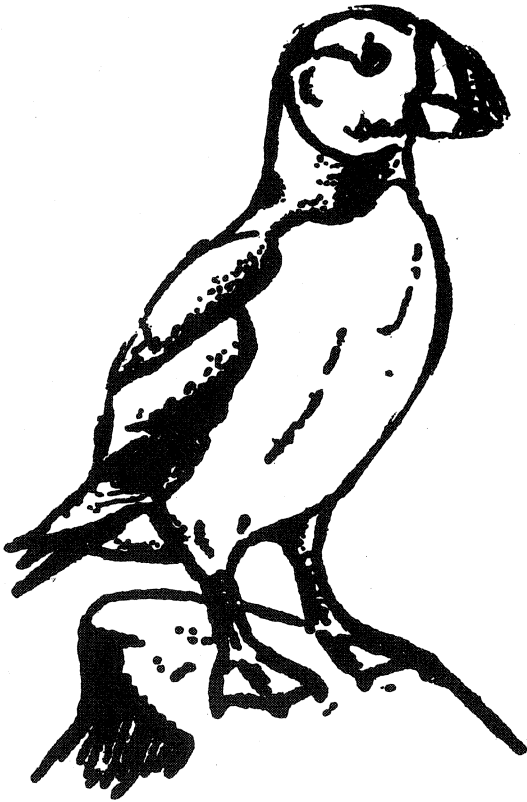


*Nova Scotia  
Bird Society*



*Newsletter*

NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY  
NEWSLETTER

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Volume 11, Number 1

April, 1969

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NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY

Incorporated 1957

c/o Nova Scotia Museum  
Spring Garden Road  
Halifax, N.S., Canada

NEWSLETTER

Editors: Phyllis R. Dobson

Volume 11, Number 1

April, 1969

PRESIDENT'S REPORT, 1968

A President's Report should be informative, but mine can offer little new for regular readers of the Newsletter. Nor can it be entertaining for those who would rather go on field trips, listen to lectures on birds of far away places, or read about birds, instead of reviewing the year's activities and modest achievements. "Good works" versus entertainment is a recurrent dilemma in societies such as ours, and I will return to the problem at the end of my report.

Our most important activity continues to be the Newsletter. Clearly the quality and numbers of reports continue to increase. Mrs. Dobson must be credited again for her organizational and literary skill. To satisfy those with an uncluttered love of birds along with those with a more scientific concern requires a considerable skill and good taste. More than anything else, the Newsletter embodies the interests of our members.

Almost equally important, especially to our new members, are the field trips. Apart from our early morning walks around Halifax in May and a series organized by our very active Cape Breton branch, the Society as a whole held five all-day trips around the province, from Brier Island to Point Michaud. The last was the traditional "President's Field Day", on which your president did nothing much except to be treated along with other members to a fine al fresco lunch by members of the Cape Breton branch. Perhaps if we were to make this an advertised feature of our field trips, membership would soar!

Some of our field work is more purposeful and organized with scientific intent. I might mention first Charlie Allen's "homegrown" project on shorebird migration. Shorebirds, with their regular, massed flights and highly visible habits can reveal obvious patterns of migration, and I hope all members can continue to make rigorous observations and notes for Mr. Allen's study.

The Christmas Count, which admittedly becomes as much entertaining as scientific when notes are exchanged over an evening glass of punch, is a continent-wide scheme in which Nova Scotia is very active. Dr. Lloyd Macpherson continues to organize the Counts for the province, for which we are very grateful.

The Random Roadside Bird Censuses, developed by the Canadian Wildlife Service and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, are perhaps the most important observations that we make. The counts are designed carefully to give accurate information on abundances and long-term changes in bird populations. Birds, with their furious pace of living, are sensitive indicators to environmental change. The extinction of the Eastern Peregrine is surely not only a great tragedy in itself, but perhaps a warning of impending threats to human well-being in our pesticide-laden environments. Our participating members take this census program seriously enough to be up and out on remote byways at improbable hours in the morning.

Members have also been diligent with data for the Maritimes Nest Records Scheme, again part of a continent-wide activity. Surprisingly little is known of nesting statistics of many of our common birds, and amateurs are making important contributions to our knowledge.

I might note that both the Roadside Censuses and Nest Records have been collated by Dr. A. J. Erskine of the Canadian Wildlife Service, who has recently left Sackville, N.B., for a posting in Ottawa. Although we shall miss him as an active member of our own Society, we wish him well in his new position.

The Society has managed to extend its winter programs in Halifax and Cape Breton by having more meetings. Regrettably the membership in other parts of the province gains little from this development. We would be happy to receive suggestions on the possibility of extending our "off-season" activities elsewhere. In the meantime, we can only assure our scattered members that, with free use of lecture halls and volunteer speakers, their fees are not being used to entertain urban members in Halifax and Sydney. I should make special mention here of a meeting held in March 1968, with CORA and the Halifax Wildlife Association on the plight of the Bald Eagle in North America and in Nova Scotia in particular. We had hoped to take up a collection in support of Mr. Ted Gittens' vigorous and rather costly work on this threatened species, but were reduced by a depressingly small turnout to making a small contribution from the Society's purse.

This brings us naturally to a "serious" side of our activities. Although we all as members accept the importance of conservation of birds and their habitats, it turned out that our constitution was not quite correctly phrased for the purpose of soliciting donations. Therefore, we have set up an independent Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund to fortify our good intentions. I take no credit for this achievement, which was undertaken before my tenure as President. Mr. Robert Kanigsberg, our Honorary Solicitor, has carried us through the various negotiations for tax-free status, and we are very grateful for his fine work. The members' part is easy: please consider us in your list of donations! The Trust Fund already stands at over \$1000, largely from a generous donation by an anonymous donor.

The newly created Trust Fund raises the whole issue of

what our Society might do. Birdwatchers, it is true, have traditionally been at the forefront of all kinds of conservation activities - scratch an anti-pollution lobbyist and you'll find a birdwatcher. But often such conservation activities seem to have little direct relation to our hobby as such. Besides, Nova Scotia is not quite as smothered in smog or asphalt as are some parts of the world. Perhaps our best strategy as bird-watching conservationists in Nova Scotia will be to try to preserve more bird islands and other unique locations, but otherwise to concentrate on the more threatened regions around towns and cities. We would like to hear from members on such matters.

Often aesthetic or even scientific premises of conservation are meaningless to governments and businesses. But there is lots of evidence of the proper course to take with the "authorities" in Nova Scotia. We receive numerous letters from birdwatchers wanting to come to Nova Scotia from all over the continent. Last year, the Florida Audubon Society actually had a group tour here. Mrs. Dobson and Mr. C. Allen are hard at work on a guide to bird-finding in the province, which should compound the attraction of Nova Scotia for these visitors. Not only visiting birdwatchers, but resident ones as well are of some economic consequence. A number of nature clubs have been surveyed for their expenditures on their hobbies. Astonishingly, birdwatchers not only outnumber duck hunters in the U.S.A., but also outspend them considerably on a per capita basis. A student from Acadia University plans to survey our Society, and I am sure members will be surprised at their expenses on boots, binoculars and bird books, not to mention motels and gasoline.

The year 1968 saw increased contact and involvement with other groups. We finally joined the Canadian Audubon Society as an Affiliated Society, and I urge members to consider personal membership in that truly nationwide Society. We hope that our joint meetings with the Halifax Wildlife Association and the Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Association will lead to further co-operation. We also donated a small gold medal as the prize for "Best Bird Life" in the Fifth Halifax International Color Slide Exhibition. This was won by Alwyn Pepper of Australia, whose "marsh wren" - believe it or not - was a brilliant blue, blue-black and white creature, with only a cocked tail in common with our drab varieties. The nature section of this show was quite incredible, and was seen, alas, by too few of our members.

Ours is clearly one society among many, "competing" for attention and membership. Many societies accept themselves simply as groups of like-minded people - as hobbyists, with mutually stimulating enthusiasms. There is nothing wrong with this, yet natural history groups such as ours seem constantly concerned with their role and image. Obviously there are two directions for development in such groups - conservation and truly scientific research activities. When I first became President, I expressed some enthusiasm for such developments in conversations with other members. I hope I am not merely rationalizing a do-nothing tenure by stating that, now, I feel it would be a mistake to commit the Society or its members excessively to more "serious" roles. Leisure is, after all, increasingly important to Man in the 20th

Century. I now feel that our conservation efforts should, wherever possible, be expressed through collaboration with other groups. We need a viable co-ordinating body for the conservation aims of a number of like-minded groups in Nova Scotia. I also feel, especially as a professional scientist faced daily with an inundation of literature, that our Newsletter, with its judicious blending of news, views, and just plain birds, is perfectly fine. There are, after all, existing outlets for more pretentious studies - the Proceedings of the Nova Scotia Institute of Science, and the Canadian Field-Naturalist, just to mention two.

I wish before closing to thank the Society's executive, who have contributed ideas, initiative, organization, and hard work in keeping things moving in 1968. I also thank the various members who have helped to shape our year's activities. And, finally, I would be delighted to hear from as many members as possible on what they feel the Society should be doing, or not doing, in furthering their aims and interests.

- Ian McLaren, President.

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The President's Report, above, was given at the Annual Meeting of the Nova Scotia Bird Society, held in Halifax on November 28, 1968. The following officers were elected for the year 1968-69: President - Dr. Ian McLaren; Vice-President - Dr. B. K. Doane; Secretary-Treasurer - Miss Molly Clayden; Membership Secretary - Miss Ethel Crathorne; Editor - Mrs. J. W. Dobson; Cape Breton Branch Representative - Mr. Robert McNeil; Members of the Executive - Dr. Eric Mills, Miss Sylvia Fullerton, Mr. Ross Anderson.

At this meeting, Mr. Jean Boulva gave a talk on his recent studies in the Western Arctic (the MacKenzie Delta) to Churchill on Hudson Bay, as assistant with the Fisheries Research Board and scientist in training. Mr. Boulva spoke entertainingly and illustrated his talk with his own color slides of Eskimos and their dwellings (very few build igloos anymore); of animals, birds, flowers, scenery, and modes of travel in the far north, still a mysterious land to most of us. Quite literally Mr. Boulva brought the country into focus, and gave us a free trip, unencumbered by packsack or parka, to the scene of his very considerable labors in a search for the Arctic Char.

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At our March 13 meeting, we were privileged to hear Dr. Roger Hughes describe his part in an expedition to Aldabra Island, just north of Madagascar in the Indian Ocean. Dr. Hughes was a member of a Royal Society Expedition to Aldabra, collecting data on the unique flora and fauna of the island, which was recently spared the threat of development as an air force station. Except for a small strip at one end, the island consists of jagged coral covered with thick scrub, and is uninhabitable, which has made it a natural sanctuary, where fish, reptiles, mammals and birds exist, certain species of which are to be found nowhere

else in the world. Here are Tropic Birds, the Sacred Ibis, the Reef Heron, the Fairy Tern, the Flightless Rail, Flamingos, Sunbird and tinier White-eye, the Nightjar and the Jonggo, to name only a few of the fabulous birds to be seen. Dr. Hughes had pictures of many of the birds and animals in their natural habitat, both creatures and habitat equally fascinating to his appreciative audience.



Shortly before going to press, word was received of the death in Florida, of Captain T. F. T. (Tom) Morland, R. C. N. (Ret.).

A man of wide interests in which birds occupied a prominent place, Tom contributed greatly, not only to our fund of information on birds of Nova Scotia, but to the foundation and early life of the Nova Scotia Bird Society. He was one of the founding members, served as its second Secretary-Treasurer, played an active part in many Society projects and livened many a field trip with his quiet wit.

He will be keenly missed by all his friends and associates.

## Hurricane "Gladys" and its Ornithological Effect on the Maritime Provinces

### The Hurricane Mentality

Hurricanes and birders are often closely associated. When I moved to Nova Scotia in the summer of 1967 I hoped (albeit with guilt feelings) that a good tropical storm would come near the area as soon as possible. Hurricane "Gladys", which developed inauspiciously in the Caribbean and moved without much fanfare up the East Coast, filled the bill admirably. Its centre crossed Cape Breton Island about noon on the 21st. of October 1968, culminating a 2600 mile trip from the Caribbean. The first clues that "Gladys" had done the expected job came on the following day, when Laughing Gulls began to appear on the Halifax waterfront. That afternoon, as the first Caspian Tern went past me near Herring Cove, Halifax County, my reaction was - "It's happened! Now let's get down to some serious birding." This account will relate what serious birding all over the Atlantic Provinces and in the eastern United States accomplished. The results of the storm left interesting questions to be considered. What birds were carried by the storm, and in what numbers? Would the origin, course, speed and intensity of the storm account for the birds we saw? What were the effects on the birds and their reactions after the storm? What did we miss, and why? What should we do in future to get the most information about the effect of hurricanes on birds?

The detailed records and correspondence on which this account is based are on file with the Nova Scotia Bird Society, Nova Scotia Provincial Museum, Halifax.

### Hurricanes and Hurricanology

Hurricanes are intense tropical cyclonic storms, usually with a diameter of roughly 400 miles, around which strong winds blow in a counterclockwise direction in the northern hemisphere. They differ from normal low pressure systems, which bring us much of our bad weather, in being much smaller and in having much stronger winds. Near the centre is an area about 20 miles in diameter with only light winds and clear or lightly-clouded skies. This is the eye. It results from the balance between winds rushing strongly toward the centre and the centrifugal force caused by the rotation of the winds around the centre. Classic pictures of hurricane structure result every time a weather satellite passes over a tropical storm. For excellent examples, see the pictures of Hurricane "Gladys" in The New Scientist, November 1968, Weatherwise, December 1968, and Scientific American, January 1969. In our area of the world, most hurricanes form either off the West African coast in the low latitudes of the North Atlantic Ocean, or (less frequently) in the Caribbean Sea. They begin as counter-clockwise swirls in



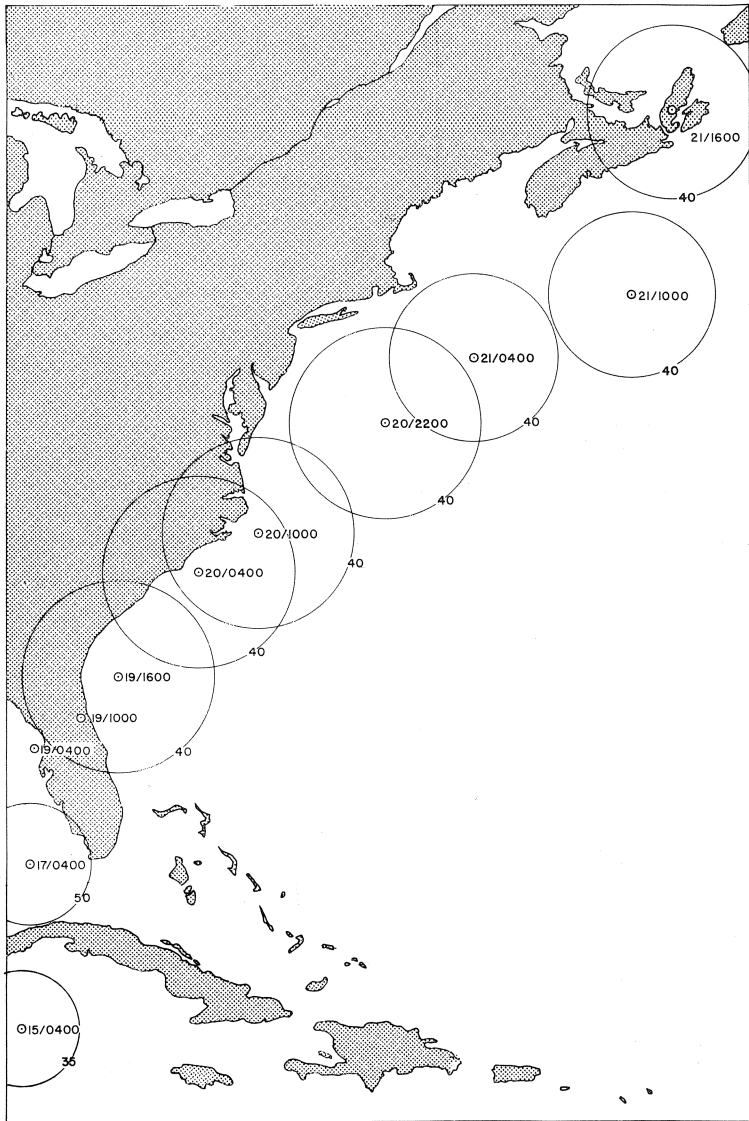
the zone (Intertropical Convergence) where Northeast and Southeast Trade Winds meet when it is well north of the Equator in the northern summer, or as strong ripples in the flow lines of Northeast Trade Winds, which become concentrated and gather energy through the condensation of warm, moist air as it rushes into the centre of the newly-formed low pressure area. Because much of the energy powering hurricanes comes from relatively warm, moist air over the sea, contact with land weakens these storms and the frictional effect of land on the winds also eventually reduces their speed. The most powerful hurricanes usually travel far at sea, moving north from their low latitude origins and curving right (northeast) because of the earth's rotation until interrupted by frontal systems at higher latitudes. In extreme cases they may cross the Atlantic as large low pressure areas, bringing heavy seas and high winds to European areas. Hurricane "Gladys" did not follow this extreme pattern, but nonetheless had some interesting features that endeared it to birders.

