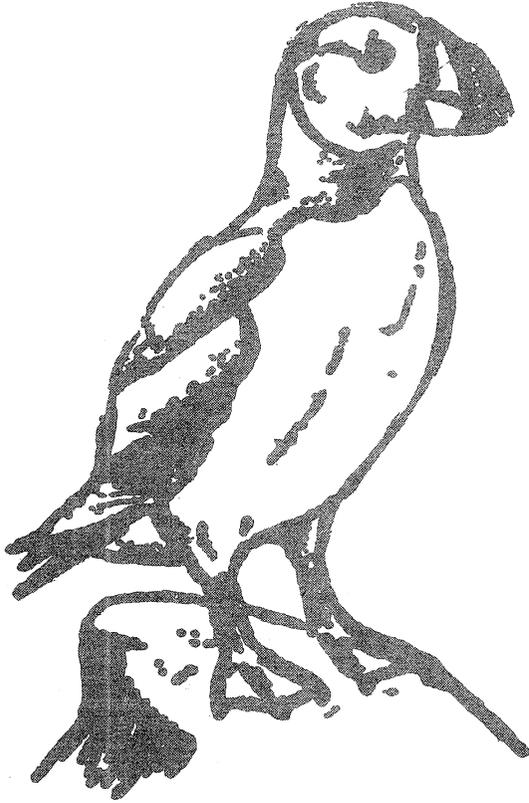


*Nova Scotia
Bird Society*



Newsletter

Volume 15, Number 3

November, 1973

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NEWSLETTER

Editor: Phyllis R. Dobson

Volume 15, Number 3

November, 1973

SUMMER and FALL 1973

Fog and rain accompanied at times by severe thunderstorms persisted along the Atlantic coast of Nova Scotia from the middle of June until well into August this summer. Temperatures were mild to quite warm, and when the weather finally cleared it remained very pleasant from mid-August through September, which was the driest and sunniest September on record, in the Halifax area. During this month temperatures gradually cooled down from the 70's to the 50's, and in October to the 40's, with frost at night in some localities.

On September 30 and again the two following week-ends, high winds dried out the autumn leaves and blew them prematurely from the trees; and doubtless drifted the flocks of migrating birds off course here and there - some of them to end up in unexpected places.

It appears to have been a good breeding season (as it should have been, for insectivorous species, since blackflies and mosquitos remained with us well into the summer) and many immature birds have been noted among the flocks which have accumulated from August on, steadily making their way down the province, to collect at the NS-NB border, or at Yarmouth, Brier Is. or Seal Is., to disappear and make room for more. (No doubt other places received their quota!)

In the Yarmouth area, C.R.K. Allen noted that swallows began to gather early (July 19) and by the second half of August there were large flocks - 200 to 500 - roosting on telephone wires, marsh vegetation and even on the graveled roadsides. Large numbers of Flickers and Robins appeared September 13, increasing in numbers in the next two weeks. Blue Jays were much in evidence, screaming continuously from the trees about the place, and the first Black-capped Chickadees since spring returned. From Pictou, in early October, Eric Holdway wrote "Robins seemed scarce in spring but are passing through in numerous flocks, probably more than usual numbers. Juncos and White-throated Sparrows are also very abundant, and large flocks - 50 or more - of Grackles can be seen in the cut cornfields. Starlings in flocks of 200 or more work the wrack line where there is much seaweed washed ashore." Driving along the back roads at this time one frequently passed through flocks of kinglets, chickadees, vireos and warblers, filling the trees with chatter; thrushes slipped into the bushes from

the roadsides, from which small and large flocks of Juncos flushed almost continuously. When the road skirted the salt water, loons could be seen at their fishing again, the inlets were filling with ducks and geese, the harbor flats with herons and late-leaving shorebirds,

