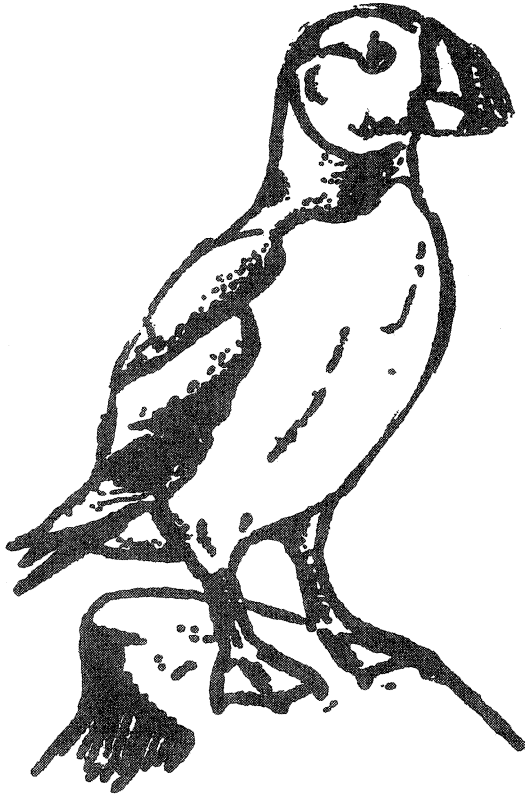


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*Nova Scotia  
Bird Society*



*Newsletter*

Volume 14, Number 3

November, 1972



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Cost of the publication of  
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NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY

Incorporated 1957

c/o Nova Scotia Museum  
1747 Summer Street  
Halifax, N.S., Canada

NEWSLETTER

Editor: Phyllis R. Dobson

Volume 14, Number 3

November, 1972

BREEDING RECORDS and FALL MIGRATION IN NOVA SCOTIA

July 1 to October 31, 1972.

The annual miracle occurred as usual, the end of June bringing an end to the cold and wet, leaving us three good months of fine, dry weather. This year sunshine remained above normal, rainfall below normal throughout this time, and drought conditions rapidly developed. October brought some relief, with more precipitation (including snow!) but on the whole gave us moderately pleasant fall weather.

We were caught up in high winds from time to time as storm centres passed us by; frequently in September, the gale "September 3-4 being the most severe for that month, particularly in the southwest end of the province.

Insects were reported to be particularly abundant this summer and small fruits and berries started out well, but the ground fruits were somewhat discouraged by drought. The cone crop generally appears to be excellent.

The land birds got off to a bad start April to June, but have made up for it, judging by the size of the fall migration flocks, which have been well reported. We do not have enough actual breeding records for a comprehensive report, although this year we have received valuable information from Simon Lunn, who is doing contract research on the birds of Kejimikujik Park.

It was difficult to tell from our June field trips what our breeding bird population was, but in early July the birds came into full chorus, falling silent about July 20. One of our observers has written "At this time the shorebirds began to appear in numbers, returning from their breeding grounds to the north; young Tree and Barn Swallows appeared on the wing but were still being fed; young Common Terns were accompanying parents, and young Crows were feeding independently. ....By August 4, the mid-summer lull, not even a Red-eyed Vireo could be heard, but the woods were full of the chips and tseeps of fledglings being fed. Immature Kingbirds, Juncos, Chipping, Song and Whitethroat Sparrows were flying - and more Swallows."

In another week or so the birds were flocking preparatory to migration, and by early September, rather suddenly, were gone.

Obviously, from Eric Mills' and other reports, enormous numbers leave via Brier Island, and the great variety can be seen illustrated in the list of birds netted by John Kearny, September 28, the list to be found following the main report later in this Newsletter. However, weather conditions undoubtedly induce erratic movements. Recent studies of the effect of westerly winds on offshore movement of birds received support from the work of Ian McLaren and his colleagues at Sable Island. While censusing the island for Ipswich Sparrows, they also censused for migrant land birds. To quote "they censused about one thirty-seventh of the island's terrain, and from this calculated that at least 12,000 migrant landbirds were present on the island. The most abundant species (in estimated percentage representation) were Cape May Warbler (24%), Blackpoll Warbler (10%), Bobolink (10%), Black-throated Green Warbler (7%), Myrtle Warbler (6%), Baltimore Oriole (5%), and American Redstart (5%)."

As for the Seal Island trips in October, where great numbers both of species and individuals can be seen arriving and leaving, some staying for weeks at a time, there is no way of knowing their point of origin. Considering the number of rarities (to Nova Scotia) found there, many must come from other places. Ninety to one hundred species were found on each of the three trips, Oct. 6-9, Oct. 13-16, and Oct. 21-23, and the island was "carpeted" with birds, even on the latest of these dates. Seal Island is twenty miles offshore, but is still part of Nova Scotia, so the two new and most extraordinary records there, the Swainson's and the Black-throated Gray Warblers, can be claimed. These and other rare birds are described in the report to follow, most of which, however, is made up of reports of our home-grown birds.

The earliest breeding record received for the COMMON LOON is June 26 in 1972, when a pair with 2 very small young was observed at Graham's Lake, Cape Breton, by George Griffin. The latest dates for young unable to fly are Aug. 19 at Kejimikujik Park, and Sept. 3 at Sand Lake, Cape Breton, at which date well-grown young were still being fed small fish by the parent birds (SL,SM). At Bear River, Digby Co., the flyway over the Timpa's became crowded Aug. 10-24, while at nearby Keji Park loons were flocking at most major lakes by Aug. 27 (JT,RH). Five Common Loons were counted Aug. 7 in Green Bay at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co., and on Oct. 4, 44+ had accumulated there, seen fishing actively off Crescent Beach (SCH,CRKA).

Early records for the return of the RED-THROATED LOON are of 6 in the Bay of Fundy seen from the Princess of Acadia July 22; 1 Sept. 2 off Economy; 2 Sept. 16-17 at Merigomish Big Island; 5 Sept. 23, 7 Sept. 24 at Bass River and 2 Sept. 30, Chimney Corner, C.B. (DC et al, FS, HB, P & WH, BR). By Oct. 7, they were scattered along the Fundy shore, Economy to Port

George area, noted in about as equal (small) numbers as the Common Loon, which latter however is abundant along the Atlantic shore (FS,RL). We have as yet only one report of a Red-throat rounding the south end of the province, one bird identified off Seal Island, Oct. 22 (SF et al).

An exceptionally early sighting of a RED-NECKED GREBE, Aug. 13 at Port Joli, comes from Ralph Johnson. Two others were noted along St. Mary's Bay shore on the trip from Yarmouth to Brier Is. Sept. 1 (MWH,DK) and 1, Sept. 16, in Yarmouth Harbor (AH,DR).

The HORNED GREBE on the other hand came on schedule, 1 seen Oct. 8 off Economy, 2 Oct. 22 at the same place (FS), 1 Oct. 15 at West Berlin, Lun. Co. (RH), and 1 Oct. 21-22 at Amherst Point (C.D.). A nest of the PIED-BILLED GREBE (bird on the nest) was observed late July at Lake Ainslie (SM); a single bird seen regularly Sept.17-Oct.3 in a pond at Nyanza (RMacC); 4, July 16 at Amherst Pt., 10 there Oct.1 and 15, Oct.7 (CD); 1 migrant Sept.29 at Pictou (EH); 3 immatures Oct.6 at Brier Is. (ELM); 1, Oct.11 at Argyle Hd., Yar.Co. (CRKA) and 1, Oct.14 at Seal Is. (ELM et al). At Kejimkujik Park, Richard Howie recorded 4 Pied-bills Oct.9; 3, Oct.11; 3, Oct.14 and 2, Oct.28.

Oceanic birds, vast flocks of which were seen during the summer of 1971 in the Bay of Fundy, appeared again, but in greatly diminished numbers off the Nova Scotia coast in 1972. Robert Smart, accompanied by S. Keith, W. Russell, E. Thompson, R. Ake and others, crossed the Bay July 8, and has sent us a list of the birds seen on "our" side. These included 2 FULMARS and about 100 GREATER SHEARWATERS. Up to 175 Greaters were found farther up the Bay on July 22, observed from the Princess of Acadia on a St. John to Digby crossing by David Christie, Eric Tull, Dr. and Mrs. Majka, Mark Majka and S.D. Whitman. Two Greaters were noted off Cape Sable Aug. 5 (BJS) and by Aug. 30 around 300 had built up off Brier Is. (ELM). On the Labor Day Pelagic Trip at Brier, members of the NSBS counted at least 400 Sept. 2 and 3,000 Sept. 3.

Smart et al sent us a record of 50 SOOTY SHEARWATERS from the July 8 trip across the Bay of Fundy; and Christie and party saw 16 on the July 22 crossing. Over 100 of this species were watched at Cape Sable Aug. 5, over Horse Race among the gulls (SS), and 20 were counted at Brier Is. Sept. 2, 50 Sept. 3 (NSBS).

Only one MANX SHEARWATER was noted on the July 8 trip (RS et al), 1 on the July 22 Fundy trip, and only 1 Aug. 25, 2-3 Sept. 2-3, at Brier Is.. Dick Brown, who periodically checks Martinique Beach for oiled birds, found month-old (approx.) corpses of 7 or 8 Manx Shearwaters there on his July round, when he also found a dead Greater Shearwater and the very old remains of a Murre. No corpses were found on the October inspection trip.

Early in July up to 14 LEACH'S PETRELS were seen off Cape Breton (R.B.) and July 8, 75 counted in the Bay of Fundy (RS et al). Three other sightings of interest are of 1, Oct. 4,

at Pictou (attracted by the lights on the ferry dock), the bird picked up and examined by E. Holdway; 1, Oct. 5, picked up alive on Simpson's parking lot in Halifax, examined by W.J. Mills, and released in the North West Arm; and 1 Oct. 12 and 17 (considered to be the same bird) seen, following the strong SW winds of Oct. 10, repeatedly at the head of the Bay of Fundy, by F. Spalding. Petrels flying near enough to be identified on the July 8 crossing of the Bay of Fundy were identified as WILSON'S, 75 of them (RS et al), and 6 Wilson's were seen Sept. 3 off Brier Is. (NSBS).

An immature GANNET was noted off Cape Breton July 3 (RB); 3, July 8, Bay of Fundy (RS et al) and 15, Bay of Fundy July 22 (DC et al). At Cape Sable, 1 Sept. 3 and 2 Sept. 11 were followed by "numbers seen with some frequency until Oct. 21" (LN). On the return trip from Seal Is., Oct. 23, Gannets passed close to the boat, at regular intervals, flying low out towards the island; 14 of them, all but one splendid white-backed adults (NSBS).

In Cape Breton Sara MacLean reports a visit, July 12, to a rookery of the GREAT CORMORANT, where 16 nests were active, 14 with 3 young, 2 with 2 young, the chicks still "furry and brown". Many individual birds were noted in the vicinity throughout the summer, the largest numbers recorded being 60, Aug. 28 at Belfry Beach, and 30, Sept. 21 at Lingan (RB). Twenty migrants of the Great species passed Cape Sable Oct. 20 (SS).

The DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT was observed in good numbers in Cape Breton throughout the summer at Forchu (RB1), at Lime Hill (MF) and at Margaree (BR), but no breeding records have been received. At the nest site alongside the causeway at Pictou Hbr. 70 nests were building May 13, 100 nests occupied by June 5 and 20 young observed in nests July 7. By late July most nests had 2, some 3 young (EH,EL). At Economy the summer population of Double-crests was about 40 birds May through August, still numerous (15-20) Sept. 18, and the last one seen was on Oct. 22 (FS). Although 1 or 2 of these small cormorants were frequently noted in Keji Park through the summer, and a nest was sought, none was found (RH,SL). The colony on Indian Is. in Green Bay, Lun. Co., appeared to be active, up to 20 birds frequently seen flying around the Bay (FWD,SCH et al). A relatively huge migration flock (over 500) passed along the coast Oct. 14 off Three-Fathom Hbr., Hfx. Co., heading SW, but Eric Cooke, who noted it, said they were too far off to identify as to species. Rick Howie, however, was able to identify a flock of 28, Oct. 15, as Double-crests. At Seal Is., Oct. 21-22, 35 Double-crests were identified, and at least one Great (NSBS), and 28 were observed off Liverpool Oct. 15 (RH).

The GREAT BLUE HERON seems to have done very well in Nova Scotia this year, gathering in ponderous flocks during September and flapping away throughout the month of October. At Morien Bay, C.B., numbers rose from 8 July 9 to 23 Aug. 11 and 30+ Sept. 15 (SM). At Pictou, the 10 July 10 rose to 24



Sept. 2, and 8 only left by Oct. 9 (EH); while at Pinckney's Point, Yar. Co., the 6 seen Sept. 10 increased to 65 Oct. 5, and were down to 26 by Oct. 9 (MWH et al). At Cape Sable "many groups gathered and then flew on, all fall until the time of writing, Oct. 21", according to the Smiths. Nine of these large herons were seen perched in a tree on Seal Island on that day, Oct. 21, possibly held up by the unseasonable snowstorm Oct. 19, although most of the snow had gone from the island by then.

A GREEN HERON was also found on Seal Island the following day, Oct. 22 (SF) and another small heron, the LITTLE BLUE, was seen earlier, Sept. 4, in a pond in Annapolis Co. near New Grafton, photographed by Norman Bowers.

Other strays among the big waders were a COMMON EGRET, seen at Pt. Michaud, C.B. (FMack), and 4 SNOWY EGRETS: 2 seen Sept. 4 at Round Island, Cape Breton, (PB) and 2 at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co., July 22, which remained in the vicinity until Aug. 30 at least (J & SC et al). A LOUISIANA HERON on Aug. 3 was a first record for Sable Is. (DW).

The BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON did not summer on the pond at Cape Sable this year, as it had done regularly for some years, but one was seen briefly on June 28, on the beach between the pond and the ocean, where it sat, apparently not interested in fishing, for about a half an hour. An immature Black-crown was noted at Brier Is. July 20 (ELM) and another about this time at Plymouth, Digby Co. (AH et al).

On Aug. 15, at Missaquash Marsh, N.B.-N.S. border, Davis Finch heard the characteristic "quock" note of the Black-crown overhead at deep dusk (over his tent) and estimated around 10 birds passing, some of them "certainly on the N.S. side of the marsh."

Except for this flock, the supposedly rarer species, the YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON outnumbered its cousin in N.S. this summer. Five were identified July through September - actually 6, counting one dead one found July 21 on Sable Is., where a live adult was later seen, on Sept. 12 (DW). The Yellow-crowned at Crescent Beach stayed at least until July 22, when the Cohrs came upon it, standing in a pond about 25 feet away from them. An immature bird was present at Brier Is. Aug. 30-Sept. 1 (JK, Ian Nisbet, ELM), and 2 more immatures caused some excitement when discovered at Morien Bar, in Cape Breton. Following is Sara MacLean's description:

"Yellow-crowned Night Heron in Cape Breton. What appears to be the first sighting of the Yellow-crowned Night Heron in Cape Breton occurred on Sept. 8, 1972, at Morien Bar. Two observers first noticed it, at a distance of about 1/8 mile, standing in company with a Great Blue Heron. Conditions for viewing at that time were not good, as darkness was falling, but the observers were able to approach the birds to within about 30 feet, their interest engaged by the difference in size

of the two. The smaller bird was extremely tame, and had actually to be forced to fly, when the long yellow legs protruding beyond the tail confirmed our opinion as to what it must be.

The next day, Sept. 9, George Spencer, one of the discoverers of the night heron, spotted it again in the same place. Continuing around the head of Morien Bay, he found another specimen on the south side. On September 10 we visited the area for the third time. Although we were unable to locate the "north side bird" on this occasion, we did find the one on the southern side. This one seemed a little smaller than the first one, and somewhat paler in color; it gave the impression of being younger - wasn't as tame and unwary as the first one. A large group - Andrew, Betty and Charles Reid, Raoul Deiltgens, Francis MacKinnon, Sara MacLean, Frank Robertson and George Spencer, were all able to view the heron both walking along the shore and flying overhead. Both birds observed separately on Sept. 15, 17 and 18 by various people, and on Sept. 27 three of us watched the Morien bird, 10 feet away, guzzling sand worms, which seem to be its favorite food. It was so tame it only trotted a few yards off and resumed feeding, after our approach, gradually working back towards us.

Oct. 1 afforded another close-up view. Aside from being a rarity, let me assure people who have not yet seen one, that the Yellow-crowned Night Heron, immature, is of a surpassing ugliness. The Morien bird, with which we have become well acquainted, is most sedentary in its habits, strolling back and forth on a short stretch of the bay shore and going up into a couple of small drains - one can't call them brooks - that seem to provide it with an unlimited supply of three- or four-inch worms. It is perhaps twenty inches tall, of which one-third is skinny neck. This one has a dark stripe running from the underside of the beak all down its neck, breast and belly. The wings, which are quite broad, are marbled in shades of brown. The legs are long and pale yellow. The beak is large in comparison with the bird's head, and heavier, less rapier-like, than that of the Great Blue Heron. The eyes are large, black and very bright and observant. The crown is lighter in color than the other feathers, more grayish than brownish, and finely speckled. It seems able to raise and lower this crown to some extent.

We have become quite attached to this character, ugly, muddy and greedy as it is; and hope that none of the local duck and goose hunters take advantage of its being such an easy target. Probably the only thing that may save it is the fact that it sticks so close to its chosen strip of shoreline, which is backed by thickets of brambles."

Thirty reports of the AMERICAN BITTERN range from Glace Bay to Yarmouth, and are generally distributed. Bitterns are there to be found, if you look for them in their favorite swampy habitat. There was even one at Seal Island Oct. 22, lurking under the dock, which had also been seen there the week before. It looked in good condition, and was feeding

actively, but its prospects are probably dim, as it has only one wing.

On Aug. 30, 37 CANADA GEESE were counted at Glace Bay Sanctuary, 200+ there by Sept. 2. (Only 50 were seen at the Port Joli sanctuary on this date, by Andy Hopkins). Geese were passing through at Economy by Sept. 8, and also at the Halifax Co. circuit; and at Broad Cove, Lun. Co., by Sept. 10 (EC,SF). On Oct. 2 around 150 went over Martinique Beach (DB) and 200+ were at Lingan Bay (GS); Oct. 5, 100+ at Melbourne Sanctuary (MWH,AH); Oct. 7, 50 at Amherst Pt. (CD), and Oct. 8 a wedge of 40 honking excitedly as they flew over Three-Fathom Hbr.(PD). On this date, Oct. 8, a SNOW GOOSE was seen with a flock of Canadas at Glace Bay Sanctuary: "a little smaller than a Canada, unmistakable with the jet black wing tips, otherwise all-white appearing, an adult, but sub-species not identifiable. Seen after a heavy storm" according to George Spencer and Sara MacLean. Geese were still passing over Economy Oct. 17, noted by Edgar Spalding, and Amherst Pt. (CD), and no doubt will continue along their southward flyways for some time yet.