### A History of Hurricane "Gladys"

American weather satellites first located the cloud mass which became "Gladys" on October 10. In the next few days it developed into a full tropical storm, relatively stationary ENE of Grand Cayman Island on October 15, then moving due north across Cuba on the 16th. Late on the 16th. and through the 17th. and 18th. the storm advanced north in the Gulf of Mexico west of Florida, then crossed northern Florida from north of Tampa to near St. Augustine in the early morning hours of the 19th. From this point it moved along the coast of Georgia and the Carolinas, centered about 25-75 miles offshore until just off Cape Hatteras at 0600 EDT (1000 GMT) on the 20th. As the storm moved offshore from Cape Hatteras to the northeast there was a rapid increase in its rate of forward progress from about 20-25 mph (the rate along the coast) to 30-60 mph as it came south of the Scotian Shelf. Along the U.S. southeast coast and over the open ocean later, winds of 40 mph (gales) occurred at a radius of 150-200 miles from the storm centre (see Figure 1 for a plot of some positions, times and wind intensity) and maximum winds near the centre reached 100 mph. At noon on October 21 "Gladys" was crossing Cape Breton Island with maximum winds of 75 mph and gales at a radius of 200 miles. At Halifax we had gale-force winds on the morning of the 21st. as the storm centre moved northeast, about 125 miles to the southeast of us. My amateur radio antenna blew down that day, the price I paid for wanting a hurricane. Later, over the Gulf of St. Lawrence, "Gladys" merged with a front from the continent to form a low pressure centre bringing strong winds and rain to southern Newfoundland.

The description of "Gladys" given by Francis C. Parmenter in Weatherwise, December 1968, explains the course of the storm. As "Gladys" moved onto the North American mainland, it was influenced by an upper air trough to the west and southwest of the Great Lakes. (This shows beautifully, bounded by a line of cloud, in the photograph in Weatherwise, December 1968.)

Figure 1 - Selected positions of Hurricane "Gladys", October 1968. Date and time (GMT) are given for each point. For Eastern Daylight Saving Time subtract four hours, Atlantic Daylight Saving Time subtract three hours. Figures on the circles indicate wind speed (mph) at that radius from the storm centre.



The trough formed a barrier, keeping the storm well to the east, just off the coast, in a flow of warm air from the southwest. The course to the northeast was maintained until morning of the 21st., when the storm turned north across Nova Scotia, finally to merge over the Gulf of St. Lawrence with the low pressure front (now much to the east) as an occluded low pressure area with gales and rain.

### Birds and "Gladys"

Because of its course up much of the U.S. southeastern seaboard, "Gladys" brought a full load of birds to Nova Scotia. The land bird records are hard to evaluate, since Nova Scotia in fall acts as the final landfall for many eastern migrants and western strays making reverse migrations to the northeast across the Gulf of Maine. Nonetheless the Yellow-billed Cuckoos seen October 24 at Shelburne and November 9 at Cape Sable Light, the Towhees seen on November 2 and 6 at Cape Sable Light, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks noted October 24 and 29 on Cape Sable Island, a Red-eyed Vireo at St. Rose, C.B.I., October 27, and the Snowy Egret seen October 27 at Port Felix, Guysborough Co., were probably storm strays.

Swallows and swifts, which are observed occasionally as late as December in Nova Scotia were seen in numbers after "Gladys". Tree Swallows were noted nine times between October 26 and November 15, the maximum numbers being 50 at Brier Island, Digby Co. on October 26, 10 at Peggy's Cove October 27, and 11 at Brier Island on November 7 and 8. Barn Swallows were less abundant, being seen seven times between October 26 and November 9. Most observers recorded low numbers, the maximum being 6 at Cow Bay, Halifax Co. on November 2. A few Chimney Swifts were also brought back north. The four records range from October 26 to November 1, either single birds (two occasions) or groups of three (two occasions).

Farther south some peculiar events appear to be related to the storm, as Aaron Bagg has pointed out. Black-throated Blue Warblers, normally rare, were seen October 18 at Tallahassee and October 19 at Alligator Point and St. Mark's Light, in northern Florida, and a later record, November 2, might also be related to the storm. Possibly these birds were carried north from the Caribbean. The same mechanism may account for the presence of some very late Bobolinks in the same area at the same time. Blackpoll Warblers were recorded more commonly than usual in Florida between September 12 and November 10. No less than twelve occurred in southern Florida (Key Biscayne, Homestead, Key Largo) between October 17 and 20. The Audubon Field Notes compiler expresses puzzlement over these records since Blackpoll Warblers migrate east of Florida from Nova Scotia and Cape Cod via Bermuda to the Antilles. Somehow they were deflected west, to end up south of the storm. Aaron Bagg suggests that these birds were affected by winds blowing from the northeast and east towards the storm centre as it lay south of Florida between October 15 and 17

and thus ended up west of their normal route.

A notable warbler flight occurred on October 20 at Kiptopeke Beach, Virginia (on Chesapeake Bay) according to Mr. Bagg, when of the 952 birds banded, 908 were warblers. Numbers were as follows: Myrtle - 743, Black-throated Blue - 42, Parula - 10, Connecticut - 10, Northern Waterthrush - 3, and Chestnut-sided - 1. On October 20 at 0100 EDT "Gladys" was centered just off Cape Hatteras, with 40 mph winds extending inland beyond Cape Charles and Cape Henry. It seems likely that the birds banded in Virginia were carried towards land by the strong easterly winds on the northern fringe of the storm. Warblers migrating from Nova Scotia via Bermuda to the Antilles would be too far east to be affected; a flight from Cape Cod or Long Island would have come into the zone of strong winds if aiming for the Bahamas.

These records and some possible interpretations add spice to the story, but my main concern will be with the gulls, terns and skimmers, the groups carried en masse to Nova Scotia.

#### Laughing Gulls, Terns and Black Skimmers

The effect of "Gladys" on Nova Scotia can perhaps be best appreciated by comparing two days birding at Chebucto Head, near Halifax, just before and just after the storm. On October 20, Ross Anderson and I spent four hours there in rain and ESE winds watching the movement of birds. Three lingering Wilson's Storm Petrels appeared over the rough water; more than 300 Gannets moved steadily to the southwest; Common Eiders (150+) and a few Scoters did the same. A Northern Phalarope, flying south, lingered briefly on a slick just off-shore. Kittiwakes in groups of three to six moved steadily past towards the southwest. By contrast, when I reached Chebucto Head mid-afternoon on October 22, with the wind strong from the northwest after the storm, Laughing Gulls were drifting past in little groups and straggling flocks. I counted 66 in two and one-half hours. Just as I arrived, two immature Caspian Terns flew past, moving south low over the water. A fine Royal Tern, high above me, followed the shore south very fast. Over the old crumbling gun-emplacements a pair of large buffy bats (probably storm strays also) flickered and sailed. These were indications of the effect of the storm. Now more detail on the birds involved.

#### 1. Laughing Gull

Laughing Gulls appeared in Nova Scotia in unprecedented numbers. At least 33 sightings were recorded between October 22 and December 21. On October 22 single adults paused briefly at Halifax in the Harbour and Northwest Arm. On the same day at Chebucto Head I counted a total of 66 Laughing Gulls streaming past towards the southwest in groups of two to sixteen. On the same day Laughing Gulls were noted on Sable Island by Mrs. Norman Bell. By the 23rd., it was clear that we had been invaded. Two

hundred and two birds passed Chebucto Head in six and one-half hours and in the next few days the species was seen all along the south shore of the province. Small flocks on lawns, in parks, and over ponds became a common sight. Two birds appeared in the harbour of St. John's, Newfoundland on October 26. The active southward movement, which must have begun just after the storm, continued for several days, with the first report from Brier Island, Digby Co., on October 26. Sylvia Fullerton and Barbara Hinds reported more than 300 on Seal Island, Shelburne Co., October 26-27. The peak of movement past Halifax appears to be October 27, when 50 were feeding at a sewer outfall on Bedford Basin, while only 50 drifted south (mostly in numbers of 1-6) in three hours at Chebucto Head on the 30th. A peak number of 50 reached Brier Island, far to the west, on the same day. Ian McLaren estimated 100+ on Sable Island on November 4 and noted that some were dying. The Sable Island Laughing Gulls persisted in small numbers through November 14, according to Mrs. Bell's records, but on the mainland the return south was over (except for local lingering groups) by November 9-10 when Molly Clayden and Barbara Hinds reported none seen between Halifax and Barrington Passage, Shelburne Co. Apart from the few birds on Sable Island, our only records after November 6 are three at Brier Island, November 20, and the two immatures found at Eastern Passage, December 21 on the Halifax East Christmas Census.

Strangely enough, once they left Nova Scotia the Laughing Gulls disappeared and cannot be traced, with the possible exception of one seen at Hampton, New Hampshire on November 3. A heavy storm which hit the Massachusetts Coast on November 8 brought thousands of sea-birds to Cape Cod, but no Laughing Gulls. Their return to the southeastern coast of the United States must have been over the open ocean, but we have no direct evidence for it.

"Gladys" route along the southeastern U.S. coast accounts very well for the mass transport of Laughing Gulls to our area. By late October, Laughing Gulls must have been gone from their northern outposts (southern Maine, Massachusetts and New Jersey). Bull (1964, Birds of New York City) states that the fall migration past New York is from late August to mid-December, with the peak late in October. Through November the species is common on the North Carolina coast, retreating farther south later in the winter, according to Bent (1947, Life histories of North American Gulls and Terns).

The birds arriving in Nova Scotia were almost certainly from Cape Hatteras and south, since this was the last contact of the storm with land before Nova Scotia. If so, they were carried a minimum distance of 1300 miles. That Laughing Gulls were picked up and deposited all along the southern course of the storm is suggested by the movement of small numbers inland in northern Florida on October 19 while the storm was crossing the peninsula, and by observations of a flock of 1,150 on October 20 at Barren Island, Maryland, in Chesapeake Bay (information from Aaron Bagg) when the storm was passing offshore with gale winds extending into the Bay.

The most marked feature of the Laughing Gull invasion, apart from the numbers, was the rapid southward movement of the displaced birds, initially along the coast and then, it appears, far from land towards the Carolinas and points south.

## 2. Forster's Tern

First recorded on October 27, when one was seen at Port Felix, Guysborough Co. and six were found at Cow Bay, Halifax Co. At least three of the latter group were still present on October 28. Two records late in November farther afield, one November 23 at Shinnicock Inlet, L.I., N.Y., and the other November 29 at Milford Point, Connecticut, may not be related to the storm. This species breeds from southern New Jersey to Texas along the coast and winters from South Carolina south (acc. Bent, 1947). At New York (Bull, 1964) there are a few fall records from August to early November and after two hurricanes. The birds carried to Nova Scotia must have been picked up near Cape Hatteras or farther south and hence were carried at least 1300 miles. There are only three previous records for Nova Scotia, two of them after the fall hurricanes of 1924 and 1958 (Tufts, 1961, Birds of Nova Scotia).

## 3. Common Tern

Three certain records of this species followed "Gladys". A single bird was seen at Cow Bay, Halifax Co. on October 27, two immatures were carefully identified at Baddeck, C.B.I., on October 28, and a group of 10-20 was seen at Canso on October 29. "Numbers" of terns seen at Pubnico, Yarmouth Co. on October 31 were probably this species, although they were identified as probable Arctic Terns. Arctic Terns leaving our area travel east toward Europe and Africa, while Common Terns leave toward the south for the southern United States and South America in September. The records after "Gladys" are probably of birds picked up off the Carolinas or Florida and carried north.

## 4. Sooty Tern

A single Sooty Tern, carefully watched by Eric Cooke at Three-fathom Harbour, Halifax County, is the only record of this species after "Gladys". Tufts (1961) lists one previous record, a bird found dead after the hurricane of August, 1924. The breeding range of the Sooty Tern includes the Bahamas, Dry Tortugas (which were crossed by the storm centre) and Caribbean Sea. In October, terns from the colony in the Dry Tortugas have dispersed, so that it is uncertain where this bird originated. If from the region of the Dry Tortugas, it travelled close to 2300 miles to Nova Scotia. The Distribution Charts of Oceanic Birds in the North Atlantic published by Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (Reference 68-69) indicate a northward dispersal of Sooty Terns along the axis of the Gulf Stream, so it is possible that one could have come from that area, east and north of Florida and 300 to 500 miles nearer Nova Scotia than the Dry Tortugas.

## 5. Caspian Tern

Six records, as follows: October 22, 1, Herring Cove,

Halifax Co.; October 22, 2 immatures, Chebucto Head, Halifax Co.; October 23, 1, Chebucto Head; October 24, 1 banded bird found dead, Canso, Guysborough Co.; October 30, 1, probably same bird as October 23, Chebucto Head; and November 4, 2, Sable Island. Tufts lists a few previous records, two after the hurricane of August, 1924, and there are several other sight records, probably of birds from the small breeding area on the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

From the available information (Bent, 1947; Bull, 1964) it appears that most Caspian Terns should be at or south of Cape Hatteras in mid-October, although the species is highly subject to northward dispersal with hurricanes. Seventeen seen at Elliot Island, Maryland on October 20 as the storm passed Chesapeake Bay were probably the first strays from farther south.

