrows were fairly common in the eastern and central portions of the county, the Dutchess County airport, and along Route NY-199. By 1979, the bird had become uncommon, and only a few breeding pairs were left. May Census first failed to record Grasshopper Sparrows in

1957, and shows small declining counts through 1984. From 1985 through 2005, it was only found in 1992 when one was reported. It has again been found most years since then.

———— **LARK SPARROW** (*Chondestes grammacus*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Dates:

- One adult on Feb. 5 to April 4, 1965, at Terhune Farm, Salt Point, by Czecher and Ralph Terhune and many others. Photographed.
- One adult on May 11, 1966, at Salt Point, by Margaret Bowman.
- One adult on Feb. 29, 1992, at Earl Brockway's feeder, Pleasant Valley.
- One adult on Oct. 18, 1997, at Vassar College Farm gardens, found by Liz Hinkley and Cheryl Barrett, seen by Mary Key, Barbara Michelin, and Joan and Stan DeOrsey. Photographed.
- One adult on Nov. 5-8, 1997, at Bowdoin Park, found by Stan DeOrsey and Helen Andrews and seen by many on a Waterman Bird Club field trip. Photographed.
- One adult on Aug. 22-23, 2014, on Salt Point Turnpike, Stanford, found by Barbara Mansell, photographed⁺ by Deborah Tracy-Kral and Carena Pooth, seen by others.
- One immature on Oct. 21, 2021, at Greig's Farm, Red Hook by Wendy Tocci.

Status: Lark Sparrows are rare but regular in New York, appearing most often in fall on Long Island. Starting in the middle of the nineteenth century, this western sparrow of open dry woodlands expanded eastward as lands were farmed. However, by the 1920s their numbers were already starting to decline. A few migrate to the mid-Atlantic coast and are found on Long Island. They are infrequent inland in New York.

Comment: Three observers submitted reports to NYSARC of the 1997 bird at Vassar College Farm, which were accepted. The 2014 sighting was also accepted by NYSARC.

———— **LARK BUNTING** (*Calamospiza melanocorys*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Date:

- One adult male on May 12-13, 1970, at Stissing, by Thelma and Paul Haight, Eleanor Pink, Otis Waterman, and others (*Kingbird*, 1970)¹.

Status: The Lark Bunting, a rare vagrant statewide, is most often seen in the fall on Long Island. The Dutchess County report is only the second inland record in New York. It is also unusual because it was in spring and upstate. Normally Lark Buntings are found in the far western prairies of the United States.

Comment: A good account of the sighting is extant. At the time of the sighting, NYSARC had not yet been established, and no report was ever submitted to that group. The Stissing bird appeared at the Haight's feeders, moving between the window feeder and the edge of a juniper. From the account, "He was in beautiful spring plumage, all black with large white wing patches, yellow legs, and his head seeming rather bluish."

[1] The first printing of this book noted a photograph existed, that is in error, none are known.

—— CHIPPING SPARROW (*Spizella passerina*) ——

Normal Dates: April 15 to October 25

Usual Locale: Widespread; particularly fond of large conifers for nesting



Summer Resident, Breeds

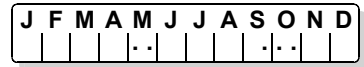
Status since 1990: Spring migration begins with an occasional March appearance. Most years the first Chipping Sparrow arrives during the first two weeks of April; the full complement is in place by mid-April. In favored nesting areas, usually parks, farms, and places with some openings among trees, five to ten pairs may nest in close proximity. Most Chipping Sparrows depart in October after forming flocks of 30 or so. A few linger into November. One spent the winter, Jan. 1 to Mar. 5, 2002, at Carena Pooth's feeders in Poughquag. It was an unusual but well-studied and photographed winter resident.

Historical Notes: Since the earliest records, Chipping Sparrows have been abundant summer residents. There were no winter records until the winter of 1966-67, when Marion Van Wagner found one at her feeder in Pleasant Valley on Dec. 20, 1966, and Jan. 3, 1967. One spent the winter (Dec. 15, 1981, through March 1982) at Vaughn Morrison's feeder in Chelsea Ridge. Florence Germond hosted an immature from January 8 through March 1984 in the Town of Washington. Prior to the 1950s, they wintered rarely on Long Island. They are now reported regularly there during the winter, but less often inland. Since Chipping Sparrows lose their distinctive rusty caps and eye stripe in winter, careful study or a photograph is necessary to correctly identify them. Since 1959 May Census takers have found from 90 to 150 Chipping Sparrows every year in gradually increasing numbers. The largest count was 243 in 2005.

—— CLAY-COLORED SPARROW (*Spizella pallida*) ——

Normal Dates: May 12 - 19 and
September 24 - October 22

Usual Locale: Edges and brushy fields, gardens in fall



Transient

Status: The first Dutchess County Clay-colored Sparrow record is one from May 25 to July 1974, at Rockefeller University Field Research Center, by Robert Smart, Davis Finch, and Donald Kroodsmas.¹ It was a male found to be paired with a female Field Sparrow. The nestlings were collected and appeared to be full Field Sparrows. Apparently the Field Sparrow mated with her own species, he departed, and the Clay-colored Sparrow stepped in. (Bull supplement)

From Dec. 12, 2002 to April 20, 2003 one was at Kristin Smith's feeder in Rhinebeck. This was apparently the first inland state winter record. There are a few winter reports from Long Island. The Clay-colored Sparrow has been seen multiple times in spring but more often in fall, as it continues to expand its range eastward. In the fall they can be easily confused with Chipping Sparrows.

Historical Notes: The Clay-colored Sparrow has been expanding eastward since at least 1950. They first bred in New York in 1971, since then there are widely scattered nesting reports across the state. They first nested in Vermont by 2007, in Massachusetts in 2007, and in Maine in 2011. The species is recorded annually on the Long Island shore during fall migration.

[1] Donald Kroodsma is professor emeritus at University of Massachusetts, formerly at Rockefeller University Field Research Center, Millbrook; and is an authority on bird vocalizations. He is the author of *The Singing Life of Birds*.

———— **FIELD SPARROW** (*Spizella pusilla*) ————

Normal Dates: March 15 - October 31



Usual Locale: Open, bushy fields

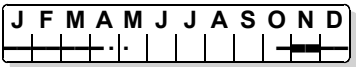
Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Field Sparrows are found in ones and twos in many places, up to ten can be found in particularly good habitat, such as the open field on the north end of Nellie Hill with its grassy areas, scattered bushes, cedars, and a few trees. Many winters one or two Field Sparrows are found in their breeding habitat and at nearby feeders.

Historical Notes: Field Sparrows show no decline in May Census numbers, averaging 43 since 1958. Always a common summer resident, they began wintering regularly during the 1960s. Helen Manson found two on Nov. 6, 1958, at Moores Mills, the first winter report. Since then, they are found on many Christmas Counts. The greatest numbers occurred during the 1970s, with a peak of 27 in 1971.

———— **FOX SPARROW** (*Passerella iliaca*) ————

Normal Dates: October 20 - April 15



Usual Locale: Under feeders and around bushes

Transient

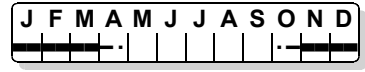
Status since 1990: Fox Sparrows come through earlier in the spring and later in the fall than most migrants. They go through in a matter of days in March, though not always the same days each year. Numbers decline through April. They appear on only seven May Censuses, the first in 1964, all as single birds, as most are gone by then. In the fall, Fox Sparrows are absent until mid-October. In November they are widespread and seen in ones and twos. Most winters one or two are reported. Fox Sparrows had been regular winter visitors to the Poughkeepsie yard of Joan and Stan DeOrsey. The winter of 1999-2000 the DeOrseys had one or two from Dec. 27 through April 1, four during March, and seven on March 9 and 27, which is remarkable in recent times for the number and duration of their stay.

Historical Notes: To Stearns, Fox Sparrows were abundant in migration in 1880. Griscom called them common, abundant at long intervals. Baker recorded 136 on April 2, 1933, during a spring that also had very large numbers around New York City (Bull), and 75 on April 8, 1939, all at Chestnut Ridge. Both of Baker's records indicate higher numbers than any other reports. The first winter record is one on Dec. 8, 1949, in Marion Van Wagner's Pleasant Valley yard. The first Christmas Count appearance was one in 1950. Since 1958, one or two Fox Sparrows have wintered every few years and have been seen on about half the Christmas Counts. During the 1970s, flocks of up to 15 were occasionally seen, and groups of four to ten were common. There are no records after mid-May or before October.

——— AMERICAN TREE SPARROW (*Spizelloides arborea*) ———

Normal Dates: October 20 to April 15

Usual Locale: Brushy fields, feeders, and, when there is a snow cover, roadsides



Winter Resident

Status since 1990: A few American Tree Sparrows arrive on October 6 or 7, although most appear after mid-October. Some years none appear until November. They spend the winter in numbers that vary from year to year. Some years flocks of twenty to fifty occur in many places. Other winters only small groups of five or so occur. Numbers decline in April as most birds depart by mid-month. The May Census recorded two in 1990 and three in 1995. There is one August report, but no supporting photograph was taken.

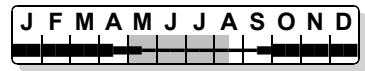
Historical Notes: American Tree Sparrows have been common winter residents since records were first kept. About once a decade, a few birds linger long enough to be part of the May Census. Although recorded on every Christmas Count, the numbers have been declining. The high count of 849 occurred in 1966. Through the mid-1970s, Christmas Counts averaged 500; the average count for the 1990s is less than 140.

——— DARK-EYED JUNCO (*Junco hyemalis*) ———

Normal Dates: October 1 - May 15

Usual Locale: Summer: Steep, forested slopes.

Winter: Feeders, roadsides, brushy areas



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Dark-eyed Juncos are winter residents in abundance and breeders in a few places in the county. A pair or two can be found nesting in areas with steep, forested slopes, such as Thompson Pond, the southern part of Tamarack Preserve (Deep Hollow Road), Pawling Nature Reserve, and Bog Hollow (Amenia). In winter, the birds that fly up from the roadside as a car approaches are frequently juncos, as evidenced by the white outer tail feathers. All feeders have at least a few and some have 20-30 Dark-eyed Juncos through the winter.

Historical Notes: Crosby, Frost, Flewelling, and Griscom found a nest and four eggs June 15, 1924, at Bald Mountain, the first documented nesting in Dutchess County. The next suspected breeding area to be discovered was Brace Mountain in June 1961 when a singing male was discovered. They were known to breed in Massachusetts north of Brace Mountain, and possibly in nearby Connecticut. However, breeding in Connecticut was not confirmed until 1963. In Dutchess County, a nest with two young was found in Deep Hollow on June 30, 1963, by Ken and Roz Davis and Jim and Mary Key. Subsequently nests have been found in other county locations as well as south of Dutchess County.

Griscom and Crosby indicate that juncos were more abundant during the spring and fall migrations than during the winter. Today the numbers do not decline through the winter, perhaps due to more feeders. In 1946 the Christmas Count recorded 127 juncos. It was the first count to exceed 100. The maximum Christmas Count tally was 900 in 1976; the average count since 1958 is 394. The May Census usually finds four or fewer juncos in most years.

Comment: Ornithologists divide the Dark-eyed Junco into 14 subspecies, some with distinctive plumage. Previously they were grouped into four species, including the Slate-colored Junco in Dutchess County. Subspecies interbreed producing intergrades,

which make subspecies identification difficult. Juncos from the Far West, Oregon Juncos, have been reported in Dutchess County multiple times, nearly always a single bird. Some sightings were for a day and some for two or three months, usually at feeders between late November and early March. Most occurred during the 1960s. The first reported sighting in Dutchess County was one from Dec. 30 to March 6, 1960 at the Fishkill feeder by Jean Wisner. Apparently she also had one in the winter of 1958-59. It is not known who saw this bird but there was confusion in identifying it. The following list is only those sightings which were confirmed as Oregon Juncos.

- One female from Nov. 30 to Feb. 9, 1963 at Schyler Dr., LaGrange, feeder by Pat Garthwaite and 11 club members.
- One male from Jan. 17 to Feb. 1, 1963 at Stanfordville by Betty Deuel. Seen by Roz Davis and Helen Manson. Photographed by Ken Davis. Again December to February 1964 seen by club members, also Dec. 29 to February 1965 or later, and January to February 1966. Thought to be same bird over four winters.
- One male and one female from Feb. 3, 1965 at Pleasant Ridge, Poughquag feeder of Margaret Langtry. Seen by Helen Manson, Roz Davis, Mary Key, Don Borquist, and Harold McLaughlin. Two seen again in January 1966 and one November 1968, thought to be same birds.
- One from Jan. 11 to March 2013 at Stanfordville by Deborah Kral. Also from Dec. 10 to April 2, 2014. Thought to be same bird and photographed+ by Debi.

For a number of years, Maunsell Crosby banded birds at Rhinebeck, most frequently Dark-eyed Juncos. No recoveries are particularly noteworthy, but some are documented in *Natural History* (Crosby, 1924). His journals also include extensive tables of birds banded from 1919 to 1928. Based on his recoveries, Crosby concluded that the same individuals generally returned to his feeders each winter. The same could not be said for White-throated Sparrows which were not re-trapped.

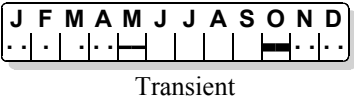
On Jan. 27, 1930 Crosby trapped what he thought was a White-winged Junco and this was documented¹ but subsequently determined by Griscom to be an albinistic Slate-colored Junco, approximately 0.5% of which show white wing bars.

[1] *Abstract of the Proceedings of the Linnaean Society of New York*, number 43 & 44, “The Ornithological Year 1930 in the New York City Region” by T. Donald Carter, pp.48-57. The skin was deposited in Vassar Brothers Institute museum. There are no accepted records of a White-winged Junco anywhere near the Northeast. Griscom discusses the skin in his *Birds of Dutchess County*.

——— **WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW** (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*) ———

Normal Dates: May 1-23 and October 1-31

Usual Locale: At feeders and with other sparrows in weedy, brushy areas



Status since 1990: Most White-crowned Sparrows come through rather quickly in May in flocks of up to five or ten. One or two are sometimes seen in April. In the fall, they are found in flocks of up to 25, more than half in distinctive immature plumage. In fall, they frequent weedy garden areas, including the gardens at Stony Kill. A few stay into December, and fewer still into January and February. One or two have been found on a quarter of the Christmas Counts since 1958. When they winter, it is generally in farm areas.

Historical Notes: Mary Hyatt included White-crowned Sparrow on her occasional visitant list in May 1892 and 1905. Crosby considered them a common transient and noted one spent the winter of 1916-17 at the feeding station of Vassar College Professor Frederick Saunders. This record is notable as White-crowned Sparrows were rare in winter in New York before 1947 (Bull). The next winter record in Dutchess County was in 1949 on the Christmas Count. There was one each in 1950 and 1951 and several in the 1960s, some spending the winter. Bill and Trixi Strauss had one to three each winter from 1972 to 1977 at their farm in Amenia. Griscom said that fewer were reported in the fall, probably due to the immatures getting “lost in the hordes of other sparrows.” Pink and Waterman noted fall White-crowns were reported more frequently after 1958, probably because more observers were in the field. The May Census counts are quite variable, ranging from none (1992) to 81 (1995). Yet the overall average of 15 per year has held steady since 1958.

———— **HARRIS’S SPARROW** (*Zonotrichia querula*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Dates:

- One immature from Jan. 15 - May 6, 1968, at feeder of Mr. & Mrs. James Sweeney, Dover Plains. Many observers during the period, including Eleanor Pink and Otis Waterman. Photographed⁺. The bird molted from immature to nearly adult plumage during its stay.
- One adult male from Oct. 12-14, 1969, at feeder of Marion Van Wagner, Pleasant Valley. Confirmed by Eleanor Pink, Helen Manson, and others.
- One immature from Dec. 16, 1981 - Feb. 28, 1982, at feeder of Trixi Strauss, Amenia. Also seen by Florence Germond, Eleanor Pink, and others.

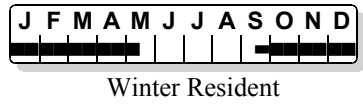
Status: The eastern boundary of the normal winter range of Harris’s Sparrow is the Mississippi River valley. However, they infrequently wander to the East Coast, often staying for an extended period near a feeder. They have been reported in New York more than fifty times since the first confirmed report in 1931 (Levine).

Comment: The 1981-82 sighting was not submitted to NYSARC.

———— **WHITE-THROATED SPARROW** (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) ————

Normal Dates: September 12 - May 23

Usual Locale: Brushy areas and woods with dense understory during migration, feeders in winter



Status since 1990: White-throated Sparrows move in from the north during late September and leave by mid-May. From October through April, they are reported at many feeders, up to thirty or forty at some. Found on most outings while present, they are particularly abundant at Buttercup Farm Sanctuary and Vassar College Farm, where up to fifty have been counted. White-throated Sparrows nest in areas of Connecticut adjacent to Dutchess County.

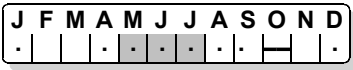
Historical Notes: Stearns called them “perhaps the most abundant species during migration,” but did not find them in winter. By 1920, some wintered casually at feeding stations. Pink and Waterman said the species had been a sparse winterer prior to 1967. There was a distinct increase in winter populations in the mid-1970s. The peak Christmas

Counts were 320 in 1975 and 362 in 1976. The average count during the 1960s was 40, rising to 142 after 1980. During the early part of the twentieth century, breeding was limited almost exclusively to the Adirondacks. Through the rest of the century, breeding ranges slowly expanded to the south and to lower elevations, approaching Dutchess County. A very small number of summer records exist throughout the century, beginning with a singing male at Rhinebeck during the summer of 1908. Other sightings include one in Rhinebeck July 24 and 27, 1921; some in late August in the 1960s; and in June 1984 and 1998. All are presumed to be summer, non-breeding visitors.

Comment: The Millbrook School for Boys ran a bird banding station year-round for a number of years beginning in 1939. White-throated Sparrows were the most frequently banded species during the 1960s, followed by Tree and Song Sparrows.

———— **VESPER SPARROW** (*Pooecetes gramineus*) ————

Normal Dates: October



Usual Locale: In migration, weedy fields and gardens

Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Vesper Sparrows are spotted most often in October during the fall sparrow migration. There are only three breeding season records in the 1990s, May 1990, June 1991, and May 1995, and no reported nesting evidence. In mid-June 2005, Breeding Bird Atlas workers found several Vesper Sparrows at Greig Farm, Red Hook. On a follow-up trip July 2, Barbara Michelin and Barbara Butler found a young bird and two adults. Birders active prior to the 1980s were familiar with the melodious Vesper Sparrow song and found them by ear, often at dawn or dusk. Today many birders, having rarely heard a Vesper, may miss the few that are still around. Winter records since 1988 are Dec. 18, 2005, when Barbara Butler found one on Downey Rd. and one on Indian Lake Rd., both just south of Millerton; plus four or more sightings, some with photographs, from the winter of 2014-15 from the central and eastern parts of the county. More recent are reports from February 2017 and December 2019.

Historical Notes: The Vesper Sparrow increased as farm lands were cleared in the nineteenth century. According to Griscom, the Vesper Sparrow “positively swarms” in the interior uplands of the county. It has been many years since Vesper Sparrows swarmed. Baker’s records show a decline from 1938 to 1942 to a level that appeared stable through the 1950s. In 1964, Pink and Waterman listed them as very common in summer, but less so than prior to 1933. Winter reports had increased by 1964, including one that spent the 1955-56 winter in Pleasant Valley. In 1979, Pink and Waterman lamented that this sparrow had almost disappeared from the county. Indeed, the normal May Census count of five to ten declined after 1974 to one to five. Since 1984, they have been found on less than half the censuses. A few were found on six Christmas Counts between 1958 and 1972, but none since. There have been two winter records since the 1970s, Jan. 5, 1988, when an individual was seen feeding along Rymph Road in Pleasant Valley and Dec. 18, 2005, mentioned earlier.

For breeding, Vesper Sparrows require open fields with very short grass or some bare ground, as in corn or potato fields or sheep pastures. This habitat is still present but declining. Breeding season reports occurred in the 1980s, mostly from the BBS route in the northern part of the county. Prior to 2005, the previous confirmed record of breeding

was by Sibyll Gilbert, who found a recently fledged bird in the Quaker Hill area in 1981 while working on the first Breeding Bird Atlas.

———— **LeConte's Sparrow** (*Ammospiza leconteii*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Date:

One immature on Oct. 9-10, 2011, at Greig' Farm, Red Hook, found by Peter Schoenberger and photographed⁺. Also seen by Douglas Koch and photographed.

Status: LeConte' Sparrows nest in central Canada south to the northern US and predominately migrate via the Mississippi Valley. While a few have been found in New York in both Spring and Fall, they are secretive and not easily identified by most birders.

Comment: The report was accepted by NYSARC.

———— **NELSON'S SPARROW** (*Ammospiza nelsoni*) ————

Casual Visitant

Only Dates:

One on Sept. 30, 1971, at Tivoli North Bay, by Erik Kiviat.

One on May 17, 1983, at Tivoli North Bay, by Seward Highley and students.

One from Oct. 17-31, 2009, at Southlands Farm, Rhinebeck, found by Mark DeDea and Peter Schoenberger, photographed⁺ by Gene McGarry, seen by many.

One from Oct. 10-16, 2011, at Greig's Farm, Red Hook, found and photographed by Deborah Tracy-Kral, also photographed by Maha Katnani, and Peter Schoenberger.

One from Oct. 21-25, 2021, at Greig's Farm, Red Hook, found by Matthew Rymkiewicz, seen by a number of people and photographed.

Status: The Nelson's Sparrow winters along the coast south from Long Island, and nests primarily in Canada. Most sightings are of fall migrants, there are only a few spring state records from late May to early June. In 1995, the Sharp-tailed Sparrow was split into the Saltmarsh Sparrow and Nelson's. The Saltmarsh is confined to the coast.

Comment: The 1983 report was not accepted by NYSARC. The 2009 report was accepted and noted "the excellent photographs indicated the subspecies *alterus*, which nests around Hudson Bay."

———— **HENSLOW'S SPARROW** (*Centronyx henslowii*) ————

Last Date: Oct. 10, 1965

Extirpated, Formerly Bred

Historical Notes: At least through 1917, neither Crosby nor Lisenard Horton was able to locate a Henslow's Sparrow nest in Dutchess County. From Griscom,¹ "The Henslow's Sparrow breeds commonly at Chestnut Ridge (Baker), locally throughout the Harlem Valley uplands from Pawling to Millerton, on the high uplands between Millerton and Pine Plains, at Amenia and near Lafayetteville. ... Near the Hudson River, however, it is rare and irregular. It bred ... in a meadow near Rhinebeck in 1924; in 1929 a colony appeared in the Astor Flats just south of Red Hook, and in 1930 this colony had doubled. In 1932 Mr. Joseph J. Hickey found 4 pairs in a field near Tivoli."

Baker continued to record Henslow's Sparrows at Chestnut Ridge into the 1940s, when the summer records became fewer. After 1944, he found them only in May. After

several years of no reports, his last records are in 1956, one on May 6 and another on August 11. George Decker recorded Henslow's Sparrow in Dover Plains during the late 1950s. There are a few reports from Pleasant Valley in the early 1960s. The last report of this species in the county is two on Oct. 10, 1965, along Wappinger Creek near Plass Road, seen by Marion Van Wagner and Eleanor Pink. All of the 1960s reports are migration records. May Census takers found them 12 times from 1928 to 1943, but only twice since, in 1953 and 1955. Since the 1930s, no records explicitly note breeding evidence. The last reports of Henslow's Sparrows during the breeding season were in June 1956, May 1958, and May 1959.

Henslow's Sparrows were last known to nest on Long Island in 1952 (Bull). Formerly, they were found locally as far north as New Hampshire. They are still found locally from central New York farther west but are declining there as well. While they often do not return to previous nesting sites, their decline has been attributed to the reduction in farm lands and increased development.

[1] Griscom, p.169, incorrectly includes the Henslow's Sparrow as breeding at Grasmere. The list of birds breeding at Grasmere on pp.53-55, plus Crosby's "Nesting Dates" in the Rhinebeck Bird Club's 1917 *Yearbook*, indicate they did not breed at Grasmere.

———— SAVANNAH SPARROW (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) ————

Normal Dates: April 9 - October 31
Usual Locale: Large, open fields of grass or alfalfa
for nesting; weedy places in migration



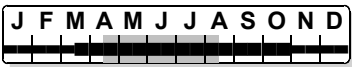
Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Of the grassland sparrows, Savannah is the only one that can still be readily found in the county. Ones and twos appear in many open fields. Particularly favored fields in the eastern areas can host up to ten birds during June when they breed there. During fall migration, Savannahs concentrate at sites like Stony Kill and Vassar College Farm gardens, where counts of 20 or more occur in October. Through the winter, one to three birds show up most years. Observers who visit Greig Farm, Red Hook, for wintering Horned Larks often find as many as ten Savannahs. There have been no March reports since 1984. Apparently the winter birds continue farther south as winter deepens.

Historical Notes: Although always present in the east, the Savannah Sparrow increased as forests were cleared. Since the 1880s, they have remained a common transient and a presumed local nester. The first confirmed breeding record is a fledgling on Aug. 21, 1921, by Griscom near Pine Plains. The May Census records 10-15 each year; the high count is 61 in 1968. The first occurrence on a Christmas Count and first winter record was two in 1946. Since 1958, they have been found on 18 Christmas Counts, each with one to three birds. The peak is six in 1995.

———— SONG SPARROW (*Melospiza melodia*) ————

Normal Dates: All year
Usual Locale: Widespread; weedy, brushy fields;
residential areas



Permanent Resident, Breeds

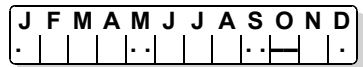
Status since 1990: Song Sparrows are found in many habitats. They are abundant during spring and fall migration and very common during their long breeding season. Finding nests is not easy, but adults defending territory or feeding young are common sights.

Early nests, built before leaf-out, are often on the ground near a grass tussock. Later nest sites include bushes. During the fall migration, 20 or 30 can be found in October at favorable locations, such as the gardens at Stony Kill and Vassar College Farm. Though less common in winter, one to five can still be found at feeders and in farm areas. Spring migration swells the numbers during the latter half of March.

Historical Notes: All historical lists include Song Sparrow as a common resident and abundant migrant. Baker's records show flocks decreasing in size over the years. May Census numbers average 162 since 1959 and a high of 329 in 1991. Christmas Counts average 44 since 1958, peaking at 142 in 1970. Song Sparrows have been recorded in winter since at least 1880.

———— **LINCOLN'S SPARROW** (*Melospiza lincolnii*) ————

Normal Dates: May 6-17 and September 25 -
October 20



Transient

Usual Locale: Weedy and brushy areas

Status since 1990: In spring, one or two Lincoln's Sparrows are reported most years. They are more numerous during the fall migration; up to five are reported each October and a few in September. The earliest spring arrival is April 16, 1999, at a Pleasant Valley yard. There is one recent winter report, two individuals on the Pawling Christmas Count Jan. 1, 1992.

Historical Notes: Historical records indicated Lincoln's Sparrows to be more common in spring than fall. The first documented record of a Lincoln's Sparrow is May 12, 1901. However, the species is believed to have been present throughout the nineteenth century. Unless searching for them, the birds are easily overlooked. Griscom notes, "... if special attention is paid to it, 6-12 birds a [spring] season can be found near Rhinebeck. Mt. Rutsen and the lane to Cruger Island are the best spots." Higher fall numbers have been seen since the 1940s. There are only two August reports: one on Aug. 20, 1981, well observed at Beaver Dam by Marion Van Wagner, Eleanor Pink, and Helen Manson, and one immature and one singing adult on Quaker Hill Aug. 15, 1983. A Lincoln's Sparrow spent time at the feeders of Florence Germond, Town of Washington, Dec. 13, 1969, through Jan. 15, 1970, and another at Bill and Trixi Strauss' feeder, Amenia, Jan. 10 through Feb. 23, 1972.

Comment: Winter reports are generally met with skepticism as this is a difficult identification and no winter specimen has been collected in the state. Unfortunately, none of the county winter records to date are supported by photographs. The reports cited here include written details.

———— **SWAMP SPARROW** (*Melospiza georgiana*) ————

Normal Dates: All year



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Usual Locale: Marshes and shrub swamps

Status since 1990: Swamp Sparrows are common in their preferred wet habitats. Visitors to places such as Thompson Pond, Millbrook School marsh, or Cruger Island will find up

to ten during spring migration and five or so during the breeding season. Even small swamps have one or two. Reports decline during August and September. During October, Swamp Sparrows also appear with other migrating sparrows at Stony Kill and Vassar College Farm. One or two are reported during most winters.

Historical Notes: Crosby’s and Griscom’s characterization of Swamp Sparrow as a locally common breeder, common in migration, and scarce but present in winter still applies. Many of the Swamp Sparrow habitats in the county are protected, so their numbers have remained fairly stable. The May Census has averaged 53 birds per count since 1959. Five or fewer are found on about half of the Christmas Counts since 1958.

———— **EASTERN TOWHEE** (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*) ————

Normal Dates: April 15 to October 24

Usual Locale: Thickets, brushy fields, woods with dense understory



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Widespread but not evenly distributed, Eastern Towhees can be found in numbers (ten or more) in favorable habitat. Among the places hosting many Towhees are Nellie Hill and Sharparoon in Dover, Mack Rd. in Union Vale, and Cascade Mountain Rd. in Amenia. Towhees arrive slowly in April. In May, they build their nests on or near the ground. Some years no Towhees are reported after early October. Other years they stay through October, a few linger into November. Since 1990, the only December report is one on Dec. 17, 2004 on Rombout Rd., LaGrange by Chet Vincent. Now and then one will spend the winter (from January on) at a feeder, which happened at Marion Van Wagner’s in Pleasant Valley in 1990 and at the Ten Mile River Farm, Dover, in 1994.

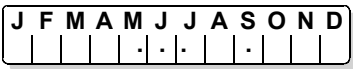
Historical Notes: Towhees are on all the early lists as common summer residents and breeders. The first wintering Towhee was found by Ralph Waterman in December 1948. Levine notes that Breeding Bird Surveys show declines for Eastern Towhees in the southeastern part of the state. May Census counts declined from the 1960s through the 1980s but have recovered somewhat since then. The count peaked at 200 in 1963 and averages about 90. Deer browse of understory plants likely impacts Eastern Towhees in this area.

CHATS

———— **YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT** (*Icteria virens*) ————

Normal Dates: May 16 - July 14

Usual Locale: Areas of dense shrubs



Transient, Formerly Bred

Status since 1990: Peter Relson found a Yellow-breasted Chat at Vassar College Farm in early July 1996, where it remained for a few weeks. One was found in the same place May 23, 1997, and last seen June 10. The following year, a single Chat was found again at Vassar College Farm on May 16 and last reported July 4. There was no report of a female or any breeding activity for any of these sightings. The only report of two Chats

(singing males) came from Wiccopee May 23-30, 1995, where Carol Jack had seen one two days earlier. Ken McDermott found one in the same area May 21-23, 1991. The only other occurrences of Chats since 1990 are one May 21-24, 1991, on the Shunpike, and May 19, 2002 on Allen Road in Clinton. One was photographed⁺ in June 2015 at Hopeland, Staatsburg where it has returned through 2021.

Falls sightings have been very infrequent however one was seen Sept. 23, 2019 in Wappingers Falls, and another Sept. 14-16, 2021 at Dennings Point.

Historical Notes: Mearns reported Yellow-breasted Chats at Fishkill in the 1870s. Crosby called the chat locally common, as did Eaton. Griscom considered the Yellow-breasted Chat a common summer resident, yet noted a decline in numbers and a retraction of the breeding range from the northern parts of the county. Prior to 1920, several pairs nested around Rhinebeck at Grasmere and also at Mt. Rutsen. By 1931, East Park was the northern limit of regular sightings of chats. Only one to three pairs were found annually in the 1950s and early 1960s. The last pairs presumed to be nesting were observed in 1966 along Deep Hollow Road and near Red Hook. Chats had been recorded every year through 1967; 1968 was the first of increasingly frequent years with no reports. Although numbers have continued to decline, the birds have followed a pattern of appearing for days or weeks in an area for three to four years in a row, as in the recent Vassar College Farm sightings. The Lithgow end of Deep Hollow Road is another place they frequented for a series of years. Their usage of successional habitat that outgrows their needs may account for this pattern.

Prior to 1966, up to three chats were found on 37 of the 47 May Censuses. Since then, they have been found on only five censuses. Dunn and Garrett (1997) have noted Yellow-breasted Chats wandering to the north and east of the breeding range in the fall and early winter. From 1959 to 1972 and in 1986, there were about 14 fall and early winter reports, the latest on Dec. 27, 1970, at Amenia Union. Three of the 14 reports were of birds found dead: Oct. 5, 1960, Dover Plains; November 1959 in Poughkeepsie; and Dec. 26, 1959, in Poughkeepsie. There have been no fall reports since 1986.

BLACKBIRDS

——— YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*) ———

Accidental Vagrant

Only Dates:

- One male on Sept. 11-12, 1963, at St. Joseph's Normal Institute, Barrytown, by a brother.
- One male on March 6, 1974, with 1000 blackbirds at Buttermilk Pond by Robert Smart.
- One male on April 14, 1979, north of Pawling, reported by Marian Schlegel, at feeder.
- One male on April 9-11, 1989, on Robinson Lane, Wappingers Falls by Nathan and Mary Hoose, photographed. Also seen by James and Mary Key.
- One male on Aug. 3, 1989, in Pleasant Valley yard with grackles by Marion Van Wagner.
- One male on Feb. 1, 2006, at Thompson Pond coming to roost at dusk with many Red-winged Blackbirds, found by Chet Vincent.
- One male on Jan. 1, 2008, in the Great Swamp, Pawling, by Rodney Johnson.

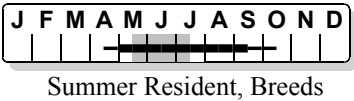
One female or first-year male on Dec. 13, 2012, Pine Plains with about ten Grackles and Red-wings at the feeder of Jane Waters and Peter Caldwell, seen by both.

Status: In most cases, the bird was seen with grackles and / or red-wings. Levine notes that sightings of Yellow-headed Blackbirds, while still rare, have increased statewide.

———— **BOBOLINK** (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*) ————

Normal Dates: April 29 - October 10

Usual Locale: In large open fields, especially hay fields



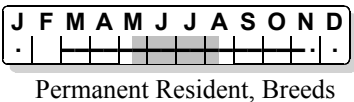
Status since 1990: The first few Bobolinks arrive in late April; the rest of the summer residents come by early May. They get down to nesting quickly and are quite easily found in large open fields. Most manage to fledge their young before the hay is cut in June. Patiently watching from the edge of a large field in June or July, one can often find 20 or 30 Bobolinks. There are still a number of such places in the eastern and northern parts of the county. Also Southlands Farm, south of Rhinebeck, hosts a good population of Bobolinks. Nocturnal migration studies have shown the peak for fall migration to be between mid-August and early September (Levine). During this period, Bobolinks in their lovely fall plumage are found in weedy places, sometimes in flocks of up to 40 or 50. On Sept. 12, 2004, Rodney Johnson found a flock of 200 near Rhinebeck. Most years a few linger well into October before departing for South America.

Historical Notes: Kent notes “great flocks in migration”, referring to fall Bobolink migration along the Hudson River in the 1870s. During the early twentieth century Bobolinks were abundant in the fields of the rural eastern half of the county. Since the 1960s summer populations have held steady, although not quite so abundant, and the counts on the May Census have increased. No large fall-migrating flocks have been noted since the 1970s. The largest fall flock in the records is 3000 at Cruger Island Sept. 6, 1975. Pink and Waterman’s 1965 prediction that future generations would find only a few straggling pairs has not come to pass. The declining number of farms was the reason for concern. But enough horse farms and hay fields still remain to support the Bobolinks. The average number found on the May Census during the 1960s was 66; during the 1990s it was 173. Quite unusual is a winter record of one near the Great Swamp in Pawling on Dec. 15, 1984. It was found in a marshy area with Swamp Sparrows and its fall plumage was well described.

