

Nov 80

TASL News



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Our thanks to the following participants who made the summer censuses possible:

North Harbor:

John Andrews, Jim and Mary Bird, Fred Bouchard, Bill Drummond, Ann Faulkner, George Gove, Craig Jackson, Natalie King, Nick and Oliver Komar, Elizabeth Lay, Al and Beth Levine, Mimi Murphy, Michael Payne, Martha Reinstein, Doris Reisig, Barbara Scheller, Mike Sharp, Bob Stymeist, Lois Tarlow, Fay and Peter Vale, Soheil Zende.

Quincy area:

Ann Blaisdell, David Brown, Dave Clapp, Ron Donovan, Kate Ellis, Chris Floyd, Ida Giriunas, Priscilla Jenkins, Peggy Kapisovsky, Leif Robinson, Mary Rosenfeld, Sid Smith, Lee Taylor, Mike Zeddeck.

Hingham area:

Brian Cassie, Ted Davis, Wayne Petersen, David Varley.

Artwork for this issue of TASL News was contributed by Denise Braunhardt; maps by Julie Roberts.

TAKE A SECOND LOOK IS A PROJECT OF BIRD OBSERVER OF EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

November 1980



LOOK! A SEAGULL

You've watched the hawks, shorebirds, and songbirds go south; herons have petered out, and ducks sleep in boring clumps on the ocean; alcids are nowhere to be found inshore. But the gulls! The gulls are always there to be watched: large, aggressive, hardy, conspicuous, graceful, bright. Let's take a tour of Boston Harbor and see what the gulls are up to.

The commonest gull of the Northern Hemisphere, the Herring Gull, is also our most ubiquitous. Unkindly writers may call this bird a "flying rat," but who can deny the beauty of the adult Herring Gull? Immatures are another story! Those who care to distinguish different year birds should read Dick Veit's "Field Identification of the Lesser Black-backed Gull" (BOEM, Vol.8 No.4, pps. 137-142), which describes well the general outlines of the plumage sequence of large gulls, from juvenile to adult. The breeding behavior and life-cycle of Herring Gulls and related species are to be found in a book indispensable to anyone interested in the study of animal behavior: Niko Tinbergen's Life of the Herring Gull. Two brief observations I have made concerning their behavior follow:

1. In fall and early winter first-year Herring Gulls far outnumber other age-classes around Boston Harbor. The fact that first-year birds are fairly scarce in spring and summer is, to me, a graphic demonstration of the phenomenon of high "first-year mortality" in birds.
2. Gulls chase each other often. When a bird thinks another has got the advantage in scavenging success an aerial pursuit often ensues. My impression is that a fairly high proportion of the chases I've watched consisted of a younger bird pursuing an older. It is as though the begging for food by the young lingers on and transforms into aggressive behavior as the birds grow up.

Of that other ubiquitous big gull, the Great Black-backed, the less said the better! I hate them, find them ominous. Here is the biggest gull in the world, a feared predator. In the dead of winter, when salt water harbors and bays freeze, it is a characteristic sight to see a Great Black-backed standing on the ice, pecking at the remains of a Bufflehead. No doubt the Buffy in question would have or had died due to weakness, but what a way to go, having your entrails pulled out by the "Minister" Gull!

The white-winged gulls, Glaucous and Iceland, are far from common in Boston Harbor, though in winter they can occur with the other large gulls at any of the coastal locations, ponds, and dumps. Iceland Gulls are at least five times as common as Glaucous-- or at least they are recorded five times as often.

As to Lesser Black-backs in the Harbor, I, for one, am on the look-out. The other day I thought I had one at Revere -- a juvenile, obviously much smaller than Herrings, with a small, thin bill. Alas, Dick Veit's article is too thorough! The inner primaries and the secondary coverts were light, just like all the juvenile Herrings. Better luck next time.

Ring-billed Gulls join Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls in a diurnal migration: every dawn and dusk squadron upon squadron of these birds head into the city from the harbor, and then back out again. It is due to this behavior pattern, which scatters a large proportion of the birds to every dump and refuse pile in the metropolitan region, that TASL's Harbor Censuses had to leave these gulls off the official tallies. Ring-bills are particularly active garbage birds and swarm around the refreshment stands and waste barrels of Revere Beach in impressive numbers.