In fact, migration proceeded so smoothly and steadily it would have been difficult to time any particular species, were it not for trips to the catch-alls of our offshore islands, plus this year Stuart Tingley's report from the bottleneck at the Nova Scotia-New Brunswick border (for which report we are very grateful). Most of our rarities - and there have been many - have been found on the islands. Besides exceptional numbers of our regular strays, we have again added new species to our list and we were able to confirm a number of unusual species by photographs, particularly on Sable Is. - the Western Sandpiper, Long-billed Dowitcher, Wilson's Phalarope; the Manx Shearwater on Cape Sable and the Harris' Sparrow on Seal Is. To give some idea of the sheer numbers of birds on these islands, during the "Ipswich" census on Sable Is. Sept. 13-14, 206 migrant land birds were counted on approximately 7% of the terrain, indicating about 3,000 birds on the island. Of these 206, 96 were Bobolinks, 33 Northern Orioles, 28 Cedar Waxwings, 5 Black-billed Cuckoos, and 35 warblers, 16 of which were Cape Mays. Later, on a brief visit to Sable by Ian McLaren Oct. 24, he found again many passerines. He censused an area roughly 2% of the island's vegetal terrain and counted 37 birds besides 30 "Ipswiches", estimating about 1800 in all for the island. About half were sparrows (mostly juncos and Swamp) and half warblers, mostly Yellow-rumped (Myrtle). On the most carefully censused trip to Seal Is. during the fall, Oct. 5-8, 123 species of bird were identified, about 2900 individuals counted.

In the report to follow, emphasis is laid on breeding records, dates and place of departure of migrants, and the presence of the disoriented birds among our native species. For convenience, headings are placed before those sections containing reports of unusual interest.

UNUSUAL NUMBERS OF THE PIED-BILLED GREBE

COMMON LOONS were noted flocking on Sept. 26 at Gabarus in Cape Breton by Roy Blakeburn. Although the resident Loon at Lake Annis, Yar. Co. was still there Oct. 1 (DBK) ten other reports place these loons in salt water from late Aug. on, and the 4 fishing off Seal Is. Sept. 30 had increased to 6 by Oct. 8. The only 2 RED-THROATED LOONS reported appeared off Brier Is. Aug. 26 (ELM). The RED-NECKED GREBES returned Oct. 8, 2 seen at Amherst (CD & ST) and one at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co. (J&SC) the same day. The PIED-BILLED GREBE has been unusually well reported: a late family (probably a family - a row of little heads which subsided suddenly) Aug. 11 on an inland lake in Yarmouth Co. (MWH & EK); 3 on Brier Is. Aug. 26-27(ELM); 6 (4 imm.) Aug. 15 near Maccan (CD & ST); 15 others this fall reported from Cheticamp, Glace Bay, Crousetown, Liverpool, Sable Is., Seal Is. and Brier Is.; and on Oct. 8, 16 had accumulated at the NS-NB border, presumably ready for migration (CD & ST).

THE MANX SHEARWATER HERE TO STAY

Varying numbers of the GREATER SHEARWATER were sighted in the Bay of Fundy during the summer - sightings dependent upon conditions of tide and weather. From the report of William Townsend, Maine, of July and August round trips, Bar Harbor to Yarmouth, and from the reports of Eric Mills and Davis Finch of pelagic trips off Brier Is., numbers ranged from 50 to the 4,000 seen Aug. 26 by the last-mentioned two observers along with guests of the Canadian Nature Federation Conference. One Greater was killed at Cape Sable Light Sept. 5, and one only seen Aug. 13 in the Northumberland Strait. One SOOTY SHEARWATER was also seen there (the Strait) on the same day, another July 15 in the Strait (EH). The first Sooty of the season appeared seaward from Cape Sable, where Sootys flew past occasionally through the summer, but in much fewer than last year's exceptional numbers. In the Bay of Fundy the highest number sighted at one time was 8, on Aug. 26. On this date also the high of 10 MANX SHEARWATERS off Brier Is. obliged the CNF visitors by coming within view. For three successive years the Manx has been found in good numbers in NS coastwaters, particularly the Bay of Fundy, and can no longer be classed as a rarity. The accompanying photograph came from the Smiths at Cape Sable, where an injured Manx spent two days "up the beach in the shelter of wild parsley bushes. It did not seem badly hurt, moved sometimes to a niche in the foundation of the house, south side....rejected overtures of friendship and food in no uncertain terms...finally disappeared, we hope to live or die in its own environment. It was a pretty bird, soft black feathers on head and back, sharp-angled wings, legs and feet really pink, with a little gray along the backs of the legs, a few gray freckles on the feet. Length 13½", wings 29". It would not pose properly....just flattened out, hence the (rather unsatisfactory) composition" wrote Betty June Smith. The reproduction here is from a color picture. It is a great pity it cannot be given in color.