———— **EASTERN MEADOWLARK** (*Sturnella magna*) ————

Normal Dates: March 10 - November 3

Usual Locale: In large, open fields



Status since 1990: Eastern Meadowlarks arrive in numbers during March. Many pastures and hay fields have a pair or two during the nesting season and beyond. Larger fields, such as Southlands Farm, have six or eight. Most depart by November. Some are found in winter.¹

Historical Notes: Early records mention occasional wintering meadowlarks. Mearns noted them wintering in Fishkill in 1874-75. During the 1950s wintering birds were more frequent, and they increased through the 1960s. Eastern Meadowlarks were found on only five Christmas Counts prior to 1952. The average count for the 1960s was 94; 38 was the average during the 1970s. For the decades since, they are again scarce or absent during the winter. Summer populations have also been declining. Stearns called them “abundant” in 1880. Later accounts consider them common in summer. As the number of farms and open fields in the county declines, so do the meadowlark numbers. Every May Census taken since 1919 has found meadowlarks. The average May Census count during the 1960s was 70, compared to 23 during the 1990s.

[1] In Levine, the entry under *Fall maxima* of “100 at Millerton, Dutchess Co. 14 Nov 1992” is in error. The number observed was ten, not 100.

———— **WESTERN MEADOWLARK** (*Sturnella neglecta*) ————

Accidental Vagrant, Bred Once

Only Dates:

One on June 7, 1962, at East Park, seen and heard by Tom Gilbert.

One male on June 13-26, 1962, at William Layton Farm on Layton Road, Bangall, mated with an Eastern Meadowlark, producing five hybrid young (*Kingbird*, 1963). Heard in May.

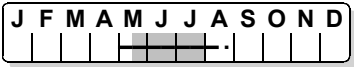
Status: “Sometime early in June, Regina Roberts, visiting on Layton Road of Stanford, south of Hunns Lake, heard and saw a meadowlark, singing an unmeadowlark song. The Laytons, we later learned, had been hearing this bird often in May but had not identified it. After a futile attempt on Miss Roberts’ part to contact Thelma Haight, she called Stanley Quickmire at Sharon who came over on June 16 and identified the bird as a Western Meadowlark! There were two in the county, since the time element of Tom Gilbert’s and this one’s presence coincided!” (*Wings over Dutchess*, Sept. 1962) Many club members visited the area and determined the bird was mated. “The bird’s territory was in fairly open rolling, sidehill hay and pasture fields, interspersed with small wooded areas. The ... elevation was between 850’ and 950’.” (*Kingbird*, 1963)

After considerable patient observation, Alice Jones located the nest with five young on June 23. This Western male was nesting with an Eastern female. “Both adults and young were trapped alive on June 26th by Wesley E. Lanyon and Frank Gill, of the American Museum of Natural History, New York and taken to the [museum’s aviary] on Long Island to be hand-reared for study. The men first made observations of the birds’ behavior and obtained sound recordings of their vocalizations during the eight hour day. The young were judged to be nine days old, the eggs probably hatched June 18th, and female probably began her nest construction about May 27th.” (Pink and Waterman) The parents and young remained at the aviary for at least three years. Lanyon documented his research in the paper, “Hybridization in Meadowlarks.”

Historical Notes: During the first half of the twentieth century, the Western Meadowlark range expanded to the Northeast. The first record for the state was in 1948 in Monroe County. There are nearly annual reports of singing males from the western counties of New York. They are reported less frequently from the Hudson Valley region. (Levine)

———— **ORCHARD ORIOLE** (*Icterus spurius*) ————

Normal Dates: May 1 - August 19



Usual Locale: Open or shrubby areas with some large trees

Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Seen every year in May, Orchard Orioles stay just long enough to nest and then leave. Only a few stay into August. Generally there are two or three reports each month from May through July. Some of the recent nesting locations are Poets’ Walk and Beacon Landing. Tom Gilbert has regularly seen them in his yard in Red Hook. A remarkably late sighting was the Orchard Oriole at Bowdoin Park on Sept. 15, 2004, seen by Tom Lake, Mary Borrelli, and a flock of third-graders on a field trip.

Historical Notes: Crosby considered Orchard Orioles to be uncommon, irregular summer residents. The fluctuation of summer reports still occurs in cycles. Through 1958, Orchard Orioles were found on only one out of six May Censuses. Since then, they have been reported on well over half and on every one since 1988. The largest May Census count was ten in 2004. There are a few April records, the earliest is April 20, 1980, at Amenia by Trixi Strauss. Generally there are few known nest sites in the county. Once orioles do nest, they return to nest in the same area for up to ten years. For example, Thelma and Paul Haight had nesting Orchard Orioles in their yard from 1979 through at least 1985.

———— **BALTIMORE ORIOLE** (*Icterus galbula*) ————

Normal Dates: April 26 - September 1



Usual Locale: Areas with fairly large deciduous trees

Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Migrant Baltimore Orioles arrive in numbers during the first week in May. Often one or two are sighted during the last few days of April. They nest in open areas with large deciduous trees. Their distinctive hanging nests can easily be seen in the fall after the leaves are gone. It is not unusual to see one hanging from a branch over a road. By that time they are long gone, having departed in early September. Despite the relatively early migration, a very few stragglers are seen, some as late as December. One showed up in a Rhinebeck yard on Feb. 27, 1992. The earliest arrival is in Stormville on April 10, 1994, a female.

Historical Notes: Zeranski and Baptist considered Baltimore Orioles to be more abundant in Connecticut from 1880 to 1920 than later. Similarly, in Dutchess County, Stearns (1880) called them abundant, while Crosby (1921) said they were common. Following the loss of their favorite nest tree, the American Elm, in the 1960s, Baltimore Orioles have adapted to using other large deciduous trees. Florence Germond observed a pair successfully nest in a dead elm in 1965. Numbers on the May Census have been a steady 150 per year since 1958. They were found on most of the earlier censuses, ranging from six to thirty when counts were recorded. Crosby noted only one winter record, November to December 1916, of a bird that “finally perished.” The next winter report was of four birds at two feeders on the 1959 Christmas Count, one of them remaining until Feb. 1, 1960. One or two have been found on the Christmas Count four more times, the last being 1987.

——— **RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD** (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) ———

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Most occur near water or in marshes,
but also in brushy and open fields



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Migrating Red-winged Blackbirds begin arriving in mid-February. Males precede females by a few weeks. Early in March, large flocks of 1000 or so appear in marshes. By mid-May, they disperse to nesting sites, which they fiercely defend. After nesting, they form large flocks that move about the county during August. These roving bands include birds that have some or all of their tail feathers missing as they molt. Later in the fall, the flocks include Common Grackles, Brown-headed Cowbirds, and Starlings and can be quite large, up to 10,000. Flocks are reported at Greig Farm, Red Hook, and other large corn fields. They settle into nighttime roosts at large marshes, usually Tivoli Bays and Thompson Pond. The flocks depart the county by mid-November, but many red-wings remain through the winter. A few remain at feeders and flocks of fifty or so remain in marshy places, such as Thompson Pond. On Dec. 31, 2001, 500 were found at Mashomack, Pine Plains. They are not recorded every year on the Christmas Count, but the count circle does not include the areas they frequent during the winter.

Historical Notes: Red-wings have always been abundant in the summer, forming huge flocks in the fall. Griscom noted winter records; the earliest is one that stayed in Rhinebeck until Jan. 22, 1921. Prior to 1959, they were found only on the Christmas Count in 1928 and 1950. By the 1960s a few stayed through each winter. Bull notes a report of 50,000 at Cruger Island Dec. 28, 1963. Some of the historical reports cite tremendous numbers of blackbirds congregating at Tivoli Bays during fall migration. Br. Michael Dougherty, who resided near Barrytown, regularly visited Cruger Island. In September 1961, he reported nightly flocks of red-wings, cowbirds, and grackles numbering 2000 to 10,000. In October, he checked them for over a week at 6:15 to 7:00AM, estimating that 750,000 to 1,250,000, daily left the evening roost. The horde departed for the south by Nov. 6, 1961, and he estimated the number moving through during the prior week at up to ten million "if no repetitions." An accurate count of a large passage of birds can be difficult, but regardless of whether it was one million or ten, this was a remarkable migration.

——— **BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD** (*Molothrus ater*) ———

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: Generally in open areas, but also small
and medium forest patches



Permanent Resident, Breeds

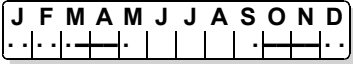
Status since 1990: Brown-headed Cowbirds are present year-round, but the pattern varies with the season. In the summer, cowbirds are widely distributed. They lay eggs in other birds' nests, leaving the rearing of their young to the hapless host birds, often warblers. Other birds that have hosted cowbirds include Red-eyed Vireo and Eastern Phoebe (noted in honor of the pair on Barbara Butler's porch that raised one cowbird and three of their own—not so hapless!) Hosts are not limited to smaller species. Scarlet Tanagers and cardinals were observed feeding cowbirds in June 2004. By September, the young join flocks of adult cowbirds. Throughout the fall, they are found in large flocks, often mixed with Common Grackles and Red-winged Blackbirds. The flocks can be huge,

with many thousands of birds. Most cowbirds migrate south, but small flocks remain in the county through the winter. Not many report cowbirds at winter feeders, but for a few feeders, fifty birds are regular visitors. Returning flocks appear in March and by April they are dispersing, looking for ready nests.

Historical Notes: The first European residents of the area would not have found cowbirds, as there were few of the grasslands required for foraging. By 1790, New York was settled enough to have pastures and other openings, and Brown-headed Cowbirds became common. Mayfield notes that cattle kept grasslands short, to the liking of the cowbirds. This role is now assumed by the rotary lawnmower. The earliest accounts of area bird life all include Brown-headed Cowbirds. Crosby considered cowbirds common in summer and notes huge flocks at Cruger Island. Griscom cites seven winter reports between 1906 and 1931. Sporadic winter reports continued until the late 1950s, when cowbirds became more regular in winter. For reports of massive flocks of mixed blackbirds, see Red-winged Blackbird.

———— **RUSTY BLACKBIRD** (*Euphagus carolinus*) ————

Normal Dates: March 10 - May 11 and
September 20 - November 7



Usual Locale: In wet areas, marshes and swamps. In winter, at feeders

Transient

Status since 1990: Some southward migrating Rusty Blackbirds appear in September, but not every year. The main push south occurs in October and early November. A few are reported wintering each year. The northward migration arrives in March, numbers peak in April, and in some years a few linger into May. Groups of 10-20 are regularly reported. Two large counts are 60 at Buttercup Farm Sanctuary on March 31, 2002, and 70 at North Jackson Rd. in Poughkeepsie on Oct. 29, 1991. Rusty Blackbird reports currently come from a small number of observers. Paul and Thelma Haight hosted wintering rusties in their marsh at Stissing for many years. The winter of 1994-95 saw the most, 40+ birds. Besides Stissing, places to find Rusty Blackbirds include Beaver Dam, Millbrook School marsh, the Harlem Valley Rail Trail, the Great Swamp, and Tamarack Swamp.

Historical Notes: Rusty Blackbirds were more numerous and more widespread in the 1960s through the 1980s than in the 1990s. In April, generally everyone reported them from various places in the county. Pink and Waterman considered them to be common, as did Griscom. Migration dates have not changed since the 1880s. Griscom noted they wintered casually. A few rusties have been recorded most winters since Marion Van Wagner reported an immature feeding in her Pleasant Valley yard Jan. 12, 1957.

———— **BREWER'S BLACKBIRD** ————
(See Miscellaneous Reports, page 252.)

———— **COMMON GRACKLE** (*Quiscalus quiscula*) ————

Normal Dates: All year
Usual Locale: Widespread, particularly numerous near water



Permanent Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Some years flocks of Common Grackles arrive in late February, but more typically the main influx appears in early to mid-March. They stay in flocks through April, when reports of 1000 grackles still occur. Common Grackles are widespread, common nesters. In July they begin flocking and moving about foraging. Through the fall, the flocks merge with those of migrating redwings and cowbirds and become quite large, in the thousands. By late October or early November, the flocks concentrate along the Hudson River each evening, awaiting the conditions for migrating south. Yet not all leave. Small numbers winter in groups to ten, often seen at feeders; others stay in larger groups, such as the 200 at Thompson Pond with Red-winged Blackbirds on Dec. 2, 2001.

Historical Notes: Accounts from the early twentieth century make a distinction between Bronzed and Purple Grackles, although they were only considered separate species from 1944 to 1948. According to Griscom, the grackles that nested in the county were Purple, while the Bronzed Grackles migrated through, rarely staying to breed. Records kept since then do not generally note which (now subspecies) is observed. Yet, Bleecker Staats remarked on the different-looking birds in his report of Feb. 22, 1991. At least half of the 100 grackles were the bronze race. He reports they looked like they were made of metal. Crosby considered Common Grackles abundant transients, common in summer with fewer in winter. For reports of massive flocks of mixed blackbirds, see Red-winged Blackbird.

WOOD-WARBLERS

OVENBIRD (*Seiurus aurocapilla*)

Normal Dates: April 26 - September 25

Usual Locale: Woods with fairly open understory



Summer Resident, Breeds

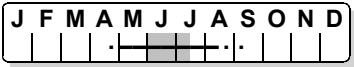
Status since 1990: Ovenbirds announce their presence with a ringing, unmistakable song throughout the woodlands of the county. They arrive during the last week in April some years, and are present in numbers by early May. They nest throughout the county. By July the young are out and noisy. At Pond Gut, Ken and Carol Fredericks found 16 mostly young Ovenbirds on July 25, 2003. Most leave by the end of August, while a few are still reported most years in September. As they have stopped singing by the end of August, the actual departure likely goes unnoticed. One stayed at Dorothy Wohlbach's feeder in the Town of Wappinger, Dec. 4-6, 1992.

Historical Notes: Ovenbirds have been listed as common summer residents in the earliest records. Found on every May Census, they have increased since counts have been kept. The yearly May Census average during the 1960s was 39, and the average for the 1990s was 108. The highest count was 180 in 1996. Since they prefer woods with the understory open, it is possible that Ovenbirds benefit from the increase in the browsing deer population. The earliest spring arrival is on April 22, 1992, in Pleasant Valley. The latest fall departure (other than the December bird) is on Oct. 6, 1971, when two were found at Thompson Pond during a Waterman Bird Club field trip.

— WORM-EATING WARBLER (*Helmitheros vermivorum*) —

Normal Dates: May 5 - August 31

Usual Locale: Wooded hillsides



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Three times since 1990, Worm-eating Warblers have arrived in late April. While some years they appear in early May, they are always here by mid-May. Once Worm-eating Warblers are found during a nesting season, they can be found in the same spot year after year. These spots are almost always on steep slopes. An exception is Pawling Nature Reserve. Although the area has many steep slopes, Worm-eating Warblers are found on the flat area on top of the ridge. Other exceptions are Newbold Road and Vanderbilt Mansion NHS in Hyde Park. Breeding locations on steep slopes include West Clove Mountain Road in Union Vale, Stissing Mountain tower trail, and Wilbur Flats Road in Milan. Few are reported after mid-August. Some that stayed into late August and September frequented Marion Van Wagner’s bird bath at the top of a hillside in Pleasant Valley. In 1998, one came every evening between 5:00 and 7:30PM from July 26 to August 28. Another fall straggler was found at Vassar College Farm on Sept. 4, 1990.

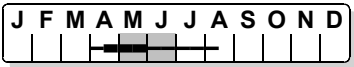
Historical Notes: The Worm-eating Warbler’s breeding range expanded very slowly north past Dutchess County during the twentieth century. Eaton’s breeding range map from 1910 shows them as far north as Putnam County and extending into a small outlying area in Greene County. By the time of the first Breeding Bird Atlas in the early 1980s, the northern range boundary was at the Dutchess / Columbia County line. Twenty years later, it was in mid-Columbia County. This change can be seen in the county records. Stearns reported a specimen collected July 1877. He felt that they bred in the area. During the 1920s, they were commonly found during spring migration in the wooded hills of eastern Dutchess County and on Mt. Beacon. These would be considered migration overshoots. Yet a very few did nest in the county. Abbott and Crosby found a nest with young in Rhinebeck on July 29, 1901. On June 6, 1925, Crosby, Griscom, and Frost discovered an active nest on Bald Mountain in Dover.

Until the 1970s, summer records and breeding reports occurred infrequently. During the 1970s, summer reports increased. By the 1980s, some were found every summer and nesting occurred at Ferncliff Forest, Stissing Mountain, Clove Mountain, and southeastern parts of the county. The May Census shows a recent modest increase. From 1959 to 1994, fewer than ten were found each year. Since 1995, ten to twenty-two have been found on all but three May Censuses. The earliest spring arrival is April 26, 1990, on Cart Road in Dover. The latest fall departure is Oct. 15, 1965, seen by Mary Key in her Poughkeepsie yard.

— LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia motacilla*) —

Normal Dates: April 8 - August 9

Usual Locale: Along flowing streams in woodlands



Summer Resident, Breeds

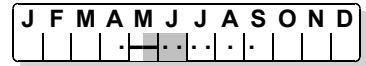
Status since 1990: Everyone birding in April listens for the welcome song of a returning Louisiana Waterthrush. Arrival dates vary from April 8 to May 1. Most are present by mid-April. They can be found nesting throughout the county along rocky, fast-moving

streams, usually in wooded ravines. The best example of their favored habitat is the Wassaic Creek where it runs through Turkey Hollow. A May or June morning spent walking along the creek can yield up to ten, many showing breeding activity. Perhaps other creeks in the county would exhibit similar numbers if they could be followed for as long a distance as the Wassaic. Other places frequented by this waterthrush are Cary Arboretum, Pawling Nature Reserve, and Ferncliff Forest. Even quite small streams, when sufficiently rocky and fast, can accommodate a pair. The birds stay through the first week in August and then are gone until the next April. September waterthrush sightings are normally Northern Waterthrush rather than Louisiana.

Historical Notes: In 1880 Stearns found several pair of what he called Long Billed Water Thrush and believed that they nested. By 1932 Griscom was able to find a dozen Louisiana Waterthrush nesting pairs from Rhinecliff north to the county line. Pink and Waterman thought that was no longer possible by the 1960s, but that pairs could be found many other places across the county. Only one May Census (1945) missed Louisiana Waterthrush. The average count since 1959 is 14 and the maximum is 38 in 1996.

———— **NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH** (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) ————

Normal Dates: May 1 - September 20



Usual Locale: Around still water in woodlands

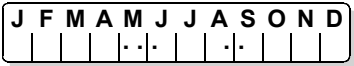
Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Each May Northern Waterthrush migrants pass through the county, usually five to fifteen per season. About one year in three, one or two appear during the last week in April. A very few breed in widespread areas of the county, as evidenced by persistent June and July records. Rodney Johnson found a nest north of Red Hook village on May 29, 2004, the first nest found in the county. The Great Swamp in the Pawling area hosts the greatest number of Northern Waterthrushes. On the May Census, the Pawling area reports about half of the total for the county. They migrate through the county again in the fall, but are seen far less frequently than in the spring.

Historical Notes: During the early twentieth century, Northern Waterthrushes were transients, found in about the same numbers as currently in spring and fall. Beginning about 1930, they began to expand their breeding range into southeastern New York, Connecticut, and northern New Jersey (Bull; Zeranski and Baptist). During June and July of 1964 and 1965, territorial singing waterthrushes were regularly found at Tamarack Swamp and were presumed to nest there. James Southward saw a pair and several young in East Fishkill August 1-8, 1977. In 1981 young birds were observed by Atlas workers in two areas near the eastern border of the county, Dover and the Sharon Station area. Other singing Northern Waterthrushes were found in the southeast during that time. The May Census counts have averaged seven since 1959, about half the Louisiana Waterthrush average. Prior to 1959, about one-third of the May Censuses missed them. Since then, they have been found on nearly every count. Earliest dates are April 12, 1947 and 1952. The latest departure date is Oct. 4, 1941.

———— **GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER** (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) ————

Normal Dates: May 2 - June 11



Usual Locale: Early successional grassy, brushy areas

Transient, Formerly Bred

Status since 1990: Only twenty Golden-winged Warblers were reported in the 1990s. One stayed at Buttercup West from May 12 to June 5, 1990. Two were found behind Dutchess Mall (Blodgetts) from May 4 to May 17, 1992. The only fall report was made on Sept. 9, 1997, by Marion Van Wagner, who had a beautiful look at one in her yard in Pleasant Valley. The rest of the reports were for one day only. The first few years of the twenty-first century, Golden-winged Warblers were found visiting Vassar College Farm. One appeared there on May 13, 2000; one for a week in May 2001, seen by at least five people; one in May and August 2002; and one female on May 29, 2004. In 2005, a singing male was found at Nellie Hill on May 12 and June 1 and another at a gun club near Sharparoon on May 14.

Historical Notes: Golden-winged Warblers expanded their range northward into the Hudson Valley during the second half of the nineteenth century. In Abbott’s 1905 journal, June 24, he writes, “As usual, golden-winged warblers are the most abundant [nesting] warblers here [Grasmere].” Eaton’s 1907 Dutchess County list includes them as fairly common summer residents. By the 1930s, Griscom noted that Golden-winged Warblers were “distinctly less common than twenty years ago.” During the 1920s, May Census counts ranged from ten to twenty-five. The highest count of 32 occurred in 1974. The last time more than ten appeared on the May Census was 1979 when there were 19. The first Breeding Bird Atlas (1980-85) found Golden-winged Warblers in twenty locations, confirming breeding in five of them. The second Breeding Bird Atlas (2000-05) reported only two birds during the breeding season. Explanations for the decline include a reduction in the species’ rather limited preferred habitat of early successional grass and bushes with a few trees. Such habitat is only temporary in any one place, soon growing up to include more trees than suits the Golden-winged. The amount of newly abandoned farmland apparently does not provide sufficient habitat to sustain a breeding population.

———— **BLUE-WINGED WARBLER** (*Vermivora cyanoptera*) ————

Normal Dates: April 26 - September 13



Usual Locale: Successional areas of grass, bushes, and small trees

Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Blue-winged Warblers arrive in late April or early May and are found by most groups doing the May Census. They breed throughout the county in appropriate habitat, overgrown fields. Reported throughout the summer, they depart by early to mid-September.

Historical Notes: Blue-winged Warblers were unknown in Dutchess County at the start of the twentieth century. They expanded as far north as Long Island and Westchester County during the late nineteenth century. The first record is from Crosby on Aug. 20, 1912. In 1921, Crosby called them rare transients, which nested at Whaley Lake. The first confirmed breeding Blue-winged Warbler was found in June 1920 at Whaley Lake

by Frost and Crosby (*Auk*, 1920). By 1932 Griscom classified them as fairly common and increasing in the southern half of the county. Bull noted an increase as the species spread throughout the Northeast starting around 1920. Pink and Waterman noted that the breeding range had expanded through the northern half of the county during the 1950s. Levine added that the birds had reached the Lake Ontario plain by the 1980s. In 1980 they first nested in Maine, which remains their northern limit. From the 1920s through the 1940s, one to five were found on the May Censuses. Census averages increased from 42 in the 1960s to 125 in the 1990s.

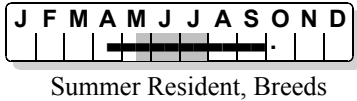
Comment: The Blue-winged Warbler and Golden-winged Warbler are closely related. Where their ranges overlap, interbreeding occurs. When a Blue-winged mates with a Golden-winged, the offspring is a **Brewster's Warbler** hybrid showing the dominant head and body coloring. The recessive head and body coloring is not displayed until the third generation of cross breeding with Brewster's. This much less common combination is the **Lawrence's Warbler** hybrid. During the twentieth century, the area of range overlap moved through the Hudson Valley. This area now lies north and west of Dutchess County so that hybrids are seen primarily on migration.

As range shift progresses, the proportion of Brewster's to Lawrence's Warblers in a given area changes. In Dutchess County, Blue-winged were first observed early in the 1900s when Golden-winged were already present. Very few Brewster's would be expected then. The first Brewster's was recorded by Crosby on May 7, 1909. Griscom notes numerous Brewster's from 1922 to 1928, including several nests with a male Brewster's paired with a female Golden-winged. As the population of Blue-winged becomes approximately equal to the Golden-winged, more Brewster's are expected with a few Lawrence's. The first Lawrence's was recorded on May 20, 1923. A nest with eggs of a male Lawrence's and female Blue-winged was found July 24, 1924, at Whaley Lake. The Blue-winged population surpassed the Golden-winged in Dutchess County during the 1950s, as shown primarily by May Census data. As the population becomes almost totally Blue-winged, the number of Brewster's decreases, but with a few Lawrence's still present. One Brewster's and one Lawrence's were recorded about every other year during the 1960s and 1970s. At the end of the cycle, there are few if any breeding hybrids. This process takes about 50 years. In Dutchess County it lasted from the 1920s to the 1970s. Both Brewster's and Lawrence's Warblers continued to be seen in Dutchess County into the 1990s, usually in May during migration. Since 1990, eleven Brewster's Warblers have been reported along with a dozen Lawrence's, one of which was photographed* on May 26, 2014 at Buttercup Farm Sanctuary.

———— **BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER** (*Mniotilta varia*) ————

Normal Dates: April 17 - September 30

Usual Locale: In the woods, on tree trunks or large limbs



Status since 1990: Black-and-white Warblers are present in numbers by the end of April. The migration peaks in May when trips to places such as Ferncliff Forest or Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery can turn up ten or sometimes twenty of them. Breeding activity begins in mid-May. By June the birds are well into raising young in their ground nests, and one or two are found on most outings. They continue to be reported each

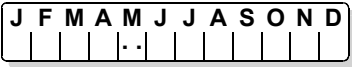
month through the summer and into September. Most depart by the end of September, a very few are seen in October.

Historical Notes: For Stearns, this warbler was known as Black and White Creeper and was a common migrant and fairly common breeder in 1880. Black-and-white Warbler abundance has remained constant through the twentieth century. The only records outside of the April-September dates are one on Nov. 1, 1967, in Salt Point and one in Red Oaks Mill on Nov. 6 and 17, 1974, and Dec. 20 of the same year. The May Census counts average a fairly steady 50 per year since 1959, the highest count is 120 in 1996.

———— **PROTHONOTARY WARBLER** (*Protonotaria citrea*) ————

Normal Dates: May 6-15

Usual Locale: Wooded swamps and other similar wet areas in the western portion of the county



Spring Visitant

Status: Prothonotary Warblers are a brilliant golden color never to be forgotten. Normally recorded in spring in the Northeast, they overshoot their breeding areas farther south, reaching Dutchess County along the Hudson River corridor. Reported in Dutchess County at intervals of many years, usually in May or June, the only sightings since 1990 were at The Millbrook School’s Trevor Zoo on April 18, 2002 and May 10, 2013 at Cary Arboretum. The first photograph⁺ was one on May 9, 2014 at Dennings Point.

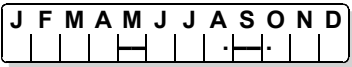
Historical Notes: Arthur Bloomfield collected a Prothonotary Warbler at Hyde Park on June 27, 1892, the first for Dutchess County. Considered accidental in New York State before the 1920s, the species has slowly expanded eastward into western New York, and to a lesser degree north into the New York City region. Prothonotary Warblers have nested regularly in northern New Jersey since 1948. They first nested on Long Island in 1979.

There have been fourteen others sighted in Dutchess County since 1892; only one stayed more than a day. That one stayed along the Wappinger Creek in Pleasant Valley May 6-11, 1954, found by Marion Van Wagner. There were four found in the 1950s, five in the 1960s, one in the 1970s, and one in the 1980s. The last, prior to the 2002 report, was on May 12, 1980, on Whaleback Road in Red Hook by Eleanor Pink, Marion Van Wagner, and Florence Germond. The only fall record occurred on Sept. 26, 1969, seen by Mary Key in her yard near Red Oaks Mill. Some sightings are difficult to confirm, as the birds do not remain long enough to be observed by others. Others are reported too long after the sighting.

———— **TENNESSEE WARBLER** (*Leiothlypis peregrina*) ————

Normal Dates: May 6-26 and August 29 - October 3

Usual Locale: Forests and woodland edges



Transient

Status since 1990: Tennessee Warbler numbers have been low, but they are subject to such wide fluctuations that it is premature to consider them in a decline. In spring the species arrives and departs during May, seldom staying more than one day. The birds are usually seen singly. The 1991 and 1992 May Censuses each recorded 19, but since then there have been fewer than ten each year. Other than on the census, only two to seven

have been found each spring. A notable high count day was May 13, 1991, when eight were found at Vassar College. During fall migration, one or two appear most years, generally in September, and stay only a day.

Historical Notes: The Tennessee Warbler was not documented in Dutchess County until May 1909 by Crosby. According to Chapman, during the nineteenth century this species migrated primarily through the Mississippi River Valley. Griscom says the birds increased in the New York City area after 1912. The size of the Tennessee Warbler spring migration has varied tremendously. The periods of high numbers can last several years and are thought to correspond with Spruce Budworm outbreaks. An amazing peak year was 1916 when Crosby counted 109 in the Rhinebeck area, making Tennessee the second most common transient warbler (second to Yellow-rumped Warbler). Tennessee Warblers were common until 1924, when counts around Rhinebeck dropped to 5-15 a season. Another peak occurred in the early 1960s and several more in the 1970s and 1980s. The highest count on the May Census was 104 in 1974. Fall migration ups and downs follow the spring pattern. The earliest spring arrival date is April 29, 1981, and the latest spring departure date is June 4, 1917. In fall, the earliest arrival date is Aug. 16, 1978, with 15 seen during the remainder of the month. The latest departure date is Nov. 22, 1972, a particularly late date.

———— **ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER** (*Leiothlypis celata*) ————

Normal Dates: May 1-15 and September 15 -
October 20

Usual Locale: Bird baths and yards; shrubby
woodlands

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
		

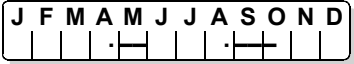
Fall Transient

Status: The Orange-crowned Warbler is predominantly a western warbler, seen only in small numbers in the Northeast. The scarcity of sightings is also due to their plain appearance, often making identification difficult. Seen much less often in spring, there had been no confirmed spring sightings since the early 1970s, then more confirmed and photographed since 2015. More common fall sightings range from the last days of September to the first half of October. On Feb. 5, 2005, the county's first winter Orange-crowned Warbler appeared at Les Line's feeder in Smithfield. The bird visited most days until April 6, once it flashed a vivid orange crown. It was photographed and seen by several people.

Historical Notes: The first record of Orange-crowned Warbler documented a singing male collected at Little Stissing Mountain, Pine Plains, on May 10, 1925, by John Baker, Crosby, and Griscom. Eight more were found by the end of the decade at Pine Plains and Rhinebeck during May or October. There was one October sighting in 1937 followed by four May sightings between 1947 and 1959. The 1960s and 1970s produced about a dozen sightings, each usually during May or September. Notable was the one that stayed in Marion Van Wagner's Pleasant Valley yard Oct. 15-20, 1963. James and Mary Key's Poughkeepsie yard hosted an Orange-crowned Warbler nine times from 1962 through 1979.

———— **NASHVILLE WARBLER** (*Leiothlypis ruficapilla*) ————

Normal Dates: April 27 - May 30 and
August 20 - October 15



Usual Locale: Brushy areas

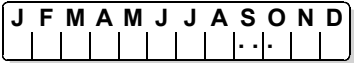
Transient, Formerly Bred

Status since 1990: Nashville Warblers generally arrive in May, although a few are sometimes found in late April. Usually seen in ones or twos, they stay only a day and then proceed north. About one to five can be found each fall, with eight seen in September 2000. One was seen on June 23, 2003, at Rockefeller University Field Research Center, the first breeding season report since the 1970s.

Historical Notes: The Nashville Warbler became more regular in the Northeast around the 1830s (Forbush). The earliest record of Nashville Warbler in Dutchess County is of a female, shot at a nest with one egg in the “hills near Poughkeepsie” by Dr. Clinton L. Bagg on May 31, 1876 (Bull). The skin is in the Smithsonian Institution. Describing the status of Nashville Warblers about 1930, Griscom wrote, “As many as four males can be heard singing simultaneously on Mt. Riga [Brace Mt.], and a day’s tramp over Bald Mt. will yield a dozen or more.” Nesting continued on the hills in eastern Dutchess County but declined, and the last nesting was presumed to have occurred in the 1950s. Breeding evidence has been absent for several decades, although there was a small number of June reports in the late 1970s. During the early 1980s, the closest confirmed nesting sites were in nearby Ulster and Columbia Counties (NYBBA). The highest count on the May Census was 36 in 1972, the only count greater than twenty. Five to ten is more typical. In the 1920s they were one of the more common warblers in migration. The latest fall departure recorded was Oct. 28, 1961.

———— **CONNECTICUT WARBLER** (*Oporornis agilis*) ————

Normal Dates: September 4 - October 5



Usual Locale: Wooded swamps and cedar hillsides

Fall Transient

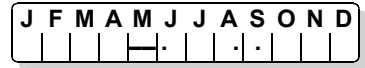
Status since 1990: There have been only three Connecticut Warbler reports since 1990, all in the fall. Jim and Mary Key found one in their yard near Red Oaks Mill on Sept. 4, 1992. The second was found on Oct. 5, 1998, in Hyde Park. The third was at Buttercup West on Sept. 27, 2003, described by Carol Fredericks. Connecticut Warblers are very rare anywhere east of the Appalachians in spring. Although more have been reported since 2006 with one photographed* in September 2019 by Aimee LaBarr.

Historical Notes: The Connecticut Warbler fall migration route is closer to Dutchess County than the spring route, so fall sightings are more expected. The first record for the county was on Sept. 6, 1913, in Rhinebeck, followed by a second sighting on Oct. 8, 1915, in Poughkeepsie. There were several fall reports each decade: 1920s (3), 1930s (8), 1940s (4), 1950s (5), 1960s (13), 1970s (11), 1980s (10), and 1990s (3). Note a decline in sightings after the 1980s. Many of these reports are from birders’ yards, especially John Baker’s during the 1930s and later Jim and Mary Key’s, Marion Van Wagner’s, and Bill and Trixi Strauss’. During September 1973 the Millbrook School banding station banded three Connecticut Warblers. The earliest arrival is two on August 26, 1959, at Pond Gut. The latest sighting is on Oct. 10, 1973, when the bird departed the yard of Bill and Trixi Strauss in Amenia, where it had been seen occasionally over ten days. There

are a few spring reports, but they are either heard and not seen or only seen by one observer. None have the details needed to support such an unexpected occurrence.

———— **MOURNING WARBLER** (*Geothlypis philadelphia*) ————

Normal Dates: May 11 - June 7 and September 1-30



Usual Locale: Thick, tangled brush

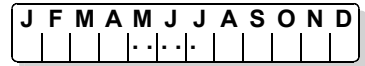
Transient

Status since 1990: One migrating Mourning Warbler is found about every other spring. An exceptional year was 1994, when four were reported. The Mourning Warbler's ringing spring song betrays the location but is no help in the fall. There are three fall records since 1990, the last in 1994. Two of the fall reports were from Marion Van Wagner's yard in late August. On July 1, 2004, a male was singing from typical breeding habitat on Mack Road, Union Vale. The bird was not seen and could not be relocated on subsequent checks of the area. Perhaps he was a wandering, unmated bird.

Historical Notes: Mary Hyatt recorded one Mourning Warbler in May 1893 and 1900. During the 1910s and 1920s, Mourning Warblers were regular spring migrants in small numbers, but in the fall only four were recorded, between 1915 and 1922. On Chestnut Ridge in Union Vale, John Baker found a male on May 24, 1931, and a female on May 30. The pair was seen by Baker and others in the area until July 3. Nest searches were unsuccessful. As of 1966, only ten additional reports, all spring, could be added to Griscom (1933). The first fall sighting since 1922 occurred Sept. 21, 1967. Since the 1960s, an average of nine spring and five fall reports per decade have occurred. The most were 13 spring and 12 fall reports in the 1970s. The earliest fall sighting is on Aug. 14, 1976; the latest is on Oct. 13, 1983. There is a May Census record for 1924, then none until 1967, when two were caught in a mist net at the Millbrook School for Boys on census day. A single individual has been found on each of five later censuses.

———— **KENTUCKY WARBLER** (*Geothlypis formosa*) ————

Normal Dates: May 7 - June 25



Usual Locale: Deciduous woods with brushy undergrowth

Spring Transient, Bred Once

Status since 1990: A Kentucky Warbler was found in the Pawling area three times on the May Census during the 1990s. On the 1999 May Census, one was found at Vassar College Farm and stayed until May 24. In the ensuing years, a male Kentucky Warbler was found there each May through 2004. The bird stayed at least two weeks, usually into June and, in 2000 and 2003, into July. No female was found with the Vassar College Farm bird. On May 26, 2004, a Kentucky Warbler was found at Norrie Point.

Historical Notes: Dutchess County is near the northern limit of the Kentucky Warbler's breeding range. The range was as close as Westchester County until the 1920s. The range had contracted southward, nesters disappeared from New York after 1942. Later a northward expansion began, and a nest was found in 1973 on Long Island.