The thievish Laughing Gull is quite common in Boston Harbor from August through October. Suffolk Downs Racetrack in East Boston attracts fair numbers of Laughies, the birds feeding on refuse and earthworms turned over by track-maintenance machinery. I have also watched these spectacularly acrobatic gulls hawking for insects over Winthrop, as well as chasing terns and other gulls, jaeger-fashion, in order to steal food from them.

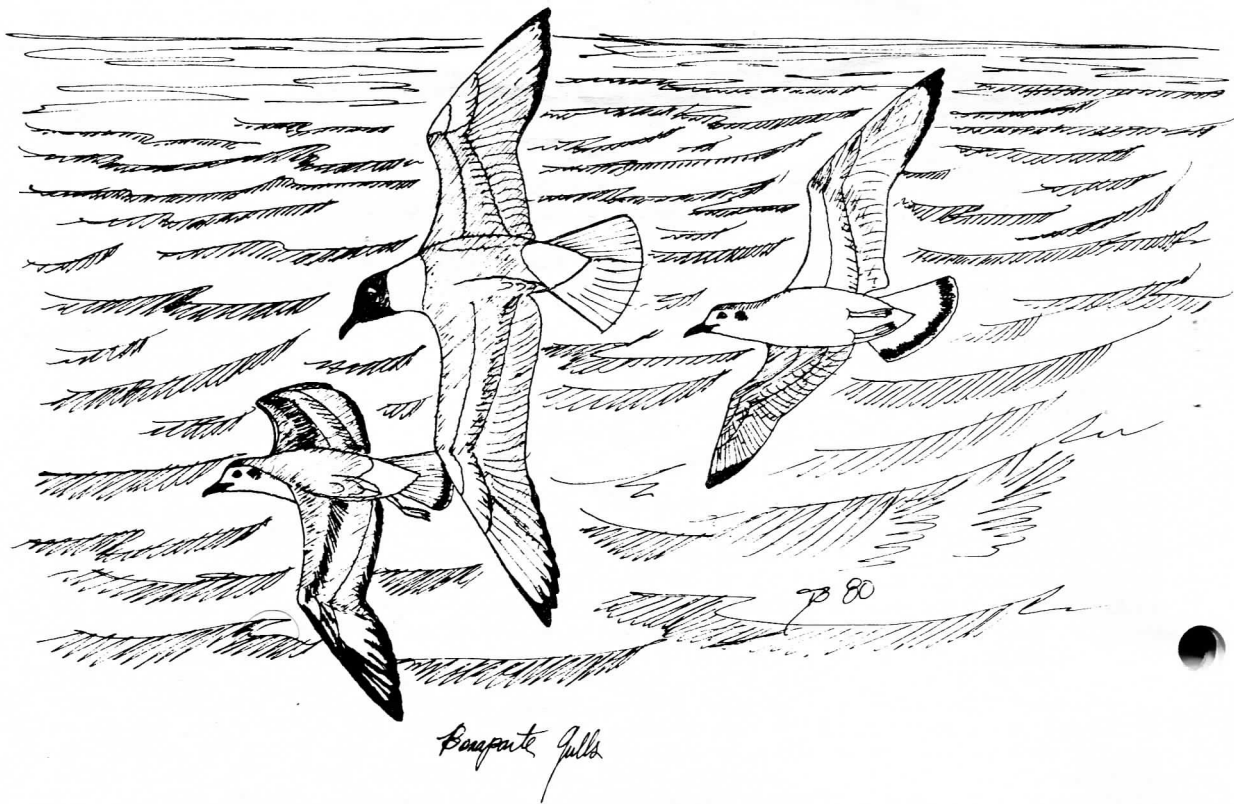
A very beautiful gull, and one far less common, is the Eurasian Black-headed Gull. Boston Harbor is one of the meccas for North American Black-headed Gull watchers. In years past up to 35 of these gulls have spent the winter at Squantum and Wollaston Beach. Recently their numbers have declined locally; even so, a November trip at high tide to Belle Isle Marsh in East Boston is sure to reward you with the sight of one to five of these gulls resting or feeding in the shallow pond. When colder weather freezes the pond at Belle Isle, TASL censusers have found that the Black-headed Gulls roost on the lawn of the Deer Island Correctional Institute.