#### 6. Royal Tern

One bird, seen flying strongly south at Chebucto Head, Halifax County, on October 22, is the third record for the province. Both previous records (1958 and 1960) were after hurricanes. Nineteen seen between Shinnicock and Mecox, L.I., N.Y. on October 26 were doubtless also storm strays. According to Bent (1947), this species lingers in North Carolina until late November. Records are unusual at New York City after late October, except following storms (Bull, 1964). The winter range of the Royal Tern extends little north of the Gulf of Mexico, but it is likely that "Gladys" caught up birds still moving down the coast of the Carolinas.

#### 7. Black Skimmer

Although they had occurred only once before in the province (numbers after the hurricane of 1924), Black Skimmers were second in abundance to Laughing Gulls after "Gladys". Like the Laughing Gulls, they were probably picked up from their wintering range along the coast of the Carolinas, but their return journey makes a fascinating contrast to that documented for Laughing Gulls, since the return was protracted and apparently followed the coast. Records of returning Skimmers can be traced from Nova Scotia to New England and Long Island through November and the first few days of December.

The first report in Nova Scotia came October 22 when one Skimmer was seen at Graham's Cove, near Three-fathom Harbor, Halifax Co. and was not followed by others until October 26 and 27 when large flocks (40, 75, 52, 30) were seen in Guysborough County, at Cole Harbor, and Eastern Passage. The records in Massachusetts also begin on October 26, and considerable numbers were recorded at various localities there through mid-November. What happened between October 22 and 26 is uncertain, but it would seem that Nova Scotia Birders were caught off guard and allowed the birds seen in Massachusetts to slip by them. Records came thick and fast in late October, perhaps the most bizarre being Captain Morland's discovery on October 29 of a flock of 17 Skimmers in a supermarket parking lot at Mahone Bay, Lunenburg Co. The first records at Brier Island were four birds seen on October 30,

followed only by one on November 19; this indicates that very few of the returning birds followed the southwestern coast to the north as far as Brier Island before striking out across the Gulf of Maine. The main movement south from Nova Scotia appears to have begun about October 26, reaching a peak about October 30. On that day Ross Anderson and I, stationed at Chebucto Head, saw 2 flocks, totalling 53, flying southwest. By November 3, the flock at Eastern Passage had dwindled to 30 and many more sightings were reported in New England. Numbers there peaked by November 8, then fell off. On November 5 a remarkable flock of 350-400 was reported resting at Flushing, N.Y., on the inner coast of Long Island, apparently a pile-up of returning birds in the enclosed western end of Long Island Sound. Groups of Skimmers were reported in Nova Scotia and New England through the rest of November. The flock at Eastern Passage, 52 on October 27, fell to 30 on November 3, 15 by November 11, and 6 on November 24. Two remaining there on December 8 are the latest records available in Nova Scotia. On the New England coast, the last record is of five seen at Plymouth, Massachusetts, also on December 8.

In summary, then, Black Skimmers seem to have begun a return movement within a day after "Gladys", peaking in Nova Scotia about October 30 and a few days later in New England, but continuing to drift south along the coasts of Nova Scotia and New England for a full month longer. The return of Laughing Gulls was much less protracted, and unlike the Skimmers they seem to have moved south offshore upon leaving Nova Scotia. This is an interesting difference, considering that both species are highly coastal and occupy roughly the same geographical range. The fact that Skimmers' food preferences are probably less catholic than those of Laughing Gulls and that various observers noted that Skimmers were "bedraggled" or dying suggests that their return was slowed by difficulty in obtaining enough food for maintenance and by the need to rest frequently. Unlike Laughing Gulls, Skimmers would not be able to rest on the water. It is remarkable that a large number were able to return from Nova Scotia's cold weather and water.

#### 8. Other Records

Although not seen in Nova Scotia, two other species, Cory's Shearwater and Sandwich Tern, deserve mention. The passage of "Gladys", with its strong easterly winds, resulted in large numbers of Cory's Shearwater (which are common off Long Island until November) being brought near the Long Island shore. Over 300 were seen at Jones Inlet, Nassau County, N.Y. on October 20, and 100 at Montauk Point, Suffolk County, N.Y. on October 26.

A single Sandwich Tern, carried north from its normal fall range on the coast of the Carolinas, was seen off Gilgo, Suffolk County, L.I., N.Y. on October 22. The compiler for Audubon Field Notes remarked that "All previous Long Island records of this species have been after hurricanes."



### Some Concluding Remarks

The questions posed at the beginning of this article can be answered as follows:

Hurricane "Gladys" brought us large numbers of Laughing Gulls and Black Skimmers. Five species of terns also occurred in small numbers. Laughing Gulls were most abundant and, judging by the numbers seen along the southern coast of Nova Scotia, tens of thousands were probably carried to the Province. Skimmers were less abundant, but the numerous records in Nova Scotia and along the coast suggest a movement of at least several hundred, possibly more than a thousand. Caspian Terns outnumbered Royal Terns in Nova Scotia, judging by the few records. Both species have occurred in large numbers at New York after hurricanes, mostly in September. The relatively few records of both species after "Gladys" suggest that they were low in numbers on the south-eastern coast of the United States in late October.

The course of "Gladys" from its origin in the Caribbean Sea to Cape Hatteras and then direct to Nova Scotia relates very well to the species observed. All would be expected on the Carolina coast or just to the south late in October, with the exception of the lone Sooty Tern, which may have been carried much farther, possibly from the Dry Tortugas. The course of "Gladys" was similar in part to that of Hurricane "Helene" in September 1958 (See L.M. Tuck, 1968, Bird-banding 39: 200-208). "Helene" carried numbers of Laughing Gulls and Black Skimmers to Newfoundland after touching the U.S. coast south of Cape Hatteras and then moving northeast and north southeast of Nova Scotia to cross Newfoundland from the southwest. Records of Laughing Gulls, Forster's Tern and Royal Tern (Tufts, 1961) in Nova Scotia at this time must have been the result of the same storm, but there is no record of a southward movement of Laughing Gulls, and Skimmers were apparently not recorded in this province. In both storms, the main transport of birds appears to have been in the storm centre. Laughing Gulls from "Helene" were first recorded in large numbers at Burgeo, Newfoundland, which had been close to the storm centre. They then dispersed north and east across a wide front before declining in numbers and disappearing. Black Skimmers also appeared first at Burgeo and then were wind-drifted east along the southern coast. The evidence from Hurricane "Gladys" is less clear cut because of lack of observations during and immediately after the storm. However, although gale-force winds affected the Halifax area while "Gladys" passed to the south, both Laughing Gulls and Skimmers reached a peak of abundance and transit only several days later. Thus most of them cannot have been on the fringes of the storm. Because there were few records of storm-blown seabirds from Newfoundland and Cape Breton Island and none were seen in Prince Edward Island, it is likely that most of the birds escaped the storm along Nova Scotia's Eastern Shore near Cape Canso, where the centre first touched land after leaving Cape Hatteras. To the south of us, some birds appear to have been moved by the peripheral winds of "Gladys" - the 1,150 Laughing Gulls and 17 Caspian Terns seen in Chesapeake Bay on October 20 and 19 Royal Terns on Long Island October 26. It is noteworthy that not a single Black Skimmer

was seen south of the storm until well after its passage. This species, with its relatively weak specialized flight seems to have been most closely associated with the storm centre.

The effects of the storm on the birds are hard to gauge. Certainly we saw hundreds of healthy Laughing Gulls moving rapidly south and more apparently healthy ones resting and feeding along the coast. The only evidence of mortality is Dr. McLaren's observation of dying birds being attacked by Herring and Black-backed Gulls on Sable Island. The Skimmers were in poorer shape. Many of a large flock at Jeddore, Halifax Co., were said to be dying and several birds in the flock at Eastern Passage, Halifax Co., were bedraggled and cold, huddling together against the strong winds and snow of late October and November. Skimmer mortality was probably high, but large numbers were able to return home, judging by the many reports south of this province.

For both Laughing Gulls and Skimmers, there is no evidence that more immatures than adults were affected, or that adults returned south more quickly. Adult Laughing Gulls outnumbered immatures by approximately 4 to 1 at Chebucto Head on October 22; the ratio was about 6 to 1 on October 23 and apparently the same on October 30. Thus there seems to have been no selective movement of age groups.

What did we miss? Skimmers must have been going by (although perhaps in relatively small numbers) between October 22 and 26. No doubt some trips to sea would have turned up southward-drifting Laughing Gulls and probably some of the Cory's Shearwaters so abundant near Long Island. The Lurcher Light Ship, well situated off the southwestern corner of the province, was in port for refit during "Gladys". We must hope for a more fortunately-timed administrative decision next time. Some more intensive shore-combing would have produced more terns, perhaps even the province's first Sandwich Tern. It is peculiar that Gull-billed Terns were not seen in Nova Scotia and New England as a result of the storm. Perhaps we missed one or two. It is these "perhapes" that will motivate us next time.

For the future, we must be sure to get out during the next hurricane, if it is possible without loss of life or limb. Observations of birds during a storm would be most useful. A very careful regular watch must be kept from the time of passage of a storm for at least a week after. Our efforts after "Gladys" were almost random, with the exception of the sea-watch at Chebucto Head. A few more similar stations in the future will increase the value of the observations. And finally, more careful note-keeping, with records of the birds' appearance, age, state of health and flight direction, weather, and any other notable features or events will give us more details on which to base even grander speculations!

#### Acknowledgements

I am grateful to many people for the records on which this account is based; these are the reporters mentioned cryp-

tically by surname in the Nova Scotia Bird Society's Newsletter and by initials in Audubon Field Notes. Aaron Bagg of Dover, Massachusetts, sent helpful letters, advice and previews of Audubon Field Notes. Wallace Bailey of the Massachusetts Audubon Society, South Wellfleet, Massachusetts, confirmed that unusual numbers of Laughing Gulls did not occur on Cape Cod. Mrs. Phyllis Dobson provided all the available information on hurricane records in Nova Scotia, and her other advice and criticism was of much value. L.M. Tuck of St. John's, Newfoundland, answered my questions about the effect of "Gladys" in Newfoundland. R. A. Hornstein of Atlantic Weather Central, Halifax, provided detailed information on the course of the storm. A special note of appreciation is due to Ross Anderson who shared many cold but exciting hours looking for the next rarity at Chebucto Head.

- Eric L. Mills



## CHRISTMAS COUNTS IN NOVA SCOTIA - 1968

by L.B. Macpherson

With the tallying of the 1968 Counts the rather surprising conclusion can be drawn that the number of species in our province in late December can be nearly as great as in early June. For while the record number of 114 species was recorded on these counts, only 118 species were noted on the Summer Counts of 1967. The total number of birds is, of course, much greater in summer.

The counts this year brought the number of species reported on our Christmas Counts (in the last 13 years) to 147 with the addition of Laughing Gull and Cardinal as new species on the list. The two Laughing Gulls on the Halifax East count, survivors of the involuntary, hurricane-borne invasion of this species, were pure accidentals and may never be recorded again on our Christmas Counts. On the other hand, the Cardinal is a species which is spreading in eastern North America and may well become a reasonably common species here in the future. The two Cardinals on the Christmas Count were seen at the feeding station of Percy Weir of Digby.

In the list following all species reported on the 1968 counts are tabulated. All interested in birds will have noted the great abundance of "winter finches" this year and the list below bears this out, with Evening Grosbeak, Common Redpoll and American Goldfinch being among the eleven most abundant species reported. Tree Sparrows, noted on 15 counts, were unusually abundant, as well.

SUMMARY OF 1968 COUNTS IN NOVA SCOTIA

- A. Total birds of the species counted.  
 B. Number of Counts on which species seen.  
 C. Highest Count total for the species.  
 D. Location of highest Count.

	A.	B.	C.	D.
Common Loon	61	9	( 24,	Halifax W)
Red-throated Loon	3	3	( 1,	Halifax E, W, Kingston)
Red-necked Grebe	53	5	( 30,	Brier Is.)
Horned Grebe	31	3	( 23,	Halifax E)
Great Cormorant	132	7	( 100,	Brier Is.)
Great Blue Heron	5	1	( 5,	Yarmouth)
Canada Goose	1288	4	( 596,	Yarmouth)
Mallard	79	3	( 53,	Wolfville)
Black Duck	3537	13	(2700,	Yarmouth)
Pintail	2	2	( 1,	Pictou, Halifax W)
Green-winged Teal	6	2	( 5,	Margaree)
Greater Scaup	173	4	( 150,	Digby)
Common Goldeneye	685	12	( 222,	Highlands)
Bufflehead	47	5	( 40,	Halifax E)
Oldsquaw	514	12	( 200,	Brier Is.)
Common Eider	457	5	( 400,	Brier Is.)
White-winged Scoter	313	10	( 99,	Kingston)
Surf Scoter	38	5	( 15,	Highlands)
Common Scoter	36	2	( 21,	Halifax E)
Hooded Merganser	1	1	( 1,	Halifax W)
Common Merganser	81	7	( 37,	Pictou)
Red-br. Merganser	118	10	( 30,	Halifax E)
Goshawk	2	2	( 1,	Shubenacadie, Wolfville)
Sharp-shinned Hawk	5	5	( 1,	Baddeck, Halifax E, Kingston, Kemptville, Brier Is.)
Red-tailed Hawk	32	10	( 15,	Brier Is.)
Rough-legged Hawk	18	6	( 11,	Brier Is.)
Bald Eagle	28	10	( 7,	Eskasoni)
Marsh Hawk	1	1	( 1,	Yarmouth)
Pigeon Hawk	4	2	( 2,	Highlands, Wolfville)
Sparrow Hawk	5	3	( 2,	Halifax W, Brier Is.)
Ruffed Grouse	44	14	( 8,	Halifax E)
Pheasant	12	3	( 5,	Kingston)
Gray Partridge			( CP,	Wolfville)
Killdeer	5	2	( 4,	Canso)
Woodcock	1	1	( 1,	Halifax W)
Ruddy Turnstone	7	1	( 7,	Louisbourg)
Common Snipe	8	3	( 4,	Halifax E)
Purple Sandpiper	744	4	( 700,	Brier Is.)
Sanderling	2	1	( 2,	Halifax W)
Glaucous Gull	21	6	( 8,	Sydneys)
Iceland Gull	223	6	( 104,	Sydneys)
Gr. Black-bk Gull	2725	19	( 810,	Yarmouth)
Herring Gull	11597	23	( 3248,	Sydneys)
Ring-billed Gull	76	4	( 48,	Halifax E)
Black-headed Gull	45	5	( 19,	Halifax W)
Laughing Gull	2	1	( 2,	Halifax E)