The first records for Dutchess County were May 23, 1915, by Allen Frost and May 25, 1919, by Frost and Prof. Frederick Saunders, both in Poughkeepsie. The next sighting was made on May 14, 1959, in LaGrangeville by Rufus Wood, followed by four

more reports in the 1960s. In 1971 and 1973, a bird was found several times in May and June along Deep Hollow Road. Other one-day sightings were reported during the 1970s and 1980s. May 1980, single birds were observed for a week along the Shunpike in Washington and for a day at Cedar Valley Road in Poughkeepsie. On June 26 and 29, 1981, Sibyll Gilbert found evidence of Kentucky Warbler nesting in the Pawling area—very agitated adults accompanied by young birds. They have been found in other places near Pawling as well as Thompson Pond, Tamarack Swamp, Cruger Island, and Rockefeller Field Station, but additional nesting has not been confirmed. The first May Census report was one in 1972; one has been found occasionally since then. Fall migration reports number only three: August 14, 1983, at Pawling Nature Reserve; Sept. 16, 1967, at Thompson Pond; and Oct. 4, 1967, at Cruger Island.

——— COMMON YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis trichas*) ———

Normal Dates: April 28 - October 14

Usual Locale: Low, dense, tangled vegetation



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: With his unforgettable face and easily learned song, the male Common Yellowthroat is one of the first warblers recognized by new birders. Yellowthroats are plentiful in their brushy habitat, which is widespread in the county. Some years a few arrive in late April; the earliest record is April 13, 2002 at Pond Gut. Most arrive during the first week in May. Many move on to breeding grounds farther north, but a good number stay the summer. They nest in thick, brushy vegetation, often, but not exclusively, in or near wetlands. Most trips afield in June and July encounter five to ten pair. Numbers begin to decline in mid-September, and one to five are found during October. There is one unconfirmed January report.

Historical Notes: Common Yellowthroats have been one of the county’s most common warblers since records were kept. The average arrival date that Mary Hyatt calculated from 1885 to 1905 was May 9. Since 1976 there have been more frequent late April sightings, but there are occasional April records back to 1894. Walter Claire, Jr. found the first winter occurrence on Dec. 5 and 10, 1963, near the IBM South Road plant in Poughkeepsie. Other winter sightings include one in November, two in December in the 1970s, and one in November 1980. Reported every year on the May Census, Common Yellowthroat numbers have increased from an average of 72 in the 1960s to 182 in the 1990s; the a high count is 260 in 1993.

——— HOODED WARBLER (*Setophaga citrina*) ———

Normal Dates: May 4 - August 31

Usual Locale: Mature woods with thick, bushy understory, frequently on rocky hillsides



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: In 1991, Fritz and Otis Waterman found a Hooded Warbler building a nest along Berkshire Road in the Town of Dover. Mary Yegella, who had first located the birds, visited the nest site several times a week and kept a log of her observations. The key events from the log are:

- May 10 - birds observed at future nest site

- May 17 - nest building activity
- May 25 - three eggs
- June 3 - four eggs
- June 8-15 - young in nest, fed by adults
- June 18 - nest empty, birds still in the area, three young

The nest was 17 inches above the ground in a Japanese Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*) bush. It was located on the east side of the road in dry, upland deciduous woods. Since then, Hooded Warblers have been found nesting in several places, including Fishkill Mountains (east of Mt. Beacon), Nellie Hill, Pawling Nature Reserve, Holiday Hills in Pawling, Mack Road in Union Vale, and in areas of Wappingers Falls, Red Hook, and Rhinebeck. Today they are absent only from the northeastern part of the county. Hooded Warblers arrive the first week of May and can be found through July. Some remain in nesting areas through August, while other August reports are from yards, indicating some movement. August reports are fewer than July, yet Carena Pooth found eight Hooded Warblers on Aug. 2, 2001, at Pawling Nature Reserve. There were two early September reports in 1995 and a very late one on Sept. 21, 1992, in Jim and Mary Key's Red Oaks Mill yard.

Historical Notes: Griscom noted six pairs of Hooded Warblers in the rocky woods on Mt. Beacon by the 1930s. They had been reported from the same area since the 1870s by Mearns, Stearns in his Fishkill list, and later Crosby. Specimens were collected at Hyde Park in 1897 and 1907. During the 1920s, reports came from Vassar College, Sylvan Lake, Bald Mountain, and a few other southerly locations. The only fall report from this period occurred on Sept. 8, 1914, at Rhinebeck. During the 1950s and 1960s, Hooded Warblers had become quite rare.

The pattern of occurrence suggested nesting, but no evidence was found. One was present from late May through June 1960 south of Wappingers Falls. During the early 1970s, territorial birds occupied the Thompson Pond / Stissing Mountain area and during the late 1970s, Blodgetts Woods, not far from the earlier Mt. Beacon nesting location. During the 1980s, singing males were found in several places in the Pawling area. May 16, 1987, Sibyll Gilbert found two building a nest along Tracey Road in Pawling where they had been found for several years. This was the first nest found in the county in 60 years. Thus Griscom's 1933 prediction that "... the Hooded Warbler may yet be found nesting in the hills of southeastern Dutchess County" finally came true.

Hooded Warblers first appeared on the May Census in 1924, then on five censuses during the 1930s. During the 1940s through the 1960s, only six censuses had Hooded Warblers. They were found on eight counts during the 1970s and every year after 1984. The average count was five during the 1990s. The maximum was 13 in 2001. The earliest arrival is April 30, 1983, at Tamarack Swamp.

———— **AMERICAN REDSTART** (*Setophaga ruticilla*) ————

Normal Dates: May 3 - September 30

Usual Locale: Woodlands



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: American Redstarts seem to arrive all at once during the first week in May. Numbers decline somewhat in June as some move north and the rest disperse to nesting sites. Observers on any summer outing to a wooded area will record several

redstarts, even through August. More are found in early September than later in the month as they move south. Since 1990 five have been recorded in October, the latest of the season on Oct. 25, 2002, on Rombout Road.

Historical Notes: All the early records show the American Redstart a common summer resident. Griscom said that they slipped away during August and were infrequently seen in September. They have become more common in fall according to Pink and Waterman (1979). May Census numbers show an increase from an average of 50 during the 1960s to 147 during the 1990s. The maximum, of 242, occurred in 1993. The earliest spring arrival is on April 23, 1966, at Tamarack Swamp, seen by four people. There have been four November sightings. One female arrived at Red Oaks Mill on Nov. 16, 1967, and stayed near the house catching bugs and taking baths until Dec. 9, the latest departure date for the species.

———— CAPE MAY WARBLER (*Setophaga tigrina*) ————

Normal Dates: May 6-20 and August 25 - October 20

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
					

Usual Locale: Most reports from yards, also places such as Pond Gut, Sharparoon, and Ferncliff Forest

Transient

Status since 1990: Through 1996 there were at least a few Cape May Warbler reports each spring and fall. The only one in 1997 was on the May Census. They were found only in spring during 1998 and 1999. Since then there have been only two reports, one on the 2001 May Census and one in October 2002.

Historical Notes: None of the early recorders (Stearns, Hyatt, Horton) mentioned Cape May Warblers. The earliest record is the female collected by Bloomfield on June 6, 1907. A rare, sought after warbler until about 1910 when numbers increased. During the exceptional warbler year of 1916, 42 were recorded around Rhinebeck. By the 1920s, the Cape May Warbler was a fairly common migrant, with 5-15 occurring in an average year. Migrant numbers then declined, and by 1965 Pink and Waterman considered Cape May Warbler an uncommon transient. On Sept. 26, 1979, 19 were sighted on a Sharparoon field trip. At that time, reports of three to four on a trip were usual.

Three Cape May Warblers appeared in winter during the 1940s and 1950s. One male appeared at a Poughkeepsie feeder in early December 1946, was collected by Ralph Palmer on December 31, and is now in Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology (Bull). One appeared at the Rochdale yard of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Heinzman on Dec. 24, 1951, and moved into the house when its favorite feeder was brought inside. It was banded by John George and remained at least until Jan. 5, 1952. A photograph of the bird appeared in the *Poughkeepsie New Yorker* Jan. 6, 1952. Emilie Skidmore had one at her Pleasant Valley feeder from Dec. 2-11, 1958, seen by many. These last two were aggressive at the feeders, chasing off other birds. On Dec. 4, 1974, the Waterman Bird Club field trip to Vassar College found one in dingy fall plumage.

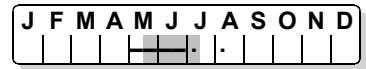
All May Censuses in the early 1920s reported Cape Mays. They were reported on only one census from 1929 through 1946, and after that on about one out of every three counts. Since 1959, the May Census showed scattered peak counts of 10-15 until the mid-1980s, but most years produced fewer than ten. The last double-digit May Census count was in 1984, the year before Hurricane Gloria, which, according to Levine,

grounded 3000 Cape May Warblers. Many perished, raising speculation that perhaps the hurricane contributed to the population decline.

———— CERULEAN WARBLER (*Setophaga cerulea*) ————

Normal Dates: May 4 - July 8

Usual Locale: In large woodlands with tall trees,
often near water



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Ferncliff Forest is the most consistent location of Cerulean Warblers in the county. Other places recently hosting the warblers include Pawling Nature Reserve and Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery. Never numerous, fewer than ten are reported each year. An exception was the May Census of 1995 when a remarkable twelve were found at Ferncliff Forest in an apparent “warbler wave.” Cerulean Warblers arrive in early May, with an early date of April 28, 1990, the earliest on record. They are reported through June and into early July. The most recently observed nest was found at Thompson Pond by Otis Waterman on May 11, 1992, and seen by others during the following weeks. The first August sighting in many decades was on August 16-17, 2002, on Southeast Mountain Road in Dover.

Historical Notes: Lisenard Horton found the county’s first Cerulean Warbler at Hyde Park on May 14, 1894, and again on July 4.¹ By 1921, there had been only two more records. On May 29, 1922, George Gray found a pair and a nest with eggs along the Wappinger Creek near what is now Greenvale Park. Local observers searched other areas and found a second male near the first and five other males from Hyde Park north to Tivoli. In 1923, six males and two nests were located in the area of the 1922 Wappinger Creek nesting. Seven more were found in the same places as the 1922 sightings along the Hudson River at Hyde Park and north. A male was found still in Tivoli Sept. 1, 1923, the latest departure on record. There were June reports from Schaghticoke Mountain (1924) and Bald Mountain (1925) in the eastern part of the county, but they were not followed up. The influx in 1922 was remarkable as it was a considerable distance from the most eastern breeding site then known at Ithaca. And it was indeed an influx. Most of the birds appeared in areas frequented by skilled observers, including Gray and Crosby, for several years prior to 1922.

The first mention of Ceruleans at Mt. Rutsen, known as Ferncliff Forest today, was in 1924. The birds can still be found there. Joseph Hickey noted nine singing males at the Leake and Watts Farm School (Rose Hill estate), Tivoli in 1931 and twelve the following year. Ceruleans continued to nest in the Wappinger Creek areas, Hyde Park, and from Rhinebeck to Tivoli through the 1920s. Br. Michael Dougherty mapped the location of singing males observed during spring migration as well as five nest sites at Cruger Island and Tivoli Bays in 1960-62. In 1979 Pink and Waterman noted that they no longer nested in the Cruger Island area, while nesting continued at Ferncliff Forest. A nest was found in the Rhinebeck area during the first Breeding Bird Atlas, and Ceruleans were recorded in a dozen places in the southeast and northwest areas of the county. The second Atlas recorded singing males in six locations, mostly in the southeast. Since 1922, only four May Censuses have missed Ceruleans. The average count is four and the peak is 14 in 1995.

The Dutchess County Ceruleans maintained their isolated outpost for decades following the 1922 influx. They were one of the attractions for the ornithologists who

traveled to Rhinebeck from New York City to bird with Maunsell Crosby. Later Roger Tory Peterson referred to Ralph Waterman as “Mr. Cerulean” because of the Dutchess County nesting population. During the 1950s and 1960s, isolated sites in other parts of the state were located (Levine). By the 1980s, the Dutchess County Ceruleans were no longer an isolated population. Breeding was confirmed in Connecticut in 1972, and eleven males were noted in 1977 in Kent, Conn., to the east of Schaghticoke Mountain. Breeding was found in Putnam, Orange, and Ulster Counties during the first Breeding Bird Atlas.

Comment: At Vanderbilt Mansion NHS on June 4, 2004, Carena Pooth found a warbler with mixed plumage characteristics of Northern Parula and Cerulean Warbler singing a Parula song. The next day the bird was observed with a female Cerulean by Rodney Johnson. It was also seen June 21 (*Kingbird*, 2004).

[1] Eaton documents the first record as 1895. It is not clear which is correct.

———— **NORTHERN PARULA** (*Setophaga americana*) ————

Normal Dates: May 1-26 and September 1-27

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
				—				••			

Usual Locale: Tall trees, usually conifers

Transient, Bred Once

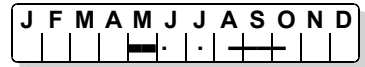
Status since 1990: In May up to four Northern Parulas are reported on many field trips and outings. About every third year, one appears in late April. Most years they depart by the end of May. In June 2002 a Northern Parula pair nested along Deep Hollow Road, Amenia, the first nesting record for the county. On June 12 birders on the Waterman Bird Club field trip saw two adults carry food into a large Norway Spruce. The nest was in the boughs suspended from the main branches and creating a hanging structure similar to that of *Usnea* lichen or old man’s beard, the usual requirement for nesting Parulas. That same month three others were found elsewhere in the county. According to Breeding Bird Atlas maps, the Northern Parula’s breeding range is primarily in the Adirondacks, with widespread, isolated nestings across the state. One to three are found in the fall, mostly in September, though some linger into October. In fall of 2004, eight were found, four of them at Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery.

Historical Notes: Early in the twentieth century, Northern Parulas were common breeders where *Usnea* lichen was common, particularly the Adirondacks and Long Island, but at other locations as well. By the 1950s *Usnea* had disappeared everywhere except in the Adirondacks, as had nesting Parulas. The cause of the *Usnea* decline is uncertain, but the leading candidate is air pollution (NYBBA). Mary Hyatt noted them as migrants from 1888. For Crosby, Parula was often the second most common migrant warbler. Griscom listed one June and one July report without any breeding evidence. During the remarkable warbler year of 1916, observers found 98 around Rhinebeck. A typical spring season count during the 1920s was thirty. Pink and Waterman noted a decline to an average of eight on the May Censuses from 1958-64. Since then the numbers have rebounded somewhat to an average of 21 for the 1970s. May Census counts vary from year to year. The peak census of fifty in 1978 was followed by a count of two in 1979. Over the last three decades, the May Census averages are fairly stable at 14. The latest fall sighting was of one bird on Nov. 1, 1967, at Innisfree, which followed an Oct. 21, 1967, sighting at Thompson Pond, both on Waterman Bird Club trips.

Comment: See the Cerulean Warbler account for a discussion of a warbler found with both Northern Parula and Cerulean Warbler characteristics.

———— **MAGNOLIA WARBLER** (*Setophaga magnolia*) ————

Normal Dates: May 2 - June 1 and August 26 -
October 10



Transient

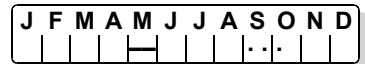
Usual Locale: Woodlands, ranging from forests to groves

Status since 1990: Magnolia Warblers are in Dutchess County in varying numbers throughout May. They were particularly abundant in 1996. They set a new early arrival date of April 23, produced a May Census peak of 58, and were seen 30 additional times. Fewer Magnolia Warblers are seen in the fall. There were very few June and July reports in the 1980s and 1990s. Since 1999, there have been more summer reports, including some of immatures. No other breeding evidence has been noted, so the immatures are likely early migrants. Yet their presence in mid-summer is intriguing. A bird club field trip to Nellie Hill found two males and a female on July 25, 2001. In 2001 and 2002 immatures were seen in mid-August at Sharparoon and Deep Hollow. Dutchess County is within the fragmented southern part of the Magnolia Warbler breeding range. The warbler is a very rare nester in the northwest hills of Connecticut, not far from the locations of the recent summer sightings.

Historical Notes: Mary Hyatt regularly observed the May arrival of Magnolia Warblers in the 1880s. Griscom noted the variability of Magnolia numbers, but a normal year then, with 30-50 birds seen, would be quite remarkable now. The few summer reports are confined to the eastern hills. One bird was reported from Dover Stone Church on July 6, 1930. In the 1950s, George Decker noted, "The Magnolia may be a summer resident. I have heard a singing male for the past three years on a wooded ridge northeast of Dover Plains." May Census counts since 1959 range from one to 58, yet the decade averages are stable, ranging from 14 to 15. Fall departures at times are later than the normal October 10, but all leave by the end of October, with two exceptions. One Magnolia Warbler appeared on Dec. 1, 1967, at Red Oaks Mill, seen by Mary Key, and another on the Housatonic Christmas Count Dec. 21, 1975, seen by Forrest and Aline Romero.

———— **BAY-BREASTED WARBLER** (*Setophaga castanea*) ————

Normal Dates: May 8-20 and August 30 - October
13



Transient

Usual Locale: Large trees in woods or park-like areas

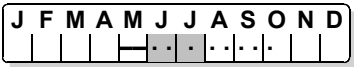
Status since 1990: One of the later migrant warblers, Bay-breasted Warblers typically arrive during the second week of May. A notable early arrival was the bird found by James and Mary Key on April 26, 1993, in their Poughkeepsie yard. In 1996 the total number reported in May was twelve, including the eight found on the May Census. In other years five or fewer were usually found. Fall brings far fewer reports, perhaps because some of these birds are only identifiable as "fall warblers." In half the years

there were none in fall. In other years one to four were found in fall, mostly in September, some in October, and one in August.

Historical Notes: The first documented record of Bay-breasted Warblers for Dutchess County was May 16, 1909, by Crosby, although some undoubtedly occurred earlier. Griscom, referring to New York City, writes, “Forty years ago [1880] the Bay-breasted Warbler was generally spoken of as a rare transient ... it has markedly increased in the last fifteen years.” During the early twentieth century in Dutchess County, Bay-breasted Warblers were uncommon, occasionally common in spring, and regular in smaller numbers in the fall (Griscom). During typical years, fewer than ten were found. Once or twice a decade, dozens of Bay-breasted Warblers would delight observers. The May Census data shows the pattern. The peak count since 1959 was 37 in 1974. There has not been a May Census count exceeding ten since 1988 when 15 birds were recorded. Through the 1980s at least a few were found each fall. During the fall of both 1982 and 1983, James and Mary Key hosted up to six in their yard for much of the month of September, with at least ten on Sept. 7, 1982.

———— **BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER** (*Setophaga fusca*) ————

Normal Dates: May 4 - September 20
Usual Locale: At the top of tall trees in conifer or mixed woods



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: During spring migration, five to ten Blackburnian Warblers are found throughout the county in addition to those counted on the May Census. The earliest spring arrival date is April 26, 1992, at Pawling Nature Reserve. Several pair remain to nest in a few places: Deep Hollow, Turkey Hollow, Pond Gut, and the east side of Tyrell Lake. Hemlocks on steep slopes are characteristic of the Blackburnian nesting areas. Only one or two are seen during fall migration and not every year.

Historical Notes: Stearns considered Blackburnian Warblers to be rare migrants and noted that a May specimen had been collected. Crosby thought them usually uncommon, occasionally quite common. Arthur Bloomfield collected a specimen in Hyde Park on June 6, 1907, and Crosby observed one at Rhinebeck on June 20, 1920, but no nesting was found. Breeding expanded south with a confirmed nesting in northwest Connecticut in the 1930s (Zeranski and Baptist) and at Fahnestock State Park, Putnam County, in 1949 (Bull). June 1, 1950, on East Mountain in Dover, George Decker observed a female gathering nesting material. At Pond Gut a female was observed feeding a young bird on Aug. 1, 1959, the first confirmed nesting in Dutchess County. In 1960 Br. Michael Dougherty found a nest at St. Joseph’s Normal Institute near Barrytown. Pink and Waterman (1965) estimated five to ten pair nested annually. Birds had been heard singing in summer at Innisfree and Cardinal Farley’s in Rhinebeck. May Census counts have averaged ten since 1959, with a peak of 40 in 1966. The latest fall report was of three birds on Oct. 23, 1986, by Sybill Gilbert in her Pawling yard.

———— **YELLOW WARBLER** (*Setophaga petechia*) ————

Normal Dates: April 22 - September 15
Usual Locale: Thickets, hedgerows and small trees



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: The sweet song of the Yellow Warbler rings out in most rural and suburban areas from late April into July. In particularly favorable habitat, three or four pair can be found nesting in close proximity. Such habitat is found in the trees along the stream by the swimming pool at Tymor Forest Park. Yellow Warblers are the most frequent victims of Brown-headed Cowbird parasitism in New York (Levine), and cowbirds are indeed a problem for them in Dutchess County. Numbers begin to decline in July when the first to leave begin their migration. Many remain into August and a few into September.

Historical Notes: Yellow Warbler has always been a common migrant and summer resident. Stearns called the species common and regular. Mary Hyatt's average arrival date over 20 years was May 3. Crosby's time range of April 25 to September 15 included the extreme dates, whereas Griscom's normal range was May 1 to mid-August. The average May Census count has increased from 80 during the 1960s to nearly 300 in the 1990s. Land use changes over time have so far increased habitat to the Yellow Warbler's liking. The earliest spring arrival date is April 19, 1995, at Tymor Forest Park. The latest fall departure date is Sept. 30, 1984, at Beacon.

———— **CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER** (*Setophaga pensylvanica*) ————

Normal Dates: May 1 - September 18

Usual Locale: Thickets, hedgerows, and mid-successional woods



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: A few Chestnut-sided Warblers arrive in late April, but most appear the first week of May. They are found in brushy areas and in all but the deepest woods. Chestnut-sided Warblers nest more in the eastern areas of the county than the western. They remain well into September in their distinctive fall plumage.

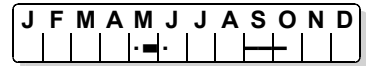
Historical Notes: Chestnut-sided Warblers were very rare in the Northeast prior to about 1840 but increased significantly as forests were cleared (Bull). While very common in the early twentieth century, they have benefited from habitat changes during the last half of the century. Counts from the May Census increased from an average of 28 in the 1960s to 91 in the 1990s. In Red Oaks Mill, James and Mary Key observed the earliest spring arrival on April 20, 1993, as well as the latest fall departure on Oct. 25, 1974.

———— **BLACKPOLL WARBLER** (*Setophaga striata*) ————

Normal Dates: May 11 - June 8 and

September 4 - October 14

Usual Locale: Large trees in woods or park-like areas



Transient

Status since 1990: Blackpoll Warblers are the last of the migrant warblers to arrive each spring. In a few springs about 20 have been found, but a more typical count is fewer than ten. Most are gone by the end of May, but a few linger into the first week of June. The year 2004 was remarkable. The count on the May Census was 61, by far the highest since 1959. In addition to the census birds, 20 others appeared in May, yet none were reported during the fall migration. During most fall migrations, fewer than six are found, but at least some are reported every year, except in 2004. Fall migrants arrive in early

September. A particularly early one was found August 14, 2002, at Rockefeller University Field Research Center.

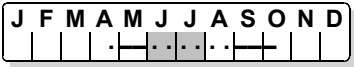
Historical Notes: During the early twentieth century, a typical spring season count of Blackpoll Warblers was 60-100 (Griscom). In the fall of the same period, the species flooded the county and were too abundant for reliable counts. They were the most common fall migrant after the Yellow-rumped Warbler. On the May Census they have averaged eight since 1959. A few years have none and others 20-30. Earliest spring arrivals are April 29, 1981, at Sharparoon and April 30 to May 1, 1989, in James and Mary Key’s yard in Poughkeepsie.

———— **BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER** (*Setophaga caerulescens*) ————

Normal Dates: April 27 - October 16

Usual Locale: Migration: mature woods;

Breeding: mature deciduous woods at elevations above 800 ft.



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Black-throated Blue Warblers are fairly common migrants. A recent early arrival of April 17, 2003, matches the previous early date in 1923. Fifteen were found on the field trip to Ferncliff Forest on May 8, 2002. A few stay to breed in the higher elevations of the eastern parts of the county. They are found regularly along the Appalachian Trail in the Pawling Nature Reserve in the summer. Observers report fewer in fall than in spring, finding them into October.

Historical Notes: Several Black-throated Blue Warbler specimens were taken during migration in the late nineteenth century (Stearns). During the early twentieth century, they were at times the second most common migrant warbler, but by the late 1940s were quite scarce. They were not known to nest in Dutchess County until June 1920, when Frost and Crosby found young birds on the hillside above Whaley Lake (*Auk*, 1920). Griscom considered the species a common nester in the appropriate eastern high elevation habitat. George Decker noted in the 1950s that they bred at Butts Hollow and on the mountains east of Dover Plains. As of 1979, no breeding had been reported since 1961, when four were found in mid-June on Brace Mountain. In 1979, Pink and Waterman presumed that they still nested on Brace Mountain, but there had been few birding trips to that area in summer to confirm breeding. Both Breeding Bird Atlases recorded the warbler in the Brace Mountain area, with breeding confirmed on the second Atlas in 2001. Recorded every year on the May Census, the counts range from one to 75 (in 1972) and average 17 since 1959. Even the decade averages vary considerably but show no long-term increase or decrease since the 1960s. Esther and Harry Chapman found a late migrant outside their window in Hyde Park Nov. 17-18, 1969.

———— **PALM WARBLER** (*Setophaga palmarum*) ————

Normal Dates: April 1 - May 7 and

September 10 - October 25

Usual Locale: Brushy areas and, in the fall, weedy places with sparrows



Transient

Status since 1990: The arrival of the Palm Warblers in early April heralds the start of the county's warbler migration. The birds appear in groups of one to five, occasionally more, throughout the area. A notably large wave brought in 20 seen in a flock with Yellow-rumped Warblers on the Waterman Bird Club Sandanona field trip in Millbrook on April 20, 1996. Palm Warblers depart for bogs to the north during the first week of May. September field trips for sparrows to Vassar College Farm and Stony Kill often find a few of them migrating. Most of the fall migrants are present from mid-September through mid-October, with a total of ten to twenty reported each year. At Tymor Forest Park on October 15, 2003, a flock of 18 Palm Warblers was found in one bush.

Historical Notes: The Palm Warbler has two subspecies, known as the Western Palm Warbler and the Yellow Palm Warbler. Stearns obtained a specimen of a "Yellow red poll Warbler" on April 27, 1880 and thought he saw several others, considering them "probably not rare." Crosby, Griscom, and Baker kept separate records for the two subspecies. Yellow Palm Warbler is the more common by far. Western Palm Warbler occurred rarely in fall and rarer still in the spring. Later records do not make the subspecies distinction.

Since the Palm Warbler occurs in the county primarily outside of Christmas Count and May Census times, population trends are difficult to discern. However, the numbers seem to have held steady over time. The May Census records Palm Warbler only eleven times. The Christmas Count found single individuals only twice, in 1967 and 1991. The only other winter record is from the Domin Farm in LaGrange, where the farmers found a Palm Warbler trapped in cobwebs on Dec. 19, 1962. They cleaned the bird and released it. Until the 1990s, there were a few late May and August reports, but none since 1990. The earliest spring arrival date is March 31 occurring in both 1990 and 2004. The latest spring departure date is May 17, 1985, when James and Mary Key saw two at Forest Glen. The earliest fall arrival date is August 14, 1985, in Amenias by Mary Yegella.

———— **PINE WARBLER** (*Setophaga pinus*) ————

Normal Dates: April 9 - October 9

Usual Locale: In groves of White Pine, occasionally in a single large White Pine

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
.	.	.	.	—	—
Summer Resident, Breeds											

Status since 1990: Pine Warblers usually appear in early April. Since the early 1990s, Pine Warblers have been found in May and June in the pine grove on the road to Cruger Island. On June 16, 2001, Carol Fredericks saw an adult with food and a fledgling. There had been increasing reports of singing Pine Warblers into the summer, but this was the first confirmed breeding record. Several pine plantations in and near Clove Valley in Union Vale host singing Pine Warblers into the summer months. Another reliable spot for hearing them is at Rudd Pond State Park where the birds sing from the pine trees surrounding the parking area. Since the Pine Warbler has returned as a nester in the county, it is now found in more places than during the 1920s, when they previously nested. Reports during the fall migration are sparse or absent. The bird's fall plumage is easily confused with that of the Blackpoll Warblers.

A Pine Warbler spent the winter at Jimmy Germond's feeder in Amenias from Dec. 20, 1989, through March 16, 1990 (*Kingbird*, 1990), photographed. The following winter, one spent parts of January and February at Florence Germond's feeder in Washington.

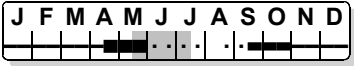
Historical Notes: Beginning in the late nineteenth century, Pine Warblers were decidedly uncommon. None of four very active birders at that time, Stearns, Hyatt, Horton, and Bloomfield, reported any. The first known record is from Crosby in April 1909. Griscom called them uncommon transients in spring and almost unknown in fall. A few Pine Warblers nested in pine groves on bluffs above the Hudson between Rhinecliff and Cruger Island during the 1920s. (They have now returned to nest in this area.) Summer reports were rare but persistent from 1910 into the 1930s. Griscom reports, “In 1932 Messrs. Joseph J. Hickey and R.T. Peterson noted 5 singing males during the summer at Tivoli.”

No nesting records or other summer records exist from 1933 through the 1940s. In the 1950s through the 1970s, there were one or two May reports per decade, then four in the 1980s. The regular May and June occurrence of Pine Warblers since 1990 is a change. Griscom noted that May reports often came from areas where nesting occurred, and this seems to be the case today as well. April birds are the migrants while the May birds stay to breed. Pine Warblers were found on half of the May Censuses until 1934. Then none were recorded until 1958. Two were counted on the 1964 May Census, and one in 1978 and 1981. Census counters found three in 1990 and every year since then, with a peak of ten in 2001. The earliest spring arrival date is on March 19, 1989, when a Pine Warbler appeared at Christine Luchini’s feeder in Pawling and remained through the month.

———— **YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER** (*Setophaga coronata*) ————

Normal Dates: September 15 - May 30

Usual Locale: In tall trees and low shrubbery,
favors poison ivy berries in winter



Transient, Infrequently Breeds

Status since 1990: The Yellow-rumped Warbler is the most abundant migrant warbler in Dutchess County. During the mid-April to mid-May peak of their migration, flocks of 30-50 occur in a number of places. They are regularly seen in winter in small numbers, usually one or two, but up to eight on occasion. Summer reports occur, but not every year. Mack Road, where breeding was confirmed in 1982, is the site of most summer reports. Other reports also come from Pawling Nature Reserve and Tymor Forest Park.

Historical Notes: All early area bird records indicate Yellow-rumped Warblers were abundant during migration and wintered casually. Mearns notes that one wintered in Fishkill during the 1877-78 season. The species were so abundant in migration that numbers were impossible to estimate (Griscom). Eleanor Pink’s records note a very large flock of at least 1000 at Forbes Swamp on April 26, 1952. The same year, Baker recorded the most ever at Chestnut Ridge. Pink and Waterman in 1965 considered them still fairly common to abundant, although the numbers had decreased since the 1930s. The average May Census count since 1959 is 95. The counts vary widely, with a high of 740 on the 1997 May Census and fewer than ten in other years, probably due to fluctuation of peak migration dates.

Until 1978 there were no summer records. That year one was reported on June 17, and in 1980 Marion Van Wagner found a male with food on Penny Road in Pawling. On June 30, 1982, Barbara Butler found a Yellow-rumped Warbler feeding its young on Mack Road in the Clove Valley after she and Helen Manson had heard and seen an adult male on a prior trip to the area. Summer visitors to Mack Road since then often have

found one or more, but no other breeding evidence has been observed. A small number have been found on about half of the Christmas Counts since 1958, with a peak of 22 in 1982. Prior to 1951, they were found on only four Christmas Counts.

Comment: An Audubon's Warbler, now a subspecies of Yellow-rumped Warbler, was at Stan and Joan DeOrsey's suet feeder near Red Oaks Mill Feb. 5-9, 1976, and was seen by many and photographed⁺. The Audubon's normally resides in the far west but wanders east on occasion. The first New York State record was in November 1970, but the subspecies has been recorded at least 16 times since (Levine).

———— **YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER** (*Setophaga dominica*) ————

Casual Visitant

Only Dates:

- One on May 14, 1939, on the May Census, by Allen Frost, Frank Gardner, George Gray, and Ray Guernsey.
- One on May 11, 1961, at St. Joseph's Normal Institute, found by students Robert Bowler and Hector Galban, seen by Br. Michael Dougherty, Otis Waterman, and others.
- One on April 28-30, 1964, at Tree Tops Lane, by Mary and James Key and several others. Also one on May 14 at Hyde Park Shopping Center, by Alice Jones.
- One on Sept. 30, 1972, at her home in Hyde Park, by Alice Jones.
- One on May 7, 1992, at Clove Cemetery in Union Vale, by Helen Manson, James and Mary Key, (*Kingbird*, 1992). Also one May 16, behind Dutchess Mall, Fishkill, by Russell O'Malley and Linda Gette.
- One on May 8, 2000, at Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery, by Liz Hinkley.
- One on May 11, 2002, on North Quaker Hill Rd, Pawling, by Sibyll Gilbert.
- One on April 28, 2021, on Lake Pleasant Rd., Staatsburg, by Madeleine George.

Status: Yellow-throated Warblers are southern warblers that have slowly expanded their range north to Pennsylvania and New Jersey in recent decades. They were first found nesting in New York State in 1984. They are seen annually, usually in the spring, on Long Island. In addition to those listed above, there were two reports of "heard only" birds in 1963 and 1965.

Comment: Reports of both 1992 sightings were submitted to NYSARC. Only the Clove Valley report was accepted. The 2002 report was submitted to NYSARC and accepted.

———— **PRAIRIE WARBLER** (*Setophaga discolor*) ————

Normal Dates: April 25 - September 25



Usual Locale: Early successional open fields

Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: Prairie Warblers begin arriving during the last week in April. Their distinctive song is easy to recognize, even while driving past the fields they frequent. Though very vocal, they are often hard to see. The northern extent of their breeding range is only two counties north of Dutchess County, so most remain here to nest. They are found throughout the county in fields with widely-spaced, small bushes. Nellie Hill in Dover hosts a large contingent of nesting Prairie Warblers. Finding ten on a visit there in

June is common. Fewer are reported during July and August when they sing less persistently. They depart in September, with only one reported in October (Oct. 1, 1997).

Historical Notes: Prairie Warblers have slowly expanded their breeding range north during the twentieth century. The first record in Dutchess County is by Frost on May 2, 1913, in Poughkeepsie. Griscom considered Prairie Warblers rare transients and exceedingly rare summer residents. The nest found east of Dover Plains on June 12, 1924, was outside the known range of this coastal plain resident. A few subsequent records from the same area raised the possibility of a colony there. The current location of the Nellie Hill colony is nearby. According to Ralph and Otis Waterman, four to six nested at the Boy Scout camp near Salt Point during the late 1940s. From 1933 to 1958, they were increasingly regular on the May Census. During the 1970s, census counts increased strikingly. Counts since then have continued to increase, if less dramatically. They averaged 15 in the 1960s and 63 since 1980. The maximum count was 113 in 1996. The earliest spring arrival date is April 23, 1985, when two were found on the Waterman Bird Club field trip to Tamarack Swamp. The latest departure is Oct. 21, 1983, in Pawling reported by John McIlwaine.

———— **TOWNSEND’S WARBLER** (*Setophaga townsendi*) ————

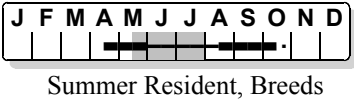
Accidental Vagrant

Only Date:
One male on April 24-25, 1965, at Thompson Pond, found by Marion Van Wagner and Eleanor Pink and seen by seven others.

Status: The bird was observed at close range both days on the path between the pond and Stissing Mountain. It was with a flock of Yellow-rumped and many Palm Warblers. NYSARC had not yet been established at the time of the sighting, but Eleanor Pink described the bird in a note for *Kingbird* (1965). This western warbler appears as a rare vagrant in the east. There have been 16 reports in New York (Levine). The first New York State record was in May 1947 in Brooklyn. The Thompson Pond bird was the fourth state record (Bull).

———— **BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER** (*Setophaga virens*) ————

Normal Dates: April 23 - October 15
Usual Locale: Widespread in migration; nests in hemlocks



Status since 1990: With their distinctive song, Black-throated Green Warblers arrive in late April. Through May they populate medium to large trees across the county. By June, most have moved north, with some staying to breed. Nesters retreat to the conifer woods of the eastern part of the county in places such as Pawling Nature Reserve, Deep Hollow, and Pond Gut. A few spend the summer in other parts of the county without specific nesting evidence observed.