In the fall Bonaparte's Gulls find Revere Beach their promised land. Around mid-August their numbers swell to over 600, and as the season progresses more and more immatures appear among them. At dead low tide one should stop at the rotary at the north end of Revere Beach Drive and inspect the shallow tidal pools just below and south of the seawall -- the sight of hundreds of dainty, crisp-plumaged Bonaparte's Gulls milling around, spinning and dipping to feed makes for an unforgettable spectacle. As the tide comes in these gulls, as well as the shorebirds that associate with them, move over to Point of Pines. About two to two and a half hours after low tide the Bonies mass together on the mudflat at the point. As they rest and preen they progressively get pushed into smaller and smaller clumps by the tide; by standing quietly in one place the patient observer will have a chance to study their plumage and habit at extreme close range. An occasional dog or some other disturbance will put the flock into flight, whereupon with flashing wings they fly around and land in another section of the mudflat.

This mode of Bonaparte's Gull watching will often reward one with excellent views of Black-headed or Little Gulls. The Little Gull is not as commonly found in Boston Harbor as it is at favored locations such as Newburyport Harbor. Nevertheless it is possible several times a year to find one or more of these gulls in the flocks of Bonaparte's at Point of Pines. It is of course easiest to pick out a Little Gull in flight, where the black underwings, all grey mantle, and rounded wings make it unmistakable in a feeding flock of Bonaparte's.

I hope that this article will inspire readers to look at our resident gulls more carefully. Some people find the field identification of gulls fun, while others think it a tremendous pain in the neck. But I think that everyone can enjoy watching gulls in their scavenging habits so intertwined with modern city-life. There is also much to be learned about gull populations and movements in Boston Harbor. Although TASL censuses have not, so far, emphasized the gulls of the harbor, it would be a worthy project for TASL to get involved in.

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Important Note to TASL News subscribers:

This is the next to last issue of TASL News for 1980. We hope that you have found our newsletter worthwhile and invite you to resubscribe for next year. We request a \$2.00 donation to cover our costs. However, to help keep our costs down, we will not bill subscribers nor take their names off our mailing list unless we receive a postcard requesting us to do so. Also, please let us know if you change your address. Thank you.

TASL SUMMER CENSUSES

TASL coordinated two summer censuses this year (July 20 and August 3), as part of its "Year of Boston Harbor" project. Although a direct comparison of these two is impossible (some different sites were covered), a brief glimpse at the data accumulated makes clear the following: First, Snake Island is a crucial high tide roost for most of the shorebirds that use the northern part of Boston Harbor. Second, TASL censusers discovered that Thompson Island is an important "way station" for Snowy Egrets that have left their nighttime roost on Spectacle Island and are on their way to feed in the marshes that surround Boston. But before we draw any more conclusions, let's look at the census results.

July 20 and August 3 were warm summer days with moderate (10-15 mph) winds from the south or southwest. On both days there was heavy cloud cover for most of the morning (fog in some places, light rain on August 3), which began to break up about mid-morning. Observations were generally made under hazy conditions.

The July 20 census was designed primarily to document the movements of herons in the Boston area. Certain known low-tide feeding areas for shorebirds were not censused, while other places which are of marginal or unknown significance to shorebirds and herons were included. As a result, a large number of shorebirds such as Short-billed Dowitchers and Semipalmated Sandpipers were unaccounted for at low tide.

One way of comparing the importance of various locations is by computing the number of "bird-hours" at that site. A "bird-hour" is computed by adding the total number of herons and/or shorebirds seen at half-hour intervals and dividing by two. Using this technique, Snake Island and Belle Isle stand out as the two most important areas for herons and shorebirds, with Snake Island having over eight times as many "bird-hours" as Belle Isle! Yet the figure for Snake Island is undoubtedly much lower than it should be since the observers there realized that thousands of shorebirds were probably sitting on the shore where they couldn't be seen all morning.

Another way to view the census results is to examine the "bird-hours" and high counts for a given species in specific locations. The highest individual count for Snowy Egret (118) was from Thompson Island. However, the much higher number of "Snowy Egret-hours" (245) from Spectacle Island indicates that not only was the island an important nighttime roost, it was also heavily used during the day. There was a great deal of feeding observed during the day, and regular counts showed that a fairly stable population remained there throughout the morning. (See "A Heron Enigma," this issue.) In contrast, the high number of Snowy Egrets on Thompson Island dwindled quickly (only 59.5 "Snowy Egret-hours"). This indicates that although, as stated above, Thompson is an important "way station" for herons, comparatively few use it for feeding during the day. (High counts at both high and low tide and "bird-hours" are tabulated for both censuses on pages 6 and 7.)