The "puddle" ducks have been well reported for this period, all species for the region having been seen except Gadwall. Three MALLARDS were at Amherst Point Sanctuary July 2 and 3 again on July 16 with a brood of 6 young (CD). All other mallard reports are from the western half of the province and in the later weeks of the period: 3 at Three-Fathom Hbr. Sept. 10 and 14 (EC), 1 at Brier Is. Oct. 6 (ELM) and 1 at Economy Oct. 15-17(FS).

Reports of breeding BLACK DUCKS are scant, probably because the report period begins after most successful broods were well grown, and most broods that were observed were in the Cape Breton area where nesting may be somewhat later than on the mainland. There are numerous reports of small numbers of Blacks during July and August and after about Sept. 15 the flocks began to build up in the brackish ponds and estuaries, a dozen or more flocks of 50-250 birds each noted.

Largest concentration of PINTAILS reported was at Amherst Pt. Sanctuary where 6 were seen on Aug. 26, 40 Oct. 1 and 50 Oct. 7 (CD). There were 3 at Trafalgar Sept. 23 (HB), 3 Oct. 6 Brier Is. (ELM), and 8 at Crescent Beach Oct. 15 (RH).

GREEN-WINGED TEAL broods were reported from near MacKay's Lake on the Roseway River, Shel. Co. where the Gallaghers saw three consisting of 4, 5 and 10 young at Homeville on July 30. At Amherst Pt. Sanctuary numbers of this species increased from 1 on July 2 to 50 Aug. 26; 100+ on Oct. 1 and 7, dropping to 30 on Oct. 21 and 22 (CD). Sara MacLean reports small groups in the Glace Bay area, increasing to 86 Sept. 6, 40+ Sept. 15 and dropping sharply thereafter. At Brier no significant peak was observed between Aug. 21 when there were 6 birds, which number increased to 30 by Sept. 3, there being still 20+ on Oct. 6. In Yarmouth County there was a flock of about 100 Green-wings and Blue-wings at Pembroke on Oct. 4 and another of about 50 on Oct. 8 (MWH,AH).

The sole breeding record for BLUE-WINGED TEAL comes from Amherst Pt. Sanctuary (CD). Migration had apparently begun by Aug. 15 and continued until about the first week in October. At Amherst Pt. there were 50+ on Aug. 15, 50+ Aug. 26, 100+ Oct. 1 and 7 (CD). At Pictou 23 were seen on Sept. 22, 21 Sept. 13 and 51 Sept. 18 (EH); 75 at Broad Cove Sept. 10 is the largest number seen on the South Shore (SF, BH) and 7 at Paradise Oct. 10 is reported by R. Lamberton as the first of this species seen by him in this area. A late Blue-wing was seen by the NSBS party on Seal Island Oct. 21-23.

Three AMERICAN WIDGEON at Eel Brook Lake Oct. 7 (CRKA) was the only report of this species outside the Amherst Pt. Sanctuary where numbers increased during the period from 6 on July 2 (some breeding) to 100+ by Oct. 22 (CD).

A female SHOVELER was seen and well described by Harry Brennan (for whom this bird was a lifer) at Trafalgar Sept. 3. There were 2 of this species at Seaforth Sept. 8 and 3 same locality Sept. 10 (EC). Two were also at Amherst Pt. Oct. 7 and 22 (CD), and a single bird was seen by the NSBS party on McNab's Island Sept. 23.

The three breeding records of WOOD DUCK are from Grafton Lake, Queen's Co., where a brood of 7 was seen July 5 (SL); from Central Hants where there were 3 well grown young with 5 adults, and from MacKays Lake, Shel. Co., where a female with at least 1 young was seen by the Gallaghers Aug. 14.

Other reports of from 4 to 8 birds are from Caledonia, Queen's Co.: 4 Aug. 28, 8 Oct. 11, and 3 Oct. 14 (RH), and from near Hopewell, Pictou Co., where there were 2 males and 2 females this fall for a period of about 6 weeks (HB). The largest number reported is from the NS-NB border where about 65 - mostly eclipse males - were seen on Aug. 15 (DWF).

Three REDHEADS appeared at Three Fathom Hbr., Oct. 27 (ELM et al).

The only record of nesting RING-NECKED DUCKS is from Amherst Pt. (CD), but the number of reports of adults and numbers of birds per sighting suggest that this species is one of our commonest inland waterfowl. There were 26 July 28 near Yarmouth (MWH, DK); 30 and 50+ at Amherst Pt. on Oct. 7 and 21-22 respectively (CD); 19 Sept. 30 Sunny Brae (HB); 31 Oct. 14 at Caledonia, Queen's Co. (RH), and 30 Oct. 6 Digby Neck and Long Is. (NSBS party).

All reports of GREATER SCAUP are from Cape Breton: a pair at Cochrane's Lake June 18, 10 at Catalone Aug. 21, 35 in the Lingan area Sept. 25, and 35 Oct. 1 same locality (GS).

Local fishermen reported OLDSQUAWS making their appearance in offshore waters in early Oct. and a pair was seen off Economy Oct. 22 (FS).

The great southward flow of COMMON EIDERS began about

mid-August and peaked in early Oct. when flocks of 150-200 were passing by the Broad Cove area from daylight to dark (SF,BH).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTERS have been seen in surprisingly small numbers considering that the report period includes their migration "schedule". Singles were seen at Brier on Aug. 21 and 29 (ELM), a fair-sized flock at Big Island, Pictou Co. (HB), another single at Seal Is. Oct. 21-23 (NSBS party), up to 8 in the Glace Bay area Sept. 3-Oct. 9 (SM-BR) and 8 off Baccaro Oct. 9 (MWH et al).

SURF SCOTER reports are little better than for the foregoing species: 1 at Brier Sept. 2 (ELM), 1 at Crescent Beach Oct. 15 (RH) and a "build-up" to 65 at Bass River Sept. 24 (W & PH). Report from Economy is that 12 males were seen July 14, none in August, about 30 on Sept. 1 and about 50 from Sept. 11 to the third week in Oct. when they began to diminish in numbers.

Except for Cape Sable, the only reports of COMMON SCOTERS are of singles or pairs at Brier Aug. 21, 29, 30 and Sept. 1 (ELM); and of a single at Seal Is. Oct. 22 (NSBS party). At Cape Sable the Smiths report the fall flight beginning with small flocks passing on Aug. 14. Four birds were seen Oct. 2 and 1,000+ Oct. 19.

In number of observations and individuals, RUDDY DUCKS this year rival the scoters, though admittedly most of the birds were seen in one inlet. These were a flock at Three-Fathom Harbor which built up from 13 to 20 during the week Oct. 22-29 (EM,IM). There were also 3 Ruddys at Amherst Pt. Oct. 22 (CD) and 1 at Cape Sable Oct. 23 (PRD).

A breeding record for the HOODED MERGANSER is of a female with two well-grown young near French Village, Hfx. Co., Sept. 17 (EC). Other sightings are of 1 Aug. 25 at Tusket, Yar. Co. (CRKA), a female at Brier Aug. 30 and 2, same locality, Sept. 2 and 3 (ELM).

Two broods of COMMON MERGANSERS numbering 11 and 18+ were observed at Keji, plus 5 other broods averaging 5 in number (RH,SL); 2 other broods at Economy numbered 2 and 9 respectively plus the adult female (FS). The only other records for this species are of 5 at Middle Stewiacke July 15 (CRKA) and a single at Amherst Pt. Oct. 22 (CD).

No records of breeding RED-BREASTED MERGANSERS have been received, but a number of reports of small groups of adults have come in. There were 2 at Amherst Pt. Oct. 22 (CD) and 6 at Pictou Oct. 18 (EH). The other six sightings were from the Glace Bay - Louisbourg area from mid-June to early Sept. and varied from 2 to 6 birds per sighting, totalling 25 birds.

Five reports of the GOSHAWK come from Shelburne Co. in August (J & CG), False Bay, C.B. and Wedgeport, Yar. Co. in Sept. (SM,CRKA), and Morien Bay, C.B., Round Hill, Anna. Co.

(WEW) and Lower Eelbrook, Yar. Co. (CRKA) in October; the usual small number and wide distribution. The SHARP-SHINNED HAWK, seen rather seldom during summer, but slightly oftener than the Goshawk, put on a notable migration, this year building up to around 20 at Seal Is. Oct. 14-16 (15 still there Oct. 22), and a peak of 50 at Brier Is., mostly immatures, by Oct. 7. Only one COOPER'S HAWK seems to have been definitely identified, at Cape Sable, Oct. 2 (BJ & SS).

About 16 sightings of the RED-TAILED HAWK is usual, but 10 sightings of the BROAD-WINGED is more than usual, and the Aug. 23 observation in Shelburne Co., at Lower Ohio, was of 5 birds, flying and calling (HH). We have had the impression that the Broadwing migration followed a rather narrow path over the North Mountain, having had no evidence to the contrary, but this year, aside from the Lr. Ohio observation, 1 was seen at Clyde River Road, Aug. 22 (D & SF, C & JG), and 2 at Seal Is. (not seen there before) an immature Aug. 25-31, and an adult Aug. 26 (IM, DF).

Seventeen BALD EAGLES reported from the Cape Breton observers, and 9 on the mainland is not as many as usual. Three nests are mentioned, 1 of them productive: at Pictou 2 birds built a nest May 15, and remained there until late July, but young were not observed (3 trips, EH); a pair with 1 young bird was seen in late July at Lake Ainslie (SM), and the permanent residents (2) at the McNicol's, Malagawatch, Inv. Co., raised no young, but were observed repairing their nest (carrying long sticks, one apiece, to incorporate in the old nest) on Oct. 12. The McNicols found this behavior puzzling and ask if anyone else has noted it.

Thirty-four sightings of the MARSH HAWK have come in, from Cape Breton, North and South Shores of Nova Scotia, and 1 only at Grand Pré. A few immatures were noted, and a possible migration Aug. 30-Sept. 10, when 3 were noted at Brier Island, 3 at Pinkney's Pt., where 1 had been the usual single inhabitant.

At least 41 OSPREYS have been seen this summer, going by our reports, but breeding success seems doubtful. At Pictou, Holdway observed a nest which was occupied April 29, 2 birds still at the nest July 19, none there July 26, and no young observed at any time. Three pairs of Ospreys seemed the probable number in the Barrington area this summer, according to the Gallaghers, and on July 28, 3 birds were seen together, also again on Aug. 15. At Kejimkujik, one pair of Ospreys started a nest, but did not complete it; another pair raised 2 young, using an old nest (RH,SL). The last report is of 1, Oct. 15, at Cherry Hill, Lun. Co. (RH).

Somewhere the PEREGRINE FALCON must be breeding, as Ian McLaren was able to point out an immature bird of this species to his class of 30 ecology students, at Conrad's Beach, Hfx. Co., on Sept. 23. He told them to look well, as it might be, in years to come, something to tell their children about. Two other Peregrines, an adult and an immature, were present on Seal Is. Oct. 8-9, one seen there still Oct. 14-16 and

Oct. 21-23 by NSBS.

A PIGEON HAWK at Markland, Yar. Co. Sept. 29 (MWH,DK) and 1 at Lower Ohio, Shel. Co. Oct. 6 and 20 (SB) seem to be the only ones seen, other than the migrants at Brier and Seal Islands. Most of these were at Seal, reaching a peak of 10, Oct. 10 (IM), 1 only left there Oct. 22. The latest straggler seen, Oct. 28, was at Martinique Beach (DB). A few, of course, remain the winter.

The SPARROW HAWK is mentioned as scarce this summer, particularly by Spalding at Economy and the Gallaghers at Barrington, Shel. Co. The family of Sparrow Hawks at Wilmot, Anna. Co., did its best to make up, by rearing 5 young, somewhat later than usual, but successfully. Thelma Hawkins writes that they began leaving the nest box by July 17, but did not take flight until July 22. Spalding reports a probable nest in nearby slash, at Economy; and one pair near Tatamagouche solved the housing problem by taking over a Wood Duck box. C.R.K. Allen, putting his glasses on the box, was somewhat amused when the little hawk appeared in the doorway. This was on July 26, but the female made several forays out over the field, returning to the box each time, evidently carrying food. Sparrow Hawks were noted in flight over the barrens, Middle Clyde, Shel. Co., 11 birds in an area of 1-2 miles, probably the summer population; but at Lower Ohio, they began to be seen with unusual frequency Sept. 29 on (HH). Oct. 5-9 saw a build-up Yarmouth to Barrington (MWH et al), and on Oct. 6, 20 were counted at Digby Neck; on Oct. 10, a peak of 15 at Seal Is. The latest record is of 1 Oct. 11 at Kempt, Queen's Co. (RH).

The grouse, both of our native species, will parade their young for all to see, giving us a fair idea of how things are going. As early as June 20 the Gallaghers saw a male SPRUCE GROUSE in company with 6 very young birds, at Middle Ohio, Shel. Co. On July 15 at Middle Stewiacke, C.R.K. Allen almost stumbled over a female with 2 young, and at Economy, Francis and his son Edgar found two families, a female with 3 young Aug. 8, and the other family Aug. 27. The only Spruce Grouse reported in Cape Breton, was 1 seen in the Baddeck area, Aug. 20 by R. McCurdy, but these birds are reported "very common" this summer at Kejimikujik - 5 different broods with an average of 4 chicks. At Trafalgar, Harry Brennan counted 5 on Sept. 5, 8 on Sept. 24.

The RUFFED GROUSE did equally well, and has been reported frequently. At Bear River, six families were noted, June 27 to July 16, all with 8-12 young, reported by the Timpas. Jean Timpa wrote "one irate female chased my husband down the road on the bicycle for a few yards". (Ed. note: I should like to have seen that.) A total of 44 Ruffed Grouse added up from Sara MacLean's Cape Breton reports, 20 of them on Marble Mountain. Twenty-three other sightings come from mainland N.S., and at Keji, Richard Howie and Simon Lunn counted 10 different broods from June 21 to Sept. 26. The average clutch size was 4, broods contained 3-6 birds. Robert Lamberton, in his Nature Notes in the Bridgetown Monitor mentions that over 20,000

Ruffed Grouse (and sometimes Spruce Grouse by mistake) are shot per year in Western Nova Scotia, but this does not seem to be more than the traffic will bear. It is no wonder the Ruffed Grouse makes such good eating. Evelyn Lowerison examined the contents of the crop of one shot Oct. 25 at Cameron Settlement and found it three-quarters full of mushrooms, the rest a few alder buds and 5 green caterpillars. The usual favorite foods of the Ruffed Grouse are apples and apple tree leaves, which, however, they discontinue eating when the leaves turn dry and brown, according to one seasoned hunter, who incidentally said he had at least 50 sightings of this grouse, fall, 1972, in one area in central Nova Scotia (HPM).



CLAPPER RAIL, photographed by DAVIS FINCH.  
Dec. 5, 1971, Grand Desert, Hfx. Co., N.S.

The above picture did not reach us in time for the last Newsletter. It is entitled "Find the Rail" and gives an idea of the difficulties encountered by the party last winter, who never did "find" it, but eventually saw it as it flew up from the marsh. The only VIRGINIA RIAL found this summer was on Sable Island, present there Sept. 12 (DW,IM). Three SORAS were seen: 2, July 2 at Amherst Pt. (CD); 1 July 17 at Grand Pré (EHC) and 1 Sept. 2 at Brier Is. (DWF,ELM), the first Eric Mills had recorded for Brier.

The COMMON GALLINULE was seen at Seal Island Oct. 8-10, still there Oct. 14-15, but not found the following week.



Another is reported from Amherst Pt., Oct. 21-22 by Con Desplanque. Following is a description of 2 of these birds seen at Caledonia, by Richard Howie, Park Naturalist at Kejimikujik: October 11, 1972.

" At 1730 hours on the above date, I was studying wood ducks on Mary Lake, Caledonia, Queen's County, Nova Scotia. The birds were feeding in shallow water with an abundance of emergent vegetation such as pond lilies, sedges, pickerel weed. I then noticed two 'Coot-like' birds feeding nearby. With the birds being between myself and the setting sun, I was only able to determine silhouettes and behavior patterns. Both of these clues led me to suspect the birds to be either American Coots or one of the gallinule species.

With the birds being about 80 yards distant and in the 'wrong light', I circled the lake and approached to within 40 yards in excellent sunlight allowing me full examination of details with 7X binoculars.

I had initially noticed the finer build to the head and bill region as compared to the chunky appearance of the coot. The two birds seemed to hold their tails more erect thus making it more prominent than it appears in the coot.

The heads, necks and breasts of the birds were slaty-grey to black but the backs and wings had a distinct reddish-brown hue. The difference in coloration between the head region and back was quite noticeable despite the awkwardness of attempting to name the colors.

Below the wing, a noticeable white flank stripe was evident in both birds. It was a stripe as opposed to white markings one might see from the wing of a coot.

The under-tail area had white outer feathers with a dark median stripe. The forehead and bill area appeared dark but did not show up as being red. The area was definitely not white as in the adult coot. The birds were wading and I could not discern leg color.

After studying the birds for about 30 minutes, I attempted to flush them but to no avail.

Considering all of my observations, I feel that the birds were both sub-adults which had not acquired fully pigmented bill and shield areas. There was no white in the neck or throat area to permit saying that the birds were simply immature. They seemed to be closer to the adult plumage than plumages shown for typical immatures in any reference books which I have at my disposal.

Behaviorally, the birds were feeding actively and tended to circle considerably. They moved in a linear direction a few steps at a time and would then stop to feed, making the circular movements once again. These circular movements reminded me of phalarope behavior but the motion was never carried to

extremes as in phalaropes. The birds would never make more than one full circle without some intervening action such as feeding or linear movement."

The only 3 AMERICAN COOT reports are for October also: 1 Oct. 14 at Ingonish Beach (WPN); 3 Oct. 22 at Amherst Pt. (CD); and 1 Oct. 23 at Seal Is., none seen on the previous trips (NSBS).

Most of the shorebirds breed to the north of us, but a few SEMIPALMATED PLOVER nest here, and one nest was found, July 8, at Cook's Beach, Yar. Co. M. Hilton and A. Hurlburt inadvertently disturbed the pair, who put on "an amazing display, feathers spread out, broken wing antics, strange cries", one immediately settling down on the nest to become invisible again, as soon as the observers returned to their car. Return of more northern nesters started July 14-15, good-sized flocks noted thereafter, building up to 100-200 generally in Aug., 1,000's in Sept. and dwindling after that to 1's and 2's in Oct.