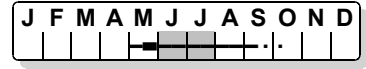
Historical Notes: Stearns considered Black-throated Green Warbler common to abundant from early spring to late fall but knew of no nestings. Crosby, Frost, and Gray found a nest with four eggs in a hemlock at Hammersley Lake on June 7, 1922, an area in which they continue to nest. For a few years, several pair were found to nest in the white pines along the bluffs over the Hudson between Rhinecliff and Barrytown. There

were few summer reports from that area until the 1980s when some were found at Ferncliff Forest in summer. The area was covered in 2004 for the Breeding Bird Atlas, but none were found then. The May Census average count is 32 since 1959, with a peak of 167 in 1996. The counts show no substantial increase or decrease over time.

———— CANADA WARBLER (*Cardellina canadensis*) ————

Normal Dates: May 5 - September 27

Usual Locale: Cool, wet woodlands



Summer Resident, Breeds

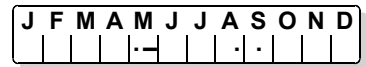
Status since 1990: Canada Warblers generally arrive the last two weeks in May, though some years one or two have been reported in early May. They are found in cool, wet areas throughout the county during migration, generally singly, sometimes in pairs. Observers on a walk occasionally find four to five. Those that stay to nest choose sites in the higher or cooler areas in the eastern towns. Canada Warblers are regulars at Pawling Nature Reserve. Birders on a field trip found five there on June 20, 2001. Other known breeding sites are Nuclear Lake, Deep Hollow, and Sharparoon. New areas for breeding Canada Warblers were found recently, Wilbur Flats Road in Lafayetteville MUA and Bog Hollow Road in Amenia. There are far fewer reports in fall than in spring, but they are again distributed across the county. Canada Warblers generally depart during mid to late September. There are a very few early October sightings.

Historical Notes: During four springs from 1885 to 1905, Mary Hyatt found Canada Warblers at Stanfordville. Arrival dates ranged from May 12 to 28. Bloomfield collected a Canada Warbler on June 7, 1892. These birds were common migrants; Crosby found 25-50 each spring near the Hudson River. Years with late migrant waves had exceptional numbers—135 in 1924 and 76 in 1927. Very few were noted in the fall. The Canada Warbler was not known to nest in Dutchess County until June and July 1920 when Frost and Crosby discovered them near Whaley Lake (*Auk*, 1920). They had also expanded in northwestern Connecticut by the 1930s (Zeranski and Baptist). According to Griscom, “The Canada Warbler nests rather commonly in the mountain laurel thickets on the tops of the higher hills and in cool ravines like Turkey Hollow and those near Dover Furnace.” This is still true, except that they are somewhat less common. The earliest spring arrival is April 29, 1928, observed by Allen Frost at Poughkeepsie. The latest fall departure dates are Oct. 27, 1969, in Poughkeepsie and Oct. 24, 1972, at Salt Point. May Census counts show a decline from the 1980s, when the average count was eleven, to the 1990s, when it was five. The peak Census count is 43 in 1974.

———— WILSON’S WARBLER (*Cardellina pusilla*) ————

Normal Dates: May 4-28 and August 26 - September 20

Usual Locale: Shrubby areas



Transient

Status since 1990: A late migrant in spring, most Wilson’s Warblers are found during the second and third week in May. The number found in spring, including the May Census counts, ranges from nine in 1992 and eight in 2002 to none in 1990. The average is four or five. During the fall migration, only three birds were sighted in August and five

in September for the 1990-2004 period. The most recent fall record is Sept. 20, 2004, when two were seen at Buttercup Farm Sanctuary.

Historical Notes: Mary Hyatt recorded a “pair” of Wilson’s Warbler on May 20, 1888. Griscom and Crosby considered the warbler to be fairly common in spring, occasional years were considerably above average. Their average was six to ten per spring; 22 were found in 1916 and 36 in 1929. Griscom notes that the “bulk of the individuals pass through very rapidly from May 18-27.” On May 19, 1956, Marion Van Wagner noted “lots of Wilson’s at Cruger Island.” About half the years in the 1960s and 1970s produced between 10 and 21 birds in the spring. Three times during that period, counts in the fall exceeded ten. Peak years became less frequent during the 1980s when a total of 19 were reported in the spring of 1984, 14 in the fall of 1983 and 18 in May 1988. In 1974 and 1978, migrants stayed into early June. The earliest fall arrivals are Aug. 16, 1919, in Rhinebeck and Aug. 17, 1973, at Marion Van Wagner’s bird bath in Pleasant Valley. A remarkable day was Aug. 27, 1981, when Jim and Mary Key found eight Wilson’s Warblers in their Red Oaks Mill yard. The latest fall departure is recorded by John Baker Oct. 29, 1939, at Chestnut Ridge. The highest May Census counts are 16 in 1972 and 18 in 1940.

GROSBEAKS

———— SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*) ————

Casual Visitant

Only Dates:

- One female on May 20, 1962, at Cruger Island, by Br. Michael Dougherty and Br. Austin.
- One male on May 14, 1988, on Butts Hollow Road, Dover, by Helen Manson and Barbara Butler.
- One male on May 10, 2008, on Woodland Rd., Salt Point, by Robert Bowler.
- One female Jan. 15 to April 20, 2020, at Melissa Fischer’s feeder and occasionally at the Michelin’s feeder nearby, Wappinger Falls. Seen by many and photographed⁺.
- One first year male on June 1, 2021 at Russ O’Malley’s, Fishkill.

Status: Summer Tanagers occasionally visited extreme southeastern New York as migration overshoots until the 1940s, and then annually since 1947. Initially they were rarely found as far as 100 miles north of New York City. During the 1980s and 1990s, they began appearing more frequently upstate. The early reports were largely from April and May. More recent reports include summer and fall sightings. The first New York breeding record is 1990 on Long Island.

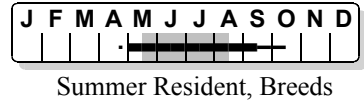
Historical Notes: Crosby included Summer Tanager on his hypothetical list, citing a secondhand report from Stearns and noting that Frost recalled seeing them several times near Poughkeepsie during the early 1890s, before he began keeping bird lists.

Comment: Reports of the 1988, 2008, and 2020 sightings were accepted by NYSARC.

——— SCARLET TANAGER (*Piranga olivacea*) ———

Normal Dates: May 3 to September 30

Usual Locale: Deciduous woodlands throughout the county



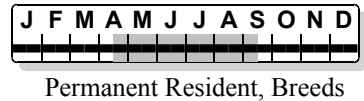
Status since 1990: Scarlet Tanagers arrive in May. There are very few April records; the earliest is April 27, 1994, on Newbold Road in Hyde Park. Six to ten Scarlet Tanagers can be found during the summer in Ferncliff Forest, West Clove Mountain Road, Pawling Nature Reserve, and Turkey Hollow. They depart during September. Some years they are gone by mid-September. Other years one or two linger into the first week or two of October. The latest departure date is Oct. 31, 1970, at Stissing reported by Thelma Haight.

Historical Notes: Griscom noted that in late May flocks of transient Scarlet Tanagers move through, "... May 23, 1929, R.J. Eaton and I saw at least 20 near Rhinebeck, and on May 26, 1924 Crosby and I saw over 50, both days, when big waves of birds poured through the county." Currently some month's records include perhaps thirty birds for an entire month. Seeing fifty of these stunning creatures in a day is no longer possible. Counts from the May Census since 1959 have averaged over 60 with several teams of birders looking. The largest May Census count was 122 in 1996.

——— NORTHERN CARDINAL (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) ———

Normal Dates: All year

Usual Locale: In brushy fields and residential areas throughout the county



Status since 1990: Several Northern Cardinals can be found on most field trips and at most feeders. They are widely distributed, but large numbers are not often seen. There are a few feeders, however, that attract up to 15 during the winter — quite a sight on a cold, dreary day. The most recorded in one place was 25 at Alice Jones' yard in Poughkeepsie on Feb. 18, 1991.

Historical Notes: Early literature indicates that cardinals inhabited southeastern New York in the early nineteenth century, declined, and then were reestablished during the 1930s and 1940s. Prior to the 1930s, there were only three Dutchess County records of cardinals. The earliest documented record is a nesting report in 1913, when Allen Frost found a nest with four eggs in Poughkeepsie on June 8 and fledglings on July 6. Because cardinals were then kept as caged birds, this was possibly a released pair. Franklin Roosevelt found an adult male at Hyde Park on July 10, 1922. During the winters of 1929-30 and 1932, a male visited feeding stations in Rhinebeck. There were no more reports until 1944, when the species was recorded by Allen Frost on April 23 and May 7. The one place visited on both days was Lake Walton, presumably the location of the cardinal.

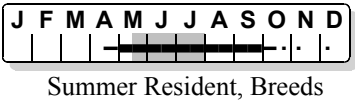
During the late 1940s and early 1950s, the number of cardinals increased dramatically in all parts of the county. The first mention of a pair is in February 1948. Ralph Waterman records two young on June 20, 1949, the first nesting record since 1913. They first appeared on the May Census in 1944, then every year from 1949. Census counts were between 50 and 100 from the 1960s until the late 1980s. Through the

end of the twentieth century, 100 to 200 were counted each May. Cardinals first appeared on a Christmas Count in 1948; two were recorded. In 1958 there were 14 and in 1959, 71. After that the Christmas Counts found 75 to 150 each year without a noticeable increase since the 1980s.

———— **ROSE-BREADED GROSBEAK** (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) ————

Normal Dates: May 3 - September 30

Usual Locale: Deciduous forests, parks, at feeders in spring



Status since 1990: Rose-breasted Grosbeaks arrive in numbers in early May, although many years a few appear in late April. The earliest arrival is April 19, 1991. They spend the first week or so at feeders, to the delight of feeder watchers. They then move to set up nesting territories in areas with fairly large deciduous trees. Most field trips find several during the breeding season. They continue at many feeders, especially with their young. The major exodus for the South occurs by the end of September. Most Octobers one or two grosbeaks remain through mid-month. Since 1990, there have been four late fall reports of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks at feeders.

Historical Notes: Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were quite scarce prior to the 1870s. Stearns noted only one report of an adult male in June 1875. The population then increased, apparently helped by tree cutting that fragmented forests. Mary Hyatt documented their spring arrivals beginning in 1890. Crosby (1921) considered the Rose-breasted Grosbeak common during the spring migration in the Hudson Valley area. However, he noted that they preferred the more eastern regions of the county for breeding. The map of the first Breeding Bird Atlas shows them well distributed around the county. Yet even today summer reports are more numerous from the eastern parts. Pink & Waterman (1979) noted that Rose-breasted Grosbeaks rarely visited feeders. The exception was Florence Germond’s feeders in Washington, where they could be found throughout the spring and summer.

Prior to 1990, there was only one winter record. One immature male was found Dec. 25, 1966, by Sylvia Hauser at her feeder at Beechwood Apartments, two miles south of Poughkeepsie. It stayed through March 1967¹ and was photographed. The only occurrence on the Christmas Count was in 1966. Every May Census has recorded Rose-breasted Grosbeak. From 1958 to the mid-1980s, 50-100 were reported. From the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s, the count increased to 100-200

Comments: On April 30, 2017 Diane DesAutels photographed⁺ a gynandromorphic Rose-breasted Grosbeak at her feeder in Poughkeepsie. Gynandromorphism is when a species shows both male and female characteristics, most notably through plumage variations. While very rare, the classic form is female plumage on one side and male plumage on the other, split evenly down the middle. While this is the first species so reported in Dutchess County, it has been recorded in various bird species and particularly in butterflies. The Grosbeak stayed until May 10, 2017 but returned the next year, on June 6, 2018 staying three days.

[1] In Bull, page 549, the bird is listed at the Keys’ feeder, staying until Jan. 12, 1967. This is incorrect.

———— **BLACK-HEADED GROSBK** (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Dates:

One first-year male from Jan. 23 to April 13, 1965, at Eleanor Pink's feeder in Pleasant Valley, seen by many, photographed⁺.

One male on May 12, 2013 at Southland Farm, Rhinebeck by Mona Payton.

Status: From Eleanor Pink's article "First record of Black-headed Grosbeak in Dutchess County" in *Kingbird* (1965), "On Jan. 23, 1964, in the midst of the heaviest snow storm of 1964-65, a storm that originated in the Texas Panhandle and moved northeast in about 36 hours, a bird, tentatively identified as a Black-headed Grosbeak in the immature plumage of a first-year male, appeared at my feeder in Pleasant Valley. ... The Grosbeak remained at my feeder for 81 days and was last seen on April 13. I had it under observation for a total of 115 hours during this time. It was extremely timid and always came into the feeding area from the same direction. The area from which it came was profuse with Multiflora Rose, Wild Grapes and Sumac. It usually stayed only a few minutes on the feeder, eating nothing but sunflower seeds then left, not to return for another hour or so. The least noise or movement inside the window would frighten him away, and our pictures had to be taken from six feet within the room. There was no evidence of plumage change before his last appearance. ..." There have been more than 15 reports state-wide (Levine).

The second sighting was a relatively brief sighting but the detailed description supports a male Black-headed Grosbeak.

———— **BLUE GROSBK** (*Passerina caerulea*) ————

Normal Dates: May

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
				.	.					.	

Usual Locale: Brushy and overgrown fields

Visitant

Status: The first Blue Grosbeak found in Dutchess County was one immature on Oct. 25-29, 1991, at Stony Kill, Fishkill, by Otis Waterman, Barbara Michelin, Eleanor Pink, Marion Van Wagner, and many others. However it is more often found in May for one day anywhere in the county. Both breeding males, immature males, and females have been seen. The earliest arrival date is April 20, 2021 in Wappingers Falls found by Debbie van Zyl and seen by many people with many photographs⁺ taken.

During the first Breeding Bird Atlas, the state's first Blue Grosbeak nest was found on Staten Island. The species is a regular nester in New Jersey and regularly visits Long Island in small numbers during migration (Levine). The Dutchess County birds reflect a very gradual northward range expansion of this southern bird.

Comment: Most early reports were submitted to NYSARC and accepted.

———— **INDIGO BUNTING** (*Passerina cyanea*) ————

Normal Dates: May 6 - September 23

Usual Locale: Open, brushy areas



Summer Resident, Breeds

Status since 1990: A few Indigo Buntings appear in April and early May; the earliest was on April 20, 2004, in Red Hook. However, they do not arrive in good numbers until mid-May. They are seen in ones and twos in brushy areas through June, July, and August. A remarkable sight was more than ten Indigo Buntings in a weedy, abandoned corn field on the old Wassaic State School property July 7, 2001. Most depart by early September. As in the spring, a few stragglers can be found into October. The latest fall departure is Oct. 28, 2001, when Chet Vincent saw an adult in winter plumage on Domin Farm in LaGrange.

Historical Notes: The general increase in the Indigo Bunting population since the nineteenth century can be attributed to beneficial habitat changes state-wide. Logging and agriculture have created open, brushy areas. Indigo Bunting populations have generally increased, although there are comments in the records of below-average numbers, especially in the early 1990s. May Census counts are quite erratic, probably because the census is taken about the time that the species arrives. Normal counts range from five to twenty; the peak is 47 in 2004. There are three winter records. The record of two females and two males “with a splotch of blue in the wing” reported by Herb Saltford at his feeder in Poughkeepsie, Dec. 11-15, 1962, was most unusual. The second winter record was of a female or immature Dec. 13-19, 1975, at a Stream Lane feeder in Pleasant Valley, seen by Marion Van Wagner. The most recent late fall record is an immature male at Marion Van Wagner’s yard, Pleasant Valley, Nov. 28 - Dec. 1, 1987.

———— **PAINTED BUNTING** (*Passerina ciris*) ————

Accidental Vagrant

Only Date:

One male on Aug. 10, 1992, on Wilbur Flats Road, Lafayetteville Multiple Use Area by Karen Kearney.

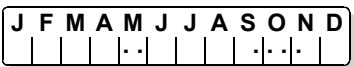
Status: Karen Kearney found the bird sitting in a dead tree near some flycatchers. She called several other people, but no one else saw the bird. Levine lists ten reports of Painted Bunting in the state since 1978.

Comment: The report submitted to NYSARC was accepted.

———— **DICKCISSEL** (*Spiza americana*) ————

Normal Dates: Most often in May and October

Usual Locale: At feeders or brushy areas frequented by sparrows



Transient

Status since 1990: Dickcissels visited Dutchess County four times during the 1990s. Three of the sightings were at Stony Kill gardens. Twice Dickcissels were seen in May, three on May 18, 1993, at Stony Kill and one on May 11, 1997, at Poets’ Walk. The other Stony Kill reports were Oct. 13, 1992, and Oct. 22, 1993. One was photographed+ at Stonykill on Sept. 27, 2011 having been there since Sept. 24. In 2020 at three locations

and again in 2021 at two locations, single birds were reported between August and November.

Historical Notes: Prior to 1850, Dickcissels were considered common breeders along the Atlantic coastal plain north to Massachusetts (Bull). There are no nineteenth century records for Dutchess County. Between 1900 and 1950, only scattered sightings occurred in the Northeast. Since the 1950s, Dickcissels are rare but regular visitors to feeding stations in the Northeast (Levine).

The first Dutchess County record was a Dickcissel banded at the Millbrook School for Boys on Nov. 10, 1953. Marion Van Wagner had one at her feeders in Pleasant Valley on Nov. 22, 1953. After November 29, it appeared every day, eating cracked corn and bread and drinking a lot. The bird stayed until Jan. 1, 1954. (*Poughkeepsie New Yorker*, Nov. 27, 1953) A few were reported most years from the late 1950s through the 1970s, usually in fall or winter. Often they were found with House Sparrows at feeders, sometimes staying quite a while. Eight appeared during the 1980s, including one July 20-21, 1982, at Stissing, one April 16-24, 1983, in Clinton Corners, one at the Millbrook School from Dec. 27, 1982 to Jan. 25, 1983, and two Oct. 24, 1985, at Stony Kill.

MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS

Within Dutchess County, the species in this section are considered either:

- **Exotic** – non-native species, released or escaped, and not represented by a sustaining feral population. Hunt clubs frequently release exotic game birds. Escaped domestic or pet birds are increasingly encountered, but are excluded.
- **Hypothetical** – all reports are sight-only reports by three people or fewer, no photograph or specimen was obtained, and no report was accepted by NYSARC. These sightings are usually vagrants outside their expected range or species normally found relatively close to Dutchess County for which there is no suitable habitat in Dutchess County, such as sea birds. Sight-only records, even of common species, are prone to error due to impediments, including lighting, weather, concealing vegetation, individual variations, and many others.

Sightings noted are not judged erroneous or correct; they are provided for completeness. Undoubtedly many, possibly all, of the hypothetical sightings are correct identifications, and the species deserves to be recognized as an accidental species in Dutchess County. Some of the exotic birds may indeed have arrived in Dutchess County by aberrant migration, unaided by man.

———— WATERFOWL SPECIES ————

Exotic

Comment: Numerous waterfowl are kept in captivity and occasionally seen as escapees or free ranging birds. **Ruddy Shelducks** (*Tadorna ferruginea*) have been reported as have **Muscovy Ducks** (*Cairina moschata*) and various hybrid farm stock. A pair of non-wild **Whooper Swans** (*Cygnus cygnus*) with clipped wings were brought to Elk Ravine Farm, Smithfield Valley Rd., Amenia to chase away Canada Geese in the spring of 2018 (photograph⁺).

———— PHEASANT SPECIES ————

Exotic

Historical Notes: The **Green Pheasant** (*Phasianus versicolor*), generally considered a subspecies of the Ring-necked Pheasant, is native to eastern Asia. The NYS Conservation Dept. released them north of Millbrook in small groups of about ten birds each year for five years beginning in fall 1969 (John Yonke, pers. conv.). The first reported sighting was March 21, 1970, on the Shunpike, Washington, by Florence Germond. Some successfully bred, as seven young were reported in September 1970 in nearby Stanford by Larry Remsen. The releases were unsuccessful in establishing a sustaining population. Subsequently, some have been released by hunt clubs.

The **Gray Partridge** (*Perdix perdix*), frequently called Hungarian Partridge, is an introduced game bird originally from Europe. They were introduced many times in North America, mostly after 1900. Gray Partridges are established in a number of areas, the closest is northern New York where nearly 28,000 birds were introduced between 1927 and 1932. They continue to steadily decline there.

In Dutchess County, Charles Dieterich released Gray Partridges on his Millbrook estate before 1896 (*Forest and Stream*). Tracy Dows released sixty pairs in 1912 and thirty pairs in 1913 at his estate, Foxhollow, Rhinebeck (Crosby). On Feb. 23, 1930, Frost recorded two Gray Partridges near Amenia. They were also reported March 15, 1940, and July 1, 1943, near Millbrook School for Boys, likely released by a hunt club. They are still released occasionally by hunt clubs from which escapees are infrequently seen. One was seen in September 2001 in Beekman.

Originally from central Asia, the **Chukar** (*Alectoris chukar*) was successfully introduced in western states around 1950. Hunt clubs released them in Dutchess County in the early 1970s, perhaps earlier, and still do on occasion. Escapees continue to be reported every few years. The first recorded sighting was one on March 15, 1940, at the Millbrook School for Boys. There is no reason to believe the Chukar is self-sustaining in Dutchess County. Introductions in eastern states have failed over the years.

Comment: Other game species are occasionally released or found as escapees from farms. **Golden Pheasants** (*Chrysolophus pictus*) have been seen in Dutchess County, most recently on May 30, 2001, at Tamarack Swamp, but they too are not established.

In 1895, Charles Dieterich released 24 **Greater Prairie-Chickens** (*Tympanuchus cupido*) on his Millbrook estate. They survived the first year but subsequently succumbed. Dieterich was also known to stock Ruffed Grouse and Northern Bobwhite on his property (*Forest and Stream*).

———— **BLACK RAIL** (*Laterallus jamaicensis*) ————

Hypothetical

Only Date:

1870s near Beacon, by Edwin Kent.

Historical Notes: Like the Yellow Rail, the Black Rail is elusive. They, too, call mostly at night. The only possible record for Dutchess County is reported by Edwin Kent as seen “only very rarely” near Beacon in the 1870s (Kent, p.10). Eaton states, “It breeds on Long Island and perhaps in the Hudson Valley,” but his comment is not supported by any firm evidence for Dutchess County.

———— **CRANE SPECIES** ————

Exotic

Comment: Many varieties of cranes are kept in zoos and other animal parks. Due to their size, escapees are often seen and reported. The 1918 Sandhill Crane sighting was thought to be an escapee. Other cranes seen in Dutchess County included one **Stanley Crane** or Blue Crane (*Grus paradisea*) from Aug. 13 to Sept. 1, 1972, at the Leonard Scaccia Farm on Route 82 in LaGrangeville, then the Dickson Farm, Verbank. Photographed at both locations by Mary Key. It was apparently first seen on June 25 in Rowly, Mass., then from July 4 to August 10 in both Hampton Falls and Amherst, N.H. After leaving Verbank, it was next seen at Bethel, N.Y., and the first week of October at Rushville, Penn. (*Wings over Dutchess*, Oct. 1972, *Poughkeepsie Journal*, Aug. 14 and Oct. 5, 1972). One **Common Crane** (*Grus grus*) was seen from April 20 to May 3, 1991, on Crestwood Road, Red Hook. It was identified by its owner as escaped from Delaware County (*Poughkeepsie Journal*, April 22 and April 28, 1991). Also one **Demoiselle Crane** (*Anthropoides virgo*) was reported from Sept. 30 to Oct. 1, 2000, at Stormville Airport, East Fishkill. It had a band and was clearly an escapee.

———— **WHIMBREL** (*Numenius phaeopus*) ————

Hypothetical

Only Dates:

One on July 23, 2004, near Beacon train station, found by John Askildsen. It was flying and calling during a rain storm associated with a front moving to the southeast.

One on Aug. 29, 2009, at Vandenburg Cove from a kayak, by Alan Mapes.

Status: A portion of the Whimbrel population nests along the shores of Hudson Bay, and migrates to the Atlantic Ocean via the Canadian Maritimes then out to sea and often directly to South America. However, a few are reported inland, most often during the fall migration.

Comment: Previously called Hudsonian Curlew, Whimbrels were classified a subspecies of the European form in the 1940s. There is apparently a lost record for Dutchess County, as Griscom included “curlew” in a list of birds he added to his copy of Crosby’s 1921 Dutchess County list. Details are unknown, although it is thought to be from Bloomfield’s collection.

———— **WESTERN SANDPIPER** (*Calidris mauri*) ————

Hypothetical

Only Dates:

One immature on Sept. 9, 1922, at Morgan Lake, by Crosby, Griscom, and Frost.

One adult on Aug. 18-19, 1923, at Halcyon Lake, by Crosby and Griscom.

Two adults on Sept. 4, 1989, along a small stream at Franklin D. Roosevelt NHS, Hyde Park, by park naturalist David Hayes.

Status: The Western Sandpiper is closely related to, and in fall difficult to distinguish from, the Semipalmated Sandpiper. Western Sandpipers nest on the shores of western Alaska, but in fall migrate across northern North America to the Atlantic coast. The first two sightings above were recorded as *possible* Western Sandpipers. The first was collected and the second observed well, but in both cases positive identification was uncertain according to Griscom.

———— **ROSEATE TERN** (*Sterna dougallii*) ————

Hypothetical

Comment: The Roseate Tern is effectively never reported inland although it nests on Long Island and the Connecticut shore. It was included on Allen Frost's checklist of "Birds of Dutchess County" printed about 1939 or 1940 but not included on subsequent checklists. While apparently listed in error, details are unknown.

———— **LEACH'S STORM-PETREL** (*Hydrobates leucorhoa*) ————

Hypothetical

Only Date:

Seen in 1870s on Hudson River, by Edwin Kent.

Historical Notes: When Edwin Kent wrote of his years around Beacon from 1872 to 1886, he said he saw "Petrel, probably Leach's" semi-occasionally on the Hudson River (Kent, p.46). A first impression is likely that he was mistaken, and the bird was really a Common Nighthawk or maybe a Black Tern given the erratic flight each demonstrates and their similar size and color. However, Eaton lists Leach's Storm-Petrel *specimens* from Catskill (October 1874) and near Troy (October and November 1879 and November 1886). While this species is normally far out to sea after breeding and has nocturnal habits, it is occasionally blown inland during storms. It is certainly possible that Kent saw this bird in Dutchess County.

———— **BROWN PELICAN** (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) ————

Hypothetical

Only Date:

One on May 3, 1992, on approach to Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge over the Hudson River, by Sally and Daniel Moreau.

Status: On the Atlantic coast, the Brown Pelican is normally found south of Virginia. When found inland and farther north, it has often been driven there by storms. The summer of 1992 was unusual in that 15 were reported on May 23 and a record 87 on July 12, all on Long Island. In addition, on July 30 two were found at Croton Bay, Hudson River, Westchester County. It is speculated that this increase was due to an increase in menhaden (Levine).

Comment: A report of this sighting was not accepted by NYSARC.

———— **SWALLOW-TAILED KITE** (*Elanoides forficatus*) ————

Hypothetical

Only Dates:

One on May 2, 2011, flying over Bulls Head Rd. at Centre Rd., Clinton, by Jim Clinton. There were multiple reports from New Jersey at this time, one from Sandy Hook on the same day.

One on May 13, 2015, flying over Canoe Hill Rd., Millbrook, by John Askilden. Also reported from New Haven, Conn. on the same day.

One on May 20, 2017, flying over Hopewell Junction, by Jeff Gerlach, catching insects. Three were reported the day before in Northern New Jersey.

Status: Swallow-tailed Kites are beautiful and unmistakable when seen well. Once breeding as far north as Minnesota, their population collapsed through the 1930s but has since increased significantly. They recently expanded their breeding range from Florida into South Carolina and Texas. They also wander with many recent records to the north, more in spring than late summer. There are well over 20 New York state records, generally seen for one day.

Comment: None of the above three sightings were submitted to NYSARC.

———— **MISSISSIPPI KITE** (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) ————

Hypothetical

Only Dates:

One on Sept. 23, 2014, perched at Peach Hill Park, Poughkeepsie, by Dick Riley and Al Orcutt.

One on May 30, 2016, hawking insects flying over Cary IES, Millbrook, by John Askildsen.

Status: The Mississippi Kite is a southern species which has been expanding north through the Mississippi River Valley. It has also been frequently reported along the Atlantic Coast. The first New York record was in 1979. There are more spring than fall sightings but there have been a few breeding records as far north as New Hampshire.

Comment: The 2014 sighting was not accepted by NYSARC, the 2016 sighting was not submitted.

———— **GREAT GRAY OWL** (*Strix nebulosa*) ————

Hypothetical

Comment: The Great Gray Owl seldom wanders south of the Adirondacks. There is apparently a lost record of the Great Gray, as Griscom included it in a list of birds he added to his copy of Crosby's 1921 Dutchess County list. Details are unknown, although it is thought it might be from Bloomfield's collection.

———— **BOREAL OWL** (*Aegolius funereus*) ————

Hypothetical

Only Date:

One on Dec. 11, 1960, south of East Park, by Walter Clair, Jr. in a field of live Christmas trees.

Status: Boreal Owls live well north of the Canadian border but wander south in winter, though seldom as far as southern New York. Being nocturnal, they roost during the day in dense evergreens making discovery problematic.

———— **CRESTED CARACARA** (*Caracara plancus*) ————

Hypothetical

Only Date:

One on April 7, 2020, flew low over Field Road, Clinton Corners, seen by Susan Joseph. One was also reported near Kingston on April 4 and one was photographed and seen by many in central Vermont from March 4 to 7. This sighting was not accepted by NYSARC.

Status: The Crested Caracara is normally found in Mexico and further south with some in Arizona, Texas, and Florida. It does not tend to wander and any sighting in the North is very unusual, yet it has happened before.

———— **MONK PARAKEET** (*Myiopsitta monachus*) ————

Exotic

Only Dates:

Two from Aug. 8-13, 1972, at Lynam home, Green Haven, Beekman, found by Ann and Ralph Lynam and seen by James and Mary Key, Helen Manson, and Enid Butler. Was with a flock of Starlings, feeding on sweet corn.

One on Dec. 19, 1972, at Texaco Research Center, Glenham, by James and Mary Key.

Two from Sept. 25 into October 1986 at Titusville Middle School, Poughkeepsie, by Chet Vincent.

Two or three during December 1986 at Pine Plains, by Philip Smith and Charles Gerhards.

One on June 10-12, 1989, on Drake Rd., Pleasant Valley, by Gary Cady.

One on Aug. 31, 1994, at Sebastian Court, Hopewell Jct., by Carol Jack.

One from summer 2001 to January 2002 in Rhinebeck and Rhinecliff villages.

Attempted to build a nest imbedded in ivy on Rhinecliff home of Ken Fricker.

Status: The Monk Parakeet, native to Argentina, is also a common cage bird. While a number of caged birds inevitably escape or are released, an escape of grander proportions occurred near Kennedy Airport in 1968 while crates of Monk Parakeets were being imported. Some of the survivors nested in 1971, thrived, and expanded around New York City. In 1973 the state attempted to eradicate them. They were unsuccessful but the expansion stopped. A colony in Bridgeport, Conn., may have been established independently. Colonies exist in other states, notably Florida, where they are the most common parrot.

Comment: There is no way of knowing if the Dutchess County sightings represent birds from the New York City area or recently escaped cage birds, likely some are the latter.

Various other species of parrots are seen from time to time, but all are considered to be escaped cage birds.

———— SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER (*Tyrannus forficatus*) ————

Hypothetical

Only Dates:

One male in spring or summer of late 1930s or early 1940s along Sprout Creek south of Todd Hill Rd., LaGrange, by Ralph Waterman. Details reported to Allen Frost, now lost, recalled by Otis Waterman.

One male on June 25, 1985, at Bangall Rd., Mabbettsville, by Jesse Bontecou. Seen very close flying from fence post to fence post.

One male on Sept. 5, 2006, flew over field before Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge, by Jim Clinton.

Status: Scissor-tailed Flycatchers are normally summer residents in the Oklahoma area. However, they have been recorded sporadically during spring and fall migration, and widely in most states and southern Canada. They have been recorded in New York since 1939, more often in spring. Frequently they are found singly near the coast.

Comment: A report of the 1985 sighting was not accepted by NYSARC, the 2006 sighting was not submitted.

———— BLACK-BILLED MAGPIE (*Pica hudsonia*) ————

Exotic

Only Date:

One on Aug. 30, 1989, at Wassaic State School, Amenia, reported to Dot Fleury. Apparently caught and released.

Status: The Black-billed Magpie is native to Europe, much of Asia, and western North America. There are accepted records from the Northeast, but the majority of sightings are considered escaped cage birds, as this sighting appears to be.

———— EURASIAN SKYLARK (*Alauda arvensis*) ————

Exotic

Historical Notes: Skylarks, native to Europe and Asia, are well known for their singing. In 1896 at Grasmere, Rhinebeck, Sarah Schieffelin¹ liberated about 35 Skylarks, followed the next year by an additional 130. Although John Burroughs reported them from West Park, Ulster County, in 1897, it is believed all perished their first winter. Thus, the brief introduction of Skylarks to Dutchess County failed. However multiple times Skylarks had been introduced around New York City. Some apparently survived until about 1913 when the encroaching city displaced them and they too disappeared.

[1] Sarah Kendall Schieffelin (1834-1921), second wife of Henry Maunsell Schieffelin, was Maunsell Crosby's maternal grandmother and sister-in-law of Eugene Schieffelin, who released Starlings and others in New York City. Eugene apparently acquired the Skylarks and may have helped release them. He summered in Tivoli.

———— EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH (*Carduelis carduelis*) ————

Exotic

Only Dates:

One on April 11, 1989, at James and Mary Key's feeder near Red Oaks Mill.

One on April 27, 2015, at Rod Gonzalez’s feeder, Stormville, photographed+. May have stayed in the area for about a week, maybe longer.

Status: European Goldfinches are assumed to be escaped cage birds. According to the account of the bird that appeared at the Key’s feeder, it arrived at 6PM, fed on thistle seed a few times, and was gone. Introduced near New York City in 1878 and other cities in the late nineteenth century, a small flock persisted on Long Island until they were displaced by development about 1955.

———— **BREWER’S BLACKBIRD** (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) ————

Hypothetical

Only Date:

One on April 28, 1993, at Thompson Pond, by Ed Treacy and Jack Focht.

Status: The breeding range of Brewer’s Blackbird has been expanding eastward in Ontario, which has resulted in increased New York sightings of migrating or wintering birds. Reports are still quite rare in the eastern part of the state (Levine). This species is extremely difficult to distinguish from other blackbirds. Identification depends on good lighting and opportunities for close study.

GENERAL SUMMARY OF CURRENT STATUS

Regularly occurring	
Permanent Residents.	63
Summer Residents.	76
Winter Residents.	8
Transients.	83
Visitants.	<u>25</u>
Total	255
Casual.	31 fewer than ten recent records, yet expected again
Accidental.	35 not expected again
Extirpated.	2 (Loggerhead Shrike, Henslow's Sparrow)
Extinct.	1 (Passenger Pigeon)
Historical.	4 (Red Knot, Long-tailed Jaeger, Dovekie, Thick-billed Murre)
Grand Total	328
Breeding.	139
Bred very few times.	5 (see Table 3 on page 43)
Formerly Bred.	12 (see Table 4 on page 44)
Miscellaneous Reports	
Hypothetical.	12
Exotic.	7

Terms defined on page 58.