Our attempt to account for the bulk of the shorebirds during both the roosting phase (early morning high tide), and feeding phase (about 8:30 AM on) of their cycle met with mixed success. For example, at dawn on August 3 over 300 Ruddy Turnstones were seen roosting on the high beach at Snake Island. By 6:30 the number was down to 61, dwindling to 11 by 9:30. The observers were aware that

WATER BIRDS IN BOSTON HARBOR

Tabulation of Census of July 20, 1980

Species	1A			1B			1C			1D			2			4			5A			5B			5C			6			7			8			9A			9B			9C			High tide totals		Low tide totals		
	H	L	B	H	L	B	H	L	B	H	L	B	H	L	B	H	L	B	H	L	B	H	L	B	H	L	B	H	L	B	H	L	B	H	L	B	H	L	B	H	L	B	High	Low	High	Low				
	Pines River	Putnam Avenue	Seaplane Basin	Saugus Marsh	Belle Isle	Snake Island	Amelia Earhart Dam	Malden River	Mystic Park	Charles River	Thompson Island	Spectacle Island	Rock Island Cove	World's End	Weir River																																			
G. B. Heron				1						1	1	2																																						
Green Heron							1	1	1	1	1	1																																						
L. B. Heron										1		1																																						
Great Egret																																																		
Snowy Egret	9	11	28	21	10	34	2	7	13	17	7	23	9	5	18	7		1													118	17	60	49	47	245	4	11	22	1	2	5	2	5	11	240	123			
B.-c. N.-heron	3		2				2	1	2	7	1	5	1	1	2				1	2	2	3	2	6	9	13	33	21	19	55	2	3	3													49	43			
Glossy Ibis				1	1	1				2	1	2	3	1	4	3		2																												12	3			
Semi. Plover							1	4	4	3		2				25	46	85	6	10	11																4		2							4	60			
Piping Plover																2																																		
Killdeer	1		1	1	1	2	3	6	3	5	2	1	3	3		3			2	2	1	1	4		1	1					5	4	9													19	13			
B.-b. Plover																															6		4																	
Ruddy Turnstone																16	8	16																																
Spot. Sandpiper	1	1					2	2	4	2	1	1	2	2	8	1	5	2	3	4	2	3	10	2	2	4	2	2	2	2																				
G. Yellowlegs	5	11	12	11									20	5	33	2	3	1	1	1											24	1	10				1	4	5				1	1			60	17		
L. Yellowlegs	6	8					5	9	18	1	3	4	5	6	11	17	6	37				1	1					4			17	18	23				1	5	4							46	54			
Red Knot													1	1		80	54	94																																
Pec. Sandpiper													1	1																																				
W.-r. Sandpiper							9	15																																										
Least Sandpiper				1	1								4	2	30	9	28	6	3																															
Dunlin																2																																		
S.-b. Dowitcher	60	73					6	5	4	1			335	134	448	418	63	211	65	12	104	18	28	25							113		31													2	1	153	185	
Stilt Sandpiper																																																		
Semi. Sandpiper	15	16	2	1	3	65	101						8	4	10	5K	12	44	60	40	137																													
H. Godwit													13	5	20	1	16	17																																
Sanderling																2	2																																	
Peep	2	50	57				6	10																																										
Totals	15	418	994	38	12	49	18	104	164	49	28	42	404	44	524	624	144	449	141	71	244	35	38	57	11	16	37	23	19	57	332	448	1524	49	47	245	7	2	33	8	6	104	4	59	42	65	2	2	2	

H - highest count during high tide (7-9 AM)

L - highest count during low tide (9-11 AM)

B - "bird-hours"