Bonaparte's Gull	2	1	( 2, Halifax W)
Kittiwake	1001	2	(1000, Brier Is.)
Razorbill	1	1	( 1, Halifax W)
Common Murre	1	1	( 1, Halifax W)
Thick-billed Murre	3	3	( 1, Canso, Halifax W, Brier Is.)
Dovekie	31	6	( 7, Louisbourg, Halifax E)
Black Guillemot	41	3	( 26, Brier Is.)
Mourning Dove	1	1	( 1, St.Peters)
Snowy Owl	1	1	( 1, Halifax E)
Kingfisher	3	2	( 2, Baddeck)
Flicker	3	2	( 2, Brier Is.)
Pileated Woodpecker			( CP, Baddeck)
Hairy Woodpecker	40	15	( 9, Halifax W)
Downy Woodpecker	59	17	( 22, Halifax W)
B-b.3-toed Wdpkr	2	2	( 1, Halifax E & W)
Horned Lark	211	6	(102, Wolfville)
Gray Jay	99	14	( 30, Highlands)
Blue Jay	298	23	( 76, Halifax W)
Common Raven	783	21	(163, Wolfville)
Common Crow	4485	25	(902, Sydneys)
Bl-capped Chickadee	896	23	(240, Halifax W)
Boreal Chickadee	347	19	( 96, Halifax W)
White-br.Nuthatch	27	9	( 8, St.Peters)
Red-br.Nuthatch	61	11	( 28, Highlands)
Brown Creeper	21	4	(13, Halifax W)
L-b. Marsh Wren	1	1	( 1, Halifax E)
Mockingbird	4	4	( 1, Highlands, Salmon R.) Halifax E, Brier Is.)
Brown Thrasher	1	1	( 1, Yarmouth)
Robin	364	14	(273, Wolfville)
Hermit Thrush	3	1	( 3, Yarmouth)
Golden-cr.Kinglet	429	15	(160, Halifax E)
Ruby-cr. Kinglet	1	1	( 1, Eskasoni)
Bohemian Waxwing	21	3	( 10, Highlands)
Cedar Waxwing			( CP, St.Peters, Round Hill)
Northern Shrike	3	3	( 1, Louisbourg, Kingston, Brier Is.)
Starling	9164	23	(3500, Halifax W)
Myrtle Warbler	6	5	( 2, Halifax E)
Palm Warbler	1	1	( 1, Halifax W)
Water Pipit	1	1	( 1, Halifax W)
Yellowthroat	1	1	( 1, Halifax W)
Yellow-br. Chat			( CP, Sydneys)
House Sparrow	3840	22	(852, Wolfville)
Red-winged B'bird	32	4	( 17, Yarmouth)
Baltimore Oriole	4	3	( 2, Digby)
Rusty Blackbird	9	2	( 6, Yarmouth)
Common Grackle	160	8	( 78, Yarmouth)
Br-headed Cowbird	545	11	(270, Halifax W)
Cardinal	2	1	( 2, Digby)
Dickcissel			( CP, Sydneys, Yarmouth)
Evening Grosbeak	1557	20	(580, Halifax W)
Purple Finch	355	15	(102, Highlands)
Pine Grosbeak	515	15	(175, Halifax E)
Common Redpoll	4535	17	(1079, Wolfville)
Pine Siskin	443	9	(131, Salmon R.)
Amer. Goldfinch	1170	16	( 530, Halifax E)

Red Crossbill	73	4	( 56, Sydneys)
W-w. Crossbill	99	8	( 35, Highlands)
Ipswich Sparrow	1	1	( 1, Halifax E)
Savannah Sparrow	10	4	( 5, Halifax E)
Vesper Sparrow	3	2	( 2, St. Peters)
Sl-colored Junco	1279	19	( 558, Wolfville)
Tree Sparrow	312	15	( 95, Halifax E & W)
White-throated Sp.	46	4	( 21, Halifax E)
Fox Sparrow	22	4	( 13, Yarmouth)
Swamp Sparrow	3	1	( 3, Halifax E)
Song Sparrow	141	14	( 40, Halifax W)
Lapland Longspur	151	2	( 150, Amherst)
Snow Bunting	565	7	( 500, Brier Is.)

Summaries of 25 Counts are recorded below, in more or less north to south order. The species' names bracketed are those seen in the Count Period but not on a Count Day. Two Counts were combined with major, established Counts covering the areas in which they were taken; two Counts which were not made in the Count Period have been omitted.

HIGHLANDS NATIONAL PARK, Victoria Co., 28 December 1968.

Nineteen observers, 40 party-hours.

Observation conditions: good.

Totals: 50 species identified; about 2230 individuals.

Common Loon, 4; Great Comorant, 4; Black Duck, 7; Greater Scaup, 2; Common Goldeneye, 222; Oldsquaw, 115; Common Eider, 3; White-winged Scoter, 5; Surf Scoter, 15; Common Scoter, 15; Common Merganser, 1; Red-breasted Merganser, 16; Rough-legged Hawk, 1; Pigeon Hawk, 2; Ruffed Grouse, 4; Purple Sandpiper, 1; Glaucous Gull, 5; Iceland Gull, 58; Great Black-backed Gull, 33; Herring Gull, 84; Dovekie, 5; Flicker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 5; Downy Woodpecker, 8; Horned Lark, 33; Gray Jay, 30; Blue Jay, 22; Raven, 38; Crow, 129; Black-capped Chickadee, 37; Boreal Chickadee, 33; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 28; Mockingbird, 1; Robin, 4; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 38; Bohemian Waxwing, 10; Starling, 33; House Sparrow, 14; Evening Grosbeak, 15; Purple Finch, 102; Pine Grosbeak, 44; Common Redpoll, 833; Pine Siskin, 32; Goldfinch, 3; Red Crossbill, 4; White-winged Crossbill, 35; Slate-colored Junco, 92; Tree Sparrow, 2; Song Sparrow, 1; Snow Bunting, 1.

Observers : Mary Barker, Gordon Doucette, Jane Doucette, John Doucette, Virginia Doucette, Irene Gettas, Michael Gillis, Hedley Hopkins, Isabel MacDonald, John D. MacDonald, Mary MacEvoy, Betty McGuire, Larry McGuire, Jacques McIsaac, Robert McNeil, Wayne Neily (compiler), Betty Reid, Edith Webb and Roger Wilson.

MARGAREE, Inverness Co., 1 January 1969.

Two observers, 10 party-hours.

Observation conditions: very poor.

Totals: 21 species identified; about 153 individuals.

Black Duck, 3; Green-winged Teal, 5; Common Goldeneye, 18; Bufflehead, 2; Ruffed Grouse, 3; Glaucous Gull, 1; Iceland Gull, 2; Great Black-backed Gull, 3; Herring Gull, 3; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Horned Lark, 5; Blue Jay, 1; Raven, 23; Crow, 32; Boreal Chickadee, 4; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 3; Starling, 10; Purple Finch, 5; Pine Grosbeak, 3; Common Redpoll, 18; White-winged Crossbill, 8.

Observers : Peter Chiasson, Wayne Neily (compiler).

THE SYDNEYS, Cape Breton Co., 27 December 1969.

Nine observers, 28 party-hours.

Observation conditions: good to medium.

Totals: 33 species identified; about 7490 individuals.

Great Cormorant, 4; Black Duck, 13;  
Common Goldeneye, 73; Oldsquaw, 55; White-winged Scoter, 78;  
(Rough-legged Hawk); Bald Eagle, 5; Glaucous Gull, 8;  
Iceland Gull, 104; Great Black-backed Gull, 571;  
Herring Gull, 3248; Ring-billed Gull, 20; Hairy Woodpecker, 2;  
Downy Woodpecker, 1; Gray Jay, 3; Blue Jay, 14; Raven, 56;  
Crow, 902; Black-capped Chickadee, 14; Boreal Chickadee, 3;  
(Mockingbird); Robin, 3; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 8;  
(Ruby-crowned Kinglet); (Bohemian Waxwing); Starling, 1078;  
(Yellow-breasted Chat); House Sparrow, 575; Cowbird, 1;  
(Dickcissel); Evening Grosbeak, 59; Purple Finch, 58;  
Common Redpoll, 260; Goldfinch, 160; Red Crossbill, 56;  
White-winged Crossbill, 11; Slate-colored Junco, 10;  
Tree Sparrow, 4; Song Sparrow, 1; (Snow Bunting).

Observers: George Hay, Mary Hay, Hedley Hopkins (compiler), D.Matheson, E.Matheson, Robert MacNeil, Wayne Neily, Betty Reid and Mary Willms.

BADDECK, Victoria Co., 30 December 1968.

Fourteen observers, 14 party-hours.

Observation conditions: good.

Totals: 27 species identified; about 437 individuals.

Black Duck, 2; Common Merganser, 12; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Bald Eagle, 6; Ruffed Grouse, 1; Herring Gull, 18; Kingfisher, 2; (Pileated Woodpecker); Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 2; (Horned Lark); Gray Jay, 14; Blue Jay, 25; Raven, 21; Crow, 38; Bl-capped Chickadee, 56; Boreal Chickadee, 5; White-breasted Nuthatch, 5; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 4; Robin, 12; (Bohemian Waxwing); Starling, 26; House Sparrow, 62; Evening Grosbeak, 36; Pine Grosbeak, 3; Common Redpoll, 16; Goldfinch, 40; Slate-colored Junco, 16; Song Sparrow, 6; Snow Bunting, 12.

Observers: George Bartlett, Roy Campbell, Kenene Doherty, Queenie Fuller, Juanita MacDermid, Agnes MacDonald, Alex J. MacDonald, Isabel MacFarlane, Mary MacLeod, Jean MacPherson, Ruth MacPherson, Gladys MacRae (compiler), Annie Nicholson and John G.Nicholson.

LOUISBOURG, Cape Breton Co., 28 December 1968.

Three observers, 9 party-hours.

Observation conditions : medium becoming good.

Totals: 39 species identified; about 2620 individuals.

Common Loon, 2; Red-necked Grebe, 3; Black Duck, 1; Common Goldeneye, 36; Oldsquaw, 38; Common Eider, 2; White-winged Scoter, 20; Common Merganser, 3; Red-breasted Merganser, 18; Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Bald Eagle, 1; (Sparrow Hawk); Ruffed Grouse, 2; Ruddy Turnstone, 7; Purple Sandpiper, 32; Glaucous Gull, 2; Iceland Gull, 43; Great Black-backed Gull, 250; Herring Gull, 800; Dovekie, 7; Black Guillemot, 11; (Mourning Dove); Downy Woodpecker, 1; (Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker); Gray Jay, 3; Blue Jay, 3; Raven, 7; Crow, 113; Boreal Chickadee, 3; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 1; Northern Shrike, 1; Starling, 60; House Sparrow, 35; Evening Grosbeak, 23; Purple Finch, 55; Pine Grosbeak, 18; Common Redpoll, 915+; Pine Siskin, 90; Goldfinch, 2; White-winged Crossbill, 6; Slate-colored Junco, 4; (Snow Bunting).

Observers : Gwen Lunn, John Lunn (compiler)  
and Simon Lunn.

ESKASONI, Cape Breton Co., 21 December 1968.

Three observers, 16 party-hours.

Observation conditions : very good.

Totals: 26 species identified; about 368 individuals.

Common Loon, 2; Black Duck, 9; Common Goldeneye, 9; Oldsquaw, 1; White-winged Scoter, 2; Common Scoter, 36; Red-breasted Merganser, 2; Bald Eagle, 7; Great Black-backed Gull, 3; Herring Gull, 91; Gray Jay, 3; Blue Jay, 2; Raven, 8; Crow, 35; Black-capped Chickadee, 4; Boreal Chickadee, 1; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 5; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 1; Starling, 16; House Sparrow, 10; Evening Grosbeak, 2; Purple Finch, 6; Pine Grosbeak, 17; Pine Siskin, 57; Goldfinch, 27; Slate-colored Junco, 12.

Observers: Michael Gillis, Robert G. McNeil (compiler)  
and Betty Reid.

SALMON RIVER, Cape Breton Co., 21 December 1968.

Six observers, 13 party-hours.

Observation conditions : medium becoming good.

Totals : 27 species identified; about 713 individuals.

Bald Eagle, 2; Ruffed Grouse, 7; Common Snipe, 1; Great Black-backed Gull, 2; Herring Gull, 7; Hairy Woodpecker, 2; Downy Woodpecker, 3; Gray Jay, 5; Blue Jay, 10; Raven, 11; Crow, 125; Black-capped Chickadee, 31; Boreal Chickadee, 2; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Mockingbird, 1; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 7; Starling, 53; Myrtle Warbler, 1; House Sparrow, 30; Evening Grosbeak, 14; Purple Finch, 14; Common Redpoll, 34; Pine Siskin, 131; Goldfinch, 214; Red Crossbill, 12; White-winged Crossbill, 3; Slate-colored Junco, 18; (Snow Bunting).

Observers : Ruth Goode, Bertha Hopkins,  
Hedley Hopkins (compiler), Frances Hussey, Betty Reid and  
Elaine Stassen.



ST. PETER'S, Richmond Co., 27 December 1968.

Seven observers, 17 party-hours.

Observation conditions : medium.

Totals : 33 species identified; about 1644 individuals.

(Red-necked Grebe, Horned Grebe, Great Blue Heron, Canada Goose, Black Duck); Common Goldeneye, 79; Bufflehead, 2; Oldsquaw, 4; (Common Eider); White-winged Scoter, 1; Surf Scoter, 2; Red-breasted Merganser, 3; (Sharp-shinned Hawk); Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Bald Eagle, 1; Ruffed Grouse, 1; Great Black-backed Gull, 18; Herring Gull, 287; Ring-billed Gull, 1; Black-headed Gull, 3; Dovekie, 4; Mourning Dove, 1; (Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, Blue Jay); Raven, 97; Crow, 259; Black-capped Chickadee, 52; Boreal Chickadee, 37; White-breasted Nuthatch, 8; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Robin, 1; (Cedar Waxwing); Starling, 321; warbler species, 1; House Sparrow, 162; (Red-winged Blackbird); Cowbird, 2; (Evening Grosbeak); Purple Finch, 34; (Pine Grosbeak); Common Redpoll, 243; Pine Siskin, 7; Goldfinch, 2; (White-winged Crossbill); Savannah Sparrow, 1; Slate-colored Junco, 3; Vesper Sparrow, 2; Song Sparrow, 2; (Snow Bunting).

Observers : Aloysius Burke, Murdock Digout (compiler), Mrs M.H. Digout, William Digout, A.O. MacLean, Kathleen MacRae and Maxine Richard.

AMHERST, Cumberland Co., 27 December 1968.

Four observers, 4 party-hours.

Observation conditions: good.

Totals: 19 species identified; about 571 individuals.

Ruffed Grouse, 2; Great Black-backed Gull, 3; Herring Gull, 6; Black-legged Kittiwake, 3; Downy Woodpecker, 2; Raven, 65; Crow, 38; Black-capped Chickadee, 26; Boreal Chickadee, 14; White-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 1; (Robin); Golden-crowned Kinglet, 9; (Bohemian Waxwing); Starling, 21; House Sparrow, 130; (Baltimore Oriole); Evening Grosbeak, 28; Common Redpoll, 56; White-winged Crossbill, 14; Tree Sparrow, 2; Lapland Longspur, 150.

Observers : Evelyn Lowerison (compiler), William McNutt, Mrs Dora Myers and Mrs Bert Vergie.

NORTHPORT, Cumberland Co., 26 December 1968.