Manx Shearwater at Cape Sable, August, 1973.
Also Sidney Smith and family. Taken by BJS.

The LEACH'S STORM PETREL was scarce in the Bay of Fundy during July, with about 20 seen on two crossings on the "Bluenose", and more, about twice as many on the two August crossings (Wf). In Northumberland Strait Holdway found them exceptionally numerous, and seen in flocks - the largest, 40, Aug. 8, two miles off shore feeding over a tidal eddy. Earlier, in June, 25+ were "blown in shore in the gale of the 17th" near Glace Bay (SMaCL). The WILSON'S STORM PETREL was found in greater number than the Leach's in the Bay of Fundy, 50 seen July 23, Bar Harbor to Yarmouth, 400 Aug. 25 on a similar trip (WT); and 40 Aug. 26 off Brier Is., 15 there Sept. 1 (ELM & DWF). As usual, only a few GANNETS were sighted - some immatures in July in the Northumberland St., off shore from Pictou, a flock of 9 there Aug. 7; seen also in late Aug. and early Sept. off Brier Is. and Cape Sable; up to 35 Oct. 7 at Seal Is. and the same day 8 at Port George, Bay of Fundy "no doubt brought in by the same wind which gave us the scoters and Bonaparte's Gull" wrote Bob Lambertson.

GREAT CORMORANTS were on the move between Aug. 28 and Oct. 21, chiefly around the shores of Cape Breton (GS,FR,RB) but a few off Cape Sable, Seal Is. and Brier Is., where they were sometimes in company with the DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT, present as usual in much larger numbers. The largest concentration of Double-crests was 200, at St. Esprit Is. Sept. 22 (R,J & SM), and 200 Oct. 6 at Seal Is. - 100 there Oct. 8, watched flying south, and still large flocks Oct. 19-21 when 10 Greats were noted also (IMcL). E. Holdway reported on the nesting colony of Double-crests on the disused wharf alongside Pictou Harbor causeway. On June 24 there were 100 nests, 5 nestlings noted. By July 13 there were 108 nests, young in all of them, usually 2, a few with 3. By Aug. 5, 23 nests were still occupied, and by Aug. 29 the young in the area were fully feathered.

SUMMERING GREAT EGRET

Early in Aug. the GREAT BLUE HERON was "more in evidence" at Wine Harbor (GMaCL); 25 were assembled at The Hawk, Shel. Co., by Aug. 19 (RH); "up to 20 on the flats, young now flying" mid-Aug. at Morien Bar, where there were 21 Sept. 5, down to 6 Oct. 10 (SMaCL). Eighteen were found roosting in a flock on Seal Is. Oct. 6, and around 13 were still "staked out" at low tide, Melbourne Sanctuary, Yar. Co. Oct. 20 (MWH). (The Great Blue appears to fly slowly, and apparently it does, as Jan Meyerowitz watched one from the bus on which he was riding, at 20 mph, and only for a short time was it able to keep parallel. One GREEN HERON missed our last report - it was found June 10 at Cape Sable (S&BJS). Also reports of two GREAT EGRETS (Common Egret) have come in late - one at Goshen, Guys. Co. in April, seen by G.H. Nichols and others, and another present through July at Shuben-acadie near the river, reported by Fran Cook. The Smiths at Cape Sable once again had visits through June, July and early Aug. from 2 and sometimes 3 BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERONS. One also was noted Sept. 5 at Brass Hill, Barrington, by the Gallaghers. Two YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERONS have been reported, one at Green Bay, Lun. Co. again Oct. 6-7 (as it has been the last 2 years), found by Chris Cohrs, and one (immature) at the Light on Sable Is. Sept. 16 (ELM et al). Only about a dozen reports of the AMERICAN

BITTERN have come in, all of ones or 2's, with no clue to any migratory movement, unless the 2 on Seal Is. Oct. 6 were On Their Way.