Status changes since first published in 2006

- 2006 • Grasshopper Sparrow again confirmed nesting, no longer “Formerly Bred.”
• Chestnut-collared Longspur, 1968 record accepted by NYSARC, to Accidental Vagrant from Hypothetical.
- 2007 • Barnacle Goose, increased sightings, many considered wild, to Casual Visitant from Exotic
- 2008 • Golden-crowned Kinglet, last confirmed nesting in 1985, to “Formerly Bred.”
• Great Cormorant, more than ten records, to Winter Visitant from Casual Visitant.
- 2009 • Tufted Duck, first record, photographed, an Accidental Vagrant.
• Nelson’s Sparrow, photographed, to Casual Visitant from Hypothetical.
- 2010 • Long-tailed Jaeger, Dovekie, and Thick-billed Murre to Historical from Accidental; Red Knot to Historical from Casual.
- 2011 • LeConte’s Sparrow, first record, photographed, Accidental Vagrant.
- 2012 • Glaucous Gull, tenth record, to regular Winter Visitant from Casual Visitant.
• Slaty-backed Gull, first record, photographed, Accidental Vagrant.
• Rufous Hummingbird, first record, banded and photographed, Accidental Vagrant.
- 2013 • Caspian Tern, photographed, first confirmed record, to Casual Visitant from Hypothetical.
• Manx Shearwater, first record, photographed, Accidental Vagrant.
• American Avocet, first record, photographed, Accidental Vagrant.
- 2014 • Sandhill Crane, tenth record, to regular Transient from Casual Visitant.
- 2015 • Boreal Chickadee, last record 1983, from Winter Visitant to Casual Visitant.
• Cackling Goose, now reported about every year, from Casual Visitant to regular Transient.
• Common Gallinule, again confirmed nesting, no longer “Formerly Bred.”
- 2016 • Osprey, again confirmed nesting, no longer “Formerly Bred.”
• Lesser Black-backed Gull, tenth record, to Winter Visitant from Casual Visitant.
- 2017 • White Ibis, first record, photographed, Accidental Vagrant.
• King Eider, first record, photographed, Accidental Vagrant.
- 2018 • King Rail, last record 1990, to Casual Spring Transient, formerly Spring Transient.
• Loggerhead Shrike, to extirpated, formerly Transient. No longer breeds north or east of Dutchess County.
• Clarified casual and accidental status based on expected or not expected again. This changed how a few species were categorized.
- 2019 • Eurasian Teal, of which the Green-winged Teal is a subspecies, first record, photographed.
• Clay-colored Sparrow, tenth record, to Transient from Casual Visitant.

- 2020 • Barn Owl, last confirmed nesting in 1980, to “Formerly Bred.”
• Caspian Tern, now reported every year, to Spring Transient from Casual Visitant.
- 2021 • Blue Grosbeak, tenth record, to Regular Visitant from Casual Visitant.
• Roseate Spoonbill, first record, photographed, Accidental Vagrant.
• Pink-footed Goose, first record, photographed, Accidental Vagrant.
• Blue-winged Teal, not bred since 1969, changed to “Formerly Bred.”

PHOTO GALLERY

Photographs of Birds Seen Infrequently in Dutchess County

In the book text, a + superscript following photograph indicates that photograph is in this gallery, generally in chronological sequence, or in the introductory chapters.*

● indicates only one record, ● indicates ten or more records, more than casual

When a list of birds is compiled for some specific area, like Dutchess County, how is it determined that the birds listed were in fact accurately recorded, particularly when the species is infrequently seen? For many years recording a new species required that the bird be shot and the specimen deposited in an appropriate collection. The last bird to be shot in Dutchess County specifically to verify the record was a Loggerhead Shrike, shot on Dec. 13, 1958 in Amenia by George Decker. The Shrike skin is now in the Columbia-Greene Community College collection. Prior to that, birds were regularly shot to prove the record, particularly by Maunsell Crosby and Ludlow Griscom.

With the availability of cameras this slowly changed. Today birds are not shot with a gun just to verify a record, they are shot with a camera. The first local record verified with a camera might be in July 1925 when Allen Frost and Henry Kiemle photographed a small group of Great Egrets near Poughkeepsie. But the real beginning was in the 1960s. An Oregon Junco was photographed by Ken Davis in 1963 and a Red-bellied Woodpecker, the second county record, was also photographed in 1963 (both photographs are lost.) From then on, shooting was with a camera.



Great Egret - July 1925 near Poughkeepsie by Henry Kiemle. Oldest known county photograph taken specifically to verify a sighting. He apparently developed and printed it himself. There are better photos by Allen Frost. The second county record, now seen regularly. ●

Photographing birds began long ago in Dutchess County. The earliest extant photograph is from July 1900 by Clinton Abbott of a Chestnut-sided Warbler nest at Grasmere. In 1902 and 1903 Lisenard Horton used glass plates to take many bird photographs. “Safety film” soon followed, all black and white, used by a variety of local people, but often from a long distance or of a bird on a nest. By 1950 color film was being used but the pictures were barely better. The breakthrough occurred with digital cameras and better less expensive lenses. By 2000, after 100 years of photographs, “everyone” had a good camera and the number of local bird photographs exploded.

What follows are most of the photographs mentioned in this book, particularly for those species seen less than about 20 times. Many are the first photograph of the species taken in the county. When multiple photographs exist of the same species, the “best” was selected with a bias for earlier photographs. However some photographs are not included when there are many photographs in eBird from Dutchess County and the species is considered regularly occurring. Some too were excluded due to identification difficulty or less significant. Each photograph has been researched to verify when, where, and by whom taken.

No photograph taken in Dutchess County is known of some species of casual or accidental occurrence, as well as the following infrequently seen species:

King Rail	Eastern Whip-poor-will	Loggerhead Shrike*
Upland Sandpiper	Black-backed Woodpecker*	Kentucky Warbler
Red-necked Phalarope*		* photographed years ago, now lost

If you have or take a photograph of any of the above or any species of casual or accidental occurrence, please tell Stan DeOrsey or Barbara Butler.

A special thank you to over 30 people who have shared their photographs, especially to Deborah Tracy-Kral who has taken so many wonderful photographs of Dutchess birds. Also to Carena Pooth for excellent restoration of the older photographs.

PHOTOGRAPH SOURCES: Great Egret from Crosby’s Journals, Boreal Chickadee from Rhinebeck Bird Club 1917 *Yearbook* (similar but different photograph in *Bird-Lore*) all others from the photographers or the Waterman Bird Club archives.



Boreal Chickadee -
Winter 1916-17 at
Grasmere Farm,
Rhinebeck by
Maunsell Crosby.
Taken to document
how tame one of two
had become. Most
recent Dutchess
County sighting is
Nov. 4, 1983.

from Bird-Lore
Nov.-Dec., 1917



Barn Owls -

Sept 11, 1953 on the John & Vincent Moody farm at Market Lane and Willowbrook Rd., Stanford by Howard Chittick. The boys are Donald Krom (left) and Ted Chittick. The owls were caught in and returned to the barn silo. ●



Atlantic Puffin -

immature Sept. 28, 1963 at SUNY New Paltz where it died the following day. Found in a backyard at Rhinebeck the previous day. The photo is from *The Conservationist* by an unknown photographer. ●



Black-headed Grosbeak -

first year male, Feb. 21, 1965 at Eleanor Pink's feeder, Pleasant Valley, by Otis Waterman. First county record.

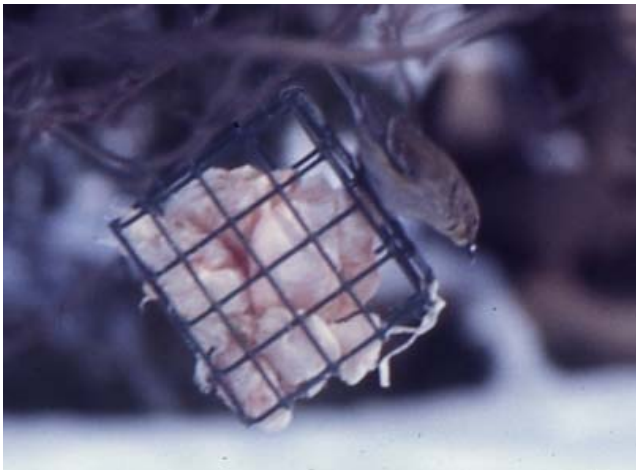
Eleanor Pink / Otis Waterman Feb 21, 1965



Harris's Sparrow - immature, Jan. 15, 1968 at a home in Dover Plains by Otis Waterman. First county record, stayed over three months. Species also found in 1969 and 1981.



Canada Jay - November 1975 at the Sky Acres Airport, Union Vale by Bill Consiglio. This Jay stayed until May, none have been seen since.



Audubon's Warbler (subspecies of Yellow-rumped Warbler) - Feb. 9, 1976 at DeOrsey's feeder, Red Oaks Mill by Bill Consiglio. Note yellow on throat is just visible. ●



Cattle Egret - May 2, 1977 at Cornell Farm, Titusville Rd., Poughkeepsie by Otis Waterman. Fourteen were found for one day only. First county sighting was in 1957. First county photograph. Now being seen less often. ●



Red-tailed Hawk (albino) - female, from 1977 at the Don Marshall Farm, Millbrook by Pat Redmond. Pat and Peter Devers studied the local Red-tails for many years. Albino Red-tails are not unusual.



Mountain Bluebird - March 18, 1978 on Fiddlers Bridge Rd., Schultsville by Otis Waterman. First for Dutchess, fourth for NY. Seen again in 1998.



White-rumped Sandpiper -

June 1, 1979 at McEnroe Farm, Sharon Station by Alice Jones. Overall grayer, streaks to flanks. One of two present. Second county record.



Marbled Godwit -

June 3, 1979 at McEnroe Farm, Sharon Station by Helen Sweeney. Only county record. ●



Common Eider -

female, Oct. 15, 1979 at Quaker Lake, Pawling by Howard Pellet. Only county record. ●



Brambling (with Northern Cardinal) - March 24, 1984 under feeder at a home in Pleasant Valley by Otis Waterman. It stayed most of the month and was the first NY State record. ●



Forster's Tern - May 16, 1986 at Baird State Park pond by Erik Kiviat through a scope. Note the bright white breast and gray back, tall orange legs and orange bill with black tip. First county record.



Northern Gannet - immature, Oct. 31, 1986 in a cage after being captured by Jon Fells by the Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery pond. It had an injured wing and was later released. Photo by Jim Key at the DEC New Paltz office.



Gyrfalcon -

gray morph, Jan. 20, 1987 near Briaclyff Farm, Pine Plains by Jeff Kirk. Seen very infrequently, this was first since 1928 and first photo.



Townsend's Solitaire -

Jan. 9, 1990 on Duell Hollow Rd., Dover by Dot Fleury. It stayed over two months and was seen by over 100 people. Second record, has been seen twice since.



Yellow-crowned Night-Heron -

May 1992 in backyard on Whittier Blvd., Poughkeepsie by a friend of Tom Gilbert. First photo for county. ●



Snowy Owl - on the Walgreen Drug sign at 44 Plaza, Poughkeepsie. Stayed from Dec. 7 to March 25, 1997. Both photos by Peter Relson. ●



Wilson's Snipe - nest May 9, 2000 in town of North East, by Jesse Jaycox of NYSDEC. By May 25 the eggs had hatched. Only the third confirmed nesting in Dutchess County, south of the normal boreal breeding area.



Cackling Goose - Jan. 28, 2002 at Waryas Park, Poughkeepsie by Ken Fredericks. The Cackling Goose is about the size of a Mallard, much smaller than the Canada Goose in this photo. First county sighting was in 1977, this was the second report. ●



Hudsonian Godwit
- Nov. 10, 2002 at
The Woods
development,
Rhinebeck by Carena
Pooth. First sighting
in Dutchess County.



Glossy Ibis -
March 25, 2003 off
Gretna Rd., Pleasant
Valley by Carena
Pooth. First found in
1966, this is the first
photograph. ●



Barnacle Geese -
Nov. 1, 2003 at
Traver Pond,
LaGrange by Alan
Peterson. Three of
four, stayed together
and very skittish.
With hundreds of
Canada Geese.

© Alan Peterson



Fish Crow at Common Raven nest - April 5, 2005 at Mills Mansion, Staatsburg by Bill Case. With a net mounted for renovation work, a pair of Common Ravens built a nest but a Fish Crow stole the eggs. First Raven nest in county 1996.



American Golden-Plover - April 9, 2006 at a small pond off Strever Farm Rd., Pine Plains by Steve Golladay. Only spring record in county, not yet in breeding plumage. ●



Great Cormorant - immature, Nov. 30, 2006 at Upper Kays Pond, Pleasant Valley by Bill Case. Expanding their range but still not found inland often. ●



Clay-colored Sparrow -

Oct. 20, 2007 at Stony Kill by Steve Golladay. A fall Clay-colored is very similar to a fall Chipping Sparrow. A difference is the light lores of the Clay-colored vs. dark lores of the Chipping. ●



Tufted Duck -

March 22, 2009 on Hudson River off Esopus by Curt McDermott. Also seen from Mills Mansion. Note tuft behind head. ●



Nelson's Sparrow -

Oct. 17, 2009 at Southlands Farm, Rhinebeck by Gene McGarry. Identified as subspecies *alterus*.



Dickcissel -
immature, Sept. 27,
2011 at Stonykill by
Deborah Tracy-Kral.
Sometimes found in
the spring, they are
particularly attracted
to the Stonykill
gardens. ●



Red Phalarope -
Oct. 8, 2011 at Greig
Farm, Red Hook by
Peter Schoenberger.
The second county
record, first was in
2006.



Le Conte's Sparrow
- immature, Oct. 9,
2011 at Greig's
Farm, Red Hook by
Peter Schoenberger.
●



Glaucous Gull -

Jan. 17, 2012 on Hudson by Beacon RR Station by Curt McDermott. This gull is very light, a dirty white. Black on bill notes not an adult. Size is larger than Herring Gull, Iceland would be smaller. ●



Iceland Gull -

Jan. 17, 2012 on Hudson by Beacon RR Station by Curt McDermott. This is a first year bird, note all black short bill. Would be smaller than a Herring Gull. Light wings has almost a checkered look. ●



Lesser

Black-backed Gull -

Jan. 17, 2012 on Hudson by Beacon RR Station by Curt McDermott. Note black back same as black wing tips and legs same yellow as bill. Smaller than Herring Gulls. ●



Slaty-backed Gull -

Jan. 21, 2012 on Hudson by Beacon RR Station by Curt McDermott. Note dark gray back contrasting with black wing tips and bright pink legs. Same size as a Herring Gull. ●



Sedge Wren -

Sept. 13, 2012 at Stony Kill Farm, Wappinger Falls by Bill Case. Once a nesting species in Dutchess, last known nesting was in the 1930s, now seen very rarely, fifth sighting since 1950.



Rufous Hummingbird -

Nov. 12, 2012 at a residential feeder in Wappinger Falls, by Steve Golladay. A first-fall female and the first sighting in Dutchess County. It remained for over a month.



American White Pelican -

June 9, 2013 on the Hudson at the Poughkeepsie Yacht Club, Staatsburg by Alison Merritt-Kaase. The third sighting since 2009, the first was in 1994.



Manx Shearwater -

Aug. 7, 2013 on the Hudson near Chelsea by Walter Joseph. First record for Dutchess County, effectively never found inland. ●



Greater White-fronted Goose - Nov. 2, 2013 in a field along Salt Point Turnpike by Deborah Tracy-Kral. Found by Chet Vincent. Usually associate with Canada Geese. ●



Surf Scoter - female, Nov. 10, 2013 at Sylvan Lake by Carena Pooth. Three were present for nearly a week. Not frequently seen in county. ●



Oregon Junco (subspecies of Dark-eyed Junco) - female, Dec. 10, 2013 at her feeder, Stanfordville, by Deborah Tracy-Kral. Note the dark hood and brown back. The same individual is thought to have wintered there 2012-13 and 2013-14.



Sandhill Cranes - Feb. 14, 2014 over Tivoli Bays by Christina Baal. Sandhill Cranes nested in NY again starting in 2003, they are now occasionally seen over Dutchess. ●



Prothonotary Warbler -

May 9, 2014 at Dennings Point by Aimee LaBarr. First photograph of a Prothonotary in Dutchess County. ●



Lawrence's

Warbler (left) - May 26, 2014 at Buttercup Farm Sanctuary East, Stanfordville;

Brewster's Warbler

(right) April 30, 2017 at Peach Hill, both by Deborah Tracy-Kral. Hybrids from Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers interbreeding. ●



Black Tern -

May 15, 2014 at Mashomack, Pine Plains by Carena Pooth. One stayed one day only. Found by Chet Vincent. Since the late 1960s their numbers have fallen significantly. ●



Red-necked Grebe -

May 17, 2014 at Long Dock, Beacon by Maury Lacher, first winter (top). April 14, 2017 on River near Tivoli South Bay by Susan Joseph, breeding adult (bottom). Infrequently found.



Lark Sparrow -

Aug. 22, 2014 along Salt Point Turnpike on Tim Knickerbocker's farm, Stanford by Deborah Tracy-Kral.



Northern Mockingbird

(albino) - Dec. 23, 2014 Freedom Road north of Baird State Park by Bill Case. Found by Chet Vincent four days earlier. ●



Golden Eagle -

first year, Jan. 10, 2015 over Berkshire Rd., Dover Plains by Deborah Tracy-Kral. Golden Eagles are uncommon in the East but one or more have wintered near Stissing and to the south since 1990. ●



European

Goldfinch - April 27, 2015, Stormville by Rod Gonzalez at his feeder. Assumed to be an escaped caged bird.



Least Bittern -

May 5, 2015 along Harlem Valley Rail Trail near Sharon Station by Jane Rossman. This was one of two present. Least Bitterns were in the county before records were kept, but seeing one is a significant accomplishment. This is the first known photo. ●



Caspian Tern -

May 15, 2015 on the Beacon waterfront by Sue Infante. Fifth sighting since 1920.



Yellow-breasted Chat -

June 8, 2015 at Hopeland, Staatsburg by Deborah Tracy-Kral. Once a nesting species in Dutchess, the last known nesting was in 1966.



Buff-breasted Sandpiper -

immature, Sept. 6, 2015 at the Red Hook Soccer Field by Bill Case. Buffy with scaled back, short bill. Third county record, all in Fall.



Tundra Swans -

March 2, 2016 at Round Pond, Amenia by Deborah Tracy-Kral. Two of six swans present for a week. Tundra Swans usually migrate long distances non-stop.



© 2016 Deborah Tracy-Kral

Common Tern -

May 5, 2016 at Conklin Hill Rd., Stanfordville by Deborah Tracy-Kral. Note grayish body, dark outer wing edge. Most often seen in May for one day.



© 2016 Carena Pooth

Short-billed Dowitcher -

July 10, 2016 at a farm pond off Rt. 199, Pine Plains by Carena Pooth. Likely a male migrating south.





Baird's Sandpiper -

Sept. 2, 2016 on the edge of South Hills Mall parking lot by Ken Harris.

Brown-buff breast band, white belly, larger than peep. Sixth record, all but one found in September.



Gray-cheeked Thrush -

Oct. 17, 2016 in LaGrange by Maha Katnani. Not often seen and easily overlooked, the Grey-cheeked has a crescent behind the eye, not a full eye ring; plus the upper breast and face has no buff, unlike the Swainson's Thrush.

●



Rose-breasted Grosbeak

(gynandromorph) - April 30, 2017 at her Poughkeepsie feeder by Diane DesAutels. A gynandromorph is an individual with both male and female characteristics. Rare but with more people looking with cameras, they are found. ●



White Ibis -
July 19, 2017
mid-Dutchess by
Adrienne Popko.
Two of the five
present, all
immature. ●



Stilt Sandpipers -
Aug. 29, 2017 at
Strever Farm, Pine
Plains by Carena
Pooth. Two juveniles
of three present.
Other images show
their dark yellowish
legs.



King Eider -
female, Dec. 18,
2017 off Norrie
Point by Peter
Stewart. Flew down
river then returned
and landed on the
water. ●



Whooper Swan - May 9, 2018 at Elk Ravine Farm, Smithfield Valley Rd., Amenia by Jane Rossman. A pair of non-wild swans with clipped wings brought to chase Canada Geese away from farm.



Black-bellied Plover - Sept. 28, 2018 off Sheffield Hill Rd., Amenia by Barbara Mansell. Not often seen in fall still in breeding plumage. In Dutchess almost always seen singly.



Eurasian Teal (right) - April 6, 2019 at Stever Farm, Pine Plains by Tony Macchiarola. The Green-winged Teal (left) is a subspecies of the Teal of Europe and Asia. Note the horizontal white side stripe rather than a vertical stripe. ●



Tricolored Heron -
April 21, 2019 at
Tivoli North Bay by
Susan Rogers. Third
county record but
first photograph.



Green Heron Colony
- July 13, 2019, by
Barbara Mansell. A
small island about 30
feet in diameter in
Dutchess Park Lake,
Fishkill supports at
least seven nests.
Twenty birds were
seen including young.
Usually nests singly,
this is the first known
Green Heron colony
in Dutchess County.



Connecticut Warbler
- Sept. 24, 2019 on
Depot Hill Rd. by
Aimee LaBarr. An
uncommon warbler
normally only seen
in the fall. First
Dutchess County
photo. ●



Summer Tanager - female, Jan. 15, 2020 at Melissa Fischer's feeder, Wappinger Falls. Most unusual in winter. Photo by Stephen Fischer.



Sooty Tern - Aug. 4, 2020 by Cathy Brady taken in her backyard at Clinton Corners. Blown north by a hurricane, it was injured.



Thayer's Gull - first year, Jan. 14, 2021, Riverfront Park, Beacon by Barbara Thomascall. Note the brown wing tips, pink legs, round head, and long black bill. A subspecies of the Iceland Gull, some winter near Lake Erie. ●



Hoary Redpoll - male, Feb. 18, 2021, Fox St., Poughkeepsie by Sean Carroll. Note the overall white appearance, totally white under the tail, and small bill with a high forehead.



Blue Grosbeak - first-year male, April 20, 2021 in Wappingers Falls by Debbie van Zyl. The tenth county record but first photograph. Slowly expanding its range north. ●



Peregrine Falcon - May 10, 2021 by Chris Nadareski of the NYC DEP who banded these four young on the Mid-Hudson Bridge where they have bred since the 1990s.



Roseate Spoonbill - juvenile, July 22, 2021 in Casperkill near South Rd., Poughkeepsie by Carena Pooth. Recently have wandered further north after leaving rookery in the South.



Sanderling - Aug. 7, 2021 by Kyle Bardwell at Beacon waterfront park. Changing from breeding to winter plumage.



American Avocet - Aug. 11, 2021 at Beacon waterfront park by Barbara Mansell.



Pink-footed Goose -
Nov. 26, 2021 at
Wappinger Lake by
Deborah Tracy-Kral.
First county record.



Specimens of Birds Seen Infrequently in Dutchess County

There are a number of infrequently seen species whose presence in Dutchess County is confirmed by a specimen. Most are old, before cameras were commonly used. Many were collected by Arthur Bloomfield who had a private museum behind his home in Hyde Park. His extensive collection was reviewed in 1924 by Crosby and Griscom. It was still there in 1941; however, since his death in 1943, no trace of the collection has been found.

The following are known specimens for species recorded less than about 20 times.

Passenger Pigeon - a male and a female are displayed with local birds at the Grinnell Library, Wappingers Falls. However it is not known if they were acquired locally.

Prothonotary Warbler - collected on June 27, 1892 at Hyde Park by Bloomfield. First county record. ●

Thick-billed Murre - one collected on Dec. 1, 1894 at Pleasant Valley by Lisenard Horton. Two collected on Nov. 30 and one on Dec. 1, 1897 on the Hudson River at Hyde Park by Bloomfield. One of Bloomfield's was given to the Vassar Brothers Institute Museum. The final disposition of all four is unknown.

Dovekie - two collected on Dec. 29, 1901 on the Hudson River at Hyde Park by Bloomfield; one kept and one given to the Vassar Brothers Institute Museum. The final disposition of both are unknown. Two others from 1932 were apparently not saved.

Upland Sandpiper - collected on July 16, 1919 at East Hyde Park by Bloomfield. First county record.

Baird's Sandpiper - female collected on Sept. 9, 1922 at Morgan Lake by Crosby and Griscom, at American Museum of Natural History #SKIN-168744. First county record.

Bicknell's Thrush - collected on May 27, 1923 at Hyde Park by Bloomfield.

Long-tailed Jaeger - immature on Sept. 7, 1929 near Millbrook, flew into a car windshield and was killed. Added to collection of the Vassar Brothers Museum. Final disposition unknown. Only county record. ●

Townsend's Solitaire - female collected on March 16, 1953 near Dover Plains by John George, at American Museum of Natural History #SKIN-707718. First county record.

Boreal Chickadee - female collected on Feb. 25, 1955 at Dover Plains by George Decker, at the New York State Museum #zo-4252. ●

Loggerhead Shrike - collected on Dec 13, 1958 in Amenia by George Decker, at Columbia-Greene Community College #1226. Last known county specimen collected for verification. ●

Western Meadowlark - male caught on June 26, 1962 at Layton Farm, Bangall; kept at Kalbfleisch Field Station, Huntington, Long Island until May 2, 1969; at American Museum of Natural History #SKIN-801468.

Atlantic Puffin - immature caught on Sept. 27, 1963 at Rhinebeck, died the following day, specimen at SUNY New Paltz. ●

Great Cormorant - female shot by hunters Nov. 2, 1969 in Cornwall Bay and confiscated; at the New York State Museum #zo-2080, first confirmed inland state record. ●

Clapper Rail - found dead Aug. 30, 2004 at Baird State Park by Jude Holdsworth, at Cornell University #CUMV-Bird 52769. ●



Yellow-breasted Chat
eggs and nest - collected May 25, 1902 in a bush 4 feet off the ground in Gretna, Pleasant Valley by Lisperard Horton. The Chat no longer nests in Dutchess County. The nest and eggs are now at the Chicago Academy of Sciences where it was photographed in 2011, #Egg375



Clapper Rail
(middle specimen) - 2004 photo by Kevin McGowan, Cornell. Left two are Clapper Rails, right two King Rails; males are larger. Clappers vary considerably from light to dark with Northeast subspecies lightest, King Rails always darker. Clappers are coastal, Dutchess Clapper is the furthest inland record. ●

PEOPLE NAMED

This list provides background information on many, but not all, people often mentioned in this book. In most cases, these people contributed numerous significant records. A few also made important contributions in other ways, as noted in the section “History of Ornithology in Dutchess County.”

Abbott, Clinton Gilbert (1881-1946) was tutor to Maunsell Crosby and cofounder of the Rhinebeck Bird Club. He moved to San Diego in 1921 to become director of the San Diego Natural History Museum.

Andrews, Helen C. Manson (1915-2002) was an early member of the first Dutchess County Bird Club and always very active in the clubs. She wrote a newspaper column on birds and was a bird painter. She lived at Moores Mills.

Baker, John Hopkinson (1894-1973) was executive director of the National Association of Audubon Societies. He maintained a home at Chestnut Ridge, Union Vale, from 1931 and kept extensive bird records.

Bloomfield, Arthur (1866-1943) collected bird skins from 1890 to about 1919. The collection, consisting of hundreds of bird skins, some mammals, and other items of natural history, was kept in its own building behind Bloomfield’s home on Fuller Lane, Hyde Park. Its disposition is unknown. Bloomfield worked for Col. Archibald Rogers at his estate, Crumwold Hall, north of Roosevelt’s home.

Butler, Barbara has been an active birder since 1975, is responsible for all Waterman Bird Club bird records since 1989, and was Dutchess County coordinator of both state Breeding Bird Atlases. She lives near Verbank.

Butler, Enid (1907-1991) lived in the hamlet of Green Haven, Beekman. She kept records of the birds in her area and sent in monthly reports for many years.

Crosby, Maunsell Schieffelin (1887-1931) collected and published extensively on Dutchess County birds. He lived at Grasmere on the south side of Rhinebeck. Griscom called him “one of the most gifted field naturalists I have ever known.”

Decker, George (1922-1968) was a true naturalist and early member of the original Dutchess County Bird Club. He lived in Dover Plains.

DeOrsey, Stan and Joan have been birders and active members of the Waterman Bird Club since 1975. They moved to Maine in 2001. Stan created the “Birds of Dutchess County” reference guide and checklist.

Dieterich, Charles Francis (1836-1927) purchased land in Millbrook from 1889 and created an estate modeled after his native Bavaria. He imported and released mammals and birds native to Germany as well as planted European trees.

Dougherty, Br. Michael (1925-2008) assigned to St. Joseph’s Normal Institute, Barrytown, from 1958 to 1962, he was diligent in reporting birds along the Hudson River and from Cruger Island.

- Dows, Tracy** (1871-1937) was a businessman and owner of Beekman Arms Tavern. He released game birds at his estate, Foxhollow, adjacent to Grasmere.
- Finch, Davis W.** is a former teacher at Vassar College and cofounder of Wings birding tours. He was very active in Dutchess County between 1967 and 1972.
- Fleury, Dorothy** has been an active birder since 1980 and has found many uncommon waterfowl in the northeastern parts of the county. She lives in Dover.
- Frost, Allen** (1877-1946) was a birding companion of Crosby from about 1915. He suggested the May Census in 1919 and continued to lead it until his death. He was curator of the Vassar Brothers' Institute. Most of his records and photographs are lost.
- Gardner, Frank LaVergne, Jr.** (1906-1957) was an avid birder and insurance agent in Poughkeepsie. He started as a "Frost Boy" in the mid-1920s and participated in many May Censuses.
- Germond, Florence L.** (1912-1994) started the Bluebird trail and was a charter member of the Waterman Bird Club. She maintained a large selection of feeders year-round, often attracting special birds to her residence on the Shunpike, Washington. No one surpassed her enthusiasm, interest, and activities for birds.
- Gilbert, Sibyll** has been an active birder since 1981 and coordinator of the Pawling Christmas Bird Count since 1988. She lives in Pawling.
- Gingert, Arthur** was manager of Miles Wildlife Sanctuary, Sharon, Conn., and a nature photographer.
- Gray, George Washington** (1885-1948) was an early birding associate of Frost and participated in many May Censuses. He lived at Greenvale Farms on New Hackensack Rd., Poughkeepsie.
- Griscom, Ludlow** (1890-1959) began visiting Crosby in Rhinebeck while Assistant Curator of Ornithology at the American Museum of Natural History. On Crosby's death, he compiled Crosby's notes into the *Birds of Dutchess County*. Author of many books and publications, he became Assistant Curator of Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology in 1927.
- Guernsey, Raymond Gano** (1878-1959) was an attorney in Poughkeepsie. He birded the county from the early 1920s and participated in many May Censuses. He was the first president of the Dutchess County Bird Club.
- Guthrie, Richard**, an active birder in Dutchess County during his college days, he is now retired from the NYSDEC.
- Haight, Thelma C.** (1911-1996) lived in Stissing on a marsh where she fed innumerable birds and had a bird banding station. She was most active in saving Thompson Pond through the Nature Conservancy.
- Hickey, Joseph James** (1907-1993) was author of the popular book, *A Guide to Bird Watching*, and was instrumental in establishing and publicizing the link between pesticides and bird populations. His records are from 1931-33 summers in Tivoli.
- Horton, Lisenard S.** (1878-1942) collected bird skins and eggs from 1894, took photographs of nests and kept extensive notes. Many photographs were published, but disposition of the collection is unknown.
- Hyatt, Ruth Mary** (1862-1940) kept extensive notes on bird arrival dates at her home, Honeymead Brook, Stanfordville, from 1885 into the 1920s.
- Jones, Alice D.** (1918-2015) lived in Poughkeepsie and was very active with the Waterman Bird Club from 1960s to 1990s, serving as permanent delegate to the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs. She monitored the crow roosts near Poughkeepsie.

- Kent, Edwin Clark** (1856-1938) wrote about hunting around Beacon during the 1870s and 1880s. He was a life member of the American Ornithologists' Union.
- Key, James W.** (1907-1996) and **Mary C.** (1909-2005) were both birders. Mary ran the Waterman Bird Club Rare Bird Alert for many years. Jim was especially knowledgeable on hawk migration. They found or verified 22 of the casual / accidental Dutchess County birds, a remarkable number. Their North American life list was over 700. They lived near Red Oaks Mill.
- Kiviati, Erik** is founder and science director of Hudsonia Ltd., an environmental research and education organization in Annandale.
- Manson, Helen** see Helen Andrews.
- Mearns, Edgar Alexander** (1856-1916), a native of Highland Falls, he became an Army surgeon; collected bird and other specimens extensively in the Southwestern US, the Philippines, and other areas; and published many papers.
- Palmer, Ralph Simon** (1914-2003) was a Vassar College professor and then the New York State Zoologist. He authored a number of acclaimed bird books and participated in many May Censuses.
- Parkhurst, Vivian H.** (1911-1998) worked at both Briarcliff Farms, Pine Plains, and the Dieterich estate, Millbrook, enabling her to find many uncommon birds.
- Pink, Eleanor R.** (1919-2010) was an active birder in Dutchess County from the 1940s, a charter member of the first Dutchess County Bird Club and the Waterman Bird Club, and a longtime records chairman. She lived in Pleasant Valley next to Wappinger Creek.
- Pooth, Carena** lives in Poughquag and has been an active birder since 1985. She created the Waterman Bird Club website, the PEEPs system to quickly alert people of special birds being seen, and the tools to compile monthly eBird records for the newsletter.
- Roosevelt, Franklin Delano** (1882-1945) was a local birder from Hyde Park who became President of the United States.
- Smart, Robert W.** (1929-1979) was a teacher at Millbrook School for Boys in the 1970s and cofounder of the American Birding Association. In 1952, he set the record for seeing the most bird species in one year in North America—510,¹ broken in 1953 by R.T. Peterson with 572. The record is now 745.
- [1] Kenn Kaufman, *Kingbird Highway*, 1997, p.16.
- Smith, Philip H.** wrote a history of Dutchess County, published in 1877, with a section on common birds.
- Spingarn, Edward D.W.** (1911-2005) as a teenager birded with Crosby and conducted Christmas Counts near Amenia in 1924 and 1927. He is the son of Joel Spingarn, former owner of the Troutbeck estate, Amenia.
- Stack, Frederic W.** (1870-1915) ran a small business providing supplies to egg collectors. He also collected eggs for others.
- Stearns, Winfrid Alden** (1852-1909) was a naturalist and ornithologist. He spent September 1879 through June 1880 in Beacon, during which time he published the first annotated local list of birds in Dutchess County.
- Strauss, Beatrix "Trixi"** (1910-1987) and **William** (1912-1979) were active from the early 1950s in various bird and conservation projects in both Dutchess County and Connecticut. They lived near a marsh north of Amenia.
- Terhune, Dorothy "Czecher"** (1912-1998) and her husband, Ralph, cultivated an apple orchard near Pleasant Valley. They were charter members of the Waterman Bird Club. For many years she led the group that covered the Salt Point area for the Christmas Count and the May Census.

Vincent, Chet has been a very active birder since 1982. A LaGrange resident, his daily walks have yielded many uncommon birds.

Van Wagner, Marion (1914-2002), the best field birder in her time, was constantly in the field looking for birds. She was secretary of the original Dutchess County Bird Club. She lived on Gleason Blvd., Pleasant Valley.

Waterman, Otis (1930-2014) was the son of Ralph Waterman. He continued his father's bird identification classes and coordinated both the May Census and Christmas Bird Count for over 40 years. He lived for many years on North Jackson Rd., Poughkeepsie.

Waterman, Ralph TenEyck (1901-1958) was an insurance agent and Boy Scout scoutmaster who took responsibility for the May Census on the death of Allen Frost. He taught bird identification classes, which lead to his founding of the Dutchess County Bird Club.

Yegella, Mary (1915-2005) was a lively, enthusiastic birder who lived in Dover Plains. She was most knowledgeable about all of nature.

In addition to many of the people noted above, a number of others contributed reports to the Waterman Bird Club regularly over many years. They include:

Judy Atwood	Karen Jaquith
Jean Beck	Art Jones
Emilie Skidmore Becquet	Susan Joseph
Elsie Browne	Bill and Donna Lenhart
Bea Buchanan	Dorothy Lloyd
Elsa Bumstead	Jeff Lucas
Walter Claire, Jr.	Barbara Mansell
Jeff Daley	Barbara and Allan Michelin
Roz and Ken Davis	Vaughn and Beth Morrison
Peggy Fasciani	Mona Payton
Jim and Bonnie Fiedler	Alan and Jan Peterson
Ken and Carol Fredericks	Aline and Forrest Romero
Pat Garthwaite	Edith and Barry Rosen
Richard Gershon	Kay Sisson
Tom and Annatje Gilbert	James Southward
Marguerite Guernsey	Anne Strain
Sue Gyscek	Millie Sturcken
David Hayes	Dorothy Wohlbach
Carol Jack	Adrienne and Gary Zylkuski

Many others contributed reports or information about special sightings. All were necessary to form the picture of Dutchess County birds presented here.

PLACES NAMED

This list identifies the location of place names cited, including some of the better birding areas. Not all places are referenced in this work. For more detail and additional birding sites, see *Where to Bird in Dutchess County* (Butler).

Most places can be located on readily available county road maps. "Street, Road and Property Ownership Map of Dutchess County, New York" is one of the better maps for locating older place names along with land owners. It was published in the 1930s by Dolph & Stewart, New York City, and was republished virtually unchanged by Hagstrom Co. in the 1950s.

Abels Pond – a small manmade pond along North Clove Rd., between Verbank and North Clove.