At Conrad's Beach, Hfx. Co., July 22, Eric Cooke found 10 PIPING PLOVER, a few of which were also seen at Pictou and at Broad Cove early in Sept. The only suggested breeding pair noted was at East Baccaro Beach June 18 (J & CG).

WILSON'S PLOVER have again been seen, this time at Cape Sable Is., where 2 were found, early Sept., by Ben Doane, 1 subsequently seen there Sept. 9, and well described by E. Bower.

KILLDEERS continue to increase, breeding fairly commonly in parts of the Valley, notably near Paradise (RL) and Wilmot (TH). One adult with 2 young was seen at Cranberry Head, Yar. Co. July 21 (MWH,DK), and 6 together at Brier Is. July 6 (ELM). Holdway at Pictou describes a bird evidently hoping for a mate, seen July 5-Aug. 6, "Each time seen squatting with wings spread and calling repeatedly. Marram grass at back of sandy beach. No nest found." Two Killdeers were noted at Nappan, Cumb. Co., June 2, last year 2 seen in the same area (CD). Late dates for probable migrants are Oct. 5-22, 16 birds in all from Yarmouth, Cape Sable and Seal Is.

The GOLDEN PLOVER at Cranberry Head Aug. 18 may have been the same bird seen repeatedly there in the early summer. Other August dates are Aug. 21, 3 birds seen at Evangeline Beach (DWF) and Aug. 25, 1 at E. Baccaro Beach (J & CG). At Seal Is., 5 were seen Aug. 24, 1 Aug. 25 and 13 Aug. 26-27 (DWF, IM). Migration in September brought to light 14 (new) birds Sept. 3 a.m. at Brier Is., 60+ in flocks overhead (NSBS); 1 Sept. 11 at Economy, 2 there Sept. 24-27 (FS) and 1 Sept. 23 at Trafalgar, Pictou Co. (HB). Two Golden Plovers were still at Economy Oct. 8, when 9 were seen also at Grand Pré meadows (JR); and 6 Oct. 12 at Cape Sable is the last report of any number of birds.

The first returning BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER, 2 birds at

Wallace, Cumb. Co. (CRKA) were followed by 2 July 28 at Evangeline Beach (RL), 2 July 28 at Crescent Beach (SC) and 6 July 31 at Pt. Michaud (MF). By August, Black-bellies were increasing fast, 25 Aug. 2 at Economy, up to hundreds there by Sept. 5, 300+ at Crescent Beach Aug. 28, with other reports from Cape Breton, Pictou and Yarmouth. Numbers rapidly fell off in October, 1 seen at Martinique Beach Oct. 2 (DB), 4 Oct. 12 on Cape Sable (SS) and still around 40 Oct. 5 at Pinkney's Pt., Yar. Co. (AH, MWH).

One RUDDY TURNSTONE in a hurry came to Cape Sable June 22, no more there until July 26, when 6 appeared. On this same date 1 was also seen at Pictou, 10 July 31 at Pt. Michaud. Aug. 6-9 saw the main influx, 30 at Shepherd's Bar in Cape Breton, 15 at Pictou, 7 at Crescent, 3 at Brier Is. Late dates are all in Sept., the latest Sept. 28, 1 or 2 birds at Brier (JK).

Hunters say this was an exceptionally good year for the AMERICAN WOODCOCK, (one even reaching Sable Is., uncommon there). In spite of early fears (because of the severe weather kill this spring), there were more Woodcocks around than have been seen the past 10 years. Evidence of late nesting, suspected to be second broods, was the unusual abundance of small birds, still in pin feathers, late in the season. Woodcock move from their breeding grounds the first week in October, and in one area in central N.S. (Col.-Hants, hunters refuse to be specific) 45 birds were seen in one day, the Saturday before Thanksgiving, 50 on Thanksgiving Day. Migration was slow this year, the birds did not move out quickly, as 25 were still to be seen in the above-mentioned area (some time after the Big Snow, Oct. 19), early in November and at this time, the big flocks had not yet reached Yarmouth.

Like the Woodcock, the COMMON SNIPE seems to have had a good breeding season. Sightings were sparse to begin with, but good numbers were noticed from August on. At Economy, Spalding wrote of display flights of Snipe daily June into July, and Edgar Spalding (a coming expert in the field), saw young being led across the road later in the season. Young birds were seen (probably a family) in a ditch at Cranberry Head, Yar. Co. Aug. 16 (MWH et al). On Aug. 26 Eric Cooke wrote "Snipe very plentiful, perhaps a migratory movement. Put up 15 from one patch of marsh 50 x 50 feet. Lots of snipe in all Marshes at Conrad's Beach, Lawrencetown and Three-Fathom Harbor." On Oct. 21, Ian McLaren reported "large numbers of Snipe, as usual", at the Piggery, Dartmouth. Five Oct. 11 at Lr. Ohio (BH), 6 Oct. 19 at Cape Sable (SS), 2 there Oct. 20, and 15 at Seal Is. Oct. 21, give a rough idea of numbers and time of the fall migration.

One WHIMBREL flushed from the edge of the upper tidal flats at Cape Sable on June 11 was noted to limp when it returned to land, and B.J. Smith, who watched it wondered if it may have been shot or otherwise crippled and left behind. The first return of the Whimbrel at Sable Is. was July 5, 2 birds seen by D. Welch. From July 14 onwards, these "curls"

were noted at Big Island, Merigomish (AD) and at Economy (FS), where a few birds passed and circled but did not stop. At Big Island there were more birds, the largest flock (of 30) noted on Aug. 31. On Aug. 5 the NSBS field trip party saw the small flocks at Big Island, and 2 birds had reached The Hawk, Cape Sable Island (J & CG); also Aug. 6, one was seen at Shepherd's Bar, near Glace Bay, where 75 were eventually seen in late Aug. (FM). This was the largest flock noted this season, the next largest the 14 seen at Brier, Sept. 3 (NSBS), but Eric Cooke wrote that Whimbrel on the Halifax-Chezzetcook circuit, although in small flocks, seemed more plentiful than usual throughout Sept. Last dates seen in N.S. were Sept. 14-16 at Grand Pré (RWT), the circuit (EC) and Big Island (HB).

The only UPLAND PLOVER reported for the period June-Oct. was 1, Sept. 8, seen by R.W. Tufts at the Grand Pré.

The earliest breeding record of the SPOTTED SANDPIPER is June 18, 3 chicks, along with 5-6 adults at Cranberry Head, Yar. Co., (MWH,AH); and 3 sets of young were found at different islands in Kejimkujik Lake June 30, July 5 and 10; two other nests with eggs along river edges in the Park (SL). July 28 at Blackett's Lake, C.B., an adult with 5 young was seen (RBl). Spotties were noted in all expectable areas this summer, the last seen, 1 Oct. 14 at Caledonia (RH).

Twenty-one SOLITARY SANDPIPERS is more than usually are reported, single birds (naturally!) seen for the most part, July 22 to Oct. 29, 2 only in Cape Breton, generally distributed on the mainland, and the largest number, 5, seen at Lower Ohio daily for over a month, Aug. 20 on (EH). The last record is for Oct. 29, one "still" at the Piggery, Dartmouth (ELM). The 4 birds at Brier, Sept. 3, probably marked the "peak" of migration.

The WILLET is increasing in Cape Breton, with 13 reports to Aug. 20, largest number, 32, Aug. 11 at Shepherd's Bar. Sara MacLean at Glace Bay notes "they come late, usually the middle of May, and leave before the end of August". Most reports have come from Yarmouth and Shelburne Counties, but on July 22, 40+ "well-grown young" were seen at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co. (CRKA). At Cape Sable, 10 were seen off and on all summer, one pair known to nest, another suspected. Most Willets were gone by the end of August; a flock of 50, migrating, seen from Cape Sable Aug. 26 (LN).

A possible 4 WESTERN WILLETS are described by Davis Finch and Ian McLaren "large body, long legs and bill, smooth pale gray color", seen: Aug. 26-Sept. 4, 1-2 birds at Seal Is.; 1 Sept. 4 at Joggins Bridge, near Digby, and 1 Sept. 30 at Conrad's Beach, Hfx. Co. (DWF,IM).

Nineteen reports of the GREATER YELLOWLEGS from Cape Breton range from June 18 to Oct. 4, with peak numbers of 100+ Aug. 16 at Morien Bar, 75+ there Sept. 6, (SM). On the mainland, most Yellowlegs were seen along the Atlantic shore, only a few at Economy, maximum there 12-15 mid-Sept. (FS). Numbers were

good, reaching around 100 at Crescent Beach Aug. 31, at least 20 still there Oct. 9 (J & SC). Oct. 9 is a last date for the Hfx. circuit and for Yarmouth, so far, Oct. 15 for West Berlin, Queen's Co., and Oct. 22 for Cape Sable, but no doubt a few will linger until Christmas. LESSER YELLOWLEGS reports, July 16 - Oct. 22 come from Cape Breton, Pictou, Wallace, Hants Co., Crescent Beach, Lun. Co., Brier Is. and the Yarmouth area, the usual rather small numbers seen (12+ July 22 at Pinkney's Pt. the largest), no "peak" noted, and the last seen to date 1, Oct. 22 at Seal Island.

The KNOT put in an appearance, six reports from Aug. 4 to Sept. 27, on which latter date 3 were seen at Economy (FS). The early birds (Aug. 4-6) were at Morien Bar in Cape Breton (SM); the only large number seen: 35, Aug. 15 at Dan'l's Head, Cape Sable Is. (J & CG), and the only sighting on Sable Is., 3-9, Sept. 12-13, (IM).

PECTORAL SANDPIPERS were present only in Sept. and Oct., but more plentiful than is usually the case. The first noted were 4, Sept. 1, at Brier Is., 6 there by Sept. 3; 5 Sept. 4, Head of St. Mary's Bay; 1, Sept. 5 at Economy, 4 there Sept. 8-11 (note that these are all Fundy shore observations); thereafter seen in small groups at Merigomish and Pictou, not noted until Oct. 14 on the Atlantic side of the province, when 4 were seen at Caledonia, Queen's Co., and 2 at Lower Ohio, Shel. Co. A late date is Oct. 22 at Seal Is., 10 Pectorals still there, (See 100+ at Cape Island Sept. 28, B. Doane's notes).

The WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER is also a late returner, first seen Aug. 7 at Crescent Beach (MWH, SCH), and never many noted. At Economy, "several" came Sept. 7, up to 20+ by Sept. 11, and larger flocks (30, 45) Oct. 13-22 (FS). The largest number seen in any one place was 100, Aug. 21, newly arrived at Brier Is. (ELM). The 12+ at Cape Sable Oct. 22 was a late departure date, but 6 were still at Martinique Beach Oct. 28 (DB).

The unusual BAIRD'S SANDPIPER was observed in several places during Aug.-Sept., probably 12 birds in all, the first one July 20-26 at Crescent Beach, identified by the Cohrs; 1 Sept. 1-3 at Brier Is., identified by Davis Finch and Eric Mills, subsequently well seen by members of the Field Trip party, and still present Sept. 28, seen by John Kearny. Four to 6 Baird's were seen at Seal Is., Aug. 24-Sept. 4 (DWF, IM); 2 Sept. 9 at Dan'l's Head, carefully watched at close hand and identified by Elizabeth Harris and Edith Bower, and 4 Sept. 13 at Sable Is., photographed by D. Welsh.

The LEAST SANDPIPER returned in July, the first seen July 6 at Brier, thereafter in good numbers among the congregations of peep at all usual places (including Economy), with a peak at Seal Is. Aug. 24-25, another peak noted at Cook's Beach, Yar. Co. Sept. 10. One dyed and banded bird was noted Sept. 17 at Big Is., Merigomish (RB & HB).

One DUNLIN, Aug. 21, at Evangeline Beach (DWF) is the

first of this species observed this summer, but most observations were in September, never many noted. Departure date was Oct. 22 from Cape Sable, and the only possible peak, 15-20 birds seen at Economy Oct. 15, around 45 there Oct. 19-22 (FS), this number being two-thirds of the total number of Dunlin seen in our reports in Nova Scotia this fall.

The SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER, first migrant (1) was seen flying over Pond Cove, Brier Is., July 6, 100+ seen July 10 at Chebogue, Yar. Co. Thereafter sizable flocks appeared: 100, July 21 at Cape Sable, 100+ at Crescent Beach July 22, 25 at Pt. Michaud July 31 and over 300 July 31 at Crescent. Only 2's and 3's were seen at Economy, head of the Bay of Fundy, Aug. 31 to Sept. 9, and only one sighting at Pictou, 3 birds Aug. 21, only one on the north shore, 15+ birds July 26 in the Wallace area. No peak has been noted, and the Dowitchers stayed around, feeding, slowly diminishing at Crescent Beach to 15, Oct. 15. None were noted at either Seal or Sable Islands, very few at Brier, maximum there 30, Aug. 21.

There were six STILT SANDPIPERS seen this summer and fall: 1 Aug. 30 on the Causeway on Long Is., Digby Co. (JK); 2 adults and 1 immature at Brier Is. Sept. 2-4, some photographed (DWF, ELM et al); 1 immature, Sept. 4 in a small roadside marsh on Digby Neck (DWF, ELM) also photographed, and 1 Sept. 14 at Seaforth, Hfx. Co. (EC).

Again, June sightings of shorebirds puzzled the Smiths at Cape Sable, but careful observation could make nothing of 2 flocks, 5 and 10 birds, but SEMPALMATED SANDPIPERS. This was June 11, and the next earliest date is July 14, 6 seen at Economy. After mid-July, the Semipals came in their usual abundance, building up to their 1000's by mid-August, the flocks down to 100's by the end of the month. A peak at Brier Is. was clearly marked: 200+ Aug. 21, 1500+ Aug. 26, 200+ Aug. 29-30. One color marked bird, dyed yellow (Magdalen Islands) was seen at Economy Sept. 8-12 and Francis Spalding remarked that he thought the streamer attached to the leg was excessive. By Oct. 22, most of these "peep" were on their way, "several" seen that date on Cape Sable, 2 still at Seal Is.

One BUFF-BREADED SANDPIPER was identified, by the Gallaghers, Aug. 6 on Brier Is. (You were too late, DWF).

A MARbled GODWIT was photographed on Sable Is. Sept. 12, by Ian McLaren - a "first" for the island.

Although only 18 HUDSONIAN GODWITS were seen this summer, there is a well-marked peak (?) in late August. The Godwits were as follows: 2 July 26, Wallace area (CRKA); 2 Aug. 5, The Hawk beach, Cape Sable Is. (J & CG); 2 Aug. 5 at Merigomish (NSBS); 3 Aug. 18, Morien Bar, C.B. (SM); 5 Aug. 21 at Evangeline Beach (DWF), and 3, "late August", at Pt. Michaud (FM); one last one, Oct. 8, at Economy (FS).

Eric Mills describes his Oct. 6 sighting of a RUFF as follows:

"Ruff - 1 immature at Rossway, Digby Co. In roadside pools with 2 Greater Yellowlegs. Smaller than Greater Yellowlegs. Legs yellow-green. Bill apparently all dark. Sides of head light, with darker crown and stripe through eye. Back brown, streaked feathers edged with buffy. Neck and breast pinkish-buff, which extended to lower breast. Belly white. In flight rump appeared entirely white, an illusion caused by large white patches on side of tail. Dark central feathers of tail narrow and hard to see. Wing stripe narrow and pale, giving bird a dark-winged appearance. Very active in the shallow water, with body and leg movements much like a Yellowlegs. No vocalizations.

This bird, probably an immature (Rufflet or Reevelet) was in full view as I stopped the car by the pools at Rossway ("The Sea Wall") and stayed in the open in full sunlight at ranges of 50' to 200 yards for half an hour for close examination by 20x scope and binoculars. Jibed very well with the ~~Ruff~~ I saw just two weeks ago in Scotland."

Order of appearance of the SANDERLING was 1 July 14, Economy; 5 July 22, Crescent Beach; 100 July 31, Pt. Michaud; and 100+ at Crescent that day. By mid-August, distribution was general. At Economy two peaks were noted, 75+ Oct. 1 and 100+ Oct. 21, birds only a few in between (FS). Oct. 2, 32 were seen at Pictou (EH), and around 75 at Martinique Beach (DB). Oct. 5, 61 at Chebogue, Yar. Co., up from maximum 25 before (MWH,AH). At Cape Sable 200+ were present Oct. 22. Sanderlings are still around and some may stay the winter.

Many thousands of PHALAROPES, most of them RED, gathered in the Bay of Fundy the last of August and first of September, moving into position just in time for the pelagic trips off Brier Is. Sept. 2 and 3. The numbers estimated by Davis Finch, Wayne Neily and Dick Brown were around 5,000 Sept. 2 and around 20,000 Sept. 3, "a fairly careful estimate". On the July 8 crossing of the Bay of Fundy, R. Smart and party saw 5 Red Phalaropes; the same number noted farther up the Bay July 22 by D. Christie et al. Several hundreds in small flocks were noted Aug. 23 in the Gulf of Maine, Yarmouth to Portland, by Robert Lamberton, the build-up perhaps for the vast numbers seen the first of September. On August 13, 6 were found dead, at Cape Sable, 1 alive but "stunned" in the pond (SS). Others on shore were: 1 in Pond Cove, Brier, Sept. 2 (DWF,ELM) and 1 at Rossway, on Digby Neck, Sept. 4, photographed by DWF, seen also by ELM, and by M. Hilton and D. Kirk on the return from the NSBS field trip.

The rare WILSON'S PHALAROPE was photographed on Seal Is., where 1 was present Aug. 25 - Sept. 2, seen daily on Cranberry Lake shore by Finch and McLaren. A second Wilson's, probably, was identified Sept. 8 at Seaforth, Hfx. Co., by Eric Cooke.

Among the Red Phalaropes off Brier Is. Sept. 2-3 were about 50 NORTHERN PHALAROPES, Sept. 2, around 100 Sept. 3. At Cape Sable, 8 were found dead below the Light Aug. 13; 3 live

ones seen Oct. 19 (SS). Late dates are 3 Sept. 13 on Sable Is. (IM), and 1 Oct. 21-22 at Seal Is., swimming around in the Western Landing duck pond (NSBS).

Both species of Jaeger were sighted this summer, the POMARINE JAEGER off Cape Breton, 1 July 3 and 1 July 10 (RB); 2 July 8 (RS et al) and 1 Aug. 26 off the Western Light at Brier Is. (ELM). The PARASITIC, 5 July 8 on the Fundy crossing (RS et al) and 2 Oct. 9 off Seal Is. (IM). We can lay claim to 2 SKUAS, according to the reporters, 1 July 8 (RS et al) and 1 Aug. 23, seen from the Prince of Fundy, 1½ hours out from Yarmouth (RL).