CANADAS RETURN EARLY

Returning flocks of the CANADA GOOSE were first noted Sept. 8-9-10: 130+ at Morien Bar, 25-50 at Cole Hbr., Hfx. Co. (M&RE), 40 at Cherry Hill, Lun. Co. (SJF) and 125 at Matthew's Lake, Shel. Co. (J&CG). By Sept. 16 there were 80 in Cole Hbr. (RE); on the 22nd 200 at Advocate (CD) and "first seen" at Port Hebert (RW). On Oct. 2, 20 geese were seen heading south at St. Esprit (RM) and 11 at the Grand Pré, the first seen there by RL. Oct. 6-13 brought 200+ to Morien Bar, 7 to Crescent Beach, 17 to Yarmouth Co. (first back in Melbourne Sanctuary), 4 to Seal Is. and 75 more to Cole Hbr. (EHC). By Oct. 20 the raft at Melbourne had built up to about 400, by the 30th, 500.

There were 2 MALLARDS in a marsh at Pictou, Aug. 12, singles at Brier Is. Aug. 27-28, also at Three-Fathom Hbr. Oct. 6, and 3 were reported from the NS-NB Border Region on Oct. 8. The largest number reported was 15 at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co. (no date given, but probably late Aug. or early Sept.). A report of a very late brood of BLACK DUCKS comes from the Sydney area where small downy young were seen on Aug. 26. One reporter states that this species is very scarce in the Lawrencetown, Hfx. Co. area so far this fall, and that hunters in Colchester and Cumberland counties are seeing fewer birds. Reports from other areas may bear this out, for, while "hundreds" have been seen at several sanctuaries, most other sightings are of 10's, 20's and 30's - small numbers for this, our most common duck.

GADWALLS, among the rarest of our ducks, were present in varying numbers (3-17) in the Glace Bay Sanctuary and surrounding area from Sept. 3 to Oct. 10. (See P.E.I. report to follow.) Eric Cooke had a nice "mixed bag" of sightings in a pond at Three-Fathom Hbr. on Oct. 6, where he found 3 PINTAILS, 7 AMERICAN WIDGEON and a female Mallard. Other reported sightings of Pintails are surprisingly few: one at Cape Sable July 31- Aug. 4; one Sept. 13 and 6 Sept. 16 also at Cape Sable; and one Aug. 28 at Brier Is. The only breeding report of GREEN-WINGED TEAL is from Cape Breton where 3 quite large ducklings were seen at Homeville on June 15. The southward movement began in late August and peaked in early October. Small flocks are still passing through SW Nova Scotia at the time of writing (Oct. 28). No definite records of breeding BLUE-WINGED TEAL have come to hand, although a pair was seen at East Slope, C.B. on June 15. Flocks of from 20 to 40 birds were seen at Sable Is. Sept. 13-15, at Glace Bay Sanctuary Sept. 30 and at Pictou Aug. 30. At Seal Is. a flock of 40 seen on Aug. 27 had dwindled to 5 by Sept. 3. The last reported sighting is of 7 at Seal Oct. 6. In addition to the American Widgeon seen by Eric Cooke mentioned above, there are three other reports: 80 Oct. 8 at the NS-NB border; 25 the same date at Amherst Pt. Bird Sanctuary and one juvenile shot in the Mira area Oct. 9.

Three NORTHERN SHOVELERS at Amherst Pt. Sanctuary on Oct. 8 and 4 reported from the Border Region could well be repeat

sightings. There were also 5 at Beaver Cove - 3 males and 2 females well observed and clearly described by Ian MacGregor. That WOOD DUCKS are on the increase is surely indicated by the sighting of 70 Sept. 6, at the NS-NB border, and 85 a week later in the same area. Other sightings are of singles at Sable Is. Sept. 13; at Beaver Dam, Cape Breton Co., where one was shot Oct. 9; and of 2 at Caledonia, Queens Co. Sept. 4. The movement of RING-NECKED DUCKS began as early as Aug. 26, when there were 27 at Tiddville, Digby Neck, and the migration was still in full tide by Oct. 8 when Rick Howie saw 80 at West Caledonia. The last report is of 2 at Sable Is. Oct. 24.

