

TASL News Summer 1997



Take a Second Look
42 Baker Avenue
Lexington, MA 02173

*Dates for summer TASL Shorebird Censuses:
August 17, September 14, October 12
Please call (617)863-2392 for more information*

The Shorebirds Are Coming! The Shorebirds Are Coming!

With July over, we are once again in the thick of the fall shorebird migration: it starts on July 4 every year!

As in the previous three summers, we're scheduling Boston Harbor shorebird censuses in mid to late August, September, and October. A July count is advisable: Statewide, the majority of Lesser Yellowlegs, Whimbrels, Hudsonian Godwits, Red Knots, Semipalmated Sandpipers, Least Sandpipers and Short-billed Dowitchers went through in late July and early August last summer. But we have continued our tradition and skipped July; any data you collected prior to our official date will be both useful in defining what happened in July or early August (try to get counts, even if you think your numbers are inaccurate—*some* data may be more useful than *none* at all); and useful practice for counting thousands of starlings on the Mystic River Bridge for the Christmas Count!

The tables on pages two and three show where the birds were on last year's two summer censuses. (We had an October 20 census scheduled, but there was a terrific rainstorm that day. Nevertheless, we received data from the fearless Nahant/Lynn team of John Quigley and Joanne Benard!) If you would like to help with this year's counts I include a guide to all the major sites with this mailing.

Soheil Zende

Shorebird Hotspots in Greater Boston

(This is a selection of sites covered for TASL Shorebird Censuses. Many are barely covered by regular birders. With more coverage new facts will undoubtedly come to light about these and other shorebird sites in Greater Boston.)

Clubs such as the Brookline Bird Club and organizations such as Friends of Belle Isle Marsh or MDC sponsor field trips to many of these sites.)

LYNN BEACH—Follow Route 1A to Lynnway to the rotary at the north end of Nahant Causeway. Park near the MDC headquarters building and walk the beach to the northeast. *Best tides:* mid-tide rising or falling. *Best time of year:* Late July to mid-September. Don't miss the first week of September! (*Waterproof footwear recommended.*)

POINT OF PINES—Follow Revere Beach Boulevard to the NE end, staying right to avoid going over the bridge to Lynn. Turn right on Rice Avenue, and again right on Wadsworth Avenue. Park near the end of the street and walk out through the fence toward the mudflat. *Best tides:* two hours before and after low tide. *Best times of year:* Late April to early June; mid-July to mid-November. (*Waterproof footwear recommended.*)

107/PINES RIVER—Follow Route 107 NE from Route 60 rotary in Revere. Park just after the second bridge and

continued on page 4

What is TASL?

Take a Second Look (TASL) was started in the winter of 1980 by a local group of environmentally concerned birdwatchers. In our winter censuses we tally the water birds and raptors of Boston Harbor from Nahant to Hull. Our summer censuses concentrate on the herons and shorebirds from Lynn Beach to Squantum.

Please mark the 1997 shorebird census dates in your calendars. Can you drag along a friend or two and break them in?

This is an excellent opportunity to learn—and teach—about the common water birds of the Harbor. You do not have to be an expert to participate. Each area will be led by at least

one competent birder. That person will need help with navigation, driving and record-keeping. So make yourselves useful and learn something in the process.

Due to our new, enlarged census schedule, we have need of additional administrative assistance. There are a number of small jobs, *e.g.*, compiling and editing tally sheets or improving our mailing list, that should be shared among volunteers. Also, if you would like to write for or illustrate this publication, we need you. For more information call Maury Hall [(617)268-7571] or Soheil Zende [(617)863-2392H, (617)923-0941W].