Astor Flats – level fields for approximately two miles on both sides of Route US-9 north of the fairgrounds in Rhinebeck. Formerly part of the Vincent Astor farm with nesting Grasshopper and Henslow's Sparrows, now much developed.

Bald Mountain – a treeless hill in Dover north of Pleasant Ridge Rd., east of the sharp turns.

Barnegat Road – a road in the Town of Poughkeepsie along the Hudson River, southern half taken over by Trap Rock Quarry and excavated out of existence. Formerly part of the May Census route.

Beaver Dam – a small pond and marsh where the Shunpike crosses a branch of Wassaic Creek, just west of Route US-44 at Lithgow. Although small, many unusual birds have been found here.

Bontecou Lake – see Tamarack Swamp.

Bowdoin Park – a county park opened in 1976. Located off Sheafe Rd. in the town of Poughkeepsie, it contains a number of trails.

Brace Mountain – at 2311 feet, the highest point in Dutchess County; located in the northeast corner of the county.

Breakneck Ridge and Mountain – see Hudson Highlands State Park.

Briarcliff Farm – originally a beef stock farm also known as Stockbriar Farm, then transformed into a hunting preserve called Mashomack Fish & Game Club. Also referred to as Craft Pond or the Glassworks. Located in Pine Plains along Route NY-82.

Brickyard Swamp – this area of Poughkeepsie was filled to become Dutchess Center and 44 Plaza from 1965-72 with subsequent filling extending along Tucker Drive. Formerly an excellent birding site.

Buttercup Farm Sanctuary – National Audubon property located in Stanford. There are two sections on either side of Route NY-82.

Buttermilk Pond – see Halcyon Lake.

Camp Nootemeing – Boy Scout Camp in Pleasant Valley.

Cary Arboretum – see Institute of Ecosystem Studies.

Chestnut Ridge – area where John Baker lived and kept records from 1930 to 1966. Mostly located on the western side of Dover and into Union Vale. Baker owned land in both towns along Chestnut Ridge Rd. at Baker's Corners.

Cornwall – The village of Cornwall-on-the-Hudson is in Orange County. It and Cornwall Bay are located along the Hudson across from and south of Beacon.

Craft Pond – see Briarcliff Farm.

Cruger Island – an “island” on the east shore of the Hudson River in Red Hook. Reached by a short causeway and separated from the shore by the railroad embankment. See also North Tivoli Bay and South Tivoli Bay.

Deep Hollow – a deep ravine along the Wassaic Creek along Deep Hollow Rd., Amenia. South of Turkey Hollow.

Dennings Point – a peninsula into the Hudson River at Beacon, formerly an estate and adjacent brick works. Future site of the Rivers & Estuaries Center. Often recorded as Deming's Point.

Depot Hill MUA – formerly a State Forest in Beekman.

Dieterichs – a private estate with a large pond in Millbrook, also called Hitchcocks. Part of the original Charles Dieterich estate.

Dotty's Pond – a marsh pond west of Route NY-82 in Pine Plains just south of the Columbia border. On private property but can be seen from the road.

Dutchess Hill – high land in southern Hyde Park used in the 1970s for hawk watching, now developed.

Eleanor Roosevelt NHS – Valkill, former home of Eleanor Roosevelt in Hyde Park.

Esopus – a hamlet on the west shore of the Hudson River opposite Norrie Point.

Esopus Meadows – a broad section of the Hudson River with extensive shallow areas near Vandenburg Cove. Also called Esopus Flats. The areas near the east side were called Fishermans Flats. The Esopus Lighthouse is here.

Fallkill Park – a county park in southern Hyde Park along Creek Rd. It contains Fallkill Park Lake, formerly the State Hospital Ice Pond. The lake is shallow and forms mud flats during times of low water where many sandpipers have been found. The park was open only a short time, closing in the early 1970s due to pollution problems.

Ferncliff Forest – a forest preserve owned by the Rotary Club in Rhinebeck. Includes Mt. Rutson.

Forbes Swamp – the area west of Wappinger Creek at Manchester in Poughkeepsie, now developed.

Forest Glen – a narrow strip of land once used by the Girl Scouts on Spackenkill Rd. near Boardman Rd., Poughkeepsie.

Foxhollow – Tracy Dow's estate south of Rhinebeck, adjacent to Grasmere. Southlands Farm is now the southern third.

Franklin D Roosevelt NHS – on route Route US-9 in Hyde Park.

Glassworks – also Gilmore Glassworks, see Briarcliff Farm.

Grasmere – the home of Maunsell Crosby south of Rhinebeck village off Mill Rd.

Greenvale Farms – a farm, including Gray's Riding Academy, owned by Homer Gray, brother of George Gray, in the Town of Poughkeepsie between New Hackensack Road and Wappinger Creek. Now a housing development and Greenvale Park.

- Greig Farm** – in Red Hook between Rockefeller and Pitcher Lanes. Also Red Hook Flats. Excellent for winter birds.
- Halcyon Lake** – part of Briarcliff Farm in Pine Plains, also known as Buttermilk Pond.
- Hammersley Lake** – see Quaker Lake.
- Harlem Valley Rail Trail** – former railroad line extending from Wassaic north into Columbia County.
- Hitchcocks** – see Dieterichs.
- Honeymead Brook** – the home of Mary Hyatt, located on Anson Rd. near Knight Rd. in Stanford.
- Horton Lake** – see Kays Pond.
- Hudson Highlands State Park** – located in the southwest corner of Dutchess County along the Hudson River. Includes Breakneck Ridge.
- Innisfree Garden** – a landscaped area around Tyrell Lake in Pleasant Valley.
- Institute of Ecosystem Studies** – formerly known as Cary Arboretum. Located in Washington.
- Jackson Pond** – see Lake Walton.
- James Baird State Park** – a large park with golf course in LaGrange. The Christmas Count circle is centered on the back entrance.
- Karl Ehmer's Farm** – once a large hog farm with some small ponds in LaGrange near Arthursburg and Noxon Roads. Now a housing development.
- Kays Pond** – Kays Upper Pond and Kays Lower Pond. Manmade about 1960 in Pleasant Valley. Also called Horton Lake.
- Lafayetteville MUA** – formerly a State Forest in Milan along Wilbur Flats Rd.
- Lake Oniad** – well developed lake in Wappinger.
- Lake Walton** – in East Fishkill, a shallow lake and swamp crossed by the railroad in the late nineteenth century. A beach area was developed from the 1930s to 1960s. Once known as Jackson Pond, where Crosby and Frost obtained many bird records.
- Locust Grove, Samuel Morse Historic Site** – on Route US-9 in Poughkeepsie south of Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery.
- Margaret Lewis Norrie State Park** – located along the Hudson River at Staatsburg. Includes Norrie Point. Connected by trails to Ogden Mills State Park.
- Mashomack** – see Briarcliff Farm.
- McEnroe Farm** – a farm on Sharon Station Rd., Amenia, notorious for shorebirds often found around a small pond or “mud puddle.”
- Millbrook School** – a private school in the town of Washington. Formerly known as Millbrook School for Boys. Includes Trevor Zoo plus habitat attractive to many birds.
- Millbrook School Marsh** – where a tributary of the Wassaic Creek crosses Millbrook School Rd. in Washington.
- Mills Mansion** – see Staatsburgh State Historic Site.
- Mill Pond, Rhinebeck** – a small pond on the north side of Mill Rd. near Grasmere.
- Morgan Lake** – a small pond adjacent to Creek Rd. in the northeast corner of the City of Poughkeepsie.
- Mount Beacon** – east of the City of Beacon, formerly had an incline railway to a hotel at the top. Used for hawk watches in the 1960s.
- Mount Rutson** – see Ferncliff Forest.
- Mount Riga** – a former railroad station north of Millerton, the actual mountain is in Connecticut, see Brace Mountain.
- Nellie Hill Preserve** – Nature Conservancy property in Dover.

- Newbold Road** – former road between Routes US-9 and NY-9G linking Franklin D. Roosevelt NHS with Eleanor Roosevelt NHS (Valkill). Now a walking trail.
- Norrie Point** – a point on the Hudson River within Margaret Lewis Norrie State Park. Good for seeing Bald Eagles and waterfowl.
- North Tivoli Bay** – a freshwater tidal marsh north of Cruger Island in Red Hook, North Bay. See also Tivoli Bays WMA.
- Nuclear Lake** – a lake on the Pawling-Beekman town line and adjacent to the Appalachian Trail. Now owned by the National Park Service. There is a trail around the lake.
- Ogden Mills and Ruth Livingston Mills Memorial State Park** – former estate along the Hudson River in Hyde Park. Connected by trails to Margaret Lewis Norrie State Park.
- Pawling Nature Reserve** – owned by the Nature Conservancy on Quaker Lake Rd. in Pawling. Includes part of the Appalachian Trail.
- Poets' Walk Park** – owned by Scenic Hudson along the Hudson River in Red Hook.
- Pond Gut** – at the southern end of Taconic-Hereford MUA reached by Pond Gut Rd., LaGrange. Previously called Suzie Quinn's.
- Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery** – between the Hudson River and Route US-9 south of the City of Poughkeepsie. The southwest corner is good for birding.
- Quaker Hill** – high ground in Pawling once used for hawk watching.
- Quaker Lake** – located in Pawling along Quaker Lake Rd. Also called Hammersley Lake.
- Red Hook Flats** – the area north of Red Hook village and west of Route US-9. Often called Greig Farm but covering a wider area. An excellent area for winter birds.
- Rockefeller University Field Research Center** – located in Washington near Innisfree. Research conducted here includes a focus on bird songs.
- Round Pond** – a small private pond off Sharon Station Rd. in Amenia. Formerly a town park.
- Rudd Pond** – see Taconic State Park.
- St. Joseph's Normal Institute** – a religious school along the Hudson River in Barrytown. Former teachers were active birders.
- Sharparoon** – a private area owned by the NY City Mission Society in Dover. Includes lakes, swamps, fields and forests, along with historic Dover Furnace.
- Southlands Farm** – a riding school south of Rhinebeck west of Route US-9, with trails open to the public for birding and hiking. Operated by a non-profit foundation begun by Deborah Dows, Tracy Dows' daughter.
- South Tivoli Bay** – shallow tidewater and mud flats south of Cruger Island in Red Hook, South Bay. See also North Tivoli Bay.
- Staatsburgh State Historic Site** – part of Ogden Mills and Ruth Livingston Mills Memorial State Park.
- Stissing Marsh** – a private marsh near Stissing, Stanford.
- Stissing Mountain** – mountain in Pine Plains west of Thompson Pond, reached by a trail starting near the entrance to Thompson Pond.
- Stissing Mountain MUA** – located on the west side of Stissing Mt. in Pine Plains. Formerly a State Forest where Wild Turkeys were released. Contains hiking trails.
- Stony Kill Farm Environmental Education Center** – located in Fishkill, contains varied habitat including farmland and private gardens attracting sparrows in fall.
- Strauss Marsh** – a private marsh four miles north of Amenia.

Swift Pond – an undeveloped area in southern Amenia.

Sylvan Lake – a lake in Beekman, largely developed, though still attracts ducks in the fall and winter.

Taconic-Hereford MUA – formerly a State Forest in Pleasant Valley. See also Pond Gut.

Taconic State Park – in the northeast corner of the county; includes Rudd Pond.

Tamarack Preserve – also called Turkey Hollow, a private hunting preserve along Wassaic Creek south from Route US-44.

Tamarack Swamp – also called Bontecou Lake, a man-made private pond in Stanford. Part of Rally Farm.

Thompson Pond Preserve – located in Pine Plains and owned by the Nature Conservancy. Has hiking trails. Historically one of the premier spots for breeding marsh birds.

Tivoli Bays WMA – comprising North and South Tivoli Bays, Cruger Island, and adjacent uplands. The area state-owned and managed by the Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve in Red Hook.

Traver Pond – small pond and marsh on the west side adjacent to Freedom Rd., Pleasant Valley.

Turkey Hollow – see Tamarack Preserve.

Tymor Forest Park – a Union Vale town park; contains excellent trails and varied habitat.

Valkill – see Eleanor Roosevelt NHS.

Vandenburgh Cove – along the Hudson River off of South Mill Rd., Rhinebeck. Excellent for ducks. Older spellings are Vanderburg and Vanderburgh.

Vanderbilt Mansion NHS – located in Hyde Park.

Vassar College – birds are attracted to the many trees near the pond and around the golf course on the main campus. The former Vassar College Farm, now an environmental preserve with an athletic field and public gardens, is between Raymond Ave. and Spackenkill Rd.

Wappinger Lake – on the Wappinger Creek between the towns of Poughkeepsie and Wappinger.

Wassaic MUA – formerly a State Forest in Amenia.

Wilbur Flats Road – see Lafayetteville MUA.

APPENDIX

LIST OF BIRDS IN VICINITY OF FISHKILL-ON-HUDSON, N.Y.

BY WINFRID A. STEARNS

During his stay in Fishkill-on-Hudson (now Beacon) from September 1879 through June 1880, Winfrid Stearns compiled and published a list of local birds. It is the oldest reasonably complete bird list for any location in Dutchess County and is reproduced here because of its historical value and rarity. Although created over a period of ten months, the list provides much detail in annotations, including abundance and breeding status.

Stearns listed 132 species he saw. As was typical of the late nineteenth century, Stearns shot many of the birds to ensure proper identification. Additionally, he made the acquaintance of Beacon collectors and added their locally acquired species to his list. Twenty-seven species were included from the collection of Peter de Nottbeck,¹ fifteen from John Lynch, and two from unnamed collectors.

Further, Stearns included 20 species that he did not see or find in collections. These additions expand the value of his list as they identify possible species for 1880 in or near Dutchess County.² He also included four species collected outside of Dutchess County, which gave Griscom and Crosby pause.³ However, it is clear Stearns was not attempting to mix birds from other areas with those from Beacon; rather he was being meticulous.

Another value of Stearns's list is that it was created at the peak of widespread land clearing and just prior to the full extent of species decimation by market and uncontrolled hunting. By the time Crosby compiled his records, many waterfowl were no longer seen on the Hudson River, causing concern over Stearns's accuracy.⁴ However, Kent recalls seeing many of these waterfowl in the 1870s and 1880s, thereby validating Stearns's list. Crosby and Griscom were unaware of Kent, who published his recollections in 1933.

Nevertheless, there are limitations to Stearns's list, principally that it focuses on a small area. He also missed some warblers, possibly due to a lack of appropriate forest habitat. A likely error is the omission of Common Merganser. It is conceivable that Stearns miswrote his list or it was typeset incorrectly. Kent confirms the regular presence of the Common Merganser.

In the following copy of Stearns's list, modern bird names have been added in the margin. Eaton's work is a good aid for converting from the old names.

NOTES

[1] de Nottbeck also contributed to Edgar Mearns's work.

[2] All unseen species have subsequently been recorded from Dutchess County, a few only casually.

[3] Griscom, p.16. The four species are Bobwhite, Snowy Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, and Canada Jay.

[4] See page 314 to understand the differences between Stearns and Crosby with regard to waterfowl records.

LIST OF BIRDS

In vicinity of Fishkill on-Hudson. N. Y.

BY WINFRID A. STEARNS.

During a stay of ten months in this place I have carefully studied the birds of the region ; besides several small collections which I have seen, I have derived information from every available source in order to make the list as complete as possible. Endeavoring to class all birds on the basis of : *Abundant, common, rather common, —not rare, rather rare, rare*, I have been obliged to call the Robin, Song Sparrow, and one or two others, *very abundant*. The word *regular* signifies a spring and autumn migrant and summer resident, breeding. The star (*) indicates that I am indebted to my friend Mr. Peter de Nottbeck for the information, either personally, or from specimens in his collection; and the dagger (†) to Mr. John Lynch, of Fishkill. I have endeavored throughout to give only what I know, and not to theorize, hence the apparent imperfectness of the list.

TURDUS MIGRATORIUS, Robin. — Very abundant, regular. A few remain during winter in sheltered places on the mountains, feeding on the cedar berries.

American Robin.

- Wood Thrush *TURDUS MUSTELINUS*, *Wood Thrush*.—Common, almost abundant, regular, very tame, and sing in the trees of door yards, arrives *after* the Hermit Thrush, but breeds in the woodlands.
- Hermit Thrush *TURDUS PALLASI*, *Hermit Thrush*.—Common, apparently regular. I have found them so late in fall and early in spring that I think they often remain during winter; prefers swamps in the highlands as well as lowlands.
- Swainson's Thrush *Turdus swainsoni*, and *Turdus fuscescens* were not detected at all. *Mimus polyglottus*, Mocking bird, has been reported from here several times, but I as yet have no positive evidence of its occurrence.
- Veery
- Northern Mockingbird
- Gray Catbird *MIMUS CAROLINENSIS*, *Cat bird*.—Common, regular, prefers the lowlands.
- Brown Thrasher *HARPORHYNCHUS RUFUS*, *Brown Thrush*.—Rather common, regular, prefers highlands.
- Eastern Bluebird *SIALIA SIALIS*, *Blue Bird*.—Abundant, regular, a few remain during winter in sheltered places on the mountain side.
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet *REGULUS CALENDULA*, *Ruby crowned Kinglet*.—Not rare, during that part of winter that approaches fall and again spring, among evergreens.
- Golden-crowned Kinglet *REGULUS SATRAPA*, *Golden-crested Kinglet*.—Common, except in summer, in evergreens and almost everywhere, a tame bird and very curious, though sly.
- Tufted Titmouse *Lophophanes bicolor*, Tufted Titmouse, and *Parus hudsonicus*, Hudsonian Chickadee, were not found, though carefully sought after.
- Boreal Chickadee

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PARUS ATRICAPILLUS, *Black-cap Chickadee*.—Common, at times abundant. I did not find it breeding, but think it must do so ; fall, winter, and spring.

Black-capped Chickadee

SITTA CAROLINENSIS, *White bellied Nuthatch*.—Common in spring, fall and winter. I have found them in summer about a very small hole in a living tree, where I am informed that they have bred and doubtless do still breed.

White-breasted Nuthatch

Sitta canadensis, *Red bellied Nuthatch*, not observed at all anywhere.

Red-breasted Nuthatch

CERTHIA FAMILIARIS, *Brown Creeper*.—Rather rare at any time, irregular. I have shot it once or twice.

Brown Creeper

TROGLODYTES AEDON, *House Wren*.—Common, regular ; arrives early in spring and builds about houses, very tame and familiar.

House Wren

ANORTHURA TROGLODYTES var HYEMALIS, *Winter Wren*.—April 2d, with snow yet on the ground, I shot a specimen between two mountain slopes in a gorge of rocks, apparently a young one. I have seen others and judge it to be a winter visitor.

Winter Wren

TELMATODYTES PALUSTRIS, *Long billed Marsh Wren*.—If anything, not rare, regular, breeding in the marsh of Denning's Point, and perhaps other places along the river. June 2d, I found a nest with 5 eggs, another completed fresh, but empty, and another just begun, (the nest is begun from the outside and built inwards.) The bird arrives late as far as I can judge from what I have seen.

Marsh Wren

Cistothorus stellaris, *Short billed Marsh Wren*, was not seen at all.

Sedge Wren

Black-and-white Warbl

MNIOTILTA VARIA, *Black and White Creeper*.—COMMON as a migrant, rather common as a resident. I have several times found full and partially fledged young, and once a nest with four very young birds, at Orange Lake, six miles from Newburgh, right across the river.

Worm-eating Warbler

HELMITHERUS VERMIVORUS, *Worm eating Warbler*.—A specimen is before me taken on one of the mountains in July, 1877. It is evidently an adult, but I cannot tell whether a male or female. I saw two birds June 19, in a rocky part of the mountain, that came so near that I could plainly see markings upon the head, and that the body was brownish, with no white upon the breast. I thought then, and do now, that they were worm eating warblers; possibly they breed here.

Yellow Warbler

DENDRÆCA ÆSTIVA, *Summer Warbler*.—Common, regular, from early spring to late fall.

Black-throated Green
Warbler

DENDRÆCA VIRENS, *Blackthroated Green Warbler*.—Common, even at times abundant, from early spring (not known to breed) to late fall.

Black-throated Blue
Warbler

DENDRÆCA CÆRULESCENS, **Blackthroated Blue Warbler*.—Several specimens taken in migrations, (May.)

Yellow-rumped Warble

DENDRÆCA CORONATA, *Yellow rumped Warbler*.—Abundant, high and low, in tall trees and low shrubbery, migrant. I do not know of its breeding, but it remained here a greater part of the last winter (1880), and were quite tame.

Blackburnian Warbler

DENDRÆCA BLACKBURNIÆ, *Blackburnian Warbler*.—Rather rare, I think migrant. A specimen was taken in May.

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DENDROECA PENNSYLVANICA, *Chestnut sided Warbler*.—Not rare, perhaps rather common.

Chestnut-sided Warbler

DENDROECA PALMARUM, *Yellow red poll Warbler*.—I obtained a specimen April 27th, and I think saw others, probably not rare.

Palm Warbler

SIURUS AURICAPILLUS, *Golden crowned Thrush*.—Abundant in woods and on mountain sides, regular, arriving early, remaining late.

Ovenbird

SIURUS NOVABORACENSIS, *Water Thrush*.
*—Though I have seen it taken here, I do not think it is as common as the next.

Northern Waterthrush

SIURUS LUDOVICIANUS, *Long billed Water Thrush*.—Of which I have seen several pair in different places, always in ravines by rocky running water. I have often lain still and had their curiosity prompt them to approach within a few yards of me, remaining about for some time, but always active. I am convinced that they probably breed, and believe them to be *not rare and regular*.

Louisiana Waterthrush

GEOTHLYPIS TRICHAS, *Maryland Yellow Throat*.—Rather common, regular; along deserted wood roads at foot of mountains.

Common Yellowthroat

ICTERIA VIRENS, *Yellow breasted Chat*.
*—On the authority of Mr. de Nottbeck, who has a skin of one in his collection, it is not rare in the brush at the foot of the mountains. I have not seen it alive here.

Yellow-breasted Chat

MYIODIOCTES MITRATUS, *Hooded flycatching Warbler*.—I have several specimens of this bird, apparently adult males; spring.

Hooded Warbler

PYRANGA RUBRA, *Scarlet Tanager*.
*—Rather common, or not rare, undoubtedly regular.

Scarlet Tanager

- American Redstart *SETOPHAGA RUTICILLA*, *Redstart*.—One of our well known birds and songsters in slightly marshy tall growths. I feel sure it breeds, from the lateness I have found it, but cannot say positively.
- Summer Tanager *PYRANGA AESTIVA*, *Summer Redbird*.—A bird "entirely scarlet" has been reported to me. I have no doubt it occurs rarely.
- Barn Swallow *HIRUNDO HORREORUM*, *Barn Swallow*.—Common, regular.
- Tree Swallow *TACHYCINETA BICOLOR*, *White bellied Swallow*.—Rather common in spite of the belief of some that it is rare or wanting, as late as June 2d all about Denning's Point. I cannot say for certain either that it breeds or is regular.
- Cliff Swallow *PETROCHELIDON LUNIFRONS*, *Cliff or Eave Swallow*.—Not rare, in spring.
- Bank Swallow *COTYLE RIPARIA*, *Bank Swallow*.—Common, regular.
- Purple Martin *PROGNE PURPUREA*.—On the authority of Mr. Benj. Strong of the Dutchess Hat Works.
- Cedar Waxwing *AMPELIS CEDRORUM*, *Cedar Bird*.—Common, regular. Abundant in flocks in spring and fall, several flocks remained here all last winter.
- Red-eyed Vireo *VIREO OLIVACEUS*, *Red eyed Vireo*.—I think I have seen this hopping among the branches of the apple trees.
- Warbling Vireo *VIREO GILVUS*, *Warbling Vireo*.*—Not rare, probably regular from its late occurrence.
- Blue-headed Vireo *VIREO SOLITARIUS*, *Blue headed solitary Vireo*.*—One specimen obtained.
- Yellow-throated Vireo *Vireo flavifrons* and *Vireo novaboracensis*.—Not seen.
- White-eyed Vireo

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COLLURIO BOREALIS, *Great Northern Shrike*.*—Occasionally, "December, 1874," I have seen it since flying. Northern Shrike

PINICOLA ENUCLEATOR, *Pine Grosbeak*. —I have seen a specimen taken here, no date was attached. Pine Grosbeak

CORPODACUS PURPUREUS, *Purple Finch*. —Common, regular, possibly winter, as I have seen them late in fall and early in spring. Purple Finch

LOXIA CURVIROSTRA, *var AMERICANA*, *Common Red Cross bill*.*—One specimen from this place dated "October, 1877," and one labeled "St. Regis Lake, Adirondack Wilderness, adult, October, (late in the month,) 1877," is all the evidence that I have seen of this bird here, though it doubtless occurs frequently and in winter. Red Crossbill

None of *Ægiothus* were seen, though they have been heard of lately as being here in former years; nor has *Chrysomitris pinus* been taken. Common Redpoll

CHRYSOMITRIS TRISTIS, *Goldfinch*.—Abundant, regular. A great many passed the winter (1880) here. Pine Siskin
American Goldfinch

PASSERCULUS SAVANNA, *Savanna Sparrow*.—Rather common, though I don't know as it breeds, in spring and fall. Savannah Sparrow

POECETES GRAMINEUS, *Bay winged Bunting*, *Grass Finch*.—Not rare, so far as I have seen, only in small flocks in fields near low brush wood, spring and fall. Vesper Sparrow

MELOSPIZA PALUSTRIS, *Swamp Sparrow*. —A specimen shot almost to pieces answered the description of this bird as near as it did anything; it was shot in a swamp. Swamp Sparrow

SPIZELLA MONTICOLA, *Tree Sparrow*.—Common in migrations, and late in fall. American Tree Sparrow

- Song Sparrow *MELOSPIZA MELODIA*, *Song Sparrow*.—Very abundant, regular, a few pass the winter.
- Dark-eyed Junco *JUNCO HYEMALIS*, *Snow Bird*.—Abundant in spring, fall, and late fall and early spring if not throughout winter in the mountain retreats.
- Chipping Sparrow *SPIZELLA SOCIALIS*, *Chipping Sparrow*.—Abundant, regular, late in fall, early in spring.
- Field Sparrow *SPIZELLA PUSILLA*, *Field Sparrow*.—Common, regular, found also in woods at base of mountains, where its song often deceives you for that of certain of the warblers.
- White-throated Sparrow *ZONOTRICHIA ALBICOLLIS*, *White throated Sparrow*.—Perhaps the most abundant species during migrations, prefers brush wood. I have not found them breeding, nor in winter, though very late in the fall.
- White-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia leucophrys*.—I am certain I have seen one or two times.
- Fox Sparrow *PASSERELLA ILIACA*, *Fox Sparrow*.—Abundant in migrations, as early as March 19, and very late in the fall.
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak *GONIAPHEA LUDOVICIANA*, *Rose breasted Grosbeak*.*—"Adult male, June, 1875."
- Indigo Bunting *CYANOSPIZA CYANEA*, *Indigo Bird*.—Rather common, or at least not rare; perhaps breeds, as I have shot it in early June.
- Northern Cardinal *Cardinalis virginianus* has not been seen or heard of.
- Eastern Towhee *PIPILO ERYTHROPHthalmus*.—Common, regular, in highland and lowland and thick-et, sings best in the evening, a rather late arrival.
- Red-winged Blackbird *AGELAIUS PHENICEUS*.—Abundant, regular except in winter, occurs late in fall.

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DOLICHONYX ORYZIVORUS, *Bobolink*.—Common, rather local, regular, except in winter.

Bobolink

MOLOTHRUS PECORIS, *Cowbird*.—Common in flocks in migrations, resident.

Brown-headed Cowbird

STURNELLA MAGNA, *Meadow Lark*.—Abundant, regular, occasionally found in flocks at foot of mountain in winter. (I find that they have remained here in winter before.—*E. A. Mearns*.)

Eastern Meadowlark

Icterus spurius, *Orchard Oriole*, occurs, but I have not yet taken it, though I am positive I have seen it.

Orchard Oriole

ICTERUS BALTIMORE, *Baltimore Oriole*.—Abundant, regular, a late arrival in the spring.

Baltimore Oriole

Scolecophagus ferrugineus ought to have but has not been seen.

Rusty Blackbird

QUISCALUS PURPUREUS, *Crow Blackbird*.—Common, regular, arrives early and departs late.

Common Grackle

CORVUS AMERICANUS, *Common Crow*.—Abundant, regular, a few remain during winter.

American Crow

CYANURUS CRISTATUS, *Blue Jay*.—Abundant, regular, winters here.

Blue Jay

PERISOREUS CANADENSIS, *Canada Jay*.—Adirondack mountains.

Canada Jay

TYRANNUS CAROLINENSIS, *Kingbird*.—Abundant, regular, arrives late in spring.

Eastern Kingbird

MYIARCHUS CRINITUS, *Great crested Flycatcher*.—Not rare, perhaps even rather common in spring; I have found it in the mountains and on the lake shore of the lowlands of Orange Lake, and heard it often late in the spring; I suppose it to breed, but cannot prove it.

Great Crested Flycatcher

- Eastern Phoebe *SAYORNIS FUSCUS*, *Pewee*, *Phoebe*.—Common, regular, arrives early.
- Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus borealis* and *C. virens* and others not seen at all, probably common.
- Eastern Wood-Pewee *EMPIDONAX MINIMUS*, *Least Fly catcher*.
- Least Flycatcher *ANTROSTOMUS VOCIFEROUS*, *Whip-poor-will*.—Rather common, regular, though hard to obtain from its nocturnal habits; April 30, and even earlier.
- Eastern Whip-poor-will *CHORDEILES VIRGINIANUS*, *Nighthawk*.—Common, regular. This bird is also hard to obtain from its retirement in daylight.
- Common Nighthawk *CHÆTURA PELAGICA*, *Chimney Swift*.—Abundant, regular, arrives late and departs rather early.
- Chimney Swift *CERYLE ALCYON*, *Kingfisher*.—Rather common, regular. I have seen them very late in fall and in winter.
- Belted Kingfisher I have seen one or the other of the *Coccyzus*, or cuckoos, flying, but could not distinguish which species it was.
- Black- / Yellow-billed Cuckoos *HYLOTOMUS PILEATUS*, *Pileated Woodpecker*.†—Greene county.
- Pileated Woodpecker *PICUS VILLOSUS*, *Hairy Woodpecker*.—Not rare, Oct. 23, one specimen, resident throughout the year, and regular.
- Hairy Woodpecker *PICUS PUBESCENS*, *Downy Woodpecker*.—Common, resident throughout the year, and regular.
- Downy Woodpecker *SPHYRAPICUS VARIUS*, *Yellow bellied Woodpecker*.—I shot one specimen, April 19, in the yard as he was tapping upon a small pine tree.
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker *MELANERPES ERYTHROCEPHALUS*, *Red-headed Woodpecker*.*—An immature specimen, with no date, appears in my friend's collection from this place.
- Red-headed Woodpecker

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COLAPTES AURATUS, *Golden winged Woodpecker*.—Common, regular. I have seen it in late fall and early spring, but do not know as it winters.

Northern Flicker

TROCHILUS COLUBRIS, *Ruby throated Humming bird*.—Several, only seen.

Ruby-throated
Hummingbird

Bubo virginianus, *Great Horned Owl*.—I feel sure that I have noticed this bird somewhere, but cannot now tell where.

Great Horned Owl

NYCTEA NIVEA, *Snowy Owl*.†—One specimen shot in Newburgh.

Snowy Owl

SCOPS ASTIO, *Mottled Owl*.—Rather common, probably regular and throughout the year.

Eastern Screech-Owl

Neither of the Eared Owls yet observed.

Long- / Short-eared Owls
Barred Owl

SYRNIUM NEBULOSUM, *Barred Owl*.*—Not rare, probably regular, often found in the swamps.

CIRCUS CYANEUS, *Marsh Hawk*.—Rather common, regular.

Northern Harrier

ACCIPITER FUSCUS, *Sharpshinned Hawk*. *—Not rare, lowlands, several specimens examined.

Sharp-shinned Hawk

ACCIPITER COOPERI, *Cooper's Hawk*.*—Not rare, lowlands, several specimens.

Cooper's Hawk

Falco sparverius, *Sparrow Hawk*.—I have seen it flying several times.

American Kestrel

BUTEO BOREALIS, *Red tailed Hawk*.—Rather rare, lowlands, probably regular.

Red-tailed Hawk

BUTEO LINEATUS.—May be rather less rare than the last; neither appear to be common.

Red-shouldered Hawk

PANDION HALIÆTUS, *Fish Hawk*.*—Rather common, spring and perhaps fall.

Osprey

ZENÆDURA CAROLINESIS, *Carolina Dove*.—Rather rare, regular, generally found in pairs.

Mourning Dove

- Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, *Bald Eagle*.*
—Rather common in spring when the ice of the river breaks up, possibly a pair occasionally breed on the cliffs of Storm King on the opposite side of the river; the old settlers of the place at least affirm it.
- Passenger Pigeon *Ectopistes migratorius*, *Wild Pigeon*.
Not rare in migrations, but I do not know of their breeding, though they probably do occasionally.
- Ruffed Grouse *Bonasa umbellus*, *Ruffed Grouse*, *Partridge*.—Now rather rare, formerly nearly common, having been killed off by the wild cats on the mountains and the hunters on the lowlands; regular, and winters.
- Northern Bobwhite *Oryx virginianus*, *Quail*.—Not rare at Orange Lake, the only place I found them, probably regular, as I found them June 10, apparently mated.
- Killdeer *Aegialitis vociferous*, *Killdeer Plover*.
†—Rather rare, occasional.
- Wilson's Snipe *Gallinago wilsoni*, *Snipe*.†—Not rare, fall.
- American Woodcock *Philohela minor*, *Woodcock*.—Not rare, a few may breed, but I think the most do not.
- Greater Yellowlegs *Totanus melanoleucus*, *Greater Tattler*.*—A single specimen, not labeled, was taken from this region.
- Spotted Sandpiper *Tringoides macularius*, *Spotted Sandpiper*.—Common, regular.
- Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*, *Great Blue Heron*.*—Not rare, fall, all along the river.
- Green Heron *Ardea virescens*, *Green Heron*.—Rather common, apparently regular.
- Common Gallinule *Gallinula galeata*, *Florida Gallinule*.—Apparently rare, a single specimen was shot here, but the date is not given.

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- BOTAURUS LENTIGINOSUS**, *Bittern*. †—Occasional. American Bittern
- PORZANA CAROLINA**, *Carolina Rail*.*—Not rare, migrations, October. Sora
- FULICA AMERICANA**, *Coot*.*—Several specimens have been taken, one as early as April. American Coot
- BRANTA BERNICLA**, *Brant Goose*. †—Not rare, fall. Brant
- BRANTA CANADENSIS**, *Canada Goose*. †—Not rare, fall. Canada Goose
- ANAS BOSCHAS**, *Mallard*. †—Not rare, fall. Mallard
- ANAS OBSCURA**, *Dusky or Black Duck*. †—Rather common, fall. Mr. Lynch speaks of there being what he calls a second kind which often flies with this bird, and calls it Norwegian Black Duck. I cannot positively identify it. American Black Duck
- DAFILA ACUTA**, *Pintail*.*—Rare. A single specimen, male in full plumage; had not been seen before by many of the old hunters here who had seen it. Date not given. Northern Pintail
- MARECA AMERICANA**, *Widgeon*. †—Quite common, in flocks of 15 or 20; they are acute divers, and like several others, take wing immediately upon appearing at the surface. American Widgeon
- QUERQUEDULA CAROLINENSIS**, *Green winged Teal*. †—Rather common, but less so than they used to be, in small flocks in early fall. Green-winged Teal
- QUERQUEDULA DISCORS**, *Blue winged Teal*. †—Not rare in early fall in family broods. Blue-winged Teal
- MERGUS SERRATUS**, *Red breasted Merganser*.*—Not rare in migrations. Red-breasted Merganser

- Wood Duck *AIX SPONSA*, *Wood or Summer Duck*.†—
Not rare, breed occasionally at Brinckerhoffville Pond.
- Greater Scaup
Lesser Scaup *FULIGULA MARILA*, *Greater Blackhead*.†
—Rather common. Mr. Lynch mentions two species, the other smaller than this one and is probably *F. affinis*.
- Canvasback *FULIGULA VALLISNERIA*, *Canvas-back Duck*.†—Rather rare, a few are seen occasionally.
- Redhead *FULIGULA FERINA*, *Redhead*.*—Rather rare. A single specimen was obtained, date not given.
- Common Goldeneye A duck named "*Bucephala americana*, March, full plumaged male,"* with the *white loreal spot touching the bill*.
- Barrow's Goldeneye *Bucephala islandica*, probably occurs.
A specimen, evidently female *Bucephala*, shot Dec. 24, no white on head and eye red.
- Long-tailed Duck *HARELDA GLACIALIS*, *Long tailed Duck*.
—Rather common. I have seen quite a number in full plumage.
- Black Scoter *CEDEMIA AMERICANA*, *American Black Scoter*.†—Rather rare, but occasionally taken.
- Surf Scoter *CEDEMIA PERSPICILLATA*, *Surf Duck*.†—
Rather rare, but occasional.
- White-winged Scoter *CEDEMIA FUSCA*, *Velvet Scoter*.*—Rather rare. A single fine male, date not given, was obtained.
- Ruddy Duck *ERISMATURA RUBIDA*, *Ruddy Duck*.—
Common in migrations, flocks or singly.
- Bonaparte's Gull *LIARUS PHILADELPHIA*, *Bonaparte's Gull*.
*—One specimen, shot in autumn of 1871, in immature plumage.