WATER BIRDS IN BOSTON HARBOR

Tabulation of Census of August 3, 1980

Species	1 Point of Pines			2 Belle Isle			3 Byron Street			4 Snake Island			7 Thompson Island			9 Hull Gut			High tide total		Low tide total		
	H	L	B	H	L	B	H	L	B	H	L	B	H	L	B	H	L	B	High	Low	High	Low	
Green Heron				2	1	3							1	1					2	2	2	2	
L. E. Heron				1	1											1			1	2	2	2	
Cattle Egret*				1	1														1	1	1	1	
Snowy Egret	1	1		29	65	208	17	7	7	18	210	15	408			1			29	108			
B.-c. N.-heron				8	4								20	1							28		
Y.-c. N.-heron*																				4			
Glossy Ibis				3	2	10	3						1	1					4	5			
Semi. Plover	28	85	150		2	36	120	17	26	1	4	3				3	2		151	145			
Killdeer				2	4	9	2	2		1	2	3	2	1						7	8		
B.-b. Plover	7	5	10	8	7	8	20	20	27	42	11	36							69	44			
Ruddy Turnstone	5	4		1	1	5	300	11	280	40	4	30	8	29	49	340	55			7	8		
Spot. Sandpiper				2	3	3	1	1	2	3	4	4	1						1	1			
Sol. Sandpiper*																				1			
Willet														1						1			
G. Yellowlegs	2	3		47	20	101	20	22	2	27	22	20		1	1	91	45						
L. Yellowlegs				13	15	12		6	4	9	13	13		1	1	32	17						
Red Knot	6	5						72	40	198						3	2		72	49			
Pec. Sandpiper				1	1								1	1					1	1			
Least Sandpiper				2	1	2	1			6	3			1	16	9	3	24					
S.-b. Dowitcher				136	23	228	128	130	32	226	66	31	5	3	222	188							
L.-b. Dowitcher				1	1	3													1	1			
Semi. Sandpiper	140	35	978	5	11	16	148	2K	154	778	53	25	39	10	7	32K	2K						
H. Godwit	14			13	20			10	23	50									23	37			
Sanderling	17	7						10	15											18	27	17	
Peep							50									35						85	
Totals	245	478	12K	313	136	242	2	931	57K	1.7K	89K	46K	64	584	11	108	97K	17K	2.8K	2.8K			

H - highest count during high tide (6-8 AM)

L - highest count during low tide (8-10 AM)

B - "bird-hours"

* - no detailed statistics available



Numbered locations correspond to summer census sites on the accompanying tables.

large numbers of shorebirds, some of which might have been turnstones, were scattered all over the mudflat, where identifying and counting them was difficult, if not impossible. Also the rocky sort of habitat turnstones prefer for feeding is more available at Winthrop Beach and Lovell's Island, where no observers were stationed. Similarly, the flock of 3000 Semipalmated Sandpipers roosting in the middle of Snake may have dispersed to the mudflat or might have flown across to the mudflats surrounding the airport, where, at half-mile range, 'scopes are not up to resolving very small birds.

The situation with Short-billed Dowitchers is more puzzling. As will be seen from the August 3 summary table (page 7), very similar numbers of dowitchers (about 130) were seen at Belle Isle before 7:30 and at Byron Street (East Boston) after 8 AM. Having previously watched the dowitchers at Belle Isle fly in a southwesterly direction as the tide fell, we had come to suspect that these two areas were a classic high tide roost/low tide feeding area unit for dowitchers. However, observers at Byron Street reported that at 9:30 over half the dowitchers left in a northwesterly direction. Furthermore, there were 130 dowitchers at Snake at high tide, some of which appeared to fly toward Belle Isle as the tide dropped; others flew southwestward over the airport and disappeared in the direction of Squantum or (possibly) the Governor's Island mudflats. As with other shorebirds, many more dowitchers were accounted for at high tide than at low.

The difficulty of counting shorebirds on far-flung mudflats is reversed in Squantum Marsh, where the high tide habit of the birds is to hide in scattered clumps of marsh grass, moving slowly down to the mudflat as the tide moves out. It is due to this fact, as well as the lack of enough observers, that our shorebird data for the Quincy sector of the Harbor is very sketchy.

One fact that can be gleaned from our census data is that certain shorebirds generally stay in the same areas for both high and low tides, while others move about much more. As might be expected, the "stationary" group included Killdeer and Spotted Sandpiper. In addition, Lesser Yellowlegs, being much more "habitat specific" than Greater Yellowlegs, is seen to be stationary in the marsh sites.