Please mail summer census results to *Soheil Zende, 42 Baker Avenue, Lexington, MA 02173.*

TASL Shorebird Census: 25 August 1996

Species	High tide sites								Low tide sites			
	Nabant Bay/Lynn Harbor	Rumney Marsh	Belle Isle/Oasis	Winthrop Beach	Snake Island high tide	Logan Airport	Squantum/Long Island	High tide totals	Pines River	Point of Pines	Snake Island low tide	Low tide totals
Double-crested Cormorant	18					120	60	198				
Great Blue Heron		1	1		4	1	7	14				
Great Egret		5	14					19				
Snowy Egret		2	111		8		31	152	19			19
Little Blue Heron							1	1				
Green Heron			6					6				
Canada Goose			45					45				
American Black Duck							10	10		5		5
White-winged Scoter	15							15				
Osprey		1					1	2				
Northern Harrier		2						2				
American Kestrel	6							6				
Merlin							1	1				
Black-bellied Plover	7	280	11		93	95	11	497	27	16		43
Semipalmated Plover	583	58	161		20	60	293	1175	42	355		397
Killdeer	1	1				1	11	14				
American Oystercatcher					2	5		7				
Greater Yellowlegs		207	127		20		86	440	9			9
Lesser Yellowlegs		14	19		4		6	43				
yellowlegs (sp)					30			30				
Solitary Sandpiper			1					1				
Spotted Sandpiper		1						1				
Hudsonian Godwit			3		6			9			7	7
Marbled Godwit		1			2			3			2	2
Ruddy Turnstone	8							8			18	18
Red Knot									2			2
Sanderling	734	22		3				759	9	390	12	411
Semipalmated Sandpiper	1502	35	310		15	150	233	2245	78	19	6	97
Least Sandpiper		23	8				13	44	1			7
White-rumped Sandpiper			1					1		2		2
peep (sp)	250	200						450				
Short-billed Dowitcher		115	33		14		10	172		35		35
Laughing Gull	5		2	6	3		1	17		7		7
Bonaparte's Gull	463			200				663		26		26
Common Tern	3				2		17	22		4		4
Forster's Tern	1							1				
Harbor Seal	2							2				
Time	8:15-10:45 AM	9-10 AM	6:30-11:15 AM	11:45 AM	11 AM	9-10 AM	AM	6-11 AM	12:45-1:15 PM	12:30 PM	2 PM	12-3 PM
Tide	HI-MID	HI	HI-MID	MID	HI	HI	HI	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW

Weather: clear **Wind:** calm early; light wsw later **Temperature:** around 75°F (23°C) early; over 80°F (26°C) later **High tide:** 8:20 AM
Participants: Jim & Vaughn Barton, Joanne Benard, Bruce Berman, Scott Bickerton, Fred Bouchard, Jamie & Tom Cameron, Karen Fretitas, Craig Jackson, Dennis F. Oliver, Brian Overly, Michelle Parham, John Quigley, Fay & Peter Vale, Soheil Zendeh
 Special thanks to Bruce Berman and Save the Harbor/Save the Bay for making their boat available for the Logan Airport portion of the census.

TASL Shorebird Census: 22 September 1996

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Species	High tide sites							Low tide sites				
	Nahant Bay/ Lynn Harbor	Rumney Marsh	Belle Isle/ Oasis	Wintthrop Beach	Logan Airport	Snake Island	Squantum Cove	High tide totals	Pines River	Point of Pines	Huckins Road	Low tide totals
Common Loon	1						3	4				
Double-crested Cormorant	112		7	160	136	40		455				
Great Blue Heron			5			1	3	9	2			2
Great Egret		1	22				1	24	1			1
Snowy Egret			44			6	6	56	11			11
Glossy Ibis			1					1				
Green-winged Teal			30					30				
American Black Duck	14				12			26				
Mallard	58							58				
Blue-winged Teal			2					2				
White-winged Scoter	251							251				
American Kestrel	3							3				
Merlin			1					1				
Black-bellied Plover	4	95	4	400	8	12		523	5	8	22	35
American Golden-Plover	1	3		4	1	1		10				
Semipalmated Plover	46	13	3	1			8	71		73		73
Killdeer	1	1					5	7				
American Oystercatcher					2			2				
Greater Yellowlegs	1	11	95			36	180	323	1			1
Lesser Yellowlegs		3	1				5	9	2			2
Spotted Sandpiper	1							1				
Marbled Godwit						2		2				
Ruddy Turnstone	1			17				18		2		2
Red Knot				5				5		5		5
Sanderling	1027							1027	48	217		265
Semipalmated Sandpiper	182	107	16			1	14	320	59	82		141
Least Sandpiper						3		3				
White-rumped Sandpiper	1				1			2		5		5
peep (sp)					2	2		4	12			12
Dunlin	26	24	6					56		13		13
Short-billed Dowitcher			10				2	12				
Long-billed Dowitcher			3					3				
dowitcher (sp)		8						8		4		4
Laughing Gull	13	0		25	30			68		78	25	103
Bonaparte's Gull	1440							1440		3		3
Common Tern						20		20		18	130	148
Forster's Tern											1	1
Belted Kingfisher	2							2				
Time	8-11 AM	9-9:20 AM	7-9 AM	9:30 AM	9 AM	10 AM	9 AM	7-10 AM	11:45 AM-12:10 PM	11 AM	3 PM	11:45 AM-3 PM
Tide	HI	HI	HI	HI	HI	HI	HI	HI	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW

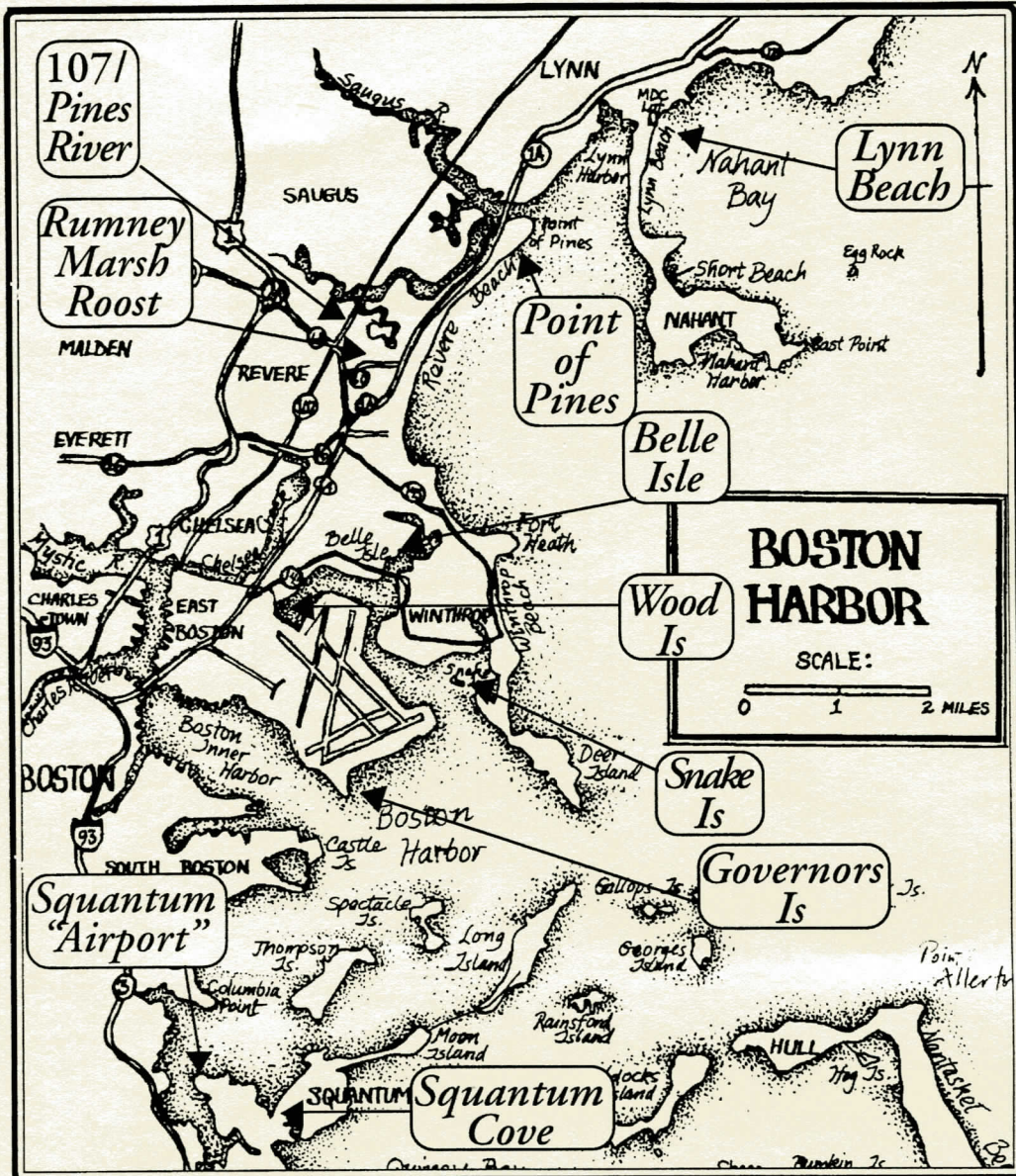
Weather: cloudy

Wind: SE 5-10 MPH

Temperature: 59°-68°F (15°-20°C)

High Tide: 7:10 AM

Participants: Jim Barton, Joanne Benard, Fred Bouchard, Mike Fager, Paul Fitzgerald, Kathy Foley, Karen Freitas, Ted Mara, Tink Martin, Patty O'Neil, Michelle Parham, Renée & Joe Pike, John Quigley, Fay & Peter Vale, Soheil Zende. Special thanks to the Pikes for the use of their boat.



Map by Julie Roberts

East Boston, the entrance to BELLE ISLE PARK is about 200 yards N of Suffolk Downs T Stop. Once in the Park, walk to the east keeping the hill to your left and the big stand of *Phragmites* to your right. When you reach *Marshhenge* (two large concrete blocks on a rise overlooking the marsh), walk out on the Sireen Reinstein Memorial Boardwalk Trail and scan the salt-pans: The closer one is to your NE and the farther one is to your SW, in the middle of the BERM AREA.

To reach ROSIE'S POND, return to Bennington Street and go SW toward Boston. Take the first left on Leverett Ave, then follow that around to the right to Lawn Avenue and eventually Palermo Street. Park on the left and scan the salt pan between you and the MBTA trains. Then walk into the marsh right to the edge of the pond.

To reach THE KEY or THE DONUT, return to Bennington Street, proceed NE to Revere, go right at Winthrop Avenue (Torretta's Bakery on the corner), and go right at Summer Street (STOP sign). Go to the end and park. Walk past the metal gate to the bermed and diked area surrounding excellent hidden shorebird pools.

Shorebird Hotspots (from page 1)