Two observers, 5 party-hours.

Observation conditions: very good.

Totals: 8 species identified; about 112 individuals.

Common Loon, 2; Oldsquaw, 6; ducks unidentified, 30; Ruffed Grouse, 2; Herring Gull, 20; Blue Jay, 1; Crow, 38; Black-capped Chickadee, 2; Tree Sparrow, 11.

Observers : Duncan MacNeil and Robert G. MacNeil.

PICTOU, Pictou Co., 22 December 1968.

One observer, 7½ hours.

Observation conditions : very good.

Totals : 23 species identified; about 681 individuals.

Red-necked Grebe, 1; Black Duck, 120; Pintail, 1;  
Common Goldeneye, 104; Oldsquaw, 1; Common Merganser, 37;  
Red-breasted Merganser, 19; Bald Eagle, 2; (Pigeon Hawk);  
Great Black-backed Gull, 12; Herring Gull, 68;  
Hairy Woodpecker, 3; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Blue Jay, 14;  
Crow, 60; Black-capped Chickadee, 7; White-breasted  
Nuthatch, 1; (Brown Creeper); (Robin); Starling, 154;  
House Sparrow, 46; Evening Grosbeak, 21; Purple Finch, 4;  
(Pine Grosbeak, Common Redpoll); Goldfinch, 3;  
Tree Sparrow, 1; Song Sparrow, 1.

Observer : Eric Holdway.

SPRINGVILLE, Pictou Co., 1 January 1969.

Two observers, 6½ party-hours.

Observation conditions : very poor.

Totals : 17 species identified; about 1202 individuals.

Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Ruffed Grouse, 1;  
Great Black-backed Gull, 40; Herring Gull, 850;  
Downy Woodpecker, 1; (Gray Jay); Blue Jay, 1; Raven, 61;  
Crow, 111; Black-capped Chickadee, 12; Boreal Chickadee, 4;  
(White-breasted Nuthatch); Starling, 47; Cowbird, 2;  
Evening Grosbeak, 11; Purple Finch, 1; (Pine Grosbeak);  
Common Redpoll, 30; Tree Sparrow, 1; Song Sparrow, 28.

Observers : Fred Kenney (compiler), Margaret Kenney.

CANSO, Guysborough Co., 31 December 1968.

Two observers, 4 party-hours.

Observation conditions : very good.

Totals : 20 species identified; about 285 individuals.

Oldsquaw, 1; unidentified ducks, 12; Killdeer, 4;  
Iceland Gull, 9; Great Black-backed Gull, 12;  
Herring Gull, 80; Thick-billed Murre, 1; Blue Jay, 1;  
Raven, 1; Crow, 33; Black-capped Chickadee, 2;  
Boreal Chickadee, 2; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Starling, 80;  
Myrtle Warbler, 1; House Sparrow, 25; Common Grackle, 1;  
Cowbird, 3; Evening Grosbeak, 12; Pine Grosbeak, 2;  
Slate-colored Junco, 2.

Observers : Eileen Armsworthy, June Jarvis (compiler).

BASS RIVER, Colchester Co., 26 December 1968.

Three observers, 7 party-hours.

Observation conditions : good.

Totals : 21 species identified; about 145 individuals.

Black Duck, 1; Bufflehead, 1; (Red-breasted  
Merganser); Great Black-backed Gull, 3; Herring Gull, 12;  
Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Blue Jay, 6;  
Crow, 11; Black-capped Chickadee, 10; Boreal Chickadee, 7;  
Red-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Robin, 1; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 6;  
Starling, 12; House Sparrow, 10; Evening Grosbeak, 9;

Pine Grosbeak, 9; Common Redpoll, 10; Goldfinch, 25;  
Slate-colored Junco, 7; Tree Sparrow, 2.  
Observers: Joyce Grue, Phyllis Hemeon and  
Ward Hemeon (compiler).

SHUBENACADIE, Hants Co., 31 December 1968.

Three observers, 7 party-hours.

Observation conditions : very good.

Totals : 23 species identified; about 476 individuals.

Black Duck, 6; Goshawk, 1; Herring Gull, 2;  
Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Gray Jay, 3;  
Blue Jay, 3; Raven, 24; Crow, 100; Black-capped Chickadee, 75;  
Boreal Chickadee, 18; White-breasted Nuthatch, 4;  
Red-breasted Nuthatch, 4; (Robin); Golden-crowned Kinglet, 10;  
Bohemian Waxwing, 4; Starling, 74; House Sparrow, 50;  
(Cowbird); Evening Grosbeak, 9; (Pine Grosbeak);  
Common Redpoll, 4; Goldfinch, 55; Slate-colored Junco, 25;  
Tree Sparrow, 2; Song Sparrow, 1.

Observers : Mrs A.Gass, Mary Geddes and  
Roslyn MacPhee (compiler).

HALIFAX (EAST), Halifax Co., 21 December 1968.

Twenty-five observers, 66 party-hours.

Observation conditions : good.

Totals : 74 species identified; about 6662 individuals.

Common Loon, 4; Red-throated Loon, 1; Red-necked  
Grebe, 7; Horned Grebe, 23; Great Cormorant, 6;  
Canada Goose, 550; Mallard, 1; Black Duck, 409; Green-winged  
Teal, 1; Greater Scaup, 17; Common Goldeneye, 15;  
Bufflehead, 40; Oldsquaw, 49; Common Eider, 2; White-winged  
Scoter, 14; Common Scoter, 21; Common Merganser, 7;  
Red-breasted Merganser, 30; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1;  
Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Rough-legged Hawk, 2; Bald Eagle, 2;  
Sparrow Hawk, 1; Ruffed Grouse, 8; Killdeer, 1;  
Common Snipe, 4; Purple Sandpiper, 11; (Sanderling);  
Great Black-backed Gull, 195; Herring Gull, 770; Ring-billed  
Gull, 48; Black-headed Gull, 11; Laughing Gull, 2;  
Black-legged Kittiwake, 1; Dovekie, 7; Snowy Owl, 1;  
Hairy Woodpecker, 3; Downy Woodpecker, 2; Black-backed  
Three-toed Woodpecker, 1; Horned Lark, 5; Gray Jay, 10;  
Blue Jay, 27; Raven, 65; Crow, 175; Black-capped  
Chickadee, 105; Boreal Chickadee, 75; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2;  
Brown Creeper, 5; Long-billed Marsh Wren, 1; Mockingbird, 1;  
Robin, 4; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 160; (Northern Shrike);  
Starling, 1750; Myrtle Warbler, 2; (Palm Warbler);  
House Sparrow, 420; Baltimore Oriole, 1; Rusty Blackbird, 3;  
Common Grackle, 2; Cowbird, 32; Evening Grosbeak, 56;  
Purple Finch, 1; Pine Grosbeak, 175; Common Redpoll, 470;  
Pine Siskin, 36; Goldfinch, 530; Ipswich Sparrow, 1;  
Savannah Sparrow, 5; Slate-colored Junco, 110;  
Tree Sparrow, 95; White-throated Sparrow, 21; Fox Sparrow, 3;  
Swamp Sparrow, 3; Song Sparrow, 24; Lapland Longspur, 1;  
Snow Bunting, 16.

Observers : C.R.K.Allen, M.W.Ankatell-Jones, Hazel Carmichael, Molly Clayden, R.J.Conover, Ethel Crathorne, R.E.Dicks, B.K.Doane, Phyllis Dobson, Elizabeth Doull, Rosemary Eaton, Sylvia Fullerton, Ewan Galbraith, Barbara Hinds, W.A.Hughs, Ian McLaren (organizer), L.B.Macpherson (compiler), Anne Mills, Eric Mills, Willett J.Mills, Wayne Neily, Roger Pocklington, R.W. and Mrs Topple and Alfred Wehrmaker.

HALIFAX (WEST), Halifax Co., 28 December 1968.

Thirty-six observers; 58 party-hours.

Observation conditions : medium becoming poor.

Totals : 73 species identified; about 10616 individuals.

Common Loon, 24; Red-throated Loon, 1;  
Red-necked Grebe, 12; Horned Grebe, 5; Great Cormorant, 13;  
Canada Goose, 121; Black Duck, 117; Pintail, 1;  
Greater Scaup, 4; Common Goldeneye, 32; Oldsquaw, 40;  
(Common Eider); White-winged Scoter, 72; Surf Scoter, 10;  
Hooded Merganser, 1; Common Merganser, 6; Red-br Merganser, 18;  
Red-tailed Hawk, 2; Rough-legged Hawk, 2; (Pigeon Hawk);  
Sparrow Hawk, 2; Ruffed Grouse, 7; Woodcock, 1; Sanderling, 2;  
Glaucous Gull, 2; Iceland Gull, 7; Great Black-backed Gull, 470;  
Herring Gull, 3050; Ring-billed Gull, 7; Black-headed Gull, 19;  
Bonaparte's Gull, 2; Razorbill, 1; Common Murre, 1;  
Thick-billed Murre, 1; Dovekie, 5; Black Guillemot, 4;  
Hairy Woodpecker, 9; Downy Woodpecker, 22; Black-backed  
Three-toed Woodpecker, 1; Horned Lark, 1; Gray Jay, 7;  
Blue Jay, 76; Raven, 18; Crow, 207; Black-capped Chickadee, 240;  
Boreal Chickadee, 96; White-breasted Nuthatch, 4;  
Red-breasted Nuthatch, 14; Brown Creeper, 2; (Mockingbird);  
Robin, 11; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 111; Water Pipit, 1;  
Bohemian Waxwing, 2; Starling, 3500; Palm Warbler, 1;  
Yellowthroat, 1; House Sparrow, 550; Red-winged Blackbird, 3;  
Common Grackle, 55; Cowbird, 270; Evening Grosbeak, 580;  
Purple Finch, 36; Pine Grosbeak, 102; Common Redpoll, 260;  
Pine Siskin, 7; Goldfinch, 39; Red Crossbill, 1;  
White-winged Crossbill, 4; Savannah Sparrow, 2; Slate-colored  
Junco, 158; Tree Sparrow, 95; White-throated Sparrow, 1;  
Fox Sparrow, 5; Song Sparrow, 40; Snow Bunting, 12.

Observers : C.R.K.Allen and Mrs Allen,  
Andrew Ankatell-Jones, M.W.Ankatell-Jones, Mrs Shirley Baird,  
R.V.P.Bowditch, Jack Brayley, Hazel Carmichael,  
Mrs P.S.Christie, Walter Chute, Molly Clayden, Ethel Crathorne,  
B.K.Doane (organizer), Phyllis Dobson, Ann Doull,  
Elizabeth Doull, F.E.Duggan, Sylvia Fullerton, Ewan Galbraith,  
J.B.Hardie, Mrs Ralph Hebb, Mrs R.H.Helpard, S.Ward Hemeon,  
Barbara Hinds, Ian McLaren, I.A.Macpherson,  
L.B.Macpherson (compiler), Anne Mills, Eric Mills,  
Willett J.Mills, Harding Moffatt, Harold Murch, Mrs E.A.Murray,  
Patricia Pocklington, Roger Pocklington, Mrs C.L.Tory.

WOLFVILLE, Kings Co., 26 December 1968.

Twelve observers, 28 party-hours.

Observation conditions : very poor.

Totals : 40 species identified; about 6178 individuals.

(Canada Goose); Mallard (feral ?), 53; Black Duck, 144; Common Goldeneye, 5; Goshawk, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 5; Rough-legged Hawk, 1; (Bald Eagle); Pigeon Hawk, 2; Pheasant, 4; (Gray Partridge); Common Snipe, 3; Great Black-backed Gull, 189; Herring Gull, 542; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Horned Lark, 102; Blue Jay, 37; Raven, 163; Crow, 800; Black-capped Chickadee, 42; Boreal Chickadee, 4; White-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Robin, 273; (Golden-crowned Kinglet); Bohemian Waxwing, 9; Starling, 654; (Myrtle Warbler); House Sparrow, 852; Red-winged Blackbird, 10; Common Grackle, 9; Cowbird, 89; Evening Grosbeak, 303; Purple Finch, 20; Pine Grosbeak, 27; Common Redpoll, 1079; Pine Siskin, 46; Goldfinch, 41; Savannah Sparrow, 2; Slate-colored Junco, 558; Tree Sparrow, 77; White-throated Sparrow, 5; (Fox Sparrow); Song Sparrow, 16; Snow Bunting, 6.

Observers : P.Austin-Smith, S.Bleakney, C.Chipman, C.Coldwell, R.Eagles, J.S.Erskine (compiler), R.Erskine, M.Forbes, B.Hughson, Wayne Neily, R.W.Tufts, and R.Waseem.

KINGSTON, Kings Co., 23 December 1968.

Seven observers, 17 party-hours.

Observation conditions: good becoming poor.

Totals : 34 species identified; about 1449 individuals.

Red-throated Loon, 1; Horned Grebe, 3; Great Cormorant, 4; Oldsquaw, 4; White-winged Scoter, 99; Surf Scoter, 1; Red-breasted Merganser, 4; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Rough-legged Hawk, 1; Pheasant, 5; Great Black-backed Gull, 1; Herring Gull, 13; Hairy Woodpecker, 2; Downy Woodpecker, 5; Blue Jay, 17; Raven, 5; Crow, 80; Black-capped Chickadee, 46; Boreal Chickadee, 6; White-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Brown Creeper, 2; Robin, 2; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 14; Northern Shrike, 1; Starling, 348; House Sparrow, 403; Cowbird, 127; Evening Grosbeak, 13; Pine Grosbeak, 38; Common Redpoll, 100; Goldfinch, 2; Slate-colored Junco, 90; Tree Sparrow, 6; Song Sparrow, 2.

Observers : Alfred Bent, Murray Bent, Margaret Brown, Frank Hawkins, Thelma Hawkins, Larry Neily and Wayne Neily (compiler).

ROUND HILL, Annapolis Co., 31 December 1968.

Two observers, 5 party-hours.

Observation conditions: good.

Totals : 12 species identified; about 66 individuals.

(Great Black-backed Gull); Herring Gull, 10; Black-headed Gull, 2; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Blue Jay, 3; Raven, 2; Crow, 5; Black-capped Chickadee, 10; Boreal Chickadee, 2; Robin, 1; (Golden-crowned Kinglet; Cedar Waxwing); Starling, 7; House Sparrow, 20; (Rusty Blackbird, Common

Grackle, Evening Grosbeak, Purple Finch); Pine Grosbeak, 3;  
(Slate-colored Junco).

Observers : M.Whitehead, W.E.Whitehead.

DIGBY, Digby Co., 31 December 1968.

Twelve observers, 8 party-hours.

Observation conditions : medium becoming poor.

Totals : 31 species identified; about 704 individuals.

Common Loon, 2; Black Duck, 17; Greater Scaup, 150;  
Red-tailed Hawk, 2; Bald Eagle, 1; Ruffed Grouse, 2;  
Great Black-backed Gull, 35; Herring Gull, 88;  
Hairy Woodpecker, 4; Downy Woodpecker, 4; Gray Jay, 1;  
Blue Jay, 20; Raven, 5; Crow, 22; Black-capped Chickadee, 26;  
Brown Creeper, 1; Robin, 3; Starling, 28; House Sparrow, 100;  
Red-winged Blackbird, 2; Baltimore Oriole, 2; Common Grackle, 10;  
Cowbird, 5; Cardinal, 2; Evening Grosbeak, 112; Purple Finch, 1;  
Pine Grosbeak, 13; Slate-colored Junco, 40; Tree Sparrow, 3;  
Fox Sparrow, 1; Song Sparrow, 4.