Predictably, we now have many more questions about the birds of the Harbor than we did before the censuses. Here is a sampling:

Does the apparent increase of Snowy Egrets from 240 on July 20 to almost 400 on August 3 mean there was a major influx of herons into the Harbor in that two week period, or merely that many immatures from the Spectacle Island colony finally began flying around by August 3 and were picked up by the Thompson Island observers?

What major shorebird feeding areas don't we know about?

Is there a regular interchange of shorebirds between the North Harbor (East Boston-Winthrop-Revere) and Quincy during a tide cycle?

Considering that two adult and two immature Yellow-crowned Night-herons were seen at Squantum on August 3, could these birds be breeding locally, perhaps on one of the islands?

The data we have collected in these censuses is too fragmentary and too pre-

liminary to answer these and other similar questions. Let new TASLers rise to the task of investigating and documenting further the bird-life and wild-life of the Harbor in years to come.

CJ and SZ



IMAGES OF A SLUMBERING SERPENT

Spartina sways
The cries of terns pierce the air
Twittering forms upon the shore rise as if a cloud
And wing their way over us, as we glide gently by

A secret cove
Rest and food for many birds,
Dowitchers tuck their heads in sweet repose
While an egret stirs its feet
Hoping to lure a curious minnow

Airplanes roar above
While below a natural calm
Myriad creatures sit in readiness
Unhurried, barely disturbing the serpent's slumber

The stillness ends
As twice each day the serpent rises
Sea water rushes off its glistening tail
And thousands of shorebirds pick, dig, and probe
At its skin for several hours

CJ

A HERON ENIGMA

July 20, 1980: This day Dave Brown and I assaulted the bastion of non-birderdom, Long Island Hospital; 5:40 AM found us staring unseeing into a fog that shrouded our goal, the newly established Snowy Egret colony on Spectacle Island. As the soup hesitantly began to thin, we could glimpse flashes of movement, whiter than white, behind the scrim of fog. Clearly, there was a large colony present. Dave left to pick up our party and complete the census; I stayed to enjoy six hours in the life of a heron colony, as the tide ebbed.

For nearly an hour nothing much happened; four birds flew away to the south and two to the northwest (to Belle Isle?). By 7 o'clock the light had become strong enough to reveal many birds on the island, mainly along a sinuous tree-covered ridge that seemed to rise toward the north.

An hour later, the egrets were seen widely scattered among the trees; by 8:15 they began the major flight witnessed that day, 20 birds in 15 minutes, presumably heading southward after rounding the north end of the island and disappearing behind it. Afterwards, only a handful of egrets left, all heading south and aiming for the Moon Island bridge.

By 10 o'clock, the pattern of activity changed, from flight to feeding. This was about four hours after high tide, and for the next hour ever larger numbers of herons congregated along the beach front; ten at 10:05 to thirty-two at 11:00. The Spectacle Island shoreline was still active when I quit the site about 12:30.

Two things troubled me. Where did the birds really go after rounding the northern tip of Spectacle? I could not be sure because the island blocked my view. And, how many birds were present? As I watched some fly away, it seemed that they were replaced by even greater numbers from some unseen source. (Incidentally, only five birds were observed arriving, all from the east.) At the end of the day I assumed that the true colony inhabited the side of Spectacle Island invisible to me and I was merely witnessing overflow.

Hence, I looked forward to the August TASL endeavor. If I were to go to Thompson Island, I could see the "backside" of Spectacle and presumably solve both questions. Thus it was that Chris Floyd and I overnighted on Thompson and, soaking wet, awaited dawn on August 3. The reward was worth the wait!

At 5:30 AM 80 Snowies stood in the pool near the middle of the island. Having gone to the north end to view Spectacle, I didn't know this at the time. From my vantage point I observed the following: Between 5:30 and 5:58, 194 Snowies left Spectacle Island. 151 of these birds actually left within a five-minute span, between 5:34 and 5:39. These birds were observed rounding the north end of Spectacle, crossing the channel that separates it from Thompson Island, and then zipping down the eastern side of the latter. On one occasion I watched 46 birds fly all the way to Squaw Rock, where they turned at the standpipe and headed down the bay toward the Marina.