walk right to the edge of the creek. Be stealthy or you'll flush everything! *Best tide:* High. *Best time of year:* Mid-September to late October.

RUMNEY MARSH ROOST—From Bell Circle, Revere, go NW on American Legion Highway. Go right on Revere Street (Route 60); where the road swings right, go straight on Temple Street. At the end turn right and park after one block, next to the high wooden fence. Walk into the marsh to your left. At first the footing is firm on fill material; suddenly you sink into very wet marsh. *Caution and rubber boots are a must!* Walk slowly to the salt pan about 200 yards away, just to the left of a conspicuous hunting blind in the middle of the marsh. If at all possible, walk completely around the pan and tally the shorebirds and waders. *Best tide:* High. *Best time of year:* August.

BELLE ISLE MARSH RESERVATION—On Bennington Street,

Best tide: High. *Best times of year:* Third week of May; August and September. **WOOD, SNAKE & GOVERNORS ISLANDS** are best accessed either by boat or special arrangements with MassPort.

SQUANTUM COVE—From Quincy Shore Drive take East Squantum Street NE. Go left at Victory Road and park immediately on the right. The Cove is between Victory Road and E Squantum Street. There are good shorebird pools both N and S of Victory Road *Best Tides:* Low for the mudflat; high for the salt marsh pools up near the roads. *Best times of year:* May; July through October.

SQUANTUM "AIRPORT"—This is now an MDC park reached by following Victory Road to the end. From the SW corner of the parking lot walk to the high berm visible through the weeds and scan the area on both sides of the berm. *Best Tide:* High. *Best time of year:* August and September.