Observers : Louise Daley (compiler), Bernice Emmerson,  
MacLeod Rogers, Harold Emmerson, Anna Ruth Rogers,  
John Rogers, Ann Rogers, Rory Rogers, Harold Sulis,  
Vara Sulis, Marjorie Tupper, Percy Weir.

YARMOUTH, Yarmouth Co., 29 December 1968.

Twenty-four observers, 22 party-hours.

Observation conditions; poor becoming worse.

Totals : 44 species identified; about 5832 individuals.

Common Loon, 1; Great Cormorant, 1;  
Great Blue Heron, 5; Canada Goose, 596; Mallard (feral?), 25;  
Black Duck, 2500; Common Goldeneye, 17; Bufflehead, 2;  
(Oldsquaw); Common Eider, 50; White-winged Scoter, 15;  
Red-breasted Merganser, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 3; Marsh Hawk, 1;  
(Pigeon Hawk); Great Black-backed Gull, 810; Herring Gull, 465;  
Black-headed Gull, 10; (Mourning Dove); Kingfisher, 1;  
Gray Jay, 5; Blue Jay, 5; Raven, 42; Crow, 96; Black-capped  
Chickadee, 43; White-breasted Nuthatch, 1; (Mockingbird);  
Brown Thrasher, 1; Robin, 13; Hermit Thrush, 3; Starling, 87;  
Myrtle Warbler, 1; House Sparrow, 263; Red-winged Blackbird, 17;  
Baltimore Oriole, 1; Rusty Blackbird, 6; Common Grackle, 78;  
Cowbird, 122; (Dickcissel); Evening Grosbeak, 209;  
Purple Finch, 5; Pine Grosbeak, 2; (Common Redpoll);  
Vesper Sparrow, 1; Slate-colored Junco, 73; Tree Sparrow, 4;  
White-throated Sparrow, 19; Fox Sparrow, 13;  
Song Sparrow, 13; Snow Bunting, 18.

Observers : Mrs Earl Cann, Mrs Aaron Churchill,  
Miss Lydia Davison, Mr and Mrs Munro Gardner, Mrs Lois Hardeck,  
J.Clark Higby, John C.Higby, Marion Hilton, (compiler),  
Mrs Wallace Hurlburt, Mrs Geo. Kenney, Miss Marjorie Kenney,  
Marsden Kenney, Mrs T.A.M.Kirk, Mrs Kathleen Lockhart,  
Mrs Clarence McGray, Mrs Fred Nickerson, J.Israel Pottier,  
Mrs Olive Purdy, Mrs Walter Quickfall, Mrs Hugh Robbins,  
Mrs John Robbins, Mrs G.E.Saunders and Mrs Edwin G.Sollows.

LAKE GEORGE, Yarmouth Co., 29 December 1968.

Ten observers, 12 party-hours.

Observation conditions: poor becoming worse.

Totals : 18 species identified; about 219 individuals.

Canada Goose, 21; Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Ruffed Grouse, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 3; Gray Jay, 5; Blue Jay, 7; Crow, 3; Black-capped Chickadee, 27; Robin, 1; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 2; Starling, 5; House Sparrow, 115; (Red-winged Blackbird); (Evening Grosbeak); (Purple Finch); Common Redpoll, 8; Goldfinch, 1; Slate-colored Junco, 15.

Observers : Mrs Fred Delaney, Miss Lydia Davison, Marion Hilton, Mrs T.A.M.Kirk (compiler), Mrs Kathleen Lockhart, Mrs Olive Purdy, Mrs Geo. Sorensen, George Sorensen, Mrs Eliz. Stübbert, Miss Mary Wyman.

KEMPTVILLE, Yarmouth Co., 29 December 1968.

One observer (feeder).

Totals : 11 species identified; about 103 individuals.

(Great Blue Heron); Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Ruffed Grouse, 3; Gray Jay, 1; Blue Jay, 1; Raven, 1; Crow, 3; Black-capped Chickadee, 20; (Robin); Golden-crowned Kinglet, 3; House Sparrow, 35; Evening Grosbeak, 5; Slate-colored Junco, 30; (Tree Sparrow).

Observer : Mrs Bernice Koon.

BRIER ISLAND, Digby Co., 29 December 1968.

One observer, 7 hours.

Observation conditions: very good.

Totals : 53 species identified; about 5900 individuals.

Common Loon, 20; Red-necked Grebe, 30; Great Cormorant, 100; Black Duck, 105; Common Goldeneye, 75; Oldsquaw, 200; Common Eider, 400; White-winged Scoter, 7; Surf Scoter, 10; Common Merganser, 15; Red-br Merganser, 7; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 15; Rough-legged Hawk, 11; Bald Eagle, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 2; Pheasant, 3; Purple Sandpiper, 700+; Glaucous Gull, 3; Great Black-backed Gull, 75; Herring Gull, 1000+; Black-legged Kittiwake, 1000+; Thick-billed Murre, 1; Dovekie, 3; Black Guillemot, 26; Flicker, 2; Hairy Woodpecker, 4; Horned Lark, 65; Gray Jay, 9; Blue Jay, 2; Raven, 40; Crow, 75; Black-capped Chickadee, 10; Boreal Chickadee, 31; Mockingbird, 1; Robin, 35; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 52; Northern Shrike, 1; Starling, 800; Myrtle Warbler, 1; House Sparrow, 50; Common Grackle, 3; Evening Grosbeak, 40; Purple Finch, 13; Pine Grosbeak, 59; Common Redpoll, 200; Pine Siskin, 37; Goldfinch, 26; White-winged Crossbill, 18; Slate-colored Junco, 14; Tree Sparrow, 7; Song Sparrow, 2; Snow Bunting, 500.

Observer : Wickerson Lent.

## WINTER BIRD REPORT - 1968-69

The winter of 1968-69 turned out to be one of the mildest in years. Along the Atlantic Coast and south-western counties in particular, autumn extended well into February; snowfall was light and temporary, lakes and inlets were largely ice-free and temperatures rarely approached zero. As a result a number of species which are regular but sparse in ordinary winters (Robins, Myrtle Warblers, Goldfinches, Purple Finches, Juncos, Fox and Song Sparrows) have been reported in unusual numbers and widely distributed from Glace Bay to Yarmouth. Stragglers and summer birds which failed to migrate have also survived much longer; Mourning Doves were still doing well in Kings County at the end of January; a Baltimore Oriole near Peggy's Cove, Hfx. Co., on Jan. 26 and a Yellow-breasted Chat in Halifax City in mid-February were living on borrowed time, but apparently thriving.

The regular woodland residents, both species of Chickadee, Golden-crowned Kinglet and the scarcer Red-breasted Nuthatches and Brown Creepers have kept up their numbers this year instead of dwindling to the vanishing point as they usually do in late January.

Add to this the great invasion of Bohemian Waxwings, Redpolls, Pine Grosbeaks, and Tree Sparrows, plus more Northern Shrikes than usual - and we have a winter which has kept our birders here on their toes and has given them daily lists twice as long as normal.

A few scarcities in this winter of plenty, should be noted: the small falcons were reported more seldom than usual, as were Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers - except at feeders; Savannah Sparrows, which usually winter in fair numbers among the dunes, have only been reported twice, and Pine Siskins and both species of Crossbills have been rare.

Numbers of water birds seemed normal. although several species benefitted from the clement winter; Great Blue Herons were reported from Yarmouth Co. (Nov. 22, 23), Hants Co. (Nov. 30), Richmond Co. (Jan. 4), Shelburne Co. (Jan. 24 & Feb. 23), Victoria Co. (Feb. 15). Three Great Blues at any rate made it till spring, still present near Barrington at the end of March. Canada Geese wintered at Cole Harbor and Petpeswick, Hfx. Co., in much greater numbers than usual because of open water, and Sanderlings were reported from several beaches along the Atlantic Coast.

One or two species seemed to be down. Horned Grebes, which in most winters greatly outnumber Red-necks, were the scarcer species this year. White-winged Gulls, too, showed up in very few reports, perhaps, as one observer suggested, because of open water in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

The above winter bird population picture is based on exceptionally good coverage by reporters from all parts of the province and is remarkably uniform throughout.



## Rarities and Late Sightings

A LITTLE BLUE HERON appeared on Sable Island Oct. 29, identified by Mrs. C. Bell. An immature YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON Nov. 3 and 4 in the same place was seen and identified by Ian McLaren and Mrs. C. Bell. A drake BARROW'S GOLDENEYE was shot Nov. 26 at Musquodoboit Harbour, Hfx. Co., and brought to Col. Bob Sutton for identification. A RUDDY DUCK, seen Jan. 12 in Yarmouth Harbor back of the Cotton Mill was identified (size, bill, cocked tail, white face patch) by Marion Hilton, who realized this was a rarity in Nova Scotia, but is familiar with the species in New England. A PEREGRINE FALCON was observed Nov. 14 at New Waterford, Cape Breton Co., by Dr. Clive S. MacDonald; one was seen Dec. 8 at Barrington, Shel. Co. by Evelyn Richardson, and one arrived at Cape Sable Light Jan. 21 (Smiths). This bird lit on the rail of the Light where it stayed some time, glaring at the family cat sunning itself in the yard below, which didn't seem to bother the cat, but made the Smiths very nervous. A VIRGINIA RAIL, released alive from a mink trap Nov. 5 at New Waterford, was reported by C.S. MacDonald; one was seen at Conrad's Beach, Hfx. Co., Nov. 15 by Eric Cooke; another Dec. 14 at Barrington by Betty June Smith; and one was "caught in tall grass near the house, released, but returned", Jan. 2 at Centreville, Shel. Co., reported by H.F. Lewis, in the Shelburne Coastguard. A SORA, an immature, in black juvenile plumage Nov. 11 and 18, seen in typical marshy habitat near Canning, King's Co., was reported by Robie Tufts, who mentions that this type of plumage is not usually retained beyond October. A COMMON GALLINULE was on Sable Island Nov. 3 to 5, seen by Ian McLaren. An AMERICAN COOT, on salt water Oct. 30 at Pictou, was reported by Eric Holdway. There were several fall records of Coots at Sable Island, with a peak of 15 on Nov. 17, according to Ian McLaren. One was seen Nov. 17 at Lower Wedgeport, Yar. Co., reported by Israel Pothier, and one Nov. 23 in a farmer's pond at Chebogue Pt., Yar. Co., identified by Marion Hilton. A very late PIPING PLOVER was last seen Nov. 17, on Sable Island (Mrs. C. Bell). Very late records of KILLDEER are 4, Dec. 31 at Little Dover, Guys. Co. (Eileen Armsworthy); 1, Jan. 8, at Sable Island (Mrs. C. Bell), and 1, Feb. 9, 1, Feb. 28, at Cape Sable Light (Betty June Smith). There were several fall records of GOLDEN PLOVER at Sable Island, the latest 1, Nov. 22 (Mrs. C. Bell); and a last lone WHIMBRELL left from the same place Nov. 1. Two UPLAND PLOVER were noted by Mrs. Bell on Nov. 19, at Sable Island and two WILLETS on Nov. 18. A very late SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER alighted at Cape Sable Dec. 28, observed by the Sidney Smiths. An unusually large flock of wintering SANDERLINGS, consisted of 25 to 30 birds, seen on Sable Island by Mrs. Bell Feb. 9, 10 and 11. A RAZORBILL was seen Jan. 8 in the North West Arm of Halifax Harbor, by Eric Mills. Razorbills are very rarely seen close to shore in this region. A YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO Nov. 11 at Cape Sable was carefully identified by the Sidney Smiths, and one, Dec. 1, was picked up dead at Chebucto Head, Hfx. Co., by the Ian McLaren. Mrs. Bell at Sable Island noted a SNOWY OWL feasting on a pheasant, on Nov. 30. A LONG-EARED OWL, Nov. 6, at Cape Sable was reported as follows by Betty June Smith: "Another forest creature, out of place at Cape Sable! A Long-eared Owl, which we discovered apparently sulking on the beach at

high noon, later found the cool dark of one end of the fog alarm building. There he spent the afternoon, flying noiselessly round and round below the high ceiling, well over our heads. The children watched until their necks ached, wondering how he could turn and swoop so silently, fascinated by the wierd little face and disappearing ears." (The BOREAL OWL, caught alive Dec. 23 on Sable Island, and sent to Robie Tufts via Ian McLaren, is pictured in another section of the Newsletter.)

A RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER, Jan. 4, at Crousetown, Lun. Co., was excitedly reported by Nellie Snyder, as present at her feeder, and subsequently seen and the identification confirmed by Ian McLaren, Eric Mills, the Henry Marches, and others of the NSBS. A RED-HEADED WOODPECKER, Nov. 9, at Karsdale, Anna. Co., was reported by Darall L. Thexton, who, after giving an excellent description of the bird, remarked: "It appeared quite bedraggled when first we saw it, and very hungry. In fact, it still seems hungry and eats from dawn to dusk on grain and suet. The first few days it would not tolerate any other birds on the feeder, but now it seems to ignore them, and they all feed together. I thought it quite likely that the bird was carried north from the New England states during last week's storm." A YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER, a bright male, came to a feeder, Jan. 20, at Sheffield Mills, Kings Co., reported to Robie Tufts, who added that he had had only one other former winter record, a December date from J.S. Erskine of Wolfville. An EASTERN KINGBIRD, lingered on Sable Island through November, last seen by Mrs. Bell Nov. 26. A WESTERN KINGBIRD, on Nov. 3, at Cape Sable, was reported by Betty June Smith, who wrote: "very handsome, coolly catching flies about the pasture fence, a pastime that displayed all his color, and the velvet black and white of the tail especially." A BANK SWALLOW, Nov. 21, and a BARN SWALLOW Feb. 9, are two more extraordinary records from Sable Island, kindness of Mrs. Bell. A LONG-BILLED MARSH WREN, on Dec. 21, in a marsh at the south end of Porter's Lake road, Hfx. Co., was seen and reported by Eric and Anne Mills and W. A. Hughes. MOCKINGBIRDS, eight reports of single birds, wintering in Nova Scotia, as compared with four reports last year: one, first seen Sept. 26 at Wedgeport, Yar. Co. by Israel Pothier; one in Shelburne town reported by Harrison F. Lewis in his column in the Shelburne Coastguard; one, from Oct. 27 at Brier Island, Digby Co., reported by Madeleine Lent; one, from Oct. 15 at Dartmouth, Hfx. Co., reported by the Topples; one, in south-end Halifax seen by Chris Helleiner, also one by Donald MacDougall near the Armdale rotary; one at Sambro, Hfx. Co. seen Jan. 12 by Eric Mills, Ross Anderson and Roger Hughes; one first seen Feb. 16 at Musquodoboit Harbor, Hfx. Co., by Col. Bob Sutton; and one throughout January at Glace Bay, reported by Sara MacLean. A HERMIT THRUSH appeared on Feb. 15, at a feeder in Bedford, Hfx. Co., and became a regular visitor in the vicinity, notably at the Tremell feeding station nearby, as reported by Elizabeth Murray, who first saw and identified it. We have at last achieved a VARIED THRUSH, "one male, well observed, around the house on Oct. 29, unmistakable", reports Mrs. Bell from Sable Island. A SWAINSON'S THRUSH on the Island, seen by Mrs. Bell Nov. 17, and again Jan. 14 and 16, is equally startling, considering that this thrush winters habitually from Mexico to Peru. WATER PIPITS on Cape Sable, Shel. Co., broke a record this year.