LABUS ARGENTATUS, *Herring Gull*.—Abundant, spring, fall, and mild winters when the river is not frozen, in nearly all its different plumages.

Herring Gull

COLYMBUS TORQUATUS, *Great Northern Diver*.—Rather common or not rare, several specimens.

Common Loon

COLYMBUS SEPTENTRIONALIS, *Red throat-ed Diver*.*—A specimen in Mr. de Nottbeck's collection, (Bull. Nutt. Orn. Club, Vol. III, p. 146,) in young immature plumage; and a second specimen taken in the river some years later, are interesting records, and new to science.

Red-throated Loon

PODICEPS CORNUTUS, *Horned Grebe*.—A young specimen had the whole under parts silvery white, sides slightly ashy brown, all the secondaries seven-eighths of an inch white tipped. No lengthened feathers.

Horned Grebe

PODILYMBUS PODICEPS, *Piedbilled Grebe*.—Not rare, spring and fall, several specimens, and in full and immature plumage.

Pied-billed Grebe

UNDERSTANDING STEARNS'S WATERFOWL RECORDS

Maunsell Crosby read Winfrid Stearns's 1880 bird list in 1920 when he worked at the American Museum of Natural History. He knew some waterfowl reported by Edgar Mearns had been found south of Cornwall Bay, outside of Dutchess County. He was concerned that Stearns may have included similar records from outside of Dutchess – perhaps at least some of the eight waterfowl listed below which Crosby had not yet recorded in Dutchess. To be sure, Crosby and Griscom decided not to accept new county species from Stearns unless *they* had seen the species in Dutchess County. Even after seeing most, *none* of Stearns's waterfowl records were included by Griscom.

Prior to 1920 Crosby had not seriously pursued waterfowl in Dutchess County, he was not sure where to look. After various attempts to find the best places and time, by 1922 Crosby knew how to find waterfowl in Dutchess. He soon found the species reported by Stearns, except Brant, although often not in the same numbers. Crosby next reviewed Arthur Bloomfield's waterfowl records in 1923, these are now lost. It is thought Bloomfield had a variety of waterfowl records however Crosby and Griscom still did not change their view of Stearns's sightings. Crosby never learned of Edwin Kent's records.

The following are the eight species Crosby had not recorded by 1920:

- **BRANT** - through the late 1800s populations plummeted principally due to shooting. Neither Kent nor Mearns reported it. Crosby never saw it in Dutchess. True to their agreement, Griscom did not list Brant in his book.
- **AMERICAN WIGEON** - common in 1880s but decreasing. Kent did not record it. First seen by Crosby on April 4, 1921 (from Griscom's notes).
- **REDHEAD** - more common in the 1880s, drastic declines after the 1920s. Kent says abundant, Mearns records at Cornwall Bay. First seen by Crosby in Fall 1923, date and location unknown.
- **SURF SCOTER** - reported to Stearns. Kent recorded occasional flocks. Crosby only saw once, one on Oct. 8, 1927 from Cruger Island.
- **WHITE-WINGED SCOTER** - common in 1880s yet Stearns only knew of one. Kent says great flocks. First seen by Crosby in Fall 1922, date and location unknown.
- **BLACK SCOTER** - reported to Stearns. Kent saw occasional flocks, Mearns reports from Cornwall Bay. Crosby first saw one on Oct. 17, 1924 from Cruger Island.
- **LONG-TAILED DUCK** - decreased in late 1800s partly due to Great Lakes fishnet trapping. Kent reported flocks often. Not seen by Crosby until one on May 13, 1923 at Halcyon Lake, Pine Plains.
- **RUDDY DUCK** - common to Stearns, but decreased steadily. Kent did not report any. Crosby saw his first, one on March 31, 1921 at Morgan Lake, Poughkeepsie.

In general, for other waterfowl species Stearns and Crosby either both saw them or both failed to see any or only very few. However there were also waterfowl which Stearns did not report, specifically Bufflehead and Common Merganser. Both were found by Crosby which may have influenced his view of Stearns's records.

With Edwin Kent's records plus an understanding of historical waterfowl changes, Stearns's reports are totally credible for Dutchess County in 1880.

From Infrequently Seen to Regularly Seen

When does an infrequently seen species cross to be regularly seen? Perhaps by the tenth sighting within fifty years, or when seen four consecutive years, or maybe when multiple birds are in multiple locations. There is no hard rule. The following identifies the known earliest sightings of species which are now seen yearly, or periodically, but once were unknown in Dutchess County. It covers those species which became regularly seen since 1910. Not included are some waterfowl which fluctuated in abundance from the early 1900s, and particularly shorebirds which find limited habitat in Dutchess County.

Birds seem constant but their range changes over many years. Counting the number of species by the decade they became regularly seen: 1910s - 1, 1920s - 2, 1930s - 6, 1940s - 2, 1950s - 2, 1960s - 14, 1970s - 9, 1980s - 2, 1990s - 3, 2000s - 3, 2010s - 5, and 2020s - 1. That is a lot of change. On average it took 30 years from first record to regularly seen. While a few sightings may be incorrectly identified, and certainly many were never reported, the club records still clearly show this changeover.

There is too little local data from the late 1800s to accurately provide similar lists for those species which became regular prior to 1910. The following are believed to fit this criteria: Brown-headed Cowbird 1800s, Rock Pigeon 1850s?, House Sparrow 1860s, Loggerhead Shrike 1870s, Louisiana Waterthrush 1870s, Worm-eating Warbler 1880s, Golden-winged Warbler 1880s, Fish Crow 1880s, and Northern Rough-winged Swallow 1900s.

Shown are approximately the first ten Dutchess County records for each specie. The sequence is chronological by date became regularly seen, which is the last date in each list in bold. The purpose of this list is simply to document these changes in one place.

European Starling

- 1905 well established in Newburgh (Eaton)
- Oct. 24, 1909, first in Rhinebeck, Crosby; Nov. 3, Grasmere, Crosby
- Feb. 25, 1910, returned to Rhinebeck, present ever since; one Dec. 24, Rhinebeck, Crosby
- Eight Dec. 26, 1911, Rhinebeck, Crosby
- Fall 1912, seen with mixed flocks of blackbirds, Crosby; four or five killed, December, Grasmere, Crosby (Chatham Carrier)
- Nested May 1914, Dutchess, Crosby (Chatham Carrier)
- Four pair nested, one May 3, 1915, Grasmere, Crosby; 40, Dec. 25, Poughkeepsie, Saunders
- One nest, June 1916, Grasmere, Crosby; average ten at feeders, December, 12 on Dec. 25, Grasmere, Rhinebeck, Crosby; 18 Dec. 23, Greenvale Farm, Poughkeepsie, Gray
- Two nests, June **1917**, Grasmere, Crosby; ten, Dec. 26, Poughkeepsie, Saunders

Cerulean Warbler

Expanding from the west, Dutchess County was home of an isolated breeding area.

- One May 14 & July 4, 1894 or 1895, Hyde Park, LS Horton
- One collected May 14, 1901, Poughkeepsie, CC Young
- June 8, year unknown but before 1922

- Four males plus two pair May 7 - July 7, 1922 nest, Poughkeepsie (Gray's home), George Gray, Moulton, Frost; two June 22, Hyde Park; one May 25-26, two males June 23-24, Rhinebeck; Aug. 18, Poughkeepsie
- **1923** similar to 1922, six males three females south of Poughkeepsie, seven males north of Poughkeepsie. See Griscom for about 40 sightings through 1929.

Blue-winged Warbler

Not reported by Stearns, Hyatt, Horton, or Crosby (1909).

- Aug. 20, 1912, reported to Crosby, first sighting
- May 16, 1914, Crosby
- May 23, 1915, Crosby
- May 16, 1920 census; June 27-29, Whaley Lake, nested, Crosby & Frost
- June 5, 1921, Rhinebeck; Aug. 7, Rhinebeck
- June 4, 1922, Whaley Lake, nest, Crosby, Frost, Gray; up to fourteen May 30 to June 7, southern Dutchess; Sept. 10, Pine Plains, Crosby, Griscom, Frost
- May 12-13, **1923**, Hyde Park; May 20, census; Aug. 24, Rhinebeck

Prairie Horned Lark

The Prairie Horned Lark is a subspecies which expanded to eastern NY by the 1890s.

- One, collected Jan. 27, 1898, Hyde Park, Bloomfield
- Six eggs, April 1, 1900; April 30, LS Horton
- Oct. 31, 1915, Moulton and Platt; 3 collected, winter, Hyde Park, Bloomfield
- Fledged young, May 31, 1916, Frost and Gray
- May 9, 1926, census
- One May 12, 1929, census; one May 23, Griscom and RJ Eaton
- Three young in nest and four eggs in another nest, March 31, 1930, Rock City, Crosby and Frost (Frost, 1944); May 11, Bulls Head, Frost; two May 18, census, Schultsville, Frost
- Two March 1, **1931** & two May 16-17, Chestnut Ridge, Baker who had each April and May from 1931-on and reported on the May Census most years

Ring-necked Pheasant

Released yearly from 1910s, NY State provided eggs and chicks to many people plus hunt clubs. Reported yearly from the 1920s in small numbers, appears to require regular releases, not self sustaining.

- *Released* before 1896, Daheim, Millbrook, Charles Dieterich, not established
- One collected, Nov. 1, 1901, Hyde Park, JT Roberts, Jr.
- *Released* about 1905 or soon after, Clove Valley Rod & Gun Club to be hunted but some escaped. This and other hunt clubs released yearly. Established by regular releases.
- *Released* 1913, Rhinebeck by Tracy Dows who provided feed, not established
- December CBC, all near Grasmere, Rhinebeck: nine in 1913, one in 1914, 30 in 1915, nine in 1916, and one in 1920; May 18, 1919 census, Grasmere, Crosby and Frost. All believed from Dows release
- 1920-on, May census in Dutchess: 12 in 1925, ten in 1926, four in 1928, three in 1929, four in 1930, plus other early years but without count
- Two March 22, 1925, Rhinebeck area, Crosby, Griscom, Frost; one Nov. 1, Rhinebeck area, Crosby, Baker, Griscom
- Two April 18, 1926, Rhinebeck area, Crosby; two Dec. 25, 1926 Rhinebeck to Rhinecliff, Crosby
- One Oct. 8-9, 1927, northern Dutchess, Crosby; one Dec. 27, Amenia, Edward Spingarn
- Two Dec. 23, 1928, CBC, Rhinebeck to Cruger Island, Crosby
- April 11 through May 17, **1931**, Chestnut Ridge, Baker; every year after. Hunt clubs in area.

Turkey Vulture

- One July 12, 1882, Stanfordville, Mary Hyatt
- One Sept. 12, 1899, possibly LS Horton, Eaton implies seen at least occasionally in southern Dutchess, Griscom says “annually” implying by 1920s
- One May 9, 1917, Rhinebeck, Clinton Abbott
- One Sept. 10, 1922, Lafayetteville, Crosby, Frost, Griscom
- One Oct. 11, 1925, Rock City, Crosby, Frost, Griscom
- Late 1920s, Kiemle “frequently” at Salt Point, also Millerton & Red Hook by Frost; 1924 & 1925 May Censuses did Mt. Beacon but no Vulture reported
- One May 13, 1928, census, Frost, Gray, Gardner
- One April 20, 1930, Mabbettsville, Frost
- Each year from **1931**, Chestnut Ridge, Baker; census 1931 and after

Evening Grosbeak

- (1889-1890 invasion) Many throughout Northeast, March 10, 1890, first Connecticut record. None reported from Dutchess.
- (1910-11 invasion) One Dec. 25, 1910, Rhinebeck, Crosby; two Feb. 24, 1911, Hyde Park, Bloomfield, one collected
- (1915-16 invasion) Seven, Feb. 17-20, 1916, Poughkeepsie, Gray, Frost, Moulton, Freeman, some remained to May 5, Frost and Moulton; flock, March 12, Rhinebeck
- (1916-17 invasion) One Dec. 29, 1916 - up to three stayed nearly a month, Stanfordville, Mary Hyatt; several, April 15, 1917, Poughkeepsie, Frost
- (1917-18 invasion) 15 or more, Rhinebeck, Cookingham
- (1919-20 invasion) Dec. 25, 1919, Rhinebeck, Crosby [not in CBC?]; up to 26, Feb. 4 - May 24, 1920, Rhinebeck, Dot Cookingham and Crosby, photos; others, Poughkeepsie
- Nov. 4 - Dec. 4, 1921, Rhinebeck; one male, Dec. 21, Poughkeepsie, Frost; May 10, 1921, Rhinebeck
- One female collected, Nov. 1, 1925, Barrytown, Crosby, Urner, Baker, Griscom.
- One, Nov. 10, 1929, Millbrook, Baker; one male, two female, Jan. 5, 1930, Cruger Island, Crosby and Frost; one male, one female April 21, Rhinebeck, Crosby
- March 25, **1932**, Knapp and Allen

Prairie Warbler

- May 2, 1913, Poughkeepsie, Frost
- May 5, 1915, Rhinebeck, Crosby; May 23, Poughkeepsie, Frost
- Sept. 24, 1916, Turkey Hollow, Abbott
- May 18, 1924 census, Stissing, Granger & Murphy; June 11-29, nest, Dover Plains, photo, Frost
- May 27, 1925, Salt Point, Kiemle
- May 16, 1926, Dover Plains, Frost
- May 8, 1930, Crosby; May 18, Millbrook, Frost & Gray
- Two May 21, 1932, Dover Plains, Baker
- May 14, **1933** census; one May 20, Baker & most years after

Barn Owl

- Fledged young, Sept. 22 to Nov. 30, 1916, Greenvale Farm, Poughkeepsie by George Gray, may have nested previous years
- One August 1917, Greenvale Farm, Poughkeepsie
- Heard February to July, 1921, one killed in May, Greenvale Farm, Poughkeepsie
- May 18, 1924, census
- One Jan. 9, 1925, Cruger Island, Crosby
- Four eggs, May 23, 1926, Greenvale Farm, Poughkeepsie
- One Feb. 11, 1928, Grasmere, Rhinebeck, Crosby
- May 1935, census; bred July 6 & 28, Douglas Cole, Millbrook, Baker

- May 14, **1939**, census

Great Egret

- Aug. 4, 1918, Jackson Pond, Allen Frost
- Several July 15, 1925, near Poughkeepsie, Allen Frost & Kiemle, photo; same date, Vandenburg Cove, Maunsell Crosby
- Four Aug. 2, 1929, around county, Allen Frost
- Aug. 1930, over 50 from Pawling to Danbury, Preston (*Linnaean Proceedings*); Sept. 14, Vandenburg Cove, Helen Crosby
- Four during July 1933 at Noxon, Lagrangeville, and Dieterich's Millbrook (*Rhinebeck Gazette*, July 28, 1933)
- Five July 25-26, one July 31-Aug. 1, 1936, Chestnut Ridge, Baker; over 50 July 28, Pawling, Preston (*Bird-Lore*, p.384); August at Hunn's Lake and East Park (*Poughkeepsie Star-Enterprise*, Aug. 25, 1936)
- One July 18 & Aug. 7, 1937, Chestnut Ridge, Baker
- Two July **1947**, Camp Nootemeing, Ralph Waterman; 14 July 19, Norris Pond, Baker; two others later Baker

Northern Cardinal

- Pair nested June-July 1913, Poughkeepsie, Allen Frost, assumed cage birds.
- Male July 10, 1922, Hyde Park, Franklin Roosevelt
- Male Dec. 9 - March 27, 1930 & female Jan. 8, Rhinebeck, Claudia Snyder / Maunsell Crosby
- One, week of Sept. 11, 1932, Rhinebeck, CR MacBeth to Maxwell Knapp
- One April 23 & May 7, 1944, May 14 census, Lake Walton, Allen Frost
- One Feb. 14, 1946, Grand Ave., Poughkeepsie, also April, May 19 census, Ralph Waterman
- Jan.-May 1947, eastern Poughkeepsie, May 18 census, Ralph Waterman; one Nov. 27, Donaldson's, John Baker
- Pair, Feb. 1948, Grand Ave., Poughkeepsie, May, June-July, Sept., Dec. 4, two Dec. 28 CBC, Ralph Waterman
- Feb. 1, **1949**, Academy St., March, April, May 15 census, Ralph Waterman

Carolina Wren

- One May 5-6, 1891, Stanfordville, Mary Hyatt
- One May 5, 1897, near Poughkeepsie, Lisenard Horton
- One May 14, 1922, Jackson Pond, Allen Frost
- One March 30, 1924, Cruger Island, Maunsell Crosby and Allen Frost
- One Oct. 15, 1927, Cruger Island, Maunsell Crosby and Allen Frost
- One Sept. 1-11, 1929, Leacote, Rhinecliff, Maunsell Crosby
- One May 24 - Nov. 21, 1930, Cruger Island, Maunsell Crosby and others
- One May 19, 1946 census
- Two Oct. 7, 1950, Camp Nootemeing, seen by many
- One Sept. 16 & 22, 1951, Chestnut Ridge, John Baker
- One 1951-52 wintered, D Hamilton's, John Baker
- Two Dec. 21, **1953**, Stissing feeder, Thelma Height

Tufted Titmouse

- One Oct. 28, 1929, Rhinebeck, Maunsell Crosby collected
- One May 1, 1950, Dover Plains, Jack Newlin
- One May 11, 1953 census, Ray Guernsey, Frank Gardiner, Otis Waterman
- 1955, possible nesting along Boardman Rd., Poughkeepsie
- May 13, 1956 census
- One Jan. 24, March 16, 1957 Munsell feeder, Pleasant Valley

- Many Oct. - Dec. **1958**, Dutchess County; one Dec. 1958 CBC, Otis Waterman; also winter 1958-59 by several people at different localities

Northern Mockingbird

- One May 7-few days, 1919, College Ave., Poughkeepsie, Frederick Saunders & others
- One July 6, 1930, 3 miles north of Millbrook, John Kieran
- One March 16, 1931, Poughkeepsie
- One April 12, 1946, Shekomeko, Edward Spingarn
- One Dec. 26 - March 13, 1948, two on Jan. 27, Ziegler Ave., Poughkeepsie
- One around Nov. 10, 1950, Overocker Rd., Poughkeepsie, Brewster's
- Sept. 1958, Helen Manson
- One all February **1960**, Greenbush Dr., Hyde Park; one Feb.-March, Pleasant Valley, two April 28, Pleasant Valley, Marion Van Wagner's

Ring-billed Gull

- March 21 & 29, 1915, Rhinecliff, Maunsell Crosby
- April 16, 1921, Vandenburg Cove, Maunsell Crosby & Ludlow Griscom; late 1920s, date not specified, Maunsell Crosby
- March 30, 1932, Rhinebeck area, Maxwell Knapp
- March 1948, Ralph Waterman
- May 13, 1956 census
- June 1958, Otis Waterman
- March - April 1959 Otis Waterman
- March 1960 Otis Waterman; one Sept. 5 & two 20, 1960 Barrytown, Br. Michael
- Two Feb. 26, **1961**, Wappingers, Otis Waterman; twelve March 4, April, six May, Barrytown, Br. Michael; four June, Otis Waterman; sixteen Sept. - Oct., Barrytown Br. Michael

Willow Flycatcher

- May 1941, 1942, 1944, 1945 one sighting each, John Baker (migrating Alder Flycatcher?)
- June 1, 1946, likely Camp Nooteming, Ralph Waterman (migrating Alder?)
- June-July 1948, nested?, Baird Park or Stissing, Ralph Waterman
- July 1949, Camp Nooteming?, Ralph Waterman
- June 11, 1951, Baird Park, Ralph Waterman
- May 1953, 1954, 1956, 1958 censuses (Willow or Alder migrant?)
- One May 24, 1958, Chestnut Ridge, Baker (Alder migrant?)
- July 20, 1959, confirmed nesting at Upton Lake, Thelma & Florence Germond
- Three pair, June 4, 1960, Cruger Island
- **1961** and yearly after, soon nested at Thompson Pond, Millbrook Boys School marsh, Briarcliff Farms

Boreal Chickadee

Note that Boreal Chickadees are no longer regularly found in Dutchess County with these dates overlapping their last sightings.

- Three, Nov. 20 - March 29, 1913, Vassar College, Prof. Ellen Freeman
- (1913-14 invasion) three, Nov. 27 - March 12, 1914, James Goodell feeder, Rhinebeck, Crosby; two, Jan. 22 - April 21, 1914, Poughkeepsie
- (1916-17 invasion) several (one in Nov., five in Dec.), Oct. 28 - March 1917, Rhinebeck, Crosby, photo; three, Dec. 23, 1916, George Gray, Poughkeepsie
- (1941-42 invasion) not found in Dutchess
- (1951-52 invasion) two Nov. 15, 1951 - March 4, 1952 at Danforth Munsell's, Pleasant Valley
- (1954-55 invasion) two, Nov. 25, 1954 - April 6, 1955, at Pleasant Valley, one Nov. 27 at Vassar. One collected Feb. 25 at Dover Plains by George Decker, now in NYS Museum.

- (1961-62 invasion) Oct. 31, 1961 - March 24, **1962** few scattered locations, usually one to three totaling maybe 11.

Great Black-backed Gull

- One Dec. 27, 1958 CBC, Barnaget Rd., Poughkeepsie, George Decker, Helen Manson, Otis Waterman
- Up to five Jan. - April 1959, Beacon Dump
- Up to 18, Jan. 6 - April 1960, Beacon Dump, Otis Waterman, Marion Van Wagner, Eleanor Pink, others; March 19, Vandenburg Cove, Otis Waterman; Two Sept., Otis Waterman
- One Jan. 2, 1961 CBC; two Feb. 8, Cruger Island, Br. Michael; up to 20 Feb. 26 - April, Beacon Dump, Otis Waterman, Jean Beck; one or two Sept. 20 - Nov. 1, Cruger Island, Br. Michael
- Four on Jan. 15, ten on Feb. 17, **1962**, Beacon Dump, Otis Waterman

Brant

The Brant population collapsed in the 1930s then recovered in the 1950s. Although there are no twentieth century records before 1957, likely flocks passed up the Hudson earlier in the 1950s.

- May 14, 1957, East Park, Tom Gilbert
- 300+ May 18, 1959, 60 on May 19, East Park, Tom Gilbert
- 100+ each day May 17-27, 1960, St. Joseph's, Barrytown, Br. Michael, plus Otis Waterman, Florence Germond, Marion Van Wagner, Helen Manson reported with estimates to 2000
- 350 May 23, 1961, over Hudson, Br. Michael also by Tom Gilbert and Paul Haight; 120 Oct. 11, and 34 Nov. 6, St. Joseph's, Barrytown, Br. Michael
- 200 May 19, **1962**, Alice Jones to 300 May 25, Br. Michael, others between these dates.

Snow Goose

The North American Snow Goose population increased from about 3000 in 1900 to 50,000 in 1960. Lack of local sightings at this time is surely due to few regular observers near the Hudson.

- Flock March 28, 1959, Pine Plains, George Ellsbree
- 400 in 6 flocks flying Nov. 8, 1959, Moores Mills, Helen Manson
- One Nov. 8 - April 18, 1960, Douglas Sherow Farm, Pleasant Valley, mingled with domestic geese until spring
- 100s April 7, 1961, Moores Mills, Helen Manson; four April 9, Barrytown, Br. Michael; 35 Nov. 24, Hudson at Poughkeepsie, Eleanor Pink; 100 Nov. 24 Travers Marsh, Pleasant Valley, DeGrot
- 40 March 29 & 500+ April 5, **1962**, Dover Plains, George Decker; one March 31, Cruger Island, Br. Michael; 150 Nov. 4, near Pine Plains, Vivian Parkhurst

Dickcissel

Present in 1800s but no Dutchess County record, gone from about 1880. After 1946 they reappeared on Long Island, particularly from 1951 (Bull NYC).

- One female Nov. 10, 1953, banded at Millbrook Boys School
- One Nov. 22, 1953 to Jan. 1, 1954, by Marion Van Wagner at her feeder Gleason Blvd., Pleasant Valley
- One Nov. 26, 1955, Gleason Blvd., Pleasant Valley, Marion Van Wagner
- One Oct. 16-18, 1958, at feeder Stissing, Thelma Height; one Dec. to Jan. 1959, B Ryan's feeder, Stissing
- One immature female Nov. 16, 1960, banded, Millbrook Boys School; Nov. 2 to Dec., Ryan's, Stissing
- One Sept. 2-3, 1962, Lagrangeville, Margaret and Rufus Wood; one Oct. 25 - 29, another Nov. 25, Gleason Blvd., Pleasant Valley, Marion; one Nov. 29, Millbrook, Elsie Browne
- One March 12, **1963** Creek Rd., Poughkeepsie, reported to Alice Jones; one Oct. 12 - 18, two in Nov., Gleason Blvd., Marion; one Oct. 27, Roz Davis, LaGrangeville; two Nov. 9 - 17 into Dec. at Strauss, Amenia.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

- One Sept. 10, 1922, Rhinebeck, Maunsell Crosby, Allen Frost, & Ludlow Griscom, collected
- One March 13, 1929, Cruger Island, Allen Frost
- Three, May 18, 1958 census, Thompson Pond, seen by 5 people; Aug. 8 & 14, 1958, Stissing
- One May 2, 1959, Cruger Island, Otis Waterman and others
- May 3, 1961, Rombout Rd.; pair May 7, Cruger Island, nest building, Gerald Kelly
- One April 30, 1962, near St. Joseph's, Barrytown also on census at Cruger
- One April 28, 1963, Cruger Island, Alice Jones; and continuing
- One, April 23, **1964**, Thompson Pond, Vivian Parkurst; pair, May 10, Innisfree, building nest, Otis Waterman, Eleanor Pink, & Florence Germond

House Finch

- One singing, July 14, 1956, Millbrook, Paul Buckley & Walter Sedwitz
- One April 12, 1960, Marion Van Wagner's yard
- One male April 5, 1962, Overlook, Rochdale, Pat Garthwaite, Jean Hartman, Dot Lloyd
- Two males April 1, 1963, Poughkeepsie, Mary Key; April 2, Rochdale, Dot Lloyd; one female May 26, Wappingers Falls, Walter Claire, Jr.
- One male March 8-11, 1964, Moores Mills, Helen Manson and many others; one male April 13, Stanfordville, Florence Germond; one male Oct. 13-16, Rochdale, Dot Lloyd
- **1965** census, CBC and others

Mallard (FERAL AND SEMI-DOMESTIC RESIDENT POPULATION)

Originally a transient with a few winter records, all were assumed wild. Starting about 1910 releases for hunting by Clove Valley Rod & Gun Club and other sportsmen's clubs, plus escapes from farms, resulted in them becoming feral and semi-domestic. These were now seen all year, particularly in the summer when they bred, eventually also interbreeding with Black Ducks. Feral birds were often not reported, however the following are the early sightings in summer.

- Three females, July 29, 1922, Cruger Island, Crosby & Frost
- Two, Aug. 31, 1935, Chestnut Ridge, John Baker
- Ralph Waterman reported without count or location on: July-Aug. 1948; June 1, 1950; June 2, July 7, and Aug. 1, 1951
- John Baker reported at Chestnut Ridge: one, Aug. 14, 1955; pair, June 8, 1957; two, June 22 and one Aug. 9, 1958
- Six young, July 16, 1960, Chestnut Ridge, John Baker. First nesting recorded although some likely nested earlier
- Nesting, May 14, 1961, Wing's woods, Millbrook, Elsie Browne
- Ten eggs hatched, June 30, 1963, Kays Pond, Pleasant Valley
- Young, May 16, 1964, Briarcliff
- Young, May 23, **1965**, Thompson Pond; four young, June 4, Beaver Dam, Lithgow, Florence Germond, Otis Waterman

Double-crested Cormorant

- One Oct. 10, 1883, Cornwall, Mearns; also seen on Upper Hudson River, Nov. 4, 1889
- One flying south Sept. 30, 1923, Crosby & Carter; one Oct. 4 & 21, all Cruger Island, Crosby
- Two Oct. 30, 1925, Barrytown, Crosby
- One Oct. 8, 1927, near Beacon, Griscom

Lack of river coverage from 1930s to 1950s surely missed some, nevertheless it appears not to have become regular until 1965.

- One May 12, 1960, Barrytown, reported to Br. Michael
- One Oct. 14, 1961, Cruger Island, Br. Michael
- One May 12, 1962, Cruger Island, Br. Michael
- One April 23, 1964, south of Barrytown on buoy, Br. Damian

- Four May 15, **1965**, census, Cruger Island, Pat Garthwaite & Marion Van Wagner; one Aug. 28, Vanderbilt, Maggie Bowman

Canada Goose (RESIDENT POPULATION)

The first known Canada Goose nesting in NY State was in 1941 at Montezuma NWR (Levine). The State released birds in the 1950s, if not before. It is believed the resident breeding birds are descended from the introductions. There are no prior June to September reports for Dutchess County. There were also very few winter records until the 1960s after some became resident and nested.

- First nesting, 1956, Swift Pond, Dover Plains, George Decker
- Young, July 1958, Swift Pond, Dover Plains, George Decker
- Two pair nesting, May - June 1959, Swift Pond, Otis Waterman
- Two pair nested, Summer 1960 with 14 on Aug. 29, Swift Pond, Decker, Jim & Mary Key
- Fourteen on May 14, 1961, Swift Pond, Decker, Thelma Height, Florence Germond; four, May 26, Buttermilk Pond, Pine Plains, Jim & Mary Key. Unknown if nested
- Two adults, one young, June 4, 1963, Swift Pond, Helen Manson
- Five young, May 13, 1964, two adults, three young, July 23, Buttermilk Pond, Vivian Parkhurst, Thelma Height, Helen Manson; pair nesting, June, with 22 on Aug. 1-3, Tamarack Swamp, Stanford, Elsie Browne; 17 on Aug. 4, Swift Pond, Helen Manson
- Young, May 15, 1965, census, Mud Pond, Pine Plains; two adults, six young, May, Buttermilk Pond, Thelma Height
- Six young, May 1, **1966**, Buttermilk Pond, 4 to 6 pair nesting in Dutchess County

Laughing Gull

- "Large flock" Spring 1870s, one skin, Cornwall, Mearns

- One May 10, 1924, adult "above Poughkeepsie," Frost; three Oct. 4, Dennings Point, Griscom
- Two Aug. 13, 1927, Beacon, Frost
- May 12, 1935 census, Frost, Gray, Guernsey
- May 14, 1943, Frost
- One May 2, 1959, Cruger Island, club trip
- One Aug 20, 1961, from boat between Poughkeepsie and Hyde Park, Eleanor
- One May 4, 1963, Cruger Island, club trip; two May 11 census Tamarack Swamp, Florence, Thelma, George Decker
- One April 1, 1965, Sylvan Lake, Helen, George Decker, Roz Davis
- Two Oct. 25, **1969**, Hudson near Cornwall, Dick Guthrie; two Oct 30, Beacon, Alice Jones, Dick Guthrie

Little Blue Heron

- Up to 10 July 21-week, 1929, Rhinebeck, Helen Crosby; 48 Aug. 2, around county with 60+ at Fishkill Plains on Aug. 26, Allen Frost; one Sept. 8, Rhinebeck, Maunsell Crosby; all immature
- 14 June 21, 1930, Tivoli, JL Redmond; July 15, Vandenburg Cove, Maunsell Crosby
- 12 Aug. 27, 1933, Chestnut Ridge, John Baker
- One Aug. 14, 1937, Chestnut Ridge, John Baker
- One Aug. 12 & 19 1956, Chestnut Ridge, John Baker
- One immature April 24, 1960, Cruger Island, Br. Michael, Otis Waterman
- One immature Aug. 14-16, 1964, VanWagner Rd., Poughkeepsie, Marion Van Wagner, Eleanor Pink, Helen Manson, Jim & Mary Key
- Four immature Aug. 6-11, 1968, Christie Pond, Clove Valley, Helen Manson & Mary Key
- One adult April 17, 1969, Vandenburg Cove, Alice Jones & Davis Finch
- One Aug. 22, **1970**, Fallkill Park, Alice Jones; two Aug. 19, Briarcliff, Jim & Mary Key and others

Red-bellied Woodpecker

- One female Jan. 16 & 22, 1961, Millbrook, Elsie Browne's feeder
- One female Dec. 30 - May 2, 1963, Stanfordville, Betty Deuel's feeder, seen by many
- One Sept. 18, 1964, Elsie Browne
- One May 15, 1966, Briarcliff, Noble Proctor
- One male April 28 - May 17, 1967, Shunpike, Florence Germond
- One Dec. 28, 1969 CBC
- One Dec. 5 - March 2, 1970, East Park, Tom Gilbert, Jim & Mary Key and Alice Jones; one January 1970 Salt Point, Edith Gerhard
- On and off all December **1970**, East Park, Tom Gilbert; one Dec. 8 & 17, Shunpike, Marion Van Wagner

Mute Swan

- Nine Jan. 29, 1949, Cruger Island, Ralph Waterman; all other sightings up to 1952 appear to be semi-domesticated swans at Ruppert's Vandenburg Cove
- One Nov. 5, 1961, Haight's marsh, Stissing, Thelma, Florence Germond; One Dec. 16, Upton Lake, Otis Waterman
- One March 26, 1963, Wappingers Lake; two March 28, Fishkill Creek near Brinkerhoff, Jim & Mary Key
- One April 3-6, 1964, Otis Waterman; one May 9, Green Haven, Otis Waterman; one May 16 census; one May 24, Otis Waterman.
- Two April 2, 1965, Hopewell Jct., Rich Guthrie
- June 1966, Otis Waterman
- One Nov. 6, 1970, Dieterich Lake, Jim & Mary Key
- One April 16, **1972**, Dieterich Lake, Jim & Mary Key; one Dec. 19-23 Abels, Jim & Mary Key

Cattle Egret

- One 2nd year bird, June 11, 1957, Rhinebeck, Paul Buckley
- One April 20 - May 2, 1960, Pine Plains, Lois Palmatier & Vivian Parkhurst, seen by others
- One May 6, 1964, Poughquag; one May 25, Briarcliff Farm, Pine Plains, club trip; one May 28, East Park, Tom Gilbert
- 5+ May 27, 1966, East Park, Tom Gilbert; Nov. 4, East Park, Annatje Gilbert
- One April 15, 1968, Schultz Hill Rd., Staatsburg, JD Davis, Alice Jones, Helen Manson
- Three Nov. 7 - Dec. 1, 1970, Briarcliff Farm, Hahn Farm, Salt Point, & Skidmore Rd., seen by many
- Three May 15, 1971 census
- Seven May 3, **1972**, Wassaic Village, Mary Yegella & sister

Prothonotary Warbler

- One June 27, 1892, Hyde Park, Arthur Bloomfield, collected
- One May 6-11, 1954 Wappingers Creek, Pleasant Valley, Marion Van Wagner
- One June 1956, Cruger Island, Eleanor Pink
- One June 1957, Cruger Island, Eleanor Pink, Thelma Haight
- One May 15, 1959 LaGrangeville, Rufous Wood
- One May 5, 1962 Innisfree, Roz Davis
- One May 11, 1963 census, Cedar Valley Rd., Jim & Mary Key & Dot Lloyd
- One May 13, 1967 census, Innisfree, Mr. Logan
- One Sept. 16, 1969, Tree Tops, Mary Key
- One May 13, **1972** census, IBM, Jim & Mary Key, Beedy Gray, seen by others

Kentucky Warbler

- One May 23, 1915, Poughkeepsie, Allen Frost
- One May 25, 1919, Poughkeepsie, Allen Frost and Frederick Saunders

- One May 14, 1959, LaGrangeville, Rufous Wood
- One May 1961, Amenia, Trixie Strauss
- One July 15, early 1960s (not 1947), Tivoli, George Rose & John Meyer
- One Sept. 16, 1967, Thompson Pond, Eleanor Pink & Marion Van Wagner; one Oct. 4, Cruger Island, Jim & Mary Key & Alice Jones
- One May 31 to June 6, 1971, Deep Hollow, seen by many
- One May 13, 1972 census, South Dutchess, Beedy Gray
- One May 3-4, **1973**, Deep Hollow, Czecher Terhune, Mary Key, Aline Romero

Golden Eagle

- One, Spring 1930, Dover, Ed Chase
- One Nov. 1 & 19, 1961, Cruger Island, Br. Michael
- Two Feb. 1962, Amenia (wintered at Sharon, Conn.), Trixie Strauss
- One Feb. 26, 1964, Pleasant Valley, Roz Davis, Helen Manson, Marion Van Wagner, Jim Southward
- One March 8, 1965, Millbrook Boys School, Frank Trevor; one March 7 & 27, Amenia, Bill & Trixie Strauss; Sept. 25, immature Millbrook, Helen Manson, George Decker
- One immature Nov. 15, 1969, Verbank, Eleanor Pink, Jeff Daley, Marion Van Wagner
- One Dec. 21 - April 4, 1970, Briarcliff, Rich Guthrie, seen by many
- One Feb. 9-19, 1972, Stissing; one Nov. 4, **1973**, Stissing; intermittently seen every year in same general area through winter 1982-83.