Simon Lunn found 2 broods of the GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL in Keji this season, one in Keji Lake, one in Central Lake. The latter pair, found May 24 with only one egg, he suspected had lost other eggs to predators. The other, discovered June 30, had 2 young, but 1 died. There is, however, no scarcity of Great Black-backs, reported in usual numbers from Glace Bay to Yarmouth. On one of the Fundy crossings, July 22, gulls were in a ratio about 1 to 3 Black-backs to Herring Gulls.

What has become of the Digby Lesser Black-backed Gull? The accompanying photograph was taken at Digby wharf last year by Davis Finch, and was received too late for the last report. We would be grateful for news of this bird.



HERRING and LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULLS  
Digby, N.S., 1971. Davis Finch



The HERRING GULL was seen in great numbers as usual near dumps and fish plants, and an unusual concentration reported Sept. 22, when Yarmouth harbor was "covered with them" (MWH). The population at Glace Bay Sanctuary Oct. 9 was estimated at 4,000+ (SM). At Seal Island, Oct. 21-23, the colony was greatly diminished, temporarily perhaps, only 150-200 gulls counted, about half-and-half Herring and Great Black-backed. Off Liverpool, Oct. 15, Rick Howie found around 75 Great Black-backs to 225 Herring Gulls.

On July 26 a sizable company of RING-BILLED GULLS was seen at Wallace, Cumb. Co. - about 50 birds, all adults. Some had stippled heads, which may have indicated winter plumage or sub-adults, according to C.R.K. Allen, who reported them. (A true immature was observed the same day at Tatamagouche, accompanied by 2 adults.) Allen queried "is this an early southward movement, or a congregation of non-breeders?" One immature Ring-bill was seen through Sept.-Oct. at Glace Bay (SM) and 1 adult Sept. 23 at McNab's Island, Halifax (NSBS).

A BLACK-HEADED GULL, the only one reported, was noted Oct. 14, in winter plumage, at Glace Bay Sanctuary (SM). The BONAPARTE'S GULL was seen in July only in Pictou, 2 July 7 and 19 (EH) and at Wallace, July 26, 5 adults still with black heads (CRKA). By Aug. 6, there were 26 at Pictou, and Bonaparte's reported, 3 at Merigomish (EC) and at Petite Riviere, Lun. Co., 1 imm. (MWH,SCH). One showed up at Brier Is. Sept. 2 (NSBS); "quite a number" at Caribou Is., Pic. Co., Sept. 4; 57 at Pictou Sept. 13; 1 at Sable Is. Sept. 12; 5 at Baddeck Sept. 17 (RMCC) and 1 at Margaree Lake Ainslie Sept. 30 (NSBS). By October a few had reached Economy, seen Oct. 5-17, in varying "obscure" plumages (FS).

KITTIWAKES have been seen fairly frequently June through October from shore, at all points from northern Cape Breton to Seal Is., the largest numbers being 10 Oct. 16 at Seal, and 20 Oct. 19 at Cape Sable. Sidney Smith at Cape Sable reports a SABINE'S GULL June 12 at Cape Sable: "It flew over and beside our Big Pond for about 5 minutes. It's cry was like the Arctic Tern, as it first flew behind me, but when I saw it I realized my mistake. It was difficult to identify, as it changed the shape of its tail in various flight manouvers, sometimes forked, sometimes flush. Could definitely see the three triangular marks of the back, and size, shape and colors suited the Sabine's. It was well studied, both near at hand and with binoculars."

The COMMON TERN colonies at Keji were active again this year. One island had 10 nests, found June 30 with mostly eggs, a few young. By July 6, many young were seen swimming around the island, and by the end of July, 17 young were observed flying over the island, with adults. The other island, which had most nests last year was submerged the greater part of this year (a gravel spit) and had 2 nests only. Two terns only, reported in August, were near Peskowsk Lake (SL,RH). Common Terns were greatly in evidence along the shore Yarmouth to Pinkney's Pt. by July 28, and a large concentration (80) at

Pictou Sept. 2 had diminished to 17 by Sept. 18. Late reports of the Common Tern come from Lingan Bay, 1 Oct. 8, which appeared distressed in the heavy storm; 1 Oct. 13 at Economy, stormy SW winds noted, and 3, off Clark's Harbor Oct. 16. The colony of ARCTIC TERNS on the sand and gravel spit at East Baccaro Beach had 70 birds present June 18 and was noted by the Gallaghers to be larger than it was last year.

Four rare species of tern have been seen, the ROSEATE, 4 Sept. 13 on Sable Is.; a sub-adult SOOTY Tern, July 4, seen at close range and well studied by Dan Welsh at Sable Is.; a CASPIAN Aug. 31 at Big Island Merigomish, seen and well described by Ann Doull; and 4 BLACK TERNS: 1 July 5 at Grafton Lake, Keji, in company with Common Terns (RH,SL); 1 Aug. 24 at Seal Is. (DF,IM) and 2 Sept. 12 at Sable Is. (IM).

A few of the alcids came into view at various points during the summer: RAZORBILLS seen (1 only) in the Bay of Fundy (RS et al) and 2 Aug. 26 off Lingan (RB). Similarly, the THICK-BILLED MURRE was seen in the same two places, but at Lingan Beecher saw 4, later, on Sept. 20. A DOVEKIE, Oct. 23 in Bedford Basin, was seen by Dick Brown; and the usual dozen or so BLACK GUILLEMOTS were sighted, off Cape Breton, Brier Is., and in Mahone and St. Margaret's Bays, rather unusual in the latter, according to Eric Cooke, who saw 4 there Sept. 16. The COMMON PUFFIN swam within view in the Bay of Fundy, 3, July 8 (RS et al), and 2 Sept. 2, 15 Sept. 3 off Brier Is., providing one of the "best" sightings of the NSBS Pelagic trips.

A scattering of MOURNING DOVES, around about the countryside during August and September gathered into sizable groups along the shores and seaside communities of Nova Scotia in October. Greatest concentrations were in Yarmouth and Shelburne Counties, seen at Robert's Island, Lower Ohio, Brier, Seal, and Cape Sable, in groups up to 20 birds (mostly fewer, the 20 were at Seal Is.) and one got the impression that there were a lot of doves. Actually, reports add up to only 51 birds altogether. None is reported from Cape Breton, 1 only from Economy, but around a dozen of these doves were seen feeding in the grass at Peggy's Cove, Oct. 17 (Frances Garrison, reported to WJM). This was during the "peak" Oct. 16-22, for the migration, if such it was.

One YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO and 7 BLACK-BILLED CUCKOOS have been identified for the summer season, about average numbers for the Yellow-bill, high for the Black-bill. The one Yellow-bill was on Seal Is. Oct. 9, the Black-bills were at Round Hill, Anna. Co., June & July (WEW); Amherst Pt. July 3-16 (CD), and 1 "during the darkest period of the eclipse, in June, flew against a window and stunned itself, making identification easy", at Lower Ohio, Shel. Co. (EH). This is a bird we would be glad to see on the increase.

The GREAT HORNED OWL was seen twice near Hopewell by the Brennan boys this summer; seen also at Lower Ohio (EH) and at Keji "one sighted along each major river stretch in the park,

e.g. Mersey, West and Little Rivers" (SL) and at Loon and Peskewesk Lakes (RH). The BARRED OWL was seen and/or heard calling on Economy Mountain (FS), Point Michaud (GG), Lime Hill (MF) and at Keji (CD). There at the Park 2 feathered young were heard calling, and picked up by flashlight on July 26 (SL). One little SAW-WHET OWL found its way to Cape Sable, seen there Oct. 20 by Norman Cunningham.

The WHIP-POOR-WILL was heard calling in a new locality this year, in Yarmouth County, where one was heard May 28 at Kempt (SL) and another June 18 near Yarmouth town (VM). The COMMON NIGHTHAWK was rather rarely seen during the summer, generally. Numbers reported rose in August, as the birds drifted south, and concentrated into sizable flocks, one such, 50-60 birds, Aug. 16 at Bear River; around 100 there Aug. 19-20, feeding on a flight of red ants - the air was thick with insects and birds (JT). At the same time (Aug. 20), 75-100 Nighthawks appeared at Round Hill, Anna. Co. (WEW), and on Aug. 24 at Caledonia, Queen's Co., 25 were counted, feeding on clouds of insects "in the air up to a height of roughly 50 feet!" (RH). On this same day at Seal Is., Ian McLaren heard a young bird uttering a shorebird-like "eek, eek" when flushed repeatedly, and noted that he had never heard a Nighthawk make such a sound before. Another flight of Nighthawks was observed Sept. 22 at Sydney River, around 200 birds seen by Francis MacKinnon.

The CHIMNEY SWIFT left us early in September, present up to Sept. 1, gone by Sept. 8, according to our reports. One straggler was seen Oct. 18 at Paradise by Robert Lamberton. The RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD left about the same time, with a peak at Seal Is. (20 birds) Aug. 31, a small peak (?) of 10 at Brier Is. Sept. 3. At Wilmot, Anna. Co., Sept. 12 was the last day a hummingbird was seen (TH); at Yarmouth, Sept. 18 was the last day (HC). There were many of these little birds seen around during the summer, and Sara MacLean comments "Marble Mountain (Cape Breton) is a great place for hummingbirds."

The BELTED KINGFISHER was not much in evidence this summer, judging by lack of reports generally. One breeding record, a nest with 2 young, at Crescent Beach, was noted by Simon Lunn, and two small "flocks" were observed, 6 Sept. 6 at Pictou (EH) and about the same number Oct. 10 at Seal Is., counted there around the dock by Bernice McLaren on departure day. One only was found on the island by the October 21-23 party.

This appears to have been a good year for the YELLOW-SHAFTED FLICKER in Nova Scotia. Of the 100 or more birds reported, 10 were in Cape Breton, otherwise in even and general distribution. Groups of flickers - 11 Sept. 15; 6 Sept. 27 and 4 Oct. 5 were noted at Round Hill (WEW), at which time Thelma Hawkins saw the last of the flickers at nearby Wilmot, Anna. Co. Sept. 21 at Wedge Point, Yar. Co., a small group (6) was noted by C.R.K. Allen; at the Churn, Yar. Co., Oct. 4, a small flock was observed (MWH,AH); the Smiths at Cape Sable watched 6 flickers, all on one pole, Oct. 3; and at Seal Is.,

the peak (20 birds) came on Oct. 10 (IM).

The PILEATED WOODPECKER, seldom seen, was observed at North River, Vic. Co., in June (GC,GM); at Economy Mountain in July (FS) and at Upper Ohio, Shel. Co. in June (J & CG). At Keji Park there were over 12 sightings, including 2 young birds with adults Aug. 9 and mid-Sept. (SL). The RED-HEADED WOODPECKER did not appear at Seal Is. this year, but one was present on Long Island, Digby Co., for at least a month, Sept. 2-27, seen first by some of us (NSBS) en route to the Brier Island Field Trip. It was on a telephone pole beside the road, going round and round the pole, and we were thrilled to see the bright all-red head of an adult bird, a new one for most of us, formerly familiar only with immatures. John Kearny saw this woodpecker, one is tempted to say on the self-same pole, Sept. 27, near Tiverton.

Many immature YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKERS have been reported, Aug. through Sept. this season, noted particularly in Cumberland, Annapolis and Shelburne Counties. At Round Hill, one female with five young worked over an ornamental birch persistently and developed a taste for ripening peaches, making herself thoroughly unpopular no doubt (WEW).

Both the HAIRY and the DOWNY WOODPECKER have maintained a normal population, and there appears to be an increase in numbers of the usually rare BLACK-BACKED THREE-TOED WOODPECKER. Three have been seen at Marble Mountain, Inv. Co. (EC,RB1), 1 in Hants Co. (CRKA), 3 in Shelburne Co. (J & CG) and there were at least 10 in Kejimikujik Park, including 2 nests, both with 3 young (WEW,SL). In the Baddeck area, R. McCurdy writes of 3 birds this summer, a pair working over a heavy spruce stand near the Laidlaw Williams residence (appropriate for an ornithologist of note) and a single female seen (by himself and Burland Murphy) in a hardwood stand at Middle River. One more, a male, was observed at Caledonia, Oct. 28, by Rick Howie.

FLYCATCHERS began to show up in greater numbers and more species at Brier Is. around Aug. 25, and scarcely any were present by Sept. 1-3. Reports of all flycatchers have been good, except for the Empidonax group, Yellow-bellied, Traill's and Least, which were notably scarce this summer. The EASTERN KINGBIRD began flocking Aug. 4 in the Valley (Cornwallis-Annapolis) and reached a peak (14) on Seal Is. Aug. 31. Two rather rare species, the WESTERN KINGBIRD - a stray, and the GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER - a native, were both reported: the Western, 1 Sept. 3 in Shel. Co. (A & NH) and 1, Oct. 9 at Seal Is. (JB & IM), and a Great Crested was well observed Aug. 6 near Upper Clyde, Shel. Co. (J & CG). At least 8 individuals were in Keji Park, where two young birds were observed, off the nest but still being fed by parents, in mid-August (SL).

The EASTERN PHOEBE came early and left late, the peak at Seal Island, 20 Oct. 10 tailing off to 3 birds still there Oct. 21-23. One new nest is recorded, at Keji, May 27, with 5 young, reared successfully (SL).

The EASTERN WOOD PEWEE left late in August, on the 30th. of which month 20+ flew in overnight at Brier Is., marking a migration peak. One late date is Oct. 16, one bird in Yarmouth town, reluctant to leave its favorite telephone wire beside the MW Hilton residence, where it is usually perched, calling plaintively, all summer long.

Fourteen records of the OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER, are mostly of single birds, the latest heard Sept. 9 at Keji Park (RL).

Flocks of the HORNED LARK reappeared in early October: 6 Oct. 6 at Pictou (EH); "several" at Economy Oct. 8 (FS); a small flock at Cape Sable Oct. 19, 3 there Oct. 22 (NC,SS), on which date 4 birds were seen on Seal Is., one of them characteristic of the NORTHERN race, white replacing most of the bright yellow markings of the commoner variety (in Nova Scotia).

Several reporters have noted TREE, BANK and BARN SWALLOWS present in subnormal numbers early this year, but all three species appear to have had good breeding success. Tree Swallow young left nesting boxes July 7 and 8 at Pictou and Halifax, 5 in each case reported (EH,WJM), but at Glace Bay they flew a good two weeks later, July 22 (SM). On July 15, at Middle Stewiacke, flying young were still being fed, and by the 22nd., they were noted as "abundant" in Cumberland, Colchester, Hants, and down through the Valley country (CRKA). Two migration peaks were observed at Brier Is.: Aug. 19, 300+, (Aug. 20, 50; Aug. 21, 10); and Sept. 3, 100 counted. Most of them were gone by Sept. 15, but 2 were seen at Seal Is. Oct. 22, on the ground, eating Bayberries. The BANK SWALLOW migration, not noted at Brier, probably took place about the same time as the Tree Swallows; large concentrations noted Aug. 6-19, last report date Sept. 4, 2 at Big Beach, C.B. (RB). Two ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOWS were seen - 1 Sept. 1 at Brier Is. (EIM) and 1 Oct. 9, the only swallow found on Seal Is. that trip (IM). The BARN SWALLOW made a fine recovery (if recovery was needed); around 1,000 were counted Sept. 3 on Brier Is., and many successful nests reported. The Smiths at Cape Sable had 5 nests in the barn and others elsewhere, along with their Tree Swallow boxes and "all seemed to hatch successfully". The Barn Swallow makes good use of its nest apparently, Frances Spalding at Economy wrote "the last of the young left the nest Aug. 28, returning nightly until Sept. 12." Most of these swallows were gone by Sept. 15.

CLIFF SWALLOW colonies reported this year were two small ones, 4 nests each, at Amherst (CD) and at Middle Ohio, Shel. Co. (J & CG); one 8-nest colony at Baker's Settlement near Bridgewater; and one large one at the end of Second Peninsula, opposite Sailmaker's place, near Lunenburg, this colony estimated at around 50 nests (SL). The PURPLE MARTIN did well in the Amherst colony, where Evelyn Lowerison reported seven pairs, "less than usual, but good nesting success". Other people are putting up Martin houses in Amherst, which may spread the present population thinner, but may bring more birds as time goes on. Martins were leaving in late September, evidenced by

8 at Cape Sable, Sept. 29, 2 very late ones there Oct. 1 (SS).

A family of 5 young GRAY JAYS, still sooty black, and making uncouth noises gathered to investigate a call, July 3, at Sambro. Sightings of this jay remain regular but fairly rare, the year around. The BLUE JAY is more unpredictable; this year little seen in many places, abundant in others, notably western Annapolis Valley, where they too have developed a taste for ripening peaches (WEW). In early October they were more generally seen, gathering in coherent flocks. One such, about 60 birds, took off from Wedge Pt., Yarmouth Co., southward out to sea, not seen again in the vicinity (CRKA), and a week later Oct. 18 a smaller flock (16) landed on a spruce-wooded headland at Pictou "probable migrants from P.E.I." (EH).

Young of the COMMON RAVEN and the COMMON CROW could be heard throughout the early summer in expectable places. We seldom have a Crow's nest to report, but this year 3 are mentioned, at Glace Bay, all as successful, the young out of the nests by June 25 (F. Cohen and E. Ervine). E. Ervine said the fledgling crows ate his small lettuce plants as soon as they left the nest (SM).

The BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE maintains its normal population, and no special fall concentrations have been reported. Two breeding records of the BOREAL CHICKADEE are both for midsummer. A very young bird, so young as to be scarcely recognizable, gave itself away by voice, July 15, near Middle Stewiacke; the other record, for Aug. 4, at Barrington, is of considerable interest, perhaps unique. The Gallaghers wrote: "on August 4, we decided to clean out our Tree Swallow nesting boxes since the young swallows had all left. There are five boxes; the first four contained the usual, but empty now, nests. The fifth one, however, contained six (day-old?) birds that all fell to the ground, and one infertile egg. We picked up the baby birds and put them back through the nesting hole. Almost immediately the two adult Boreal Chickadee parents came to feed them! They fed them every day (at about 5 minute intervals) from August 4 through August 17. On the 18th., the nesting box was empty and we found the parents feeding a young bird in a nearby "pickle" ash. All of this seems an extremely late date for the Boreal Chickadee to be nesting; perhaps it had had trouble with the first brood - certainly it nearly did with this one!"

This is definitely a NUTHATCH year, for both of our local species. The WHITE-BREASTED, while found where looked for, has been reported as single sightings (except on Seal Island of course, where there were 3); but the RED-BREASTED seldom came singly, and put on a spectacular migration. On Brier Is., Aug. 20, 30+ came in overnight, and on Seal Is. a sudden increase to 70+ occurred on Aug. 30 (40+ at Brier on that date). From Aug. 21 on, these Nuthatches were greatly in evidence at Tusket and surrounding territory, also seen in numbers at Green Bay, Lun. Co., where there were "hundreds" Oct. 4-10, filling the trees with their pipings from early dawn to black dark. On Seal Is., 15 seen Oct. 14 increased

to 200 by Oct. 16, 50 still there by Oct. 22. Rick Howie counted 17, Oct. 28, at Caledonia, Queen's Co., so some have been left behind, or are still moving through.