We badly need reporters from the Wallace area where some diving ducks such as GREATER SCAUP and COMMON GOLDENEYE begin to concentrate in large numbers in late Sept. and Oct. Our only reports of the former species is of a pair at Schooner Pond, C.B., June 25; of 2 at Glace Bay Sanctuary Aug. 26 and of a single at Broad Cove Sept. 16. Reports on Goldeneyes are even fewer, though the number of birds seen is greater: 3 Sept. 20 at Glace Bay Sanctuary and 40 Sept. 27 at Lingan. Two early reports of OLDSQUAWS are: one July 28 at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co. and one Sept. 15 at nearby Green Bay. Fishermen in the Wine Hbr., Guys. Co. area reported COMMON EIDERS as commoner than usual but that Black-backed Gulls were destroying numbers of young. Well grown young birds were noted after June 21 at Cape Sable and on July 13 at Seal Is. The southward movement was apparently well under way by late August. On Brier, Eric Mills saw 10 birds on Aug. 26, 500 on the 27th, 20 on the 28th, 500+ on the 29th and 300+ on Sept. 1. A flock of 75 passing Seal on Oct. 21 were clearly migrants. Eiders will, of course, be fairly common all winter as we are well within their wintering range.

Bob Lamberton reports 21 WHITE-WINGED SCOTERS on Oct. 7 at Port George, and goes on to say: (on this date) "with strong NNW wind and heavy surf the first big flocks of Scoters (all three spp) showed up in my Fundy shore transect". The only other report of any number of this species is of 35+ at Mira Bar, also on Oct. 7. Migrant SURF SCOTERS first appeared at Port Hebert Oct. 8. Bob Lamberton had 37 at Port George on Oct. 7, but all other records are of singles or 2 or 3 birds, seen during October in the western part of the province. The first BLACK SCOTERS (Common Scoters) appeared at Port George on Sept. 5, when one was seen, followed by 3 on Oct. 7. There were 25 in the sea off Matthew's Lake, Shel. Co., on Sept. 6, 30+ there on Oct. 8, and 200 at Seal Is. Oct. 20.

The only HOODED MERGANSER report is of 4 juveniles or females at Head of St. Margaret's Bay on Oct. 13 (ELM). COMMON MERGANSERS are also lightly reported this fall: a flock of 40+ at Lingan, C.B. Sept. 27 and another of 12 at Cherry Hill, Lun. Co. Oct. 6. Cape Bretoners report RED-BREASTED MERGANSERS very scarce this summer with no broods seen or reported; the only sighting was of a single bird at Homeville June 25. There were 23 at Cranberry Head, Yar. Co., Sept. 20 and 40 at Markland a few miles to the south, on Oct. 20. The only other reports are of 5, Oct. 8 at Seal Is., one Sept. 15 at Green Bay, one at Cherry Hill Oct. 7; 2 July 15, 7 July 23 and a female with 5

young Aug. 5, all at Caribou Harbor, Pictou Co.

INCREASE IN PEREGRINES

The only three GOSHAWK reports were sent in by the Gallaghers (JR&CD) from Shelburne Co.: one at MacKay's Lake, Middle Ohio, June 30; one at John Lake, Upper Ohio, Aug. 23; and by Rick Howie, one at Keji, Aug. 30. There were good numbers of SHARP-SHINNED HAWKS during the NSBS trip of Sept. 29 - Oct. 1 and they, together with the Merlins, played a continual game of not-very-serious chase with the abundant Flickers. In fact, the raucous cackle of flustered Flickers was continuous throughout the day as both of these little hawks made half-hearted passes at them. Just how seriously the Flickers themselves took this game is hard to say, for they made no attempt to hide from or avoid their pursuers until the last moment. Actual numbers of Sharp-shins was difficult to estimate as these birds are swift and the island is small, but the party agreed on 2, for Sept. 29, 10 for the 30th and 15 on Oct. 1. A week later Eric Mills reported an influx on Oct. 8 - one seen on the 7th and 25 on the 8th. All other reports, (seven in all) are of singles seen during the summer. Seven reports only are to hand of the RED-TAILED HAWK seen throughout the mainland from Guysborough to Yarmouth Cos. all summer. One wonders if they are really as scarce as this, or if observers are just not bothering to send in sightings of this "bread-and-butter" bird?