Snowy Egret

- Two Aug. 2, 1929, Sprout Creek, Fishkill Plains, Allen Frost
- One immature, Sept. 30, 1962, Ten Mile River, Dover Plains, Jim & Mary Key
- One April 13-16, 1964, Cruger Island, William McEntee
- One May 6, 1965, Sleigh Plass Rd., Pleasant Valley, Peggy Gorson
- Five May 17, 1967, Buttermilk Pond, club trip
- One April 20, 1968, Cruger Island
- One May 11, 1975, Wappingers Creek, Manchester, Tom Story, photo by Otis Waterman; one June 19, South Bay, Cruger Island, Erik Kiviatt
- One July 15, Aug. 24, **1976**, Buttermilk Pond, Vivian Parkhurst; one Oct. 4, Wappingers Lake, John Gray

Wild Turkey

- Two reports in late 1950s near Clinton Corners possibly from releases in Columbia or Putnam Counties
- *Released*, five toms & five hens, Jan. 16, 1974, Stissing Mountain State Forest and four toms & seven hens released Feb. 27, East Mountain, Dover
- Two April 28, 1974, Tamarack Swamp, Stefley VanVlack
- Eight Jan. 11, 1975, East Mtn, Helen Manson, Mary Yegella; seven May 17, 1975 census
- One April 17, 1976, Wassaic, Aline & Forest Romero; four April, Sand Hill, Dover, Jim Fiedler; 26 Nov. 25, Stissing, Curtis Simmons
- One Feb. 5, **1977** Briarcliff, Thelma Haight

Greater White-fronted Goose

- One April 10-19, 1977, Strauss Marsh, Amenia, seen by many
- One Jan. 4-18, 1983, Wappinger Lake, Mary Yegella, Dot Fleury, Ken McDermott, waterfowl count; one March 9, Millerton, two March 13, Sharon Station, Otis Waterman, Alice Jones, Dot Fleury, Mary Yegella; six Dec. 2, Tamarack, Florence Germond, Marion Van Wagner, Helen Manson, Mary Yegella; two adult and eight immature Dec. 10, Ryder Pond, Florence Germond
- One Feb. 26, one March 9, two March 27, two April 18 1984, Round Pond, Dot Fleury, Mary Yegella; one Oct. 28, Tamarack, Elsa Bumstead

- One Feb. 28, March 8, 1985, Round Pond, Dot Fleury
- Two Dec. 27 - March 3, **1986** wintered, Sylvan Lake; two Nov. 4, Dieterich, Mary Yegella, Dot Fleury; two Dec. 31, Hillside Lake, Alice Jones

Glossy Ibis

- One May 15, 1966, Cruger Island, Eleanor Pink, Brad Whiting, Marion Van Wagner
- One May 23, 1970, Wappingers Creek near Poughkeepsie, Mrs. Leo Audretsch
- One July 25, 1974, small pond east of Amenia, Mary Yegella
- One May 3, 1975, Cruger Island, Erik Kiviat; two Aug. 24, Karl Ehmer Farm, LaGrangeville, Tom Story, Bob Rasmussen, and Ken McDermott
- One May 6, 1979, Tivoli North Bay, Alice Jones
- One Aug. 12-13, 1981, IBM South Rd., Stan DeOrsey and Helen DeMunn
- One April 21-22, 1982, Seaman Farm, Hyde Park, Alice Jones and many others
- One May 12, 1984, Vandenburg Cove, Otis Waterman and six others
- One March 29-31, **1989**, Violet Hill Rd., Rhinebeck, Susan Joseph and four others

Common Raven

- Aug. 27, 1959, near Rhinecliff, Fred Hough
- One May 3, 1969, Cruger Island, Rich Guthrie
- One March 1970, Freedom Plains, Bill Chrystal
- Two Feb. 14, 1987, Dave Rosgen
- One Aug. 1989, over Bog Hollow Rd., John McNeely
- One April 24, **1990**, Millbrook, Elsie Browne; one May 12 census; one June 8, reported to Mary Yegella; one Sept. 3, north of Pine Plains, Alan Peterson; three Oct. 21, Indian Lake, Mary Yegella, Dot Fleury, Chris Luciani

Black Vulture

- One May 2, 1960 near Pine Plains, Marion Van Wagner, Jean Beck, Jim & Mary Key
- One April 21, 1976, Billings, Br. Michael
- One Sept. 4, 1983, Pleasant Valley, Bob Bohler; three Sept. 16, Allen Hill, Checker Terhune
- One May 11, 1991 census; one Sept. 1, Butts Hollow Rd., Alice Jones
- One July 20, 1992, Rt. 44 near Turkey Hollow, Alan Peterson; one Aug. 11, Dover Plains; two Sept. 18, Hudson Highlands, Drew Gress
- Two May 12, **1993** census, Taconic Parkway, Alan Peterson

Tundra Swan

- Two March 25, 1968, Cruger Island, Czecher Terhune, Ruth Thomas, Jim Southward.
- One March 2, 1969, Hyde Park, Don Davis
- One immature Nov. 10-12, 1970, Thompson Pond, Vivian Parkhurst seen by Davis Finch and many others.
- One March 23 - April 17, 1974, Traver Marsh, Aline & Forest Romero and others, perhaps different birds; one April 6-8, Tivoli, Marion Van Wagner, Jim & Mary Key, others
- One Nov. 15, 1975, Rhinecliff, club field trip
- One Dec. 14, 1977, Sylvan Lake, Helen Manson, Aline & Forest Romero
- Nov. 1983, Round Pond, Amenia, Dot Fleury, Trixie Strauss, Mary Yegella
- Four March 9, 1984, Hopewell Jct., Carol Jack
- Four March 11-12, **1995**, Round Pond, Amenia, Barbara Butler, Dot Fleury, Mary Yegella, Helen Manson

Yellow-Crowned Night-Heron

- One adult June 26-30, 1967, Stissing Rd., Stanfordville, Donna Haight and seen by others
- One April 27, 1968, Cruger Island South Bay, Maggie Bowman
- One immature Aug. 10-16, 1972, Nassau Rd., Poughkeepsie, Jim & Mary Key

- One Sept. 6, 1976, Beacon, Jim & Mary Key
- One June 11, 1988, Cream St. / Dutchess Hill Rd. marsh, Alice Jones
- One Aug. 21 - Sept. 4, 1989, Dover, Dot Fleury and Mary Yegella; one Sept. 12, Hibernia, Meg Guernsey and Bill Consiglio
- One adult April 24-25, 1991, Wicoppee, Claudius Feger, Otis Waterman, Jim & Mary Key
- One May 20, 1992, Whittier Blvd., Poughkeepsie, Jim & Mary Key, photo
- One Oct. 14, 1997, Salt Point, Bob Bowler
- One June 26, **2004**, Fishkill Creek at I-84, Binnie Chase

Iceland Gull

- One April 18, 1926, Vandenburg Cove, Maunsell Crosby and Ludlow Griscom
- One May 3, 1930, Vandenburg Cove, Maunsell Crosby
- One immature March 23, 1963, Hudson River from Beacon Dump, Mary Key on a Club trip and seen by eight others
- One immature Feb. 2, 24, & 27, 1964, Beacon Dump, Otis Waterman and eight others. May have been different birds
- One April 24, 1965, Cruger Island, Br. Francis Gary and two others
- One March 15, 1969, Hudson River near New Hamburg, Davis Finch on a club trip and seen by many
- One immature Feb. 28 - March 3, 1977, Wappingers Creek between New Hamburg and Wappingers Lake, Dan Nickerson and seen by at least five others
- One immature, maybe two, March 17-19, 1979, Wappingers Creek at New Hamburg, Tom Storey and seen by many
- One Jan. 7, 1983, Van Wagner Rd dump, Alice Jones
- One Jan. 1, 1992, Pawling CBC, Sibyll Gilbert
- One Dec. 5-8, **2005**, Indian Lake / Reagan Rd., Millerton, Dot Fleury, Chet Vincent, Ken & Carol Fredericks

Great Cormorant

- One immature May 11, 1966, perched on a buoy, observed from Cruger Island, Alice Jones, Czecher Terhune, four others.
- One adult Oct. 19 - Nov. 2, 1969, Cornwall Bay. Seen by Rich Guthrie and many others on Oct. 25. Shot by hunters on Nov. 2, it was seized by conservation officers and preserved in State Museum at Albany.
- Two immatures Jan. 13, 1992, Bannermans Island, Ed Treacy
- Two Jan. 6-7, 1993, Esopus Lighthouse, Al Brayton. One was seen Jan. 6 Jim & Mary Key from the Mills Mansion. Seen Jan. 7 Helen Manson, John Balint, and others.
- Nine June 25, 1996, Hudson River near Staatsburg, Tom Lake
- Six Jan. 21, 2002, New Hamburg, Barbara Michelin
- One Oct. 25, 2003, Wappingers Creek from Reese Park, Allan Michelin
- Three March 8, 2006, on a metal tower off Bannermans, Hudson River, Ken McDermott and two others; one immature Oct. 18 - Nov. 30, Upper Kays Pond, Pleasant Valley, Barbara Butler, Liz Martin, photo Bill Case
- One Nov. 16, **2008**, Norrie Point, Chet Vincent

Glaucous Gull

- One March 23, 1963, south of Beacon, Jan Reese and eight others
- One April 7, 1968, South Bay Cruger Island, John Marsh
- One May 10, 1969, Rhinecliff, Eleanor Pink and others
- One immature March 7-18, 1972, Wappingers Creek, New Hamburg, Marion Van Wagner, Helen Manson
- One Feb. 3, 1973, Hudson River, Davis Finch & Bob Smart

- One Feb. 1, 1981, New Hamburg, Alice Jones and one Feb. 15, near Pirate Canoe Club, Poughkeepsie, Jim & Mary Key. Possibly different birds.
- One adult Jan. 6-7, 1983, Van Wagner Rd. dump, Poughkeepsie, Alice Jones
- One immature, Jan. 6, 1999, Beacon, Barbara & Allan Michelin
- One second winter Dec. 14, 2003, Webatuck Creek, Millerton, Barbara Butler & Dot Fleury
- One Jan. 17, **2012**, Beacon, Curt McDermott, photo

Sandhill Crane

- One Aug. 4, 1918, Jackson Pond, East Fishkill, Allen Frost. Maunsell Crosby thought escaped from a Connecticut preserve
- One May 4, 1983, Tivoli North Bay, Erik Kiviat, flew overhead calling
- One May 26, 1990, Buttercup Farm Sanctuary, Pine Plains, Richard & Leslie Gershon
- Thirty Dec. 31, 2000, Fishkill, Ed Spaeth
- Seven Dec. 7, 2003, Fishkill, Ed Spaeth
- One Nov. 20, 2005, Beacon, Stephen Seymour
- Thirty Dec. 28, 2010, Fishkill, Ed Spaeth
- Four April 12, 2011, Ferncliff, Rhinebeck, Jim Closs
- One Sept. 23, 2012, Poet's Walk, Rhinebeck, Chrissy Guarino
- Four April 18, 2013, Pouquag, Patricia Mackay
- Two Feb. 14, **2014**, Tivoli Bays, Susan Rogers & Christina Baal

Cackling Goose

Split from Canada Goose in 2004, previously a subspecies.

- One March 25-27, 1977, Bontecou Lake, Stanford, Jesse Bontecou, seen by at least six others
- One Jan. 28, 2002, Waryas Riverfront Park, Poughkeepsie, Chet Vincent, Carol & Ken Fredericks, Rosa Corbeels. Photographed
- One Nov. 9, 2008, Fraleigh Hill Rd., Alan Peterson
- One Nov. 6-8, 2011, Ryder Pond, Stanfordville with 2000+ Canada Geese, John Askildsen, Deborah Tracy-Kral
- One Oct. 22, 2012, Round Pond, Amenia with 1000 Canada Geese, Chet Vincent
- One Nov. 5, 2013, "The Fly," Pine Plains, Adrienne Popko, Dick Ryley, and Maha Katnani
- One Jan. 18, 2014, Salt Point, Barbara Mansell & Liz Martens; two Nov. 8-28, Weeping Spruce Preserve, Pine Plains, Adrienne Popko, Margaret Philips, & Barbara Michelin
- One April 15 & two on April 21, **2015**, Meshomack, seen by at least four people; one Oct. 15, Ryder Pond, Bangal Amenia Rd, Adrienne Popko

Lesser Black-backed Gull

- One from about June 26 - July 1, 2002, Chelsea Yacht Club, Dot Fleury and seen by six others. Photographs not conclusive
- One Feb. 26, 2006, Hudson River at Hyde Park, Chet Vincent
- Two Dec. 22, 2007, just south of the Mid-Hudson Bridge, Rodney Johnson
- One Jan. 8, 2009, Hudson River at Chelsea, Rodney Johnson; one Nov. 9, Hudson River at Beacon Waterfront Park, Dick Ryley
- One Dec. 28, 2011 near Hudson River in Rhinecliff, Rodney Johnson on the Ulster / Dutchess CBC
- One adult Jan. 16 - Feb. 1, 2012, Hudson River near the Beacon Railroad Station, Curt McDermott, photographed, seen by others
- One adult Dec. 28, 2013, Hudson River at Beacon, Ajit Antony, seen with other gulls.
- One Jan. 22, 2015, Hudson River near Beacon with many other gulls, Curt McDermott
- One first winter Nov. 20, **2016**, McEnroe Farm, Sharon Station, John Askildsen

Clay-colored Sparrow

- One male from May 25 - July 1974, at Rockefeller University Field Research Center, by Robert Smart, Davis Finch, and Donald Kroodsmas.
- One on Oct. 14, 1993, at Fishkill feeder by Russ O'Malley.
- One from Dec. 12, 2002, to April 20, 2003, at Cedar Lane, Rhinebeck feeder by Kristin Smith. Also seen by Barbara and Allan Michelin, Alan and Jan Peterson, Carena Pooth, and Ken McDermott.
- One from Oct. 20-22, 2007, at Stony Kill Farm gardens, by Steve Golladay, photographed. Also seen by Peter Bedrossian.
- One on Oct. 20, 2010, at Stony Kill Farm gardens, by Ken Harris.
- Two on Sept. 24, 2011, at Stony Kill Farm gardens, by Chris Wood and Jessie Barry, photographed. Apparently one lingered to Oct. 8.
- One on Oct. 6-12, 2018, at Stony Kill Farm gardens, found by Barbara Mansell. Photographed by Anthony Macchiarola and Aimee LaBarr. Also one on Oct. 21, at Vassar Farm gardens, found by Eileen Stickle.
- One on May 12, **2019**, at Lafayetteville MUA, Milan, by Sean Carroll. Sang and seen well. May 19, at Peach Hill Park, Poughkeepsie, found by Matthew Rymkiewicz and seen by at least three other people. Sang.

Caspian Tern

- Two on April 30, 1920, at Cruger Island, by Maunsell Crosby.
- One adult on June 18, 1961, at Cruger Island, South Bay, by Br. Michael Dougherty.
- One on Aug. 25, 1990, at Cruger Island, by Peter Bedrossian.
- One on May 17, 2013, at Cruger Island, South Bay, by Alan Mapps, Michael Kalin, and Julie Elson, photographed.
- One on May 15, 2015, at the Beacon waterfront, found by Sue Infante, photographed+.
- Two on May 5, 2016, off Rhinecliff by Susan Rogers.
- Up to five April 14-23, 2018, Tivoli to Rhinecliff, found by Susan Rogers, photographed by multiple people. It is unknown if any stayed multiple days or how many moved through over the period, two or three were often seen. One April 30 at Beacon by Alan Bacchiochi.
- One or two April 12-14, 2019, nine on April 26, Tivoli to Rhinecliff, found at Kingston Point and then seen from the Dutchess side by multiple people.
- One April 8, **2020**, Rhinecliff, photographed by Anthony Macchiarola and David Chernack. Three on April 16, one April 18, at Rhinecliff by Anthony and David.

Blue Grosbeak

- One immature on Oct. 25-29, 1991, at Stony Kill, Fishkill, by Otis Waterman, Barbara Michelin, Eleanor Pink, Marion Van Wagner, and many others.
- One female on May 17-21, 1996, at Old Route 9, Fishkill, by Russ O'Malley and six others. Photographed by Peter Relson.
- One adult male on May 16, 1998, at Kimball Rd, Poughkeepsie, by Bernie and Fran Heyman.
- One first-year male on May 14, 2000, at Verbank, by Barbara Butler.
- One adult male on May 4, 2003, at Poughkeepsie near Dutchess Community College, by Pat Gabel.
- One male on May 17, 2010, at Woodland Dr., Salt Point, by Alys and Robert Bowler.
- One male on Aug. 1, 2014, at Valkill, Hyde Park, by Dan Whalen.
- Two, one male, one female on May 27, 2015 on Berkshire Rd., Dover Plains by Barbara Mansell, Adrienne Popko, and Susan Joseph. Seen very well.
- One male on May 15, 2018, at Drayton Grant Park, Burger Hill, Rhinebeck by Sherman Suter.
- One first-year male on April 20, **2021**, at Tanglewood Dr., Wappingers Falls by Debbie van Zyl and many others, many photographs.

No Longer Regularly Seen

As some species expand their range, other species reduce theirs. The following are those species once regularly found in Dutchess County, although not every year, which have recently been 25+ consecutive years without being reported. Some were found in very limited habitat and are now locally extirpated. Shown are about the last ten sightings, with the most recent last. There are numerous earlier sightings not shown.

Sedge Wren

In the 1920s the Sedge Wren was known to breed in four or five locations in Dutchess County. It has not been confirmed breeding since. Those which may now be found are possibly migrants, yet few breed in New England. While seen recently, after 1953 it was unrecorded for 27 years.

- One May 14, 1933, May Census, Alan Frost, George Gray, Ray Guernsey, Frank Gardner
- One Aug. 18, 1935, Chestnut Ridge, John Baker
- One June 7-21, July 20-26, Aug. 10, 1941, not known to have bred, Chestnut Ridge, John Baker.
- One May 11, 1953, on May Census, by Ralph Waterman, Ray Guernsey, and Frank Gardner.
- ✓ 1978 - 25 years unreported, now considered casual
- One May 14-18, 1980, on the Shunpike, by Florence Germond, Otis Waterman, Eleanor Pink, Marion Van Wagner, and others.
- Two July 30, 1986, at Millbrook School, by Seward Highley.
- One June 9 and 29, 2001, off State Line Rd., Millerton, by Brian Kane and Barbara Butler.
- One Sept. 13-15, 2012, at Stony Kill Farm, by Steve Golladay, photographed, also seen by Jim Clinton.

Henslow's Sparrow

The Henslow's Sparrow regularly bred in Dutchess County through the 1930s, especially in the Harlem Valley. The last breeding was likely soon after 1944. It no longer breeds in New England.

- One May 23, 1948, Chestnut Ridge, John Baker
- Two May 15, 1954, Chestnut Ridge, John Baker
- One May 6, 1956, Chestnut Ridge, John Baker; one June, Dover Plains, Thelma Height and Florence Germond; one Aug. 11, singing, Chestnut Ridge, John Baker
- April 26, 1957, Dover Plains, George Decker
- Two May 21, 1958, Dover Plains, George Decker
- Two April 24 - May, 1959, Dover Plains, George Decker
- One April 20, 1960, Pleasant Valley, Marion Van Wagner
- One Sept. 27, 1961, Kays Pond, Pleasant Valley, Marion Van Wagner
- One Sept. 23, 1962, Kays Pond, Pleasant Valley, Alice Jones
- One Oct. 10, 1965, Rochdale, Marion Van Wagner and Eleanor Pink, seen well for 20 minutes.
- ✓ 1990 - 25 years unreported, not regularly seen nearby - **EXTIRPATED**

Boreal Chickadee

Boreal Chickadees are generally found in Dutchess County during periodic winter invasions. However invasions as far south as Dutchess appear to be a thing of the past.

- (1951-52 invasion) Two Nov. 15, 1951 - March 4, 1952 at Danforth Munsell's, Pleasant Valley
- (1954-55 invasion) Two Nov. 25, 1954 - April 6, 1955, at Pleasant Valley, one Nov. 27 at Vassar. One collected Feb. 25 at Dover Plains by George Decker, now in NYS Museum.
- (1961-62 invasion) Oct. 31, 1961 through March 24, 1962 few scattered locations, usually one to three totaling maybe 11.
- Up to three March 16-21, 1964, Moores Mills, Helen Manson
- (1969-70 invasion) Oct. 19 - February 1970 throughout county, usually one or two at a time totaling perhaps 5. Two on Christmas Count.
- One Oct. 18, 1971, Gleason Blvd., Pleasant Valley, Marion Van Wagner

- (1975-76 invasion) Oct. 24, 1975 - March 30, 1976 throughout county, usually one to three at a time totaling perhaps 13 or more. Five on Christmas Count.
- One Oct. 14, 1981, Tamarack, Marion Van Wagner, Eleanor Pink, Florence Germond
- One Nov. 4, 1983, Gleason Blvd, Pleasant Valley, Marion Van Wagner
- ✓ 2008 - 25 years unreported, now considered casual

King Rail

The King Rail was found on most May Censuses from 1925 to 1956 when Thompson Pond was visited at daybreak. Bob Smart lived at the Millbrook Boys School and regularly checked their marsh. It is still found within 100 miles of Dutchess.

- One May 13, 1956, census, Thompson Pond by Otis Waterman and others; one June 12, Thompson Pond by Eleanor Pink and Emilie Skidmore Becquet
- One heard July 15, 1971, North Bay, Tivoli by Erik Kiviat
- One April 29, 1972, North Bay, Tivoli by Erik Kiviat
- One heard April 27, 1974, Thompson Pond by Bob Smart; heard Sept. 20, Ryder Pond, Stanford by Bob Smart
- One heard by many, seen by some, May 18 to June 8, 1977 Millbrook School marsh by Bob Smart and many others
- One heard May 13, 1978, census, Millbrook School marsh by Bob Smart
- One seen and heard May 15, 1984, Cruger Island by Steward Highley and students
- One May 11, 1985, Cruger Island by Joseph DiCostanzo
- Two heard May 13, 1990, census, Thompson Pond by Art Gingert; one seen May 14, Westgate, Fishkill by Russ O'Malley.
- ✓ 2015 - 25 years unreported, now considered casual

Loggerhead Shrike

Loggerheads Shrikes expanded east by the 1870s and may have nested in Dutchess County in the 1890s. However most records appear to be during migration with the majority occurring after 1950. It no longer breeds north or east of Dutchess County.

- One Jan. 1, 1972 Helen Manson; one Jan. 30, eating a House Sparrow, also Feb. 9, 12, 17, Dover Plains, Mary Yegella or Jim Fiedler; one April 16, Pugsley Hill, Jim & Mary Key
- One Jan. 20-21, 1973, feeding on a bird, Mary Yegella and Jim Fiedler; One Nov. 2, Trap Rock, Noel Cartright
- One Oct. 10, 1974, Salt Point, Marion Van Wagner
- One March 29, 1975, North Bay, Cruger Island, Otis Waterman and class; one Nov. 20, Millerton, Helen Manson and Mary Yegella
- One Sept. 19, 1979, Dover Plains, Helen Sweeney
- One March 3, 1981, Millerton, Seward Highley; March 31, Tamarack Swamp by Marion Van Wagner and Eleanor Pink
- One Feb. 15, 1992 at Brooklyn Heights Rd., Milan by Susan Joseph
- ✓ 2017 - 25 years unreported, not regularly seen nearby - **EXTIRPATED**

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When a reference in the Annotated List is to an author with no page number given, see the same species account in that author's work. When "Crosby" is referenced, the source is his works of 1921 and 1923.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

Lispenard Horton took many photographs of young birds and nests. These are his known published photographs, likely there are others. It is thought they were all taken in Dutchess County, probably near Gretna and Hyde Park, during the 1902 and 1903 nesting seasons, but possibly a few in 1901 or 1904.

- *Birds of New York* by Eaton: 14 photographs including Sedge Wren and Grasshopper Sparrow nests.
- *American Ornithology* magazine: 1904-06, seven photographs including Marsh Hawk [Northern Harrier] nest, 1904, p.52.
- *Bird-Lore* magazine: Long-eared Owl on a nest, 1904, p.18 and Wood-Pewee, 1904, p.129.
- *The Oologist* magazine: Cooper's Hawk nest, 1904, p.71; Grasshopper Sparrow nest, 1904, p.184; Ovenbird, 1905, p.182; and Bobolink, 1906, p.167.
- *Shields Magazine*: January 1906, pp.11-19, 13 photographs illustrate "Bird Neighbors and their Nests" by CW Clark, includes Green Heron and Marsh Hawk [Northern Harrier] young in nest.
- *Shields Magazine*: July 1906, pp.7-19, six photographs illustrate "Bird Life on an Indiana Farm" by Barton Evermann, includes juvenile Red-shouldered Hawk.
- *North American Birds Eggs* by Chester Reed, 1904: Long-eared Owl on a nest (same nest as above, different photograph), Green Heron nest, and Marsh Hawk (same photograph as above but not credited).
- *Camera Studies of Wild Birds in their Homes* by Chester Reed, 1911: young chickadees and robins.
- Horton also sold photographic prints of nests of at least 16 species and young of 12 species, seven nest and two young appear to duplicate magazine photos (no original prints have been found).

Bird photographs by Clinton Abbott, Maunsell Crosby, and Allen Frost are found primarily accompanying some of their articles in *Bird-Lore* and the *Annual Report of the Rhinebeck Bird Club*. Crosby also published photographs in *Bird-Lore*: 1905 pp.16, 170, 200, 206; and 1917 p.309.

UNPUBLISHED

Held by Beverly Burroughs Kane (granddaughter of Grasmere Farm Superintendent for Crosby) some held by Rhinebeck Historical Society:

Crosby, Maunsell. Birding Scrapbook, 1903-1925. Newspaper and related clippings of articles written by Crosby. A few *Rhinebeck Gazette* articles, and others, omitted. Digital copy exists.

Crosby, Maunsell. Original photographs of Crosby in: college, military uniform, and later years. Also photos of Grasmere during Crosby's ownership.

Held by Bill Evarts (grandson of Clinton Abbott, Escondido, Calif.):

Abbott, Clinton. Birding Journals: Jan. 1 - Oct. 14, 1902 and Jan. 3 - Dec. 25, 1903. See San Diego Natural History Museum for additional journal.

Abbott, Clinton. Personal Diary: April 1, 1915 - March 4, 1918. Abbott lived in Rhinebeck during much of this time. Very little information on birds.

Abbott, Clinton. Photographs. Primarily of birds and nests.

Held by Cornell University Library:

Griscom, Ludlow, Papers of. Includes many letters, some regarding Crosby; a copy of the 1921 *Year Book of the Rhinebeck Bird Club* annotated by Griscom; a copy of Crosby's 1925 "Ten All-Day Bird Censuses from Dutchess County, New York" with updates by Crosby to 1930, but not complete species lists.

Held by Erik Kiviat / Hudsonia Ltd.:

Kiviat, Erik. Birding Journals. 1972 to date. Two volumes for Tivoli Bay area, one volume for Dutchess County. Separate notes late 1960s to 1972.

Held by Franklin D. Roosevelt Library:

Crosby, Maunsell. Birding Journals:

Unnumbered volume – lists from 1909 - 1916

Unnumbered volume – Aug. 11, 1921 - Dec. 11, 1921

Vol. 2 – April 29, 1921 - March 9, 1922 (lost until 2021)

Vol. 3 – March 9, 1922 - Feb. 27, 1924

Vol. 4 – Feb. 28, 1924 - Jan. 31, 1927

Vol. 5 – Feb. 1, 1927 - May 12, 1929

Vol. 6 – May 12, 1929 - Jan. 29, 1931

Also bird banding lists from 1912-28 by species.

Vol. 1 of the Birding Journal existed independently of the unnumbered volumes but is lost. Per Griscom it is thought to have also covered Crosby's Army time on Long Island in 1918-19.

Griscom, Ludlow. Letter to Allen Frost dated Oct. 6, 1941, offering Crosby's journals to the Library. Volumes 1 and 2 were never in Griscom's possession.

Roosevelt, Franklin D. Bird Diary for January to June 1896. Lists all birds seen or heard as well as a list of those shot. Relevant data included in Griscom.

Whitehead, James. Account of an early morning bird watching trip made on May 10, 1942, by President Roosevelt, 7 pages and 2 photos.

Held by Millbrook School:

Bird banding records. 1939 to date. Begun by Frank Trevor, started mist netting in 1967 which increased the variety of species. Various notebooks with records and some returns, plus newer computer files. Some early years banded on Long Island, not always clear which records are for Millbrook.

Trevor Zoo. Rehabilitation records. 1970s to date. Various details about the birds treated.

Held by Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Mass.:

Griscom, Ludlow. Birding journals from 1909 to 1950s, list of all birds seen on various dates and places, including many field trips and May Censuses in Dutchess County.

Held by Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Dept. of the Interior:

Bird banding digital database at the Bird Banding Laboratory, thousands of banding records for Dutchess County from 1920 to date.

Biological Survey Migration Records digital online database, well over 1000 records from Dutchess County from 1901 to 1928 with more to be added.

Held by Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club:

Club Records:

Christmas Bird Count. 1958 to date. Summary sheets, most individual group reports.

May Census. 1928 to date. Field cards and summary sheets, most individual group reports.

Miscellaneous Letters. Descriptions of rare bird sightings and similar correspondence, sometimes with photographs.

Monthly Records. 1958-89. Index cards by species of all sightings reported. Kept as computer file from 1990, most in eBird from 2010. Also many individual reports before 2010.

Poughkeepsie newspaper clippings. 1949-60. Mostly May Census and Christmas Count lists plus news notes. Newer clippings kept in club scrapbooks.

Ralph Waterman's birding class notebook. Initially used to teach Boy Scouts.

Secretary minutes and membership roster from 1949 Dutchess County Bird Club.

Computer files (see Preface for information on obtaining copies of these files):

Bluebird Trail nesting. Spreadsheet, 1962 to date.

Christmas Bird Count. Spreadsheet, 1901 to date.

May Census. Spreadsheet, 1919 to date.

Monthly Records. Database, 1990 to date.

Waterfowl Count. Spreadsheet, 1960 to date.

Photographs of accidentals and other interesting sightings.

Personal Records for Dutchess County:

Allen, H. Leonard. 1931. Small journal with lists for 29 Dutchess County field trips from April 19 to Dec. 27, 1931. (At the Museum of Rhinebeck History)

Andrews, Helen Manson. Notebook for 1950-58 and monthly sheets from 1958 to 1999.

Baker, John. Field cards for 1927-42, and four notebooks mostly for Chestnut Ridge by species for 1930-66 with fewer entries for December through February.

Bowman, Margaret. Typed sheets of first arrivals and last departures plus daily sightings from 1954 to 1961.

Decker, George. Extensive annotations in his copy of Griscom for 1950s.

Frost, Allen. Field cards for 1940-43, plus 28 original photo prints of flowers and four birds.

Hyatt, Mary. List of arrival dates for spring migrants each year for 1885-05 with a separate small sheet for 1906, plus list of "Occasional Visitants at Honeymead Brook, Stanfordville, N.Y." through 1925. Two small bird journals, Jan. 1886 - Oct. 1887 and Oct. 1887 - Nov. 1888. Also three letters from Crosby to her. (Digital copies exist, the originals are all at the Museum of Rhinebeck History)

Pink, Eleanor. Index card file for 1949-58, fewer entries after 1952. Notebook of checklists by month from June 1958 to February 1970, added details on back, club monthly records.

Van Wagner, Marion. Three notebooks for 1949-63.

Waterman, Otis T. Notebook of checklists by month from May 1957 to May 1964.

Waterman, Ralph T. Notebook of checklists by month from March 1945 to October 1952, plus field cards for 1946 and 1947.

Held by San Diego Natural History Museum:

Abbott, Clinton. *Birding Journal*: one volume, April 16, 1904 - July 6, 1910 (no entries from April 14, 1906 to Dec. 26, 1908). See Bill Evarts for additional journals.

Ralph Palmer deposited various materials at the Fogler Library, University of Maine, Orono, Maine but none appears to be related to Dutchess County.

SPECIMENS

The following partial list of bird skins and eggs, all from Dutchess County, are found in various museum collections. Seventy-six of these were collected prior to 1915, of which 26 are from Lisenard Horton, all eggs collected between 1894 and 1903. Each of Horton's egg specimens includes his original data card recording when and where collected. Generally Horton sold to collectors whose collections were acquired by the museums. Undoubtedly there are many more specimens from Dutchess County where either their origin is now lost or they are not cataloged. Museum collections can be searched at www.vertnet.org/search. Use keywords *aves* and *dutchess* in your search terms. There are over 800 records.

- American Museum of Natural History: includes 2 from Franklin Roosevelt in 1896, 2 Prairie Horned Larks in 1907, 10 from Crosby / Griscom, others collected more recently at Millbrook
- Canadian Museum of Nature: 13 species, all from SM Sutton in 1959 at various locations
- Cornell University Museum of Vertebrates: 2 in 1898, 1 in 1930, 4 since 1955
- Denver Museum of Nature & Science: Ring-necked Pheasant from JT Roberts in 1901
- Harvard University Museum of Comparative Zoology: 25 species from Ralph Palmer in 1942-47
- Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History: Yellow-bellied Sapsucker from unnamed collector in 1887
- Smithsonian Institution National Museum of Natural History: 5 eggs from Horton, 3 eggs and 1 skin from Clinton Bagg in 1876
- Utah Museum of Natural History: 8 species, all eggs from Horton
- University of Washington Burke Museum: 9 species, most collected in 1981-82 at Millbrook
- Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology: 4 species, all eggs apparently from Horton
- Yale University Peabody Museum: 19 species, 1 egg from Horton, 1 Cerulean Warbler from Albert Fisher in 1928, others since 1957 at various locations. In addition Frank Trevor of the Millbrook School Zoo contributed 45 skins likely connected to the zoo, some are exotics.

The Columbia-Greene Community College has 11 skins collected from 1938 to 1959, 5 of which are from George Decker; and over 200 skins since 1985 mostly from Waterman Bird Club meetings; also at least 6 skins from Eugene Bicknell given to the Vassar Brothers' Institute Museum, although collected outside of Dutchess County.

The Grinnell Library, Wappingers Falls, has a small case displaying native birds, including two Passenger Pigeons, some or all may be from Dutchess County.

LOST ITEMS

Arthur Bloomfield was an active collector of bird skins and some eggs while Lisenard Horton collected mostly eggs; their collections, records, and Horton's photographs are lost, as are Mary Hyatt's journals after 1888. It appears Horton's collection was sold at auction in 1955 following his brother's death. Maunsell Crosby's journal number 1 and his photographs are lost. Edwin Kent mentions bird lists, but none are known. Allen Frost maintained a large number of notebooks with

bird and other nature records plus photographs; they apparently were given to the Boy Scouts by Ralph Waterman and are now lost. No records are known from Frank Gardner, Jr., George Gray, or Raymond Guernsey — apparently none kept records. The authors would be most interested to know if these items, or others like them, are found.

- New York's Dutchess County has an unusually rich heritage of naturalists who studied local birdlife and recorded their findings. This book consolidates their extensive records covering more than a century.
- This book describes the history and current status of all bird species found in Dutchess County and chronicles local bird study. It also examines the impact of man on local habitats and, consequently, birdlife over the centuries.
- Readers will learn about the birds around them, and obtain a foundation for future comparison as well as a factual basis for biodiversity decisions.