When I rejoined Chris at 6:30, there were about 200 Snowies in the mid-island pool. He had observed the following numbers of Snowies in the pool: 80 at 5:30; over 130 by 5:40; over 200 by 6 AM. At 6:45 we made a "hard" count of 210. Looking at my figures and discounting the 46 birds that flew past Squaw

Rock to the Marina, we can readily see that the increased number of herons in the mid-island pool can be accounted for fully by the birds that flew past me earlier, after having left Spectacle Island.

Incidentally, during my earlier observations, I had timed the birds' flight from A to B, a distance of 0.6 mile; a simple calculation showed me that the flight speed of the Snowy Egrets was 21 miles per hour.

We continued to monitor the pool -- and managed to spook the birds about 7:30. (Presumably they were ready to go anyway, right?) But where did they go? Not elsewhere on Thompson, that's for sure. . . . To the Marina . . . to Belle Isle. . . . ?

As no one was watching the other side of Spectacle on August 3, we don't know if the feeding activity of July 20 was repeated. We don't even know if any birds were left on Spectacle after the 200-plus Snowies left. This is one of the more satisfying aspects of TASL -- to learn something and still be faced with an enigma. Such is the nature of birds and the universe.

Leif J. Robinson



THOMPSON ISLAND

The management of Thompson Island Education Center very kindly offered to help TASL in our Year of Boston Harbor censuses. On July 20 and August 3 TASL censusers were permitted to camp on the island in order to be on site at dawn and gather clues about the whereabouts and movements of the heron hordes in the Harbor. We wish to thank, specifically, Messrs. Frank White, Jim Blake, and Mike Zeddeck for their cooperation and assistance.

Public access to Thompson Island has recently become possible. Boats leave Kelly's Landing on Day Boulevard in South Boston at 11:15 and 1:15 on Saturdays (return at 3 and 4:30), and at 11:15 only on Sundays (return at 4:30). Cost is \$4 round-trip. Be sure to call the island office at 328-3900 before you go to check whether the boats are running.

NOVEMBER WATER BIRD SURVEY

By late November large numbers of wintering water birds have returned to Boston Harbor. Huge rafts of Common Eider once more speckle the offshore waters; Brant have begun building up impressive numbers; Great Cormorants have almost completely supplanted their smaller cousins; and the huge varied summer shorebird flocks have been replaced by Dunlin and Sanderlings, most in their drab winter plumage.

TASL will hold its final 1980 survey and census on November 23 to record these and other changes in the harbor's bird life. Observers are needed. If you would like to participate, call one of the leaders listed below or meet at the appointed place. (Call if possible since there may be last-minute changes.) The census will start at 8:30 A.M. and last around five hours. Following the census, we will have a compilation where we will discuss the day's results, thoughts on our 1980 surveys, and plans for the future.

This meeting will be held at the Trailside Museum in Canton at 3 P.M. Food and refreshments will be provided and a nominal fee, \$1.00 per participant, will be collected to defray photocopying, mailing, and refreshment costs.

Nahant: Meet at MDC parking lot at the north end of Nahant Causeway.
Robert Stymeist: 734-1289.

Winthrop: Meet at Orient Heights MBTA Station, East Boston. Craig Jackson: 321-4382.

Central Harbor: Meet at Castle Island, South Boston. Soheil Zende, home: 628-8990; work: 923-0941.

Quincy: Meet at Moswetuset Hummock, Squantum. David Brown: 328-3533; Leif Robinson: 237-5270.

Hingham: Call leaders for meeting place. Sibley Higginbotham: 472-8578
Wayne Petersen: 447-0332.

Directions to Trailside Museum: The Trailside Museum is located on Canton Avenue (Route 138) in Canton about one mile north of Route 128. (Take exit 64 north).

LOOKING TOWARD 1981

As TASL approaches its final 1980 Boston Harbor survey, we see that we have just begun to gain an understanding of the dynamics of harbor bird life. Thus, one of our major goals for 1981 will be to continue this project, comparing our results and accumulating additional data. Hopefully, increased participation will also enable us to make better observations. We would also like to examine in greater depth some of the marshes and wetlands which are an essential part of the Boston Harbor water bird ecosystem. We will be looking at both the special qualities of these places that are attractive to birds and at their overall ecological significance for bird life. If you have other ideas about projects in which TASL might want to participate, or would like to discuss these, we hope you'll either come to our November compilation or write or call us.

TASL coordinators: Craig Jackson: 321-4382; Soheil Zende, home: 628-8990;
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