About 40 birds arrived on Nov. 2, 14 were noted Dec. 30, and 25 were seen Jan. 15 "still busy at the kelp banks", according to the Sidney Smiths. Probably the biggest thrill for most of us this past winter was provided by the BOHEMIAN WAXWINGS. Never before has such a sizable influx of these birds been noted in Nova Scotia, at any rate during the past hundred years, according to Tufts, who lists only eight records since 1863. The invasion seems to have been general throughout the Northeastern Maritime Region, and was widespread in New Brunswick by the end of December (Moncton Naturalists Club Annual Report, 1968). Three Bohemian Waxwings Nov. 3 to 5 at Sable and one Nov. 15 at Cape Sable, were followed by the appearance of 4, Nov. 24, at Chebucto Head, Hfx. Co., one, Dec. 5 in Shelburne Co., and one Dec. 10 at Gaspereau, Kings Co. On Dec. 11, Eric Holdway of Pictou saw 11 of these Waxwings in a flock, which grew to 36 in the next few days, observed also by Mrs. H.E. Long. This was our first indication of a real invasion. It is curious that of the eight previous records (previous to 1968), four were from Pictou Co., according to Tufts. By Jan. 4, the Pictou flock numbered 46 and flocks of 20 to 30 had appeared in Cape Breton, at New Waterford and Glace Bay, and 10 in Shelburne town. By Jan. 20, 21 birds were in Greenwich, King's Co.; a small flock in and around Yarmouth; and early in February, sizable flocks at Rockingham, Hfx. Co., and Halifax City (up to 50 birds). For the most part, the Bohemian Waxwings cleaned up the hawthorn berries and departed by early March, but the small flock at Chebucto Head is still there, at the time of writing, March 30.

A CAPE MAY WARBLER, Oct. 23 on Sable Island (Mrs. C. Bell), a BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER, Nov. 2, at Cape Sable (Smiths), a BLACKPOLL WARBLER Dec. 13, 15, Jan. 1, 15, 17 on Sable Island, a (well-studied) PINE WARBLER, Nov. 5 on Sable Island (Ian McLaren), a PALM WARBLER, Jan. 5 at McNab's Island, Hfx. Harbor (Ross Anderson and others of the NSBS), a YELLOWTHROAT Dec. 17 and 18 on Sable Island, and an AMERICAN REDSTART Nov. 18 at Armdale, Hfx. Co. (Shirley Cohre) were very late lingerers, part of the pattern of this unusual season. Eight MEADOWLARKS have been seen, one on Nov. 9 at Cape Sable (Smiths); one Nov. 10, at Northport, Cumb. Co., by Robert MacNeil; one Jan. 4 at Brookfield, Col. Co., by Robert Lindsay; one Jan. 19 at Seaforth, Hfx. Co. by B. K. Doane; 3 Jan. 12, at Cookes Brook, Yar. Co. by M.W. Hilton, who observed them feeding on weed seeds near the edge of the sand and one at Seaforth, Hfx. Co. Jan. 19 (Doane and McLaren). The Northport bird must still have been hopeful of its summer food of insects, as it was walking about the house lawn when first observed, and Mr. MacNeil wrote "a pair of robins lit nearby, whereupon the lark attempted to hide by squatting very low, neck outstretched and tail feathers straight back. This action was very effective since only the top of the back could be seen." A flock of 50 to 60 REDWINGED BLACKBIRDS paused briefly Nov. 18 at Sable Island. A few Redwings habitually winter in Nova Scotia, and have been noted in most of our feeder reports throughout the winter 1968-69, but a flock of this size, suggesting a migratory movement on such a late date is most exceptional.

Very few records have come in for the BALTIMORE ORIOLE, hopefully most of them migrated successfully this year. Two were on their way on Nov. 16, sighted from the Lurcher Lightship (Capt.

J.L. Romain). One stayed at a feeder in Hebron, Yar. Co., from Nov. 23 to Jan. 6 (Mrs. C.F. McGray). Two more were seen Dec. 10 at Wedgeport, Yar. Co., by Israel Pothier, who mentioned that this was the first time he had seen Orioles in the fall. Aside from that we have only two reports, of a single bird each. One was seen Jan. 26 at Glen Margaret, Hfx. Co. (C.R.K. Allen). This was an immature bird, or female, in excellent condition, very much at home in an old apple orchard. The other report is for Feb. 7 to 24, at Bedford, Hfx. Co. by Elizabeth Murray, who watched the bird at her feeder and finally picked it up dead on the 24th.

Three RUSTY BLACKBIRDS were seen Dec. 11 at St. Peters, Richmond Co. (Murdock Digout), and one on Jan. 1 at Glace Bay (Sara MacLean). Rustys were on Sable Island until early January, Mrs. C. Bell reports. Really extraordinary sightings of the CARDINAL are vouched for by Dr. R. W. Tufts. Two were present Jan. 8, at the Percy Weir feeding station in Digby, and one other was reported Jan. 12, as follows, by Dr. A. H. Barss of Rose Bay, Lun. Co.:

"Today my wife and myself observed at close hand a female CARDINAL, which I thought should be reported to the Society. The bird was first noticed in the shrubbery directly in front of our living room window, then later at our feeding station.

Identification was made from these features - in size slightly larger than a robin, the beak was a distinctive red color (shape like that of a grosbeak), a very prominent rosy red crest on the head (not unlike the crest of a Bluejay, except in color), the tail feathers, which were fairly long, and moved downwards and up to the horizontal quite frequently, were rosy red in color. The wing tips had a suggestion of red, the upper throat and area ahead of the eye was faintly black, and the body of the bird was a mixture of light brown and olive green.

We and our five children had a chance to observe her for over half an hour, at times she was only a foot away from us. The bird seemed very tame and curious, looking at us, and did not shy away if we moved. She fed on seeds in and about our feeding station.

P.S. Has been here for 3 days."

An unusual fall sighting of an INDIGO BUNTING, Nov. 13, is reported for Sable Island (Mrs. C. Bell). Three DICKCISSELS also were seen there Oct. 20. Two Dickcissels stayed a few days after Nov. 25 at a feeder in St. Peter's (M. Digout); one was seen Dec. 6, at Shelburne (Lewis, in the "Coastguard"); and one stayed all fall, till Dec. 25, at a feeder in Yarmouth town (Margaret Nickerson). Sophisticated birdwatchers (and the rest of us) scanned the flocks of Redpolls keenly, looking for a HOARY REDPOLL, and five were found; 4 Jan. 18, in a flock near Halifax by Jean Boulva and Robert Gautier, who mentioned the very white rump. (Jean Boulva is familiar with Arctic birds); and one, Feb. 22, at Kennetcook Dyke, Hants Co., by C.R.K. Allen. Mr. Allen's bird was with a dozen Common Redpolls, in a bush beside the road, just a few yards distant, and gave every opportunity for

close study, also exhibiting a china-smooth white lower back, and suggestion of "hoariness" in the rest of the plumage. The 150 PINE SISKINS present on Sable Island in early November (Ian McLaren) may explain the shortage of Siskins throughout the rest of Nova Scotia this past winter season. Dr. McLaren noted also that all winter finches were present on Sable Island in good numbers, including both species of crossbill. The WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL had deserted us for so many years, it rates as a rarity. One flock of 20 birds rose from the trees in answer to "swishing" by C.R.K. Allen, late afternoon of Mar. 1, along the roadside near Blandford, Hfx. Co. This is our only mainland winter report of White-wings since Christmas. The RUFIOUS-SIDED TOWHEE appeared briefly in November, two birds seen Nov. 2, one Nov. 6 on Cape Sable by the Smiths; and one male, "in brilliant fall plumage" Nov. 22 to 25, at Truro by Ross Baker. Another Towhee visited the Donald Jeffries feeding station on March 1, but stayed only a short time. Three LARK BUNTINGS were reported by H.F. Lewis in the Shelburne Coastguard, as present the week of Jan. 5, at the Donald Robertson feeder in Shelburne town. To conclude this exceptionally long list of winter rarities, we return to our starting point, to report a WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW, which spent the entire winter on Sable Island, at Mrs. Bell's feeder, along with her 100 native Ipswiches.

N.B. The YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER reported in the last Newsletter as photographed by David Higgins at Sable Island turned out to be easily identified on the resulting slides. Two of these have been deposited in the National Museum of Canada, as evidence for the first official record for the province.

A small gull flying around the Bell's house at close range on March 9 at Sable Island was seen to have greenish legs ("The color of new sprouts in spring"), a yellowish bill, small and without band or spot, and markings otherwise like those of the herring gulls with which it was flying around the yard. The larger gulls unfortunately drove it off, but Mrs. Bell saw quite enough to convince her that she had seen either the western MEW GULL or the European race, the COMMON GULL. The latter is more likely in view of the single record from Newfoundland in April, 1956 (Birds of Canada).

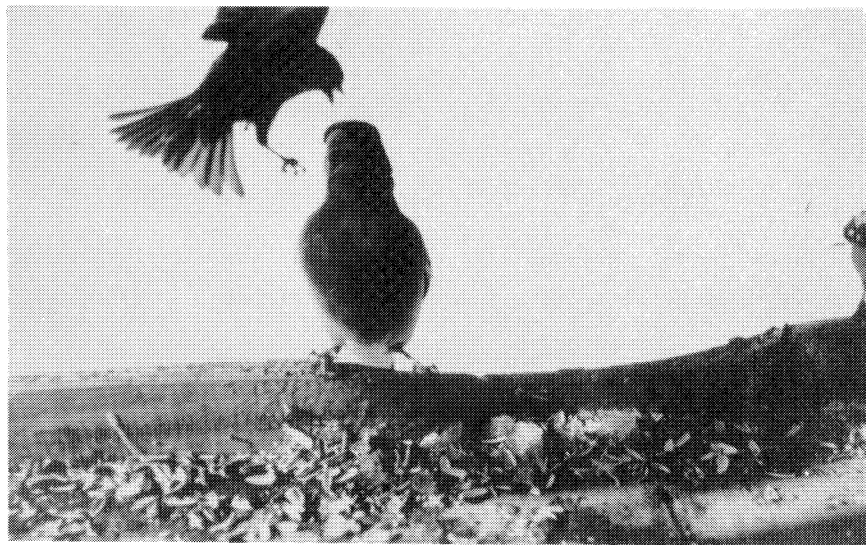
Twenty-five reports from feeding stations last winter exhibit remarkable uniformity. Evening Grosbeaks were universally present, from the first week in November, and are still around. Flocks numbered up to 50 (65 on Sable Island), the size of the flock depending on the amount of sunflower seed supplied in most cases. Blue Jays were also universally mentioned, but were intermittent visitors. Everybody had a Robin this year, sometimes 2 or 3, and most people Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, Hairys slightly

more numerous. Black-capped Chickadees came every day, and two people also had Boreals in attendance. Both Purple and Goldfinches were around in good numbers, and so were Pine Grosbeaks, to everyone's delight, earlier in the season, or until the multiflora rose hips were gone, and as a last resort, the highbush cranberries. About half of us had Nuthatches, White-breasted mostly, and the other half had Cowbirds (or both). Of the Sparrows, -Juncos, Whitethroats and Tree Sparrows received most frequent mention, with Song, Fox, Savannah and Swamp next and numbers diminishing in that order. The Hawks in attendance were the Red-tails and the Sharpshins this winter; no-one mentioned a falcon at a feeder. In fact, since Christmas we have records of the Pigeon Hawk only, 2 in Halifax Co. Jan. 5, and 2 or 3 seen in the Glace Bay - Sydney area December through January. Four people had Mourning Doves, three had Cedar Waxwings, eight had Redpolls and six had Siskins (single birds). It is perhaps interesting that most reports of the blackbirds come from the southern end of the province, where Grackles and Redwings were common, and the Orioles, Cardinals and Lark Buntings were seen. The same is true of the Myrtle Warblers, which regularly winter in small flocks in Yarmouth and Shelburne counties. Other rarities have been mentioned in the Christmas Counts and the main report. Feeding winter birds is somewhat like cultivating a summer garden, with more elements of the unexpected. It may not contribute greatly to science, but certainly provides a variety of interests to the people concerned. Elizabeth Murray of Bedford succeeded in getting a picture of a tiny belligerent Pine Siskin attacking an Evening Grosbeak. It paid no attention to birds of its own size, but would not tolerate grosbeaks on the feeder. Rosemary Eaton of Cole Harbor constructed a "hide" in her front porch, and got some beautiful close-ups in color of her birds, including a "mystery bird" for identification. She feels strongly that snapshots are preferable to gunshots for this purpose. At Cape Sable, Snow Buntings and Horned Larks came to feed in the henyard, for the most part peaceably, but Betty June Smith wrote "frequently we see a Bunting routed by the Larks to a barren snowbank, and sometimes a Bunting will overturn a Lark and give him a good drubbing. How pitiful those upside-down claws look! The Buntings are my favorites though." The Smiths also were amused to find, one cold night, Cowbirds in the barn, warming their feet on the backs of the cattle. Donald MacDougall of Halifax has been entertained watching a Mockingbird take its daily exercise chasing Bluejays out of its favorite tree down by the Northwest Arm. As he chased one out, another would come back behind him. This would go on for 15 to 20 minutes, but he kept at it determinedly until the Jays got tired and left him alone. Evelyn Lowerison of Amherst scatters bits of cheese on her walks through her hazelnut grove and has Gray Jays for constant company. The Anketell-Joneses were cheered to hear the (Halifax) Dockyard Song Sparrow singing on Feb. 14 Others were heard in good song on Feb. 23 in Halifax by Ross Anderson and Eric Mills, and on Mar. 2 by C.R.K. Allen at Elmsdale. This was another feature of our mild winter - Chris Helleiner heard a Whitethroat singing here in town (Halifax), rather a wavering song, late in December, and the Donald Jeffries at Boulderwood maintain that their sizable flock of Purple Finches sang all winter.

I have left out the Starlings and the English Sparrows -

it goes without saying that most people had the former, and all people in towns the latter. In Halifax, several people spoke of a comparative scarcity of English Sparrows, but C.R.K. Allen assures me that there was a reason for this. They were all in his own backyard! He had three hundred and sixty-two.