Only one HOUSE WREN was seen to arrive in Nova Scotia last May, but 6 left, putting on a mini-migration of 4, (Oct. 9-10 at Seal Is.), which arrived while the McLarens were there, and 1 Oct. 10, 1 Oct. 11 at Cape Sable (SS). This was as large a "movement" as that of the WINTER WREN, marked by the presence of 6 Sept. 3, at Brier Is. (NSBS).

A MOCKINGBIRD was heard (and seen) singing on a T.V. aerial, July 14 at Amherst (CD); another, identified by Edgar Spalding was at Economy Sept. 3-5 (FS); 1 Sept. 19 was found in Berwick (C & A Fletcher); 1 Oct. 2 at Cape Sable (SS) and 1 since Oct. 15 in Halifax, at the McLarens. This, or another, has begun work on a multiflora hedge at 1444 Seymour St., since Oct. 29, here every day for an hour or so; which makes 5 at least, or plus the Seal Is. Mockingbird, Oct. 21-23, 6 at least of these persistent strangers for the 1972 record.

The CATBIRD was present in good numbers throughout the summer, one with 2 young seen on a lawn July 18 at Cameron Settlement (EL), and the last at Wilmot seen Sept. 27, after "several daily" all summer (TH).

The BROWN THRASHER put in an appearance at Homeville, in Cape Breton, June 16-17 (CF,GS), and at Yarmouth Sept. 27, at a feeder. Verona Moor, who reported the Yarmouth bird wrote that she had not seen one there since June 1967. Only one Thrasher was found on Seal Is. this fall, where they are occasionally abundant; or possibly 3 came to the island one at a time, as the first sighting was Aug. 24-26 (DWF), a second Oct. 9 (IM) and a third Oct. 23 (NSBS).

In spite of our spring disaster - the April 9 and the May 9-10 snowstorms, ROBINS were exceptionally abundant all summer, and prolific, judging by the numbers of spotted young appearing at regular intervals. Flocks appeared around the end of August and early in September, especially where the Mountain Ash berries were ripening. From Sept. 9 on right through October "waves" of robins went through, concentrating in the Yarmouth area, the biggest day recorded being Oct. 8, when several thousand were estimated at Wedgeport (CRKA). About 40 robins were on Seal Is. Oct. 14, 400 on Oct. 22.

The WOOD THRUSH is moving inland. One (June 8) report came from Cape Sable (SS) and then three from central Western Nova Scotia; 1 May 28 at Keji, heard singing and subsequently photographed; 1 June 1-2, at Kempt, Anna. Co., heard singing, and the song recorded; the third record, probably one of the same birds, in a red oak hardwood stand, July 5, at Keji (SL).

The HERMIT THRUSH was conspicuous by its scarcity this year, single birds mostly reported, but fair numbers heard in Colchester-Hants. A few immatures were noted, and a few obvious migrants - for example 1 Sept. 25 on a roadside in

Annapolis Co. (RL), and around 15, present on Seal Is. Oct. 21, only 3 seen there the next day.

The SWAINSON'S THRUSH reports outnumber the Hermits about 4 to 1, except in Cape Breton where there were more Hermits. An indication of a migratory movement was six of these birds counted at Brier Is. Sept. 2, none seen next day. (It is almost safe to say that these are true numbers, since this was part of the Labor Day week-end, and the island was swarming with bird-watchers.) Three records of singles on Sept. 20, 1 at Pictou (EH); 1 at Waterville (A.Hopkins) and 1 at Lawrencetown, Anna. Co. (RL) are of undoubted migrants, and 6 Swainson's thrushes were at Seal Is. Oct. 21, none seen the week before. These late birds quite probably came from north of us.

The VEERY is reported as present in normal numbers in the Valley (Annapolis, TH; Gaspereau, CRKA; and Cornwallis, A.Hopkins). The only probable migrant mentioned is 1 Sept. 12 on Sable Is. (IM).

One of our outstanding reports for 1972 concerns a very rare bird indeed, the WHEATEAR, the second sight record of this bird in three years in Nova Scotia, the last one being for Aug. 16, 1969, Newsletter Vol. 11:106. The bird was discovered by Ian MacGregor on South Bar, a sandbar in Sydney Harbor, and subsequently thoroughly inspected by Frank Robertson, Wayne Neily, Francis MacKinnon and Betty Reid, as it stayed over a week, Aug. 11-19. Although attempts to photograph the Wheatear were unsuccessful, the description is excellent: "about 6 inches long, dark reddish brown above and quite buffy below. A white tail with a black inverted T on the end of it, and an eye line, not prominent, but easily distinguishable. The bird constantly wagged its tail and bobbed. In flight, which was strong and direct, the white of the rump and a portion of the lower back contrasted sharply with the darker back and even darker wings." The above listed observers, all experienced in the field, had complete confidence in their identification of the bird as a Wheatear.

Both KINGLETS have been well reported, the GOLDEN-CROWNED particularly, perhaps because of its scarcity last year. The RUBY-CROWNED sang late into the summer, and then slipped away almost unnoticed, while more and more Golden-crowns were in evidence. In his October reports to us, Rick Howie, Park Naturalist at Kejimikujik, mentions 6 Golden-crowns to 1 Ruby-crown, and the same picture can be seen at Brier Is. At Seal Is., 15 Ruby-crowns seen Oct. 14-15, 20 on the 16th., down to 3 Oct. 22, indicates a late migration; while the opposite trend, 8 Golden-crowns Oct. 14, up to 50 Oct. 16, still around 50 Oct. 22 may indicate a later migration, or a "wandering movement" characteristic of this little kinglet, permanently resident in Nova Scotia.

The fall movement of the WATER PIPIT was well marked this year, first noted at Brier Is., Sept. 28, by a flock of about 100 birds, and at Yarmouth (Pembroke Shore, Cranberry



Head and Sandford) Sept. 29, 3 flocks of 70-100 birds (MWH, DK). On Oct. 5-11 at Economy a large flock, 75+ (FS); Oct. 6 at Cape Sable, 6; Oct. 12 at Seal Is., 50; and the same day 25-30 at Cape Sable; other flocks seen at Broad Cove, West Berlin and Lower Ohio, culminated in 50-100 birds at Seal Is. Oct. 14, around 35 there Oct. 22 and the same day 100+ birds at Cape Sable. Pipits were first seen at Sable Is. on September 12.

The CEDAR WAXWING flocks grew in size about the middle of August, mentioned at both Wilmot and Cameron Settlement in coincidence with the ripening of the chokecherries, also seen feeding in Mountain Ash trees; but these vagrant flocks of harvesters were probably on their way, as the dates Aug. 15 to 30 at Glace Bay, Pictou, Economy, Black Rock (the South Mountain, King's Co.), Caledonia, Queen's Co. and Brier Is. all saw Cedar Waxwings, in flocks numbering 10-30 birds, only 1 or 2 seen around usually; the only waxwing record there for the summer, was, at Cape Sable, Aug. 15.

Two or 3 NORTHERN SHRIKES have been reported, an immature at Lower Ohio, Shel. Co. Oct. 19-20 (EH, EB), still there Oct. 23, the same day on which 1 adult was seen at Seal Is. This shrike, or another, had been noted at Seal Oct. 12 (NSBS), but the species was not determined at that time. The Oct. 23 bird was well seen, at close range, on the road to the west landing.

Normal numbers of STARLINGS were seen this summer and fall - 1,000+ on Cape Sable Is. on Oct. 16-20 (SS), indicating a probable migration. E. Holdway reports from Pictou "Large flocks of starlings feed daily along the wrack line where seaweed is heaped up to a depth of two feet along an open sand beach. It seems that they feed on the abundant small flies that are found on the decaying seaweed." M. Hilton noticed increasing numbers in Yarmouth in September, with "large flocks in the shore areas".

The migration of the SOLITARY VIREO peaked on Seal Island (9 individuals) on Oct. 9 (IM), with 2 still there on Oct. 16. The late date for the province is Oct. 18, at Economy (FS). RED-EYED VIREOS were seen in usual numbers, peaking on Seal Is. on the 9th of Oct. (IM). The last seen at Economy (FS) were there on Sept. 18, including several immatures. One late one was seen at Yarmouth (CRKA) on Oct. 10. The usually rare PHILADELPHIA VIREO was uncommonly plentiful this season. A total of 5 were carefully identified: 1 on May 17 at Keji (SL), one on Cape Sable June 18 (BJS), 1 in Amherst Aug. 17 (CD), 1 on Aug. 25 on Brier Is. (ELM), and 1 at Wedgeport on Sept. 14 (CRKA). The Keji bird was observed at 15 feet, with and without binoculars, the yellow-washed breast, lack of wing-bars, distinct eye-stripe noted, "rather drab, chubby bird, song heard 6 times, habitat: young mixed wood edge". The Cape Sable bird was well seen, as it was around for more than an hour "in the yard and along the pasture road....active, hanging upside down or fluttering before a tuft of leaves" as described by Audubon's guide. The Amherst bird was in the garden, singing, and the song was checked with Guide sonore des oiseaux du Quebec. CRK Allen simply marked his bird "genuine".

As with the other songbirds, it was difficult to assess the numbers of WOOD WARBLERS present this spring, and reports are scanty throughout the early part of the season. All of our regular 22 nesting species were present, and an extraordinary number of strays, 7 species in all, among which were 2 records for the province, both found on Seal Island Oct. 9 and 10, by Jean Boulva and Ian McLaren. These were the SWAINSON'S WARBLER, uncommon even in its usual habitat, southern U.S.A., and the BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER, a far western bird from over the mountains. The Swainson's was collected for a first record, the Black-throated Gray photographed, for a third Nova Scotia record (2 previously found on Sable Is.). The other rarities were: an ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER found among the lobster pots on Seal Is. Oct. 21 by Sylvia Fullerton, subsequently seen by the others of the NSBS party present; 4 PINE WARBLERS, 1 Aug. 6, Brier Is., identified by the Gallaghers, 2 Sept. 27-29, Lower Ohio, seen and heard by Elizabeth Harris, and 1 Sept. 28, which flew into a window in Yarmouth, and remained stunned for 30 minutes, identified by the F. Nickersons



Black-throated Gray Warbler, October, 1972, at Seal Island, Nova Scotia, taken by J. Boulva.

and Marion Hilton; at least 9 PRAIRIE WARBLERS, 6 on Sable Is. Aug. 18-22, counted by Dan Welsh, seen there Sept. 12 by Davis Finch and Ian McLaren; and 2, Aug. 30-31 on Seal Is., the same 2 observers. One Prairie Warbler was among the birds killed at the Light on Cape Sable Aug. 14-15, found by Sydney Smith; 7 YELLOW-BREASTED CHATS: 1 Sept. 3, Dartmouth "Piggery", seen there up to Oct. 27 by Dan Welsh, Eric Mills and others; 1 Sept. 5, Cape St. Mary, reported by Ian McLaren; 2 Sept. 12-13 at Sable Is., Dan Welsh and Ian McLaren; 1 killed at the Light on Cape Sable Sept. 28, found by the Smiths; another there

Oct. 1; and 1 Oct. 14-21, Seal Is., seen by both NSBS parties. Several HOODED WARBLERS, all but 1 on Sable Is. - 1 Aug. 10, 4 Aug. 13, 3 Aug. 21, all seen by Dan Welsh; and 1, the last week in October, which flew aboard the CSS Dawson, en route Bermuda to Halifax, 200 miles out of Halifax, captured in the main lounge by Jim Elliott, and kept in his stateroom, fed on bits of meat and lettuce (he said it was starved, would eat anything) until he reached shore.

Some fall migration must have started by Aug. 14, as the kill at Cape Sable Light that night included 1 each Magnolia, Black-and-White, Yellow, Bay-breasted, Cape May, Wilson's and Prairie Warblers, 3 Redstarts and a Red-eyed Vireo. The first big "wave" at Brier Is. was Aug. 19, and included Tennessee, Parula, Black-throated Green, Blackpoll, Yellowthroat and Canada, besides most of the ones mentioned above; with another big wave the next two days, Aug. 20 and 21, when Myrtles, Blackburnians, Chestnut-sided and Nashvilles joined the flocks. Tennessees, Cape Mays and Yellowthroats were in largest numbers. McLaren noted Blackpolls common on Seal Is. through August, some males still singing, but the numbers dropped off after Sept. 1. Over 20 Cape Mays were counted at Green Bay, Lun. Co., Sept. 5, by the Cohrs. Warblers continued to fly out through September, the kill at Cape Sable Light Sept. 28 including among 38 dead birds found by Lovitt Nickerson the Yellow-breasted Chat, an immature Black-throated Blue, an immature Cape May, a Bay-breast, 6 Blackpolls and 2 Red-eyed Vireos. On Oct. 1-2, 1 Wilson's (immature), 2 Blackpolls, 1 Chestnut-sided, 1 Yellow-breasted Chat (plus a Black-billed Cuckoo) fell victim to the tall lighthouse; and after the cold wet night of Oct. 9-10, 20 Blackpoll Warblers (plus 4 Red-eyed Vireos and a Mockingbird) were found dead. At Seal Is., the peak of the Myrtle Warblers (150) was Oct. 9-10 (IM).

The Ovenbird, frequently heard though seldom seen, is undoubtedly one of our common Wood Warblers. One or two figure in fall reports at Brier Is. and Cape Sable; but never large flocks, comparable to those of the Myrtle, Magnolia or Cape May for example. The where, when and how of its departure is generally unnoted. We have a date this year, possibly not typical, but the story attached is interesting.

In brief, this Ovenbird was first observed during the last week of August, feeding in a garden among Whitethroats and Song Sparrows and other birds; and as time went on it became very tame. The observers, Frank and Thelma Hawkins, kept an eye on it, and decided it had been injured. One wing drooped and the tail remained cocked, like a wren's, showing more white than usual underneath. It did not fly, but ran, if approached too closely. However, it fed actively, on insects and table scraps, and seemed well able to look after itself.

Finally, on the evening of September 17, the Ovenbird was discovered on a willow tree branch, vigorously preening. To quote the Hawkins' report: "in addition to thoroughly manicuring its toenails and combing its breast, the bird would stretch its neck way out, twist it this way and that and open its beak as widely as possible at the same time. Did you ever

see a bird do push-ups? This one did, at least twice. It grasped the twig upon which it was standing, and shoved its body straight up as far as it would go.....The next morning it was gone. We are convinced we witnessed its preparations for migration."

Actual numbers of birds migrating can be judged by the totals for each species caught in mist nets, Sept. 28, by John Kearny at Brier Is. Northern Point. This list follows the main report, and completes our season's data for warblers. During the earlier period at Brier Is., actual numbers added up to less than half seen there at the same time last year. Whether this is a valid comparison is doubtful. It is, however, interesting that 11 species of warblers were present on Seal Is. on Oct. 17 last year, only 5 species this year. On the whole, the birds seem to have left earlier in 1972.

The HOUSE SPARROW, described at Glace Bay as "common, but not unduly numerous" (SM) does not appear to increase. Flocks of 8-10 remain the rule, in towns and villages in favored areas. They evidently move about from place to place, as Holdway wrote: "The usual large numbers of the House Sparrow left the residential area of Pictou in January/72. As they disappeared all at once it is likely that they migrated elsewhere. They never came back. Only a few were present this summer and fall season." On the other hand, at Wilmot, Anna. Co., Thelma Hawkins described 1972 as a "banner year" for House Sparrows, and in Yarmouth M. Hilton noted them returning to town in noisy flocks early in September.

Some BOBOLINK breeding pairs were noted this year, a pair carrying food July 16 at Homeville, C.B. (SM); 2 pairs at Brass Hill, Barrington (J & CG), and a pair at Cape Sable (BJS). The largest number of Bobolinks found by C.R.K. Allen on his trips through Hants-Col.-Cumb. Counties was at Wallace, July 26, over 50 in an open field, many immatures, and the males losing nuptial plumage. The Gallaghers saw more Bobolinks than ever before on their trip through Shelburne Co., 8 birds in all. The first migrants (16) appeared at Brier Is. Aug. 25, 20 there Aug. 30, 2 Sept. 2. Thirty-six immatures were at Salmon River, Digby Co., Sept. 1 (MWH,DK), only 7-8 seen in the vicinity during the summer. At Petite Riviere, Lun. Co., the last few Bobolinks seen there by the Cohrs were on Sept. 5.

An EASTERN MEADOWLARK at Cape Sable, Sept. 11 (LN), is the first one seen since June, and 4 arrived on Seal Is. Oct. 9 (IM); 1, seen there Oct. 22, possibly left behind. McLaren reported scattered singles in Halifax County up to Oct. 23; and 1 immature, Oct. 16, 1 adult Oct. 19 were noted at Lower Ohio (EH).

The REDWINGED BLACKBIRD has been reported in normal numbers, immatures seen at Sydney Forks July 23 (RB) and 15-20 immatures on the wing but being fed by females July 26 in the Wallace area. Large flocks were seen in early October, notably at Amherst Pt., "100's" Oct. 1-22 (CD), and 225 Oct. 14 at Caledonia, Queens Co. (RH).

Two ORCHARD ORIOLES were seen, 1, female, Aug. 20 at Brier Is. (ELM) and 1, male, Oct. 14 at Seal Is. (NSBS).

The BALTIMORE ORIOLE was little in evidence in the Valley this summer, judging by reports, but in good numbers in the Yarmouth area, heard "singing all over town, mid-May to July 4", and one nesting pair at least noted (MWH). Only a few were seen at Brier Is.: 1 male Aug. 20; 2 Sept. 2 and 4 Sept. 3 (ELM); but at Seal Is. after the storm Sept. 4-5 a large flight arrived, an estimated 105 birds. One immature was seen at Cape Sable Oct. 5, seen again (or another) Oct. 8 (SS). By Oct. 9 very few orioles were left on Seal Is. (McLaren notes 1 "very Bullock's-like female" among them), but on Oct. 22, 1 full-plumaged male was still present (NSBS). On Oct. 26, 2 more were seen in coastal Halifax County, 1 male at Herring Cove, seen by Mrs. Sullivan, and well-described to Willett Mills, and 1 female at Brookside (E & FWD).

The RUSTY BLACKBIRD has received its usual rather small number of reports, undoubtedly because of its preferred rather remote summer habitat. It was to be found when looked for in the right places, according to C.R.K. Allen. The only suggested migration dates are marked by a large flock (40) Sept. 28 at Brier Is. (JK), and a small flock (15) Oct. 11 at Kempt, Queens Co. (RH), and 2, Sept. 28 at Cape Sable (SS). It is possible that Rustys were among the huge flock of black-birds seen Oct. 2 at Wilmot, where lighter-colored birds were observed among the majority of Grackles.

