



# Bird Notes

From Northeast Kingdom Audubon  
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## For Immediate Release

### Migration Headache

It seems to me that the cartoonist, Gary Larson, may have described last week's migrating bird sentiments precisely. Once in The FarSide collection, he captioned a duck family, bags packed on the roof of a car with, " Oh, God, George! Stop! ..Stop the car! I've got another migration headache!" Judging by what I have seen and been told, this year's spring arrivals are showing up, a bit weary perhaps, but they ARE here. For those who use the robin as an indicator, they were here very early and managed to hang on through the last big snow. The "black ones" (blackbirds, starlings, grackles, cowbirds) also arrived early scooping up every bit of seed at the feeders if I let them. But watch your chimneys, for some reason a grackle ended up in my cold woodstove this week...now there is headache!

My spring-indicator birds include tree swallows and bluebirds. Once the nest boxes have been made ready for them, the anticipation grows, waiting to see the first arrivals inspect the accommodations. With snow still lingering, they arrived April 19, not late, not early, just here.

Sparrows have been a delight this spring, especially noticing the streaky, white and rust-colored fox sparrows. They move through Vermont to nest in the boreal regions of Canada, joining the American tree sparrows at our feeders until they, too, leave for Canada. Sparrows can be tricky to ID, so check your field guide or make up way to remember them. I think of SS for the Song Sparrow with SS, Streaks and Spots. Watching my field for grasland sparrows (field, vesper or savannah), I was treated to an eastern meadowlark, today.

By this time, I am starting to think about the ruby-throated hummingbirds, locating the feeders, cleaning them up and considering this year's locations. I wonder where they are right now. Certainly a tiny bird like that will struggle in the massive late spring storms we saw this month. I received an email about how I could find out where they are. Using the wonders of cyberspace, follow this link to an amazing hummingbird migration map, <http://www.hummingbirds.net/map.html>. You can even report your sightings on this website, as well. When they first appear, I just have to tell someone!

There are just too many migrants coming in now to list them all here, but if you are an interested birder and nature enthusiast, join the VT BIRD email list for a daily discussion of birding in Vermont. Members are encouraged to report recent sightings, ask questions, make announcements or discuss bird conservation issues. Go to this site to see how to subscribe. <http://www.uvm.edu/~ebuford/vtbird.html> .

Our NEK Audubon website offers many opportunities for good spring birding at [www.nekaudubon.org](http://www.nekaudubon.org). Vist the site to find out about field trips and the BIRDATHON, next month (watch the papers for more information ).

Happy Migration Birding!

**Carolyn E. Boardman is a board member of NEK Audubon living in Brownington, Vermont. NEK Audubon is one of 8 chapters of Audubon Vermont and part of the National Audubon Society. NEK Audubon is a non -profit organization that encourages people's enjoyment of birds, wildlife and natural habitats through field trips, programs and publications. For more information about meetings, field trips and special events visit [www.nekaudubon.org](http://www.nekaudubon.org). Art work by Robin Rothman.**