For supplying the material for the above reports, the Editor is most grateful to: C.R.K. Allen, Ross Anderson, Michael Anketell-Jones, Eileen Armstrong, Ross Baker, A. H. Barss, Mrs. C. Bell, Jean Boulva, Margaret Burchell, Ethel Crathorne, Mary Clulee (Yarmouth Light-Herald), Shirley Cohre, Bunny Coffill, Murdock Digout, Ben Doane, Elizabeth Doull, Rosemary Eaton, John Erskine, John B. Hardie, Chris Helleiner, Eric Holdway, Phyllis and Ward Hemeon, Marion Hilton, Rona Hunter, Helen Hurlburt, June Jarvis, Donald Jeffries, Joseph Johnson, Fred and Margaret Kenney, Madeleine Lent, Harrison F. Lewis (Coastguard), Mrs. S.E. Lewis, Robert Lindsay, Mrs. H.E. Long, Evelyn Lowerison, Clive S. MacDonald, Donald MacDougall, Ian McLaren, Sara MacLean, Robert MacNeil, Lloyd Macpherson, Mrs. Clarence McGray, Eric and Anne Mills, Elizabeth Murray, Wayne Neily, Granville B. Nickerson, Roger and Pat Pocklington, Israel Pothier, Frank Robertson, Capt. J.F. Romain (Lurcher Lightship), Betty and Sidney Smith, Nellie Snyder, Col. Bob Sutton, R.W. and Betty Topple, Darall Thexton, Robie W. Tufts, W. E. Whitehead.



Siskin versus Grosbeak

E. Murray

## CORRECTION

In my article on "Northern birds summering in eastern Canada", NSBS Newsletter, Vol. 10, page 130, line 22 contains an error which reverses the sense of that sentence. It should read "it is highly probable that this species is now breeding regularly", rather than "is not breeding regularly".

With reference to Wayne Neily's note on "Chestnut-sided Warbler in Cape Breton", Newsletter, Vol. 10, page 116, I have one more record which pre-dates his. On the Mabou breeding bird survey (NS 1, 1), on 16 June 1967, I listed four of this species, near Riverville, Hillsborough, Mull River, and (east of) Port Hood. Wayne's record on 25 May 1968, and Cameron's on 1 June 1941, were both surely strays during spring migration, and mine may have been the same, despite the late date. 1967 was a very late spring, and later on the same day (16 June) I noted 22 Blackpoll Warblers along the course of Middle River from the Cabot Trail bridge down to Nyanza; these were surely migrants, as I have never had that species there or in comparable habitat as a breeding bird.

- A. J. Erskine

## BIRDWATCHING AT THE PIGGERY

To All Members of the Nova Scotia Bird Society:

Last fall and winter several members complained that they were spoken to by workmen at the piggery near Dartmouth and asked to move on. As a result, we have made contact with the owner, Mr. Morash, who has said that birdwatchers will be welcome to wander in the swampy area below the buildings, but he has asked that we approach from the paved road and not drive up near the buildings. For several reasons they do not like to have the public wandering near the buildings, and so the workmen have been instructed to send intruders away. If the pursuit of good birds demands that you go up near the buildings, please identify yourself as a birdwatcher to the men in the barn, and we understand that they will accordingly let you wander up onto the other property.

This, as we all know, is one of the local "hot spots" but it is, after all, on someone else's property. They have been kind enough to extend to us the privilege of using their property for our pleasure, so let us not abuse the privilege. We would ask all birdwatchers to abide by the owner's request.

- Ben Doane



## BONANZA

In this neighborhood corn for silage has become rapidly more popular, among farmers and also among birds. As the corn ripens, Crows, Jays, and House Sparrows, Pheasants and Mourning Doves, Grackles and Cowbirds, gather in flocks. Then comes the harvester, and a truck follows to carry away the minced crop. In a few hours the field is cleared and the congregation of birds scatters. Of course, a few remain, for even in the best harvesting a few cobs are trampled into the ground and short stubs of stalk remain to tempt the sweet tooth of woodpeckers.

This particular field, however, was unlucky. The soil is a rich alluvial clay which had been baked into adobe by a hot and rainless summer. Perhaps the corn ripened a little late, perhaps the harvester was not available at the particular moment, but the rain came first, three inches of it in twenty-four hours. At last the harvester arrived. The ruts of its passing were a foot deep in chocolate clay, and there were three deep pools where the machine had bogged down and had had to be hauled to safety. Doggedly they struggled on and eventually lumbered homeward, leaving the field a wreck of crumpled cornstalks and trampled cobs.

The news got around. As I approached, I heard a roar of voices extending along half a mile of woodland. The few acres of the field were black with Crows which rose in a clamour and seemed to fill the sky, and yet the ground was still peppered with them and the wood beyond was crowned with Crows. Counting the visible crows in patches, I estimated six hundred in sight at a time, yet these were only a fraction of the widespread clamour. A great creature splashed with white arose from among Crows, a Canada Goose. Two Pheasants rocketed up from the edge of the field. Flocks of House Sparrows, a hundred at least, swirled up and were followed by not less than two hundred and fifty Cowbirds. Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers were busily pecking at the cornstalks. Juncoes, Tree Sparrows, and Redpolls ransacked the bordering lines of withered weeds, lambs-quarters, pigweed and evening primrose; and Song Sparrows and Chickadees continued about their business at the edge of the wood, uninterested in corn. I scanned the myriad Redpolls, raspberry pink, brown and grey, hoping to find a pale Hoary Redpoll which I had never seen, but at best I could pick out only an occasional Goldfinch and a single Pine Siskin.

On the top of a small tree sat a Shrike, watching his own feast feasting. A Goshawk rose from a spruce and wheeled swiftly out of sight. I had seen him here before, but this time he had lost a patch of feathers from his right wing, possibly a charge of shot that had nearly caught him. I was told that he had been seen to take two Crows. Who would begrudge him?

A week later I returned. Snow had fallen and covered the wrecked field, and there was a great silence. Tree Sparrows and Juncoes were still investigating the protruding weeds, but the Crows had gone. The Goshawk was still there on an elm, but at sight of me he fled, showing that battered wing. On another

small tree near a cottage wrecked by local louts sat the Shrike, trustful like most northern birds. Snow Buntings flew over with their ringing chirps and chuckles and Lapland Longspurs ran along the edge of the road. There again was a hawk on the elm, but when he flew he flashed the white wing-patches of a black Rough-legged Hawk. Were they waiting in memory of good fare, or were there still mice available, smelling out the fragments of corn under the snow?

- J. S. Erskine



#### Bird Banding

- Chimney Swift: Banded August 1, 1934 at Wolfville, N.S.  
Recaptured September 26, 1942 at Memphis,  
Tennessee, U.S.A.  
Trapped and released.
- Tree Sparrow: Banded December 28, 1935 at Wolfville, N.S.  
Recaptured March 6, 1938 at Wolfville, N.S.  
Trapped and released.
- Tree Sparrow: Banded February 19, 1935 at Wolfville, N.S.  
Recaptured February 25, 1936 at Wolfville, N.S.  
Trapped and released.

It would appear from the Tree Sparrow returns that birds do possibly return to the same wintering grounds as well as to the same breeding locality each year. The Tree Sparrow's summer range is in the far northern part of Canada.

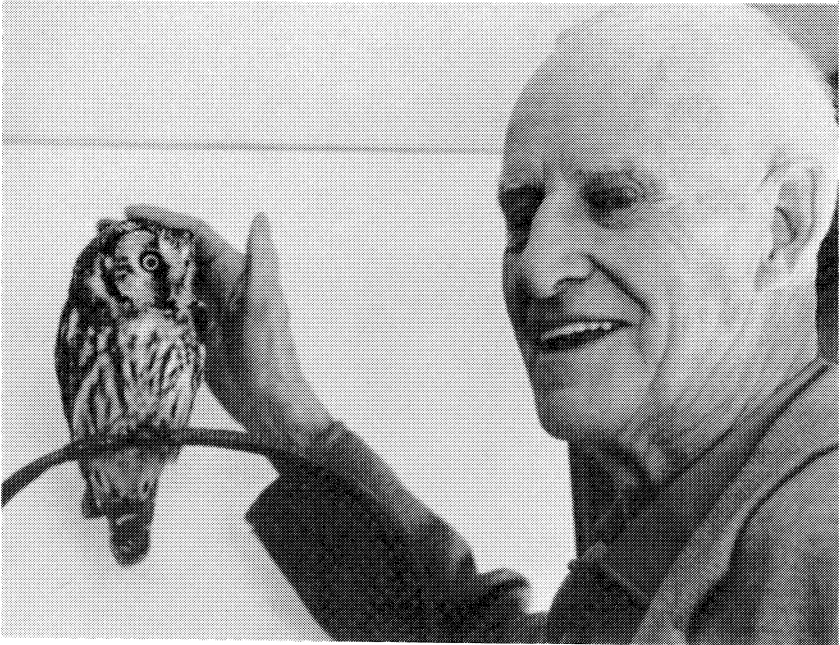
- Cyril K. Coldwell

A Fox Sparrow, banded near Pocomoke, Md., U.S.A., Mar. 23, 1967, was killed by a cat Nov. 11, 1968 at Round Hill, Anna. Co., found by W. E. Whitehead.

## BOREAL OWL

This little owl was picked up at the foot of the Light Tower, Sable Island, on Dec. 23, 1968. It was kept by the Bells until Jan. 10 and fed on house sparrows and starlings, one or two daily. The Bells, realizing that it could not be kept, noted that Robie Tufts in his book stated that he had never seen one alive in Nova Scotia. They therefore wrote to him informing him of his impending guest and shipped the bird by air to Halifax on Jan. 10. It was picked up by Ian McLaren, who delivered it safely to Dr. Tufts next day. It now lives in a (freshly) gilded cage and has had its name changed from "click" to "Judy".

Mrs. Michael Eaton made a special trip to Wolfville recently to photograph Dr. Tufts with his new pet.



Judy and friend.

Rosemary Eaton

Local Names of Birds Used by the Acadians, Some French  
and Some No Doubt Micmac, Others English.

Loon, Rishpom or Quimou.  
Grebe, Lapin-de-mer or Sea Rabbit.  
Shearwaters, Hag or Haglet.  
Black Guillemot, Sea Pigeon.  
Murre, Godde.  
Dovekie, Noddy.  
Brant, Cravant.  
Canada Goose, Outarde. (According to Taverner's Bird Book (Dionne from Quebec) Outarde is a shore bird in Europe. It should have been LaBernache du Canada. The old timers here used to call Eel Grass l'herbe à bernache.  
Teal, Sarcelle. (Which is the correct french word.)  
Merganser, Bec-scie (Saw Bill) Tamaganièche (At Belleville, Yar. Co.)  
Scaup Ducks, Bélarge.  
Bufflehead, Marionette. (Note that the scientific name is Charitonetta albeola).  
American Golden-eye, Garo.  
Oldsquaw, Cock-a-wee. They pronounced it cock-ar-lite.  
Eider, Moyac.  
All Hawks, Mange poule (hen eaters).  
Marsh Hawks, Cosarde.  
Ruffed Grouse, Perdrix.  
Bittern, Biorque.  
All Snipes, Plovers, Becasse.  
Willetts, Chevalier or turn-a-vire.  
Spotted Sandpiper, Branle-queue.  
All Gulls, Goeland.  
Terns, Historlat. Esterlette is the correct word or Sterne.  
Owls, Hibou or Cuckoo Gouche.  
Great Horned Owl, Titi Gris.  
Saw-Whet Owl, Cup guèche.  
Kingfisher, Sanglode.  
Flicker, Pie Vert.  
Swallows, Hirondella.  
Tree Swallow, Martinet.  
Raven, Corbeau.  
Crow, Corneille.  
All Thrushes, Rosignolle (Nightingale).  
Robin, Merle.  
Shrike, Pie-Grieche.  
All Sparrows, Petit oiseau Gris (Little Grey Bird).  
The Warblers, Yellow Warbler, Petit Oiseau Jaune.

Note: Where some of these names originated, I do not know, some are still used today here in Wedgeport, Pubnico, etc., others have gone with the passing of the older people.

- J. Israel Pothier

N.S.B.S. FIELD TRIPS

Mainland Nova Scotia

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Meeting Place</u>	<u>Leader</u>
May 25	Brier Island, Digby Co.	West Ferry Wharf 10.00 A.M.	Eric Mills
June 14	Central Hants Co.	R. R. Crossing, Mt. Uniacke	C.R.K. Allen
July 19	Martinique Beach, Halifax Co.	Musquodoboit Hbr. cor. Route 7 & road to beach 8.30 A.M.	Ian McLaren
August 16	Crescent Beach, Lunenburg Co.	The Beach 10.00 A.M.	C.R.K. Allen
Sept. 13	Caribou Island, Pictou Co.	Pictou Lodge 10.00 A.M.	Ross Anderson

Early Morning Trips - Halifax Area  
Meeting time for all trips 6.00 A.M. sharp!

May 14	Pt. Pleasant Park	Old Yacht Squadron	C.R.K. Allen
May 21	Chebucto Head	Intersection of Duncans Cove Rd. & Sambro Rd.	Eric Mills
May 28	Susie Lake	Hyland Theatre Parking Lot	B. K. Doane

Cape Breton

May 12	Louisbourg		The Lunns
May 19	Glace Bay Sanctuary		Sara MacLean
May 26	Ball's Cr�ek (early morning)		Mary Hay
June 2	Baddeck area (early morning)		Mary Hay
June 28 or July 5	Marble Mountain		Sara MacLean
July 26	Cheticamp Island		Wayne Neily
Aug. 23	Pt. Michaud		Bob MacNeil
Sept. 6 or Sept. 13	Meat Cove		Wayne Neily

It will be noted that in the Cape Breton programme times and places of meeting are not given, also that dates of two trips are not settled. Mainlanders who plan to attend any of these should get in touch with Mrs. Sara MacLean, 52 Catherine Street, Glace Bay, N. S.



THE HAZARDS OF EDITING BIRD REPORTS  
or  
WATCH THAT SYNTAX  
(With apologies to all concerned)

Recently I had occasion to unearth some old Newsletters, and while leafing through them my eye lit upon an interesting item: "...Mrs. E. Richardson - Sang a pleasing song." Mrs. Richardson is well known to us all as a woman of many talents, but I had not realized that this was one of them. Glancing below I read: "...Dr. H. Lewis - Eating highbush cranberries", and "...W. E. Whitehead - Flycatching in his garden". Fascinated I read on and was not surprised at "...J. Comer - Observed swimming off Conrad's Beach", "...S. Fullerton - Lurking in swampy area below County Home", nor "...W. Neily - Feeding upon peanut butter", but when it came to "...H. Carmichael - Engaged in nest building", "...J. Brayley - Seen on the limb of an apple tree in his backyard", "...W. Chute - A lively male at his feeder" and "...A.J. Erskine - Yellow feet noted", horror began to mount. At"... Margaret Torey - Ate multiflora rose hips and began to sing in the spring", "...E. Crathorne - Watched for half-an-hour on the water and flying", "...Capt. Holdway - Perched in a lilac hedge" and "...The Hemeons - Seen together on a telephone wire", hysteria set in. Worse was to come: "...Dr. L. B. Macpherson - Seen sitting on the ice": "...C.R.K..Allen - On a piece of drift ice, oiled!!" so when I read: "...W. Mills - Picked up by the police at a shopping centre", and "...Mr. and Mrs. Smith - Both males", I was glad to reach "...P. Dobson - Found in a weakened condition, cared for, but died".

- The Red-faced Editor.