The COMMON GRACKLE was seen in numbers daily at Glace Bay and at Yarmouth, and at many places in between, this summer, but Sara MacLean at Glace Bay notes "no huge flocks such as were usual some years ago". The huge flocks must have reassembled elsewhere, as they were observed: 50 Aug. 26 at Pictou (EH); 200-300 Sept. 17 at Round Hill, Anna. Co.; a vast flock at Wilmot the next day, so large it stopped a car as it swooped (the flock) across the road, the ground "seething" with birds when they landed (TH). Another flock, mostly Grackles, at the same place Oct. 2, Frank Hawkins described as "1000's"; and at Yarmouth Oct. 7 there were "great swirls of Robins and Grackles in the high wind" according to M. Hilton. These birds are not seen in such numbers at Brier and Seal Islands, although a few go through each year, and 3 were seen Oct. 30 at Cape Sable this late fall, such a rarity as to be greatly admired! One lone laggard was noted at Prospect, Hfx. Co., Nov. 1 (FWD), (hopefully to stay for the Christmas Count).

The BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD began to congregate around Aug. 25, in small flocks (10-20 birds) which rapidly coalesced into large flocks (50-100 birds) through September, seen mostly in the Valley and SW Nova Scotia, according to reports. They became plentiful on Cape Sable from early October up to Oct. 22. (Several observations of Cowbirds following horses around is discouraging, considering the great increase in horse breeding in Nova Scotia of late years.)

A good sight record of the WESTERN Tanager comes from

Elizabeth Harris at Lower Ohio: seen "Sept. 29, the dusky head, face and back noted, yellow wing bars, deep yellow breast, notched tail". This is the second sight record of the Western Tanager in Nova Scotia in the last 9 years, both in this general region, the other seen by A. Hurlburt, August, 1962, at John's Island near Tusket, Yar. Co. (NSBS Newsletter, March, 1963, 5:7). The SCARLET TANAGER came this way in unprecedented numbers in 1972, over half-a-dozen sightings of at least 4 different birds (1 female, 3 males) from May 19 to July 19 at Kejimikujik (SL); 1 July 4 at Malagawatch, C.B. (R.Bloss, E.Chant); 1 moulted male Aug. 29 at Economy (FS and Edgar Spalding); at least 9 seen on Sable Is. Sept. 13 (IM); 1 young bird with wing bars photographed on Seal Is. Aug. 30, and 2 males there Oct. 9-10 (IM); 1 Oct. 12 at Yarmouth (Hazel Cann, reported by CRKA); and 1, female, Oct. 20 at Cape Sable (SS). A SUMMER TANAGER, female, was also photographed on Sable Is. Sept. 13 (DW,IM).

The ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK was found in normal numbers Cape Breton County (G.Crowell) to Yarmouth County (M.Reardon) and immatures noted Aug. 2 on, particularly at Round Hill (WEW), Waterville (A.Hopkins) and Bear River, feeding on wild raspberries (JT). Migrants first appeared on Brier Is. Aug. 30, 1 at Seal Is. at this same time; at Economy Sept. 6 (FS), at Sable Is. Sept. 12 and at Amherst Pt. Oct. 7 (CD). About 2 dozen birds were reported in all, 3 at a time the largest single sighting (in Hants Co.). Up to 4 INDIGO BUNTINGS were on Seal Island Oct. 8-10, 1 still there Oct. 14-16, gone by Oct. 21. One was also found at the Dartmouth Piggery Sept. 17 (IM). A number of DICKCISSELS have been seen - 1 Aug. 20-29 at Brier Is. (ELM); 3 Seal Is. Aug. 24-29 (DWF,ELM); 1 female immature in a Halifax garden Sept. 16-20 (Willett Mills, whose garden it was, wrote that in his many years of birdwatching, this was the third Dickcissel he had found there); 1 Sept. 18, a bright male at a feeding station in Port Maitland, Yar. Co., seen by V. Moor, L. Delaney and M. Tracy; 1 immature Oct. 14 at Ingonish Beach (WPN) and 1 female Oct. 14 at Caledonia, Queens Co. (RH). One of the Dickcissels at Seal stayed, or a new one arrived for the Oct. 14-16 field party.

The EVENING GROSBEAK is steadily increasing as a breeding bird in Nova Scotia, and is quite commonly encountered on summer field trips. Reports of immature birds, and/or adults feeding young have come from Hubbards (where Helen Bringleoe watched the male birds feeding the young, and estimated 4-6 pairs adding to the population), Lower Ohio (EH), Cape Sable (SS), Round Hill (WEW) and Mineville Road, Hfx. Co. (WJM). Numerous Evening Grosbeaks were seen, in various parts of Cape Breton, at Economy, Berwick, Wilmot and at Cameron Settlement, Guys. Co. "many all summer". Flocks appeared at Maitland Bridge, Anna. Co. (23) Oct. 20 (RH) and near Walsh's Brook in Hants Co. (15) Oct. 17 (B.Coffill). Oct. 18-26 Grosbeaks appeared in Halifax city, reported by several people, and at least 5 have stayed at one feeder, 3 males and 2 females (CWH).

Reports of the PURPLE FINCH extend from June to October quite generally all over the province, with largest numbers

concentrating in the Gaspereau-Cornwallis-Annapolis Valley region. On July 2 along the New Ross Road near Dalhousie great numbers lined the roadside, evidently "gravelling". By Sept. the ranks had thinned, only a few to be seen in Oct., mostly in the south end of the province; and migratory flocks were noted at Amherst and at Brier Is. At the latter point many small flocks passed over on Oct. 7, the day before the storm.

The PINE GROSBEAK was occasionally seen during the summer, and some sort of movement took place in September, one of these birds appearing on Cape Sable Sept. 11, and a sizable flock, about 20 birds, arriving at the Christies, in Bedford, the first week in Sept., to feed on the seeds of lilacs and Mountain Maple, and drink from the rain barrel. This is practically an annual event, so reported by Margaret Christie, and the birds, mostly dull females and immatures, are surprisingly tame - will continue feeding undisturbed as people walk by.

The first of the winter birds, the COMMON REDPOLL, has returned, 6 seen on the Old Sambro Road, Hfx. Co., on Sunday, Oct. 39, by Joy Sullivan.

PINE SISKINS have become more and more abundant and ubiquitous as summer progressed into fall, and great numbers have been seen, particularly in Shelburne and Yarmouth Counties through October; on Seal Is. Oct. 21-23, a flock of 50-100 birds was seen about constantly on the move; and on a trip up from Yarmouth to Halifax by Dayliner Oct. 24 one observer saw flock after flock (20-30 birds each) fly up from the line as far as Digby, and then at the other end, from Windsor Junction in to Halifax again, the same picture, the birds evidently disturbed at their gravelling.

The AMERICAN GOLDFINCH also has been abundant all summer, and widely distributed "seen almost daily all summer in any area" in Cape Breton, "universal and vociferous" in the Valley in August, "especially common in September" in Economy, "seen and heard every day" in Yarmouth, and at Brier Is. one of the most numerous of the migrants, around 200 in small flocks Sept. 2, over 100 Oct. 7.

RED CROSSBILLS were seen in June and July in ones and two's here and there, but a surprising number of reports from August on indicate a considerable growth in population of this "winter finch". These reports come from Sydney Forks, 2 Aug. 27 (RB1); 2 Aug. 3, Hopewell, Pic. Co. (MB); 2 Aug. 4, Gaspereau Valley; 2 Aug. 5, Central Hants, 10+, Stillwater Siding, Hfx. Co. (CRKA); "several all summer" at Green Bay, Lun. Co. (J & SC); "common throughout the summer in small flocks of 2-10 birds" at Keji (SL); 6 Aug. 3 on, Upper Ohio, Shel. Co. (J & CG); 10 flying over, Aug. 19, Brier Is., 2 there Aug. 21, 6 Aug. 25 and 20 Aug. 30 (ELM); 2 Wedge Pt., Yar. Co., Sept. 2 (CRKA); several small flocks of 5-7, Oct. 8-10 at Green Bay (J & SC); 4 Oct. 8 at Round Bay (BD); 2 still at Keji Oct. 19-27 and 2 Oct. 14 at Caledonia, Queens Co. The largest number seen was 36, including some immatures seen "gaveling" Aug. 3

at Cameron Settlement, Guys. Co. by Evelyn Lowerison. A few WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILLS have been seen, very few compared with the Reds, for a change - 3 July 22 at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co. (CRKA); 1 male, Aug. 3, Clyde River Road, Shel. Co. (J & CG); 2 Aug. 19 at Stillwater Siding, Hfx. Co. (CRKA); "seen infrequently during the summer, not as common as the Red" at Keji (SL); 2 Oct. 8 at Round Bay, Shel. Co. (BD); 4 Oct. 15-16 at Seal Is. (NSBS), and 2 Oct. 26 at Brookside, Hfx. Co. (E & FWD).

It is unusual to be able to report on the migration of the RUFIOUS-SIDED TOWHEE, but up to 8 "arrived" on Seal Is. Oct. 9 must have been a stray migrating flock. Three of these birds were left on the Island by Oct. 14, none there on Oct. 21. Two other Towhees had been seen previously, 1 Aug. 23 at Sable Is. and 1 Aug. 26 at Seal Is. (IM).

Our one comprehensive breeding report comes of course from Sable Island, from the summer census by Wayne Stobo, of the IPSWICH SPARROW. This is the ideal situation of a bird breeding on an island of manageable size, and not known to breed anywhere else in the world. This year, from an estimated 2040 in breeding population (the lowest in 6 years) numbers built up to an estimated 11,000 birds at the end of the breeding season. Dr. Ian McLaren, who has been directing this work for some years, has been keeping an eye on possibilities of extra-territorial nesting and interbreeding with the Savannah Sparrow, and has found one previous example on mainland Nova Scotia of both situations (combined), and 2 more examples this year - a female mated with a Savannah at Clam Bay, another such pair at Martinique Beach, both on the shores of Halifax County. The only two Ipswich Sparrows we seem to have sighted in migration were 1 Oct. 8 at Round Bay (BD) and a late lone one back of the dunes at Seal Is., Oct. 22 (CRKA).

The SAVANNAH SPARROW was found generally in normal numbers this summer, abundant in suitable habitat, in July, after noticeable scarcity in the same areas in late May. The Brier and Seal Island reports indicate a protracted migration, with the number increasing daily at Brier Is. from 20+ Aug. 20 to around 300 Sept. 3, and on Seal Is. 40 counted Oct. 14, down to 10 by Oct. 22.

An exceptional number of GRASSHOPPER SPARROWS, 12, arrived on Seal Is. Oct. 9 (JB,IM), 1 still there Oct. 22.

Following the early bird in May, the next report of the SHARP-TAILED SPARROW is of 3, June 13 in the Brass Hill salt marsh, Barrington (J & CG), a few noted later at Pictou, Economy, Crescent Beach, Lun. Co., and in various localities in Digby and Yarmouth Counties; 1 Oct. 3 at Brier Is. being the first one ever seen there by ELM. At Conrad's Beach, netted Sharptails were in full moult by Sept. 23, and still present Oct. 23. All of the birds netted there seemed to be of the Acadian race (IM).

A SEASIDE SPARROW, first noted Sept. 27-28 at Economy, and found again Oct. 8, and Oct. 22 within a few feet of where it was first seen, among some driftwood forced from the marsh



by high tides, is described by Francis Spalding as follows:

A Seaside Sparrow, observed on two successive days, Sept. 27-28, at the same spot in Economy at a range of 5 yards or so; the first day cloudy, the second cloudy with periods of sunlight.

First impression: a largely gray, vaguely wren-like bird, disappearing into driftwood, without the darker-backed - lighter-belly effect often noted when a sparrow is glimpsed. When flushed, flight rather weak and "flurried".

Close observation: Field marks noted - Yellow spot before eye, the yellow extending a very little over the eye giving the effect of a barely incipient eye-line; head otherwise gray, no trace of eye ring; eye dark, bill large, elongated, conical, of a fleshy bone color darker towards the tip; throat a light off-white; breast with broad gray streaks giving a washed-on effect; lower belly dingy grayish white; legs light grayish straw color, grayish in any but the best light. Sharp-tailed, the tail of a rustier brown than the grayish back; primaries browner than most other wing feathers. A few feathers on upper back pale-edged, but not sufficiently to give the back a streaky appearance. Breast largely suffused with a buffy wash under (or around) the gray streaks. A suggestion of buffy whisker marks, scarcely noticeable.

Remarks: the yellow at elbow of wing was not noted, perhaps because the breast feathers were fluffed out, possibly because the bird was an immature. The white whiskers were not noted, the slight buffiness in their place perhaps a sign of incomplete mature plumage.....

Books consulted, Peterson and Robbins, Forbush, Birds of New England, the two former with the bird in view. The bird stayed around two days, virtually in the same spot.

The seldom seen VESPER SPARROW was observed at Scotsburn, Pic. Co., 3 sightings in July and August (EH) and 3 were noted Aug. 19 at Economy (ECr), 1 later, Sept. 11-18 (FS), and 1 Oct. 9 at Seal Is., 2 there Oct. 22. Three stray LARK SPARROWS are reported from Seal Is. Aug. 24-Sept. 3, 1 seen there Oct. 14 and Oct. 22. (DWF,IM,NSBS parties) One was also spotted on Brier Is. Sept. 3 (LBM), and 1 Sept. 5 at Green Bay (J & SC).

The SLATE-COLORED JUNCO was our most abundant sparrow this summer, very generally distributed, and many immatures noted through August.

Large migration flocks in early Sept. about the countryside did not appear to concentrate on the three islands; the 40+ at Brier for the Labor Day week-end could have been the normal population. A big flock gathered at Barrington Sept. 20-21, noted by the Richardsons; at Cape Sable, small numbers went through Oct. 1-22. The Junco was still the most observed sparrow at Seal Is. Oct. 21-23, with a count of about 40.

It is interesting that the TREE SPARROW was seen in Cape Breton all summer, 1 July 12 at False Bay; 1 Aug. 11 at Shepherd's Bar (SM); 1 Aug. 28 at Belfry Lake (RB); 1 July and August at Lime Hill (MF) and 2 Oct. 8 at Lingan (RB).

The CHIPPING SPARROW had a good year, reported generally. One late nest, Aug. 12 at Economy, was unsuccessful, the very young nestlings found dead at a later date, nest discovered by Edgar Spalding. In Halifax city W.J. Mills had Chippies in the garden all summer, 8 there on Oct. 1. A flock of 11 was seen at Pictou Aug. 20 (EH), a flock of 10 on the same date at Brier Is. (ELM), and the numbers usually noted doubled at Yarmouth Aug. 24 (MWH). A later migration is indicated by a flock of 12-15, Oct. 10 at South Belleville, Yar. Co. (CRKA); 18 Oct. 11 at Kempt, Queens Co. (RH), and 25, "arrived" at Seal Is. Oct. 9-10 (IM), 15 still there Oct. 22 (NSBS).

The FIELD SPARROW has been reported - 1 Aug. 31 at Brier Is. (JK); 1 Sept. 22 at Lr. Ohio, 1 seen there also Oct. 21 (EH); and 1 Oct. 7-8, Oct. 9-10 at Seal Is., 3-4 still present up to Oct. 22 (NSBS parties).

Of 2 adult WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS on Seal Is. Oct. 7-10, one was of the western race gambelii, photographed by Jean Boulva. Six others, immatures were also present, 15 there by Oct. 14-16 and 12 Oct. 21-23. Two immature White-crowns were seen at Caledonia, Queens Co. Oct. 9 by Richard Howie, 3 Oct. 10 at Cape Sable - 1 adult and 2 immatures, 2 there Oct. 11, 1 Oct. 16 (SS); and 1 was seen in Dartmouth Oct. 22 (IM).

The WHITE-THROATED SPARROW also had a good year, many bob-tailed immatures seen early in August, other young birds noted all of that month, some of them making abortive attempts to sing. At Wilmot, in the Valley, small flocks began to appear the first part of September, continuing through that month (TH), and like the Junco, with which it often joined in mixed flocks, it had a long diffuse migration, small numbers on Cape Sable Aug. 15 - Oct. 20; a peak of "many about" Aug. 25-29 at Brier Is., still 15+ to be seen on Seal Oct. 22.

A very small movement of the FOX SPARROW is indicated by 1 seen Oct. 9 at Louisbourg (FWD, Tony and Brad Dobson); 1 Oct. 10 on Seal Is. (IM), and Fox Sparrows "common" at the Dartmouth Piggery by Oct. 22 (IM).

Twelve LINCOLN'S SPARROWS were observed this summer, from Cape Breton to Cape Sable (actually the only mainland sightings at Pictou and Economy). One was found at Brier Is. Aug. 21, 1 at Seal Aug. 30, 4 there Oct. 9, 5 Oct. 14 and 1 left by Oct. 22.

The SWAMP SPARROW, surely quite common, had only a few reports, of 24 birds in all, of which 13 arrived at Seal Is. Oct. 9-10, 8 seen there Oct. 14 and 4 Oct. 22. An earlier "peak" may have been represented by a small flock (6) at Wedge Pt., Yar. Co., Sept. 21.

The SONG SPARROW was in normal abundance, with the "new crop" (adults feeding young) noted at Yarmouth July 15. About 200 at Brier Is. Sept. 3 were surely migrants, but many were still about late, at Seal Is. - up to 50 birds counted there Oct. 22. No doubt many will stay to be our "lobster pot" birds on the Christmas Counts.

The LAPLAND LONGSPUR has returned, 1 Oct. 19 at Economy (FS); 1 Oct. 22 at Conrad's Beach (ELM), 1 Oct. 23 at Seal Is. (NSBS); and the SNOW BUNTING has been seen in large flocks - the forerunner a single bird, Oct. 8 at Cole Harbor, Hfx. Co., seen by Eric Cooke, other flocks (10-15 birds) and singles seen at Economy (FS), Grand Pré (RWT), Martinique Beach (DB), Kejimkujik (RH) and Cape Sable (BJS). Snow Buntings were heard going over repeatedly at Seal Island Oct. 21-23 (CWH).

The following two lists of birds are given in their entirety, as they illustrate the kinds and numbers of birds which concentrate in favored localities along the southwest coast of Nova Scotia during the migration season.

The first list comes from John Kearny at Brier Island, September 28:

A very large wave of land bird migrants was noted while mist-netting on Northern Pt., Brier Is. Between the hours of 0700 - 1400, 186 birds were caught in a total of only 3 nets being operated. The preceding day was stormy with clearing during the night. A complete list of birds captured on this morning is included.

