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MARTHA'S VINEYARD



LANNY McDOWELL

This red phalarope, normally an ocean flyer, blew in on the storm, wowing landlubbers.

See birds? They're sea birds!

Birders are abuzz over the recent north-easter's huff-and-puff delivery of several interesting species from the tweet and fly set.

The storm blew in several pelagic species, which live most of their lives out in open water. Perhaps causing the biggest stir was the frequent sighting of the red phalarope in full breeding plumage, a rare sight for landlubbers.

Birder Lanny McDowell of West Tisbury on Martha's Vineyard got up early yesterday and snapped this photo of a red phalarope from onboard a Boston Whaler near Lake Tashmoo.

"The big deal about phalaropes is that the pretty ones of the pair are the female," said McDowell. "In almost every other kind of bird the male is the showoff."

Staff at the Massachusetts Audubon Society's Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary reported several sightings of the red beauties and predicted they might linger for a day or two before heading back to sea.