Also of note is the large quantity of Blue Jays seen on this day flying about this end of the island. Several flocks of 40-60 birds were seen. A flock of 40 Rusty Blackbirds was also observed. There were quite a few Sharp-shinned Hawks that kept themselves very busy chasing birds through the spruces and alders and climbing high trying to pick off flying migrants.

At Pond Cove that afternoon, the following were observed:

Semipalmated Sandpiper - 30	Sanderling ----- 2
Baird's Sandpiper ----- 1	Marsh Hawk ----- 1
Ruddy Turnstone ----- 1-2	Pigeon Hawk ----- 1
Greater Yellowlegs ----- 15-20	Water Pipit ----- 100
Pectoral Sandpiper ----- 4	

Birds caught in 3 mist nets on 28 Sept. 1972 on Northern Pt., Brier Is.

Myrtle Warbler .....	23	Red-eyed Vireo.....	12
Blackpoll Warbler.....	18	Red-breasted Nuthatch....	10
Slate-colored Junco.....	17	Ruby-crowned Kinglet.....	8
White-throated Sparrow....	17	Golden-crowned Kinglet...	7
Magnolia Warbler.....	14	Swainson's Thrush.....	6
Black-throated Green		Solitary Vireo.....	5
Warbler..	14		

Palm Warbler.....	5	Brown Creeper.....	1
Yellowthroat.....	5	Mourning Warbler.....	1
Black-and-White Warbler.....	4	Tennessee Warbler.....	1
Blue Jay.....	2	Northern Waterthrush.....	1
Ovenbird.....	2	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker..	1
Black-throated Blue Warbler..	4	Catbird.....	1
Bay-breasted Warbler.....	2	White-breasted Nuthatch..	1
Nashville Warbler.....	2	Yellow-shafted Flicker...	1
Wood Pewee.....	1	Saw-whet Owl.....	1
Chestnut-sided Warbler.....	1		

On Sept. 29 very few birds were present in comparison with the day before. A total of 28 birds of 15 species was caught in 3 nets.

The second list comes from Ben Doane, and consists of the birds seen Oct. 8 at Cape Sable Island, following one of our big blows. The wind on the 8th was 10-20, the day warm and cloudy. Birds on the South Side were observed in the morning, 0930-1300, those on North Side in the afternoon 1430-1730.

	<u>South Side</u>	<u>North Side</u>
Common Loon	1	3
D. C. Cormorant	10	0
G. B. Heron	5	3
Canada Goose	0	8
Black Duck	1	0
Common Eider	6	0
Piping Plover	1	0
Semipal Plover	50	10
Black-b Plover	40	2
<u>Wilson's Plover</u>	2	0
Gr. Yellowlegs	30	5
Knot	1	0
Pectoral Sandpiper	<u>100</u>	0
W-rumped Sandpiper	2	0
<u>Baird's Sandpiper</u>	1	0
Dunlin	0	1
Least Sandpiper	20	2
Semipal Sandpiper	20	2
Sanderling	500+	200
Pomarine Jaeger	1	0
Gr. Bl-b Gull	(seen)	(seen)
Herring Gull	"	"
Ring-billed Gull	2	0
Kittiwake	0	4
Kingfisher	4	2
Flicker	2	2
Gray Jay	0	10
Blue Jay	2	1
Raven	5	5
Crow	30	30
Bl-c Chickadee	0	3
Boreal Chickadee	0	1
Red-b Nuthatch	0	6
Robin	10	150

	<u>South Side</u>	<u>North Side</u>
Golden-cr Kinglet	0	1
Pipit	12	0
Starling	(seen)	(seen)
Cape May Warbler	0	1
Myrtle Warbler	0	10
Purple Finch	5	0
Pine Grosbeak	0	4
Goldfinch	3	0
Red Crossbill	0	4
W.W. Crossbill	0	2
Ipswich Sparrow	1	0
Savannah Sparrow	30	2
Junco	6	20
Wh-thr. Sparrow	0	1
Song Sparrow	10	10

On behalf of the NSBS and others who may benefit by this report, the Editor wishes to thank the following contributors: Allen, C.R.K.; Anderson, Ross; Bamford, M.; Blackburn, Mr. & Mrs. R.; Bloss, R.; Boulva, Jean; Bower, Edith; Brennan, H. and sons; Brown, R.G.B.; Cann, Hazel; Chant, E.; Christie, David; Christie, Margaret; Cohrs, John, Shirley and family; Cooke, Eric; Crathorne, E.; Crowell, G.; Cunningham, N.; Deiltgens, Raoul; Delaney, Leta; Desplanques, C.; Doane, B.K.; Dobson, Fred, Evelyn and family; Doull, A.; Ferguson, A.L. & D.; Ferguson, Clarence; Finch, Davis and Sally; Foote, M.; Fullerton, Sylvia; Gallagher, J.R. and C.; Griffin, George; Harris, Elizabeth; Hawkins, F. and T.; Helleiner, C.W.; Hemeon, W. and P.; Hilton, M.W.; Hilton, S.C.; Holdway, E.; Hopkins, A.; Howie, R.; Hurlburt, A.; Johnson, Ralph; Kearny, John; Kirk, D.; Lamberton, R.; Lowerison, E.; Lunn, Simon; Mills, Eric L.; Mills, W.J.; Moffatt, H.P.; Moor, V.; McCurdy, R.; MacDuff, Don and Barbara; MacKinnon, Francis; McLaren, Ian and Bernice; MacLean, Sara; McNichol, J.; Macpherson, L.B.; Neily, Wayne; Nickerson, L.; Pocklington, R.; Purdy, O.; Rawlings, D.; Reardon, M.; Reid, Charles, Betty and Andrew; Roberts, Mrs. L.; Robertson, Frank; Smart, Robert; Smith, S. and B.J.; Spalding, Francis and Edgar; Spencer, Ann and Arthur; Spencer, George; Stobo, Wayne; Timpa, John and Jean; Topple, B.; Tull, Eric; Tufts, Robie; Welch, Dan; Whitehead, W.E.

REPORTS FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER

DUE MARCH 1, 1973.

## FIELD TRIPS

Inland Field Trips in the summer do not usually produce a long list of birds, but by August 5, many of the shorebirds are returning, and a coastwise locality is more rewarding. This was found to be the case on the Aug. 5 trip to Merigomish Big Island, Pictou Co. It was a beautiful fine day, and members from all over the province attended, seventeen in all. Fifty-two species of bird were sighted, 25 field, forest and marsh; 17 shorebirds. Besides Yellowlegs and peep, a good number of Whimbrel were seen (16), also 3 Hudsonian Godwits, and many Bonaparte's Gulls, of special interest to most of us, who rarely get a close look at these little gulls; but this is the place to do so. Besides the birding, this trip included a lesson in plant biology, thanks to the presence of an expert; the plants arousing greatest interest being Lovage, wild orchids and poison ivy. On the causeway, between the island and the mainland, foxes have dens in the hillocks of the marsh, and many tracks led here and there; a strategic spot for foxes. It was a good day, and by late afternoon, coffee and doughnuts tasted fine, at Mason's Camp Ground; the pause for refreshments giving us a chance to talk over the trip before heading for home.

- Margaret Kenny.

The trip to the Magdalen Islands, sponsored by the Cape Breton Branch of the Bird Society, included a 4-hour boat trip between Souris and the Islands, adding a number of pelagic birds to the list. The Islands themselves consist mostly of open, lightly wooded rolling countryside, bordered with miles of beautiful sand beaches, tidal flats and salt marshes. This was the Aug. 18-20 Field Day, and great numbers of shorebirds were present, including yellowlegs, peep, turnstones, Whimbrel and Hudsonian Godwits. Razorbills were seen off a point at the east end of the Islands. Ducks and hawks were scarce, but swallows were abundant still. In all, 68 species were found for the list. This was an exceptionally interesting trip, and nobody wanted to leave, everybody determined to return. There are now several well equipped camping areas as well as a new, modern motel, for anyone not wishing to camp. The Magdalens are famous, of course, but we add our recommendations of them for birding at its best, especially in the shorebird migration seasons.

- Eric Cooke.

The Margaree Harbor Field Trip Sept. 30 was exceptionally well attended and entirely satisfactory except, unfortunately, for the birds. Reverend Tom Bellis took the lead in the morning, from the Harbor up the coast to Chimney Corner. Birds were seen, but nothing rare or unusual, and there was

time to enjoy the scenery and to bone up on local history. After lunch at Big Cove Marsh (Mrs. Helen Stein's cookies much appreciated), Bob Wheeler took over, and the party drove to Dunnegan, Scotsville and East Lake Ainslie - a few more birds, a lot more scenery. Another lesson in plant identification included specification of several varieties of mushroom, by Dr. Leonard Muller. There was even an interesting old ruin to explore, an old stone house, of which nobody knew the history. One of us ran out of gas, the only thing to mar a perfect day, a day delightfully warm (which we hope we may remember amid gale force winds and frigid temperatures, come the Christmas Counts). Our best bird was a Bald Eagle, seen at the very start of the trip, only 100 yards away; our final score 38, of which we found 5 at the last stop, Nyanza Ponds. Finally, nobody required lullabies that night to induce sleep, but we had followed a pleasant road to exhaustion.

- Betty Reid.

We would not have believed it possible, but Brier Island surpassed its last year's record, on the President's Field Day, Labor Day week-end, Sept. 3, 1972. This day provided the longest list of birds ever seen on an organized field trip in Nova Scotia - 112 species. This year we had both land-based and pelagic groups of observers. The sea-going crowd saw a remarkable assemblage of 15,000 Red Phalaropes mixed with a few (a mere 100) Northern Phalaropes, 3000 Greater Shearwaters; glimpsed an elusive Manx Shearwater, and had breath-taking views of enormous Fin Whales almost alongside the boats. The whales were swimming lazily, blowing and occasionally sounding with an alarming flourish of flukes. There were Wilson's Petrels, Kittiwakes and Puffins, altogether making this the best birding on the east coast of the continent.

One member of the boat party has written:

"First came the Greater Shearwaters in considerable numbers. They skim the water tilted up with one wing edge almost cutting into the wave. Our boatman threw out some small fish and the birds came very close so we could see them snatch the fish or, if it began to sink, they dived for it. We were wishing for a Sooty when along one came and put on a regular exhibition for us, circling the boats - the three boats were kept together. Then along came some Puffins and some Wilson's Petrels - there were Gannets diving in the distance - but the show was stolen by the Phalaropes. There were thousands of them all around us spinning on the water, dipping for plankton, and uttering little twittering cries. There were so many of them we could hear them a long way off.....

We got back about two o'clock, ravenous, and headed for the NW area of the shore where Fred and Evelyn Dobson had set up their tent on a hill overlooking a little bay. There was a picnic table there and we moved in on one end of it and had our lunch. As we ate, we could watch Eiders, a Loon, and

some Cormorants swimming about in the water below. Small birds kept flying overhead on their way to some distant winter quarters or for a final stop and feed before the final take-off. A flock of Whimbrel flew over...."

The parties on land had what could be called a quiet day by Brier Is. standards, but there was satisfaction for every taste; notably 2 Hooded Mergansers, a Baird's Sandpiper and 2 Stilt Sandpipers in Pond Cove, a Pigeon Hawk at the cemetery, Golden Plover passing over in tight formation toward the south, Whimbrel flying by and calling, and many hundreds of swallows, gathering on the power lines near Western Light late in the day. Cape May and Myrtle Warblers were in full migration, and Red-breasted Nuthatches reached the third migratory peak of the fall. Yellowthroats and Wilson's Warblers were everywhere and Bobolinks were passing over regularly, almost invisible but betrayed by calls.

This was birding at its best in Nova Scotia - outstanding views of pelagic species, a sprinkling of land bird rarities, and a pervading sense of the power and sweep of the fall migration along the east coast.

- Eric Mills.

The two previous days at Brier Is. had been fine, but Sept. 3 was overcast, some fog in the morning, but still warm (68°) and windless. Most of the fifty birders arrived on the island Saturday night, although some had come earlier, for the first pelagic trip. The island suddenly became populous, but an air of great informality reigned. This was one of the delightful aspects of the trip. The President, to keep us down to earth (quite literally) called an Executive meeting, which we held, sitting on a ground sheet, outside of Ross and Mary Anderson's camp. We got through a lot of business too, in spite of watching the sunset and the Vice-president preparing a vegetable stew for his dinner. Roger had brought his own beautiful home-grown vegetables, and his problem was that he had two pots but only one burner on the stove. He finally settled for cooking them all in one pot, including carrots, turnips, onions, squash and beets. They finally got cooked, long after dark, although they sounded awfully crunchy, but Roger assured us they were done, it was only that he had omitted to rinse out the pot, which the children had been using for a sand pail that afternoon. True Grit.

Most of us foregathered at the Andersons that evening, to make and renew acquaintance, and were honored to have Davis Finch with us, and to meet Sally, his wife. The next day, David Christie and the Majkas from New Brunswick joined us, so that we were both an interprovincial and international party. We met, next morning, at the cemetery on the Peajack Road, to group ourselves appropriately for the day's activities. And it was here that we had our first bird of the day, a real exotic, the CARVED PUFFIN. To the surprise, delight and considerable



embarrassment of the Editor, she was presented with the first Society Puffin-of-the-Year Award, a very handsome bird, mounted and brass-plaquet, given by the President, who announced that hereafter such an award would be granted each year for outstanding work in the Society, the choice to be at the discretion of the year's incumbent. (Thank you, Eric, for the clever idea, and for your choice!)

Eric Mills has described our day, which ended rather more dramatically than we could have wished. As afternoon drew on, cars began to collect for the ferry, and as we waited, the weather deteriorated rapidly. It is a 5-car ferry, and a 20-minute trip, and the line of cars grew longer and longer on the main street of Westport. For a while, a brisk trade was carried on at the adjacent Ice Cream Parlor (Foof's Place); but the wind changed, it grew cold and dark, and as the tide receded we became well aware of the proximity of the mudflats and fishing boats. Eric Cooke, our President, kept our spirits up by wandering down the line of cars to chat, and was ill rewarded for his pains. His car, left driverless, was passed by a whole ferry load, and having been "put back" so far, he gave up the battle, and returned to his camping ground, where he spent a lively night. Brier Island caught the full force of the on-coming gale, and the President rode out the storm in soggy splendor, attempting to hold down his tent.

- P. R. Dobson, Editor.

N. S. Bird Society Executive Meeting      2 Sept., 1972

Location: Field in front of Ross Anderson's cottage, Brier Island.

Present: Eric Cooke, Shirley Cohrs, Ethel Crathorne, Fred Dobson, Phyllis Dobson, Roger Pocklington, Elizabeth Reid.

The reading of the last minutes was dispensed with, and business arising from the minutes discussed.

R. Pocklington reported that he had gotten speakers for about one-half of the lectures in the Dartmouth night school class being offered; he would make sure before committing more that a sufficient number registered for the course, to be given at the Bedford Institute of Oceanography on Wednesday nights.

E. Cooke reported on arrangements for the August 1973 Canadian Nature Federation Meetings. Dr. H. Moffatt of Halifax has been approached as a co-ordinator for the Society's hosting of the 1973 Canadian Nature Federation meetings at Acadia; he appears to be interested in accepting the job providing he

can get space and secretarial help at the Museum. He has not as yet made a firm commitment; however, Eric Cooke will meet soon with Dr. Moffatt and Dr. MacLaren to obtain the necessary commitment. The place of the 1973 meeting was announced at the 1972 Edmonton meeting in August. The meeting agreed that the Bird Society has a clear duty to host the meeting.

The Annual General Meeting will be held in December. A general meeting for October was proposed, and it is hoped that Dr. MacLaren will talk on the Edmonton Canadian Nature Federation meeting; also Dr. Pimlott, the 1972 CNF president, has been asked if he can come. Allan Smith of the Canadian Wildlife Service was also suggested as a speaker.

New business came next. F. Dobson asked if the Society should offer life memberships, in an attempt to set up more capital. The consensus was against such a plan; the Society was thought to be too small, and inflation too large.

E. Cooke mentioned a publication called "Viking" put out by the N.S. Tourist Information Department (issued 8 times per year, from June 1 - Sept. 22), and suggested that the Society should contribute articles. It was agreed that such a possibility should be explored, and it was agreed that the best time to do so was next spring.

Dr. L. B. Macpherson dropped in, and agreed to finish bringing the N.S. Tourist Bureau Tour Book up to date "when some time was available". S. Cohrs suggested that we should offer checklists for sale at the Nova Scotia Museum; E. Crathorne said that she had approached the Museum but had been told that they could not sell anything they had not published themselves.

F. Dobson read a letter from R. H. Burgess, Deputy Minister of Lands and Forests, stating that they "are proposing to recommend to the Government that the area (Pearl Island) be declared a game management area". F. Dobson said that it remains to be seen what a "game management area" means in terms of protection. R. Pocklington noted that he was planning to write the Minister (B. Comeau) to thank him for including the islands of Mushaboom harbor in the new Eastern Shore Provincial Park.

F. Dobson said he had received a request for advertising rates in the Newsletter; all were opposed to the idea of selling advertising space in the Newsletter.

P. Dobson reported that she had received an answer from A. D. Smith of the Canadian Wildlife Service concerning the feeding of geese on the marshes; Smith felt that such feeding would do little to help weak birds; and would probably have a negligible effect on the overall success of the flocks. He also offered to send along a large quantity of informative literature, and Mrs. Dobson asked for ideas on how to distribute this; she noted that G. P. Reilly of the Dept. of the Environment in Ottawa had made an offer similar in magnitude. S. Cohrs suggested a central repository for such information, preferably

in the Museum, where interested people could pick it up. The lack of a suitable space in the Museum was bemoaned by all. E. Crathorne suggested reference shelves in the Libraries of various centres. No further action was taken on the matter.

E. Crathorne reported that 503 members had now paid their 1972 dues.

R. Pocklington proposed a Field Day on MacNab's Island near Halifax, on Saturday, Sept. 23; his proposal was agreed upon with enthusiasm.

F. Dobson was asked to be sure that notices concerning the proposed changes in the By-Laws of the Society (to separate the Secretary and Treasurer offices) must be out by October 20 at the latest.

The Annual General Meeting, as noted earlier, will be held at the N.S. Museum at 2:00 p.m. on Dec. 2, 1972. E. Cooke asked for suggestions for improving the meeting; for instance, was more room required? It was suggested that the meeting could expand after conclusion of its business into the room adjoining the auditorium simply by opening the folding doors. E. Reid suggested that out-of-town people would appreciate a field day on the following day (Sunday) and the idea was received with enthusiasm. R. Pocklington said that he would try to arrange it.

P. Dobson moved that Dr. Eric Mills be asked to head the Nominating Committee for this year's slate of officers; he could then appoint his own committee. The meeting agreed unanimously, and then was adjourned at 8:30 p.m., its business having been done.

- Fred Dobson,  
Secretary-Treasurer.

N. S. Bird Society Executive Meeting                      16 October, 1972

A meeting of the Executive of the Nova Scotia Bird Society was held at the residence of Ethel Crathorne on 16 October, 1972. Present were Eric Cooke, Fred Dobson, Phyllis Dobson, Ethel Crathorne, Betty Reid, Hazel Carmichael and F. Himsl.

F. Dobson read the minutes of the 2 September 1972 meeting, and business arising from them was discussed.

R. Pocklington and F. Himsl were both praised by E. Cooke for their work, Roger for organizing the Dartmouth Night School Course on birds, and Frank for producing the slide presentation for the Museum.

E. Cooke reported that Dr. Moffatt has agreed to co-

ordinate the 1973 meeting of the Canadian Nature Federation at Wolfville. Dr. MacLaren has obtained extensive information on the arrangements for the 1972 Edmonton meetings, which he will pass on to Dr. Moffatt.

E. Cooke announced that the Annual General Meeting will be held on December 9, so that Dr. D. H. Pimlott, president of the Canadian Nature Federation, can speak; his subject will be "Naturalists and Environmental Issues." The notice of the meeting must be out by November 6, since it is necessary to give 30 day's notice of the planned change in the By-laws to separate the offices of Secretary and Treasurer. Mr. Kanigsberg, the Solicitor of the Society, will be consulted about the change. A discussion followed on the By-laws change. It was discovered that last year three, instead of two, executive members "without portfolio" were elected (F. Himsl, S. Cohrs, W. Neilly). It was decided to return to the normal two in 1973. F. Dobson was reminded to close the books on October 30; he was also asked to prepare a forecast of the coming year's expenditures. Eric Mills has been asked to head the nominating committee, he will let Eric Cooke know "soon". E. Reid asked that if a field trip was planned for the day after the Annual General Meeting, it be included in the notice. E. Cooke and F. Dobson agreed to arrange for preparing the notice and getting it sent out. Seven hundred copies, plus stamps, will be needed.

E. Crathorne reported that 550 members have now paid their dues for this year (140 notices have been sent to members with still-unpaid subscriptions). R. Pocklington reported on the field day on McNab's Island on September 23. It was very successful.

F. Dobson has written to Mr. Prime of the N. S. Dept. of Lands and Forests, asking for more information of the meaning of the term "game management area", the term used by Mr. Burgess in his letter about Pearl Island. E. Cooke noted that the Society presented a brief at "Man and Resources", a public meeting of the Canadian Council of Environment Ministers, held at Province House on September 26, 1972. E. Cooke gave the brief.

E. Reid reported she has learned that the seabird colonies on Ciboux and Hertford Islands are being disturbed regularly by local people, who are landing on Ciboux and approaching very close to Hertford. She was asked to look into the matter further to see what might be done. F. Dobson was asked to mention the problems to Mr. W. Mills while having the audit done. The Society is still interested in obtaining Hertford Island through the Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund.

F. Himsl was asked to keep an eye on the feeders in Point Pleasant Park this winter. P. Dobson suggested that donations be solicited from locals at the Annual General Meeting and that someone should telephone members thought to be interested in continuing to supply them before the meeting. Frances Cook's name was suggested for this job, and P. Dobson agreed to ask

her. It was decided that no money for provisioning the feeders should come from Society funds; seed will be bought using only money collected through donations from local residents.

R. Pocklington and E. Cooke have started a "bank" of good color slides of local birds, and solicited them from the Executive and from the general membership. Copies will be made and the slides returned.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m. and tea served.

- F. Dobson,  
Secretary-Treasurer.

A Brief Presented By  
THE NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY

To

MAN AND RESOURCES

Canadian Council of Resources and Environment Ministers

HALIFAX, N. S.

September 26, 1972.

The Nova Scotia Bird Society is an organization of over 600 members made up of people in all walks of life throughout the Province. Our primary interest is in birdlife and members range from those who enjoy watching birds around a feeder in theyard, through enthusiastic amateurs who study the feeding and nesting habits and migratory patterns of the various species to the professional scientists involved in chemistry, biology and oceanography. The N.S. Bird Society supports the Canadian Nature Federation and through it is affiliated with natural history organizations across Canada. We ourselves are partly supported by the Nova Scotia Museum. The Society publishes a quarterly magazine containing information on migratory birds, nesting records and related subjects, which is distributed not only to our members but to schools, universities, libraries and interested individuals in all Provinces of Canada and some other countries.

The Society administers a Scholarship and Trust Fund which has acquired islands which are kept as protected areas for nesting seabirds. While our main interest centers around birdlife, this inevitably leads to a wider interest in their habitat and all types of wildlife, for birds are but a part of the closely woven and interdependent web of life known as Nature.

Swamps, rivers, lakes, woodlands, insects, fishes, wildlife and birds are all part of this web of life, each playing its part and each dependent in some way on the other. Therefore, to protect the whole, each part must be protected and kept healthy. However, our remarks today will be confined to only three points.

The first item we wish to discuss concerns islands along our coast used as nesting areas by various species of birds. With today's expanding population, the search for new areas on which to build summer residences, and the desire of non-residents to acquire land - any land - in this province, it is important that prompt action be taken to protect these nesting areas. We understand that some action is being taken by the N.S. Government to protect certain sites, particularly major nesting areas of the Common Eider. This is a species of duck hunted along the coast and the protection of its nesting places is desirable. However, this is only one of the species requiring attention. Nesting colonies of Great and Double-crested Cormorants, Great Blue Heron, Puffins, Petrels and Terns are to be found on a number of islands all along our coast.

These colonies cannot stand the encroachment of Man, so the islands on which they are located must be given protection if they are to survive.

The government's efforts to provide some measure of protection to certain islands are commendable. Here it seems that the places receiving attention are ones related mainly to hunting. This is good as far as it goes, but attention should also be paid to areas where other species nest and feed. The habitats of both game birds and other species not related to hunting deserve attention.

Therefore, we recommend that the government expand its program to acquire control of islands used by various species of birds in order to protect their nesting sites. A list of such islands is attached to this brief showing species nesting on each. We suggest this as a basis for a program to extend protection to the most vital areas.

Our second concern relates to marshlands. Both fresh and salt water marshes are vital to wildlife and birds as breeding areas, for protection and for food. Unfortunately many people consider marshes as wasteland, suitable only as garbage dumps or, if close to residential areas, as places to be filled in for parking lots. However, marshes are rich in the foods required by a wide variety of fishes, birds and animals. Salt water marshes and the shallows surrounding them provide spawning grounds for a number of species of fishes and food for their young. Loons, Blue-wing and Green-wing Teal, Black Ducks, Redwing Blackbirds, Bitterns, Rails and Snipe all make their nests and raise their young in marshes throughout the Province. Shorebirds feed in the saltwater marshes on their northward migration each spring and southward journey each fall.

All these and other species need the protection of our

swamps and marshes. In addition, the marshes of the Province form a part of the image of the Province in the eyes of tourists who have been here or of those who might think of coming - an image of a countryside of salt air, clear water, fresh, green woods and open spaces. We understand that the government has a program to acquire some of the more important waterfowl production areas, presumably with a view to ensuring a continued harvest of ducks, geese and teal for the hunter. While commending the government on this program, we suggest that the program be expanded to ensure the well-being of species other than game birds. The saltwater marshes of the Province require protection in the same way as the beaches which are being brought under the Beach Protection Act. We recommend that a similar act be implemented to offer protection to the swamps and marshes so vital to much of our wildlife. Also that certain selected areas be given Sanctuary status to provide a refuge for wildfowl during the hunting season.

Another matter of concern is the subject of spraying to kill brush. About the end of 1969, Honorable I. W. Akerley, Minister of Highways for Nova Scotia, announced the government's decision to suspend roadside spraying in the Province and review the use of herbicides by his department. At that time, the Nova Scotia Bird Society wrote to the Minister commending the government and expressing our support for this decision. So, too, did many citizens of the province. The Halifax Mail Star of January 27, 1970, contained an article which states "A spokesman for the Nova Scotia Highways Department said yesterday that

"literally hundreds of letters of congratulations are being received commending the Department. We've received comments from all over the Province on this. We haven't received a single letter of opposition to our review. Its the biggest reaction we've ever received".

When the public obviously favored and supported the cancellation of the spraying program, why was it resumed? Not only are citizens of the Province offended by brown, unsightly brush along the roadsides resulting from the use of herbicides - we can hardly expect visitors to the Province to enjoy dead, withered roadside vegetation either.

Second and most important in the long run, there are sound biological reasons for keeping the use of herbicides to an absolute minimum. To the ecologist, the indiscriminate use of herbicides is like using an atomic bomb to kill flies - the results extend far beyond the target. We must also be concerned that there is increasing evidence from both the laboratory and nature that chemical herbicides can have long range detrimental effect on humans. In this light, we cannot help but be surprised that roadside spray has recently been used in the Halifax water supply area.

We recommend that the use of herbicides for spraying of brush along roadsides, railroads and power lines should be suspended in Nova Scotia. In view of the stated policy of the

government to provide as many jobs as possible in these days of widespread unemployment, we feel it would be desirable to eliminate the spraying in favor of providing jobs at cutting brush for some now out of work.

The Nova Scotia Bird Society supports the government in the program it has begun. The Beach Protection Act and the programs to acquire wetlands and islands are welcome measures. However, as outlined in this brief, we recommend the expansion of these programs to include species other than game birds, and that protection be given to the islands and marshes where these other species nest and feed.

The Nova Scotia Bird Society would be glad to offer its services and knowledge to all levels of government and act as consultants relative to any matters concerning birds, which bring pleasure to so many people. While it is impossible to put a dollar value on the pleasure they bring, birds are certainly one of our most enjoyable and therefore valuable resources.

#### ISLANDS OF INTEREST

SABLE ISLAND	Only breeding place in the world of Canada's unique species, the Ipswich Sparrow.	
SPENCER ISLAND	45°20'N	64°42'W
AMET ISLAND	45°50'N	63°11'W
BOOT ISLAND	45°08'N	64°16'W
BRIER ISLAND	44°15'N	66°22'W
ROUND ISLAND	43°31'N	65°59'W
SEAL ISLAND	43°25'N	66°01'W
BLANCHE ISLAND	43°28'N	65°24'W
BLUE GULL ISLAND	43°40'N	65°13'W
GREEN ISLAND	43°45'N	64°56'W
INDIAN ISLAND	44°18'N	64°24'W
PEARL ISLAND	44°23'N	64°03'W
SADDLE ISLAND	44°32'N	64°11'W
MACNAB ISLAND	44°37'N	63°22'W
SOUTHWEST ISLAND	44°30'N	64°00'W



JEDDORE ROCK	44°40'N	63°01'W
BARREN ISLAND	44°41'N	62°59'W
LONG ISLAND	44°41'N	62°54'W
WESTERN ISLAND	44°45'N	62°43'W
OUTER ISLAND	44°45'N	62°40'W
ISLAND OFF GUILDFORD (OUTER GUILDFORDS)	44°48'N	62°32'W
GUILDFORD ISLAND	44°48'N	62°32'W
PUMPKIN ISLAND	44°49'N	62°23'W
BROTHER ISLAND	44°49'N	62°22'W
HORSE ISLAND	44°51'N	62°28'W
HARBOUR ISLAND	44°52'N	62°20'W
BIRD ISLAND	44°52'N	62°17'W
INNER HALIBUT ISLAND	44°52'N	62°12'W
MIDDLE HALIBUT ISLAND	44°52'N	62°12'W
OUTER HALIBUT ISLAND	44°52'N	62°12'W
LITTLE WHITE ISLAND	44°54'N	62°06'W
WHITE ISLAND	44°53'N	62°06'W
W. SUGAR ISLAND	45°13'N	61°18'W
GEORGE ISLAND	45°20'N	60°58'W
BASQUE ISLAND	45°35'N	60°39'W
HAY ISLAND	46°02'N	59°42'W
PORTNOVA ISLAND	45°56'N	59°48'W
GREEN ISLAND	45°56'N	60°04'W
HERTFORD ISLAND	46°22'N	60°24'W
CIBOUX ISLAND	46°23'N	60°44'W
TOOTHBRUSH ISLAND	46°04'N	60°44'W
ST. PAUL ISLAND	47°12'N	60°09'W
MARGAREE ISLAND	46°22'N	61°16'W

## SPRUCE BUDWORM

### Enzyme Speeds Attack on Major Forest Pest.

OTTAWA - A significant advance in the biological control of the Spruce Budworm, Canada's most costly forest pest, was reported today by the Canadian Forestry Service.

Researchers under Dr. Vladimir A. Smirnof of the Laurentian Forest Research Centre at Ste. Foy, Quebec and aided by the Quebec Lands and Forests Department, have completed an experimental spray program of a 10,000 acre fir forest in the Temiscouata area of Eastern Quebec. The heavily-infected forest was sprayed with a bacteria (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) improved by an enzyme to speed the effect of the bacteria's attack on the feeding budworm larva.

The spruce budworm, which has ravaged Canadian forests for many years, is in a severe epidemic state this summer over more than 20 million acres of eastern Canada's spruce and balsam fir growth. Much of the forested area under attack has been protected over the years by chemical spray. This special bacteria formulation offers an important alternative, one that does not endanger other species of beneficial insects, plants, fish or mammals.

CFS scientists have studied the use of the *Bacillus thuringiensis*, a naturally occurring bacterial disease, against the budworm for several years. The bacteria is licensed for agricultural and forestry use but its effect has been too slow to halt the voracious feeding habits of the budworm during the larval stage of development.

Dr. Smirnof undertook to improve the effect of the bacillus and reasoned that an enzyme was required to break down the gut wall of the larva and speed introduction of the fatal infection of the budworm's blood system.

Since the rigid structure of the budworm consists of chitin he selected the enzyme chitinase. This substance was introduced into spray formulations over 100 acres in 1971 and its success brought a decision to expand the trials in 1972. Chitinase, however, was expensive and not available in sufficient quantities.

Dr. Smirnof began looking for a supply in nature and turned his attention to the digestive tracts of birds! Since birds eat insects containing chitin, he felt the supply might be found in bird stomachs. With his theory proven, he worked with a chemical company to extract 100 grams of chitinase from the entrails of 60,000 chickens acquired from poultry processing plants.

Dr. Smirnof used only a few milligrams of chitinase per acre in the bacillus formulations, but this was enough to accelerate the action of the bacteria and arrest larval feeding,

Growth of the trees, which otherwise would have been stripped, continued and the forest is in good health, he said.

The 100 acre plot sprayed last year is flourishing this year, he reported, although it is surrounded by an epidemic of budworm. These results suggest that there may be some residual effect of the bacteria, giving promise of long-range control.

General use of the bacillus-chitinase spray will depend upon the low-cost production of chitinase by the new process.

(News release received from Forestry Information Section, Department of the Environment Section, Ottawa, Canada).

(Editor's Note: The Maine Audubon Society staff has worked closely with Dr. Smirnoff over the past year. Mr. Anderson visited his laboratory at Laval University in Quebec and has since discussed the Canadian work with him in phone calls and letters. Contacts made by MAS with Dr. Smirnoff were responsible for the Maine Forest Service conducting extensive B.t. and chitinase testing in northern Aroostook County last spring.)

Copied from the Maine Audubon Society Newsletter, September, 1972.

#### Literature on Canadian Wildlife

Enclosed with the Newsletter you will find a pamphlet on Bird Feeders. This is sent to you courtesy of the Canadian Wildlife Service, and is one of a number of pamphlets put out by the Service, recently sent to us by Alan Smith, CWS, Sackville, N.B. Some of these are beautifully illustrated, and all are full of reliable firsthand information. Requests for literature on wildlife should go to A. D. Smith, Wildlife Biologist, P. O. Box 1590, Sackville, New Brunswick.

Examples are:

The Great Cormorants of Eastern Canada.  
Canadian Bird Names: French, English and Scientific.  
Birds Protected in Canada Under the Migratory Birds Convention Act.  
Field Grasses of Nova Scotia.  
Nest Boxes for Birds.  
Bird Feeders.  
Wildlife in Man's World.  
Wildlife News.  
A Walk in the Forest.  
Canadian Wildlife Service '71.

Hinterland Who's Who (separate pamphlets):

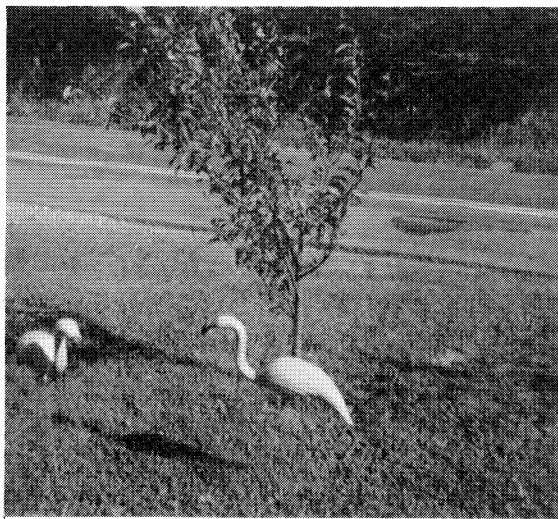
Lemmings	White-tailed deer
Skunk	Mountain Sheep
Wolf	Moose
Blue Jay	Red Fox
Beaver	Caribou
Hawks	Polar Bear
Peregrine Falcon	Woodchuck

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The Pink Flamingo

Incidence in Nova Scotia.

The winter of 1972 with its long stretches of cold, and heavy snowfall, was particularly hard on one species of Nova Scotia bird, the pink plastic flamingo, lawn variety, that winters out-of-doors. This species has grown common in the larger towns and was making good progress in the country districts, but it has received a severe setback.



Owing to the difficulty of finding volunteers for a comprehensive count of this species, it is impossible to give an accurate list of their numbers, but it is estimated that last year there were upward of 902 individuals scattered among the towns of Nova Scotia, some of great age, and in the rest of the province at least 500 could be found. By the spring of 1972, however, there could not have been 800 of the birds

left standing, and many showed deterioration or loss of color. These last are not to be confused, however, with the true white flamingo to be found in a few places on the South Shore. A member of the Bird Society reports seeing an adult bird with one immature in Cumberland County in mid-July, but there were only a few sightings of birds in bright spring plumage.

No record has been kept of the lawn ducks, hens, or swans of Nova Scotia, which must await further study.

- M. MacIntyre.

(The above article, for which we are very grateful, goes under the heading of "What To Do When Forced to Accompany Bird Watchers" or "Down With Discrimination". Editor)

THREE DAYS OF GRACE ONLY  
FOR THE MARCH 1  
REPORTS