BROAD-WINGED HAWKS are lightly reported this fall. Either it did not occur, or no one saw the grand take-off from Brier Is. One was at Morien June 12; 2 were reported by a visitor from the USA on Aug. 18 at Tatamagouche; one was seen in the NS-NB border area Aug. 28, and 2 were reported from Seal Is. Oct. 8. The only report of a ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK is of one seen at Seal Is. Oct. 19-21 (IMCL). There have been no definite records of successful nesting by BALD EAGLES this year. A pair at Mira River brought a clutch of eggs to hatching, but one of the pair disappeared and the young are thought to have died. The pair that regularly nested at Homeville also disappeared, but, to quote Sara MacLean "the ugly little midget not much bigger than a raven, who lives at the Sanctuary, has a handsome big bride". On a more cheerful note, juvenile birds were observed at several places: one at Cheticamp Sept. 15; one at Seal Is. Aug. 28 and again Oct. 20-21 (evidently responsible for a freshly eaten Great Blue Heron); one at Bear River Sept. 16 and one at St. Esprit Sept. 17. (See Bald Eagle survey to follow.) MARSH HAWK reports are numerous and are about equally distributed all over the province, mostly of single birds, although there were 7 at the NS-NB border over the marshes on Aug. 28, and 5 on Seal Is. Sept. 1. One at Cape Sable Sept. 28 was seen to chase a Kestrel up out of sight, presently returning empty-taloned. Nesting by the OSPREY is reported from several localities: one nest as usual west of the Brookside Road, Hfx. Co.; at least three nests in the Cole Harbor area; the Indian Path, Lun. Co. pair raised one young bird, and an Osprey was observed incubating at Caribou Is. July 13 and seen beside the nest Aug. 5, though no young were evident; a pair at Wine Hbr. was said to be "almost certainly" nesting though no details were supplied. Ospreys are apparently still present in

good numbers, as there were many recorded sightings from both Cape Breton and the mainland.

Although classed as extinct in Eastern Canada by the Canadian Wildlife Service PEREGRINE falcons persist in showing up in our area. One was seen Aug. 15 at Tupperville, Anna. Co., by W.E. Whitehead, flying low across the road (the falcon, that is), one was at Seal Is. during the NSBS trip of Sept. 29-Oct. 1 and up to 4 birds were seen by the NSBS party Oct. 6-8. Eric Cooke saw 2 Peregrines together at Three-Fathom Hbr. on Oct. 6 and one immature bird was still present at Seal Is. Oct. 19-21. The MERLIN (Pigeon Hawk) is reported almost entirely from the western half of mainland N.S., the one exception being a bird seen by the NSBS party at Cheticamp Sept. 15. Seal Is. led in sightings by a good margin. Estimated numbers on the field trip Sept. 29-Oct. 1 were: 5 on the 29th, 25+ on the 30th and 5 on Oct. 1. On the Oct. 5-8 trip to Seal, numbers were reported as: one on the 5th, 6 on the 6th and 7th and 10 on the 8th. On the visit of Oct. 19-21, an early count of 12 dwindled to 4 on the last date. The Cohrs report many more of this and the following species at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co., this fall, harrying the shorebirds. As mentioned earlier, the Merlins joined the Sharpshins in an apparently harmless game of chase with Flickers on Seal Is. and the Flickers, although shrieking in protest, did not make any serious attempt to evade their pursuers.

In the past years, considerable numbers of KESTRELS (Sparrow Hawks) have been seen en route down Digby Neck, and concentrations built up on Brier Is. This, together with their consistently smaller numbers at Seal Is., compared with those of the Merlins, suggests a different migratory pathway. We have a goodly number of recorded sightings from the mainland, and one from Cape Breton. All of these, (except Eric Holdway's reports of single birds on June 30 and July 13 at Pictou) are in September and October; but one suspects that this is because birders begin to bestir themselves in the fall, not that these little falcons were absent all summer. Certainly one pair found its usual niche - its familiar nest box at the Hawkins at Wilmot. By June 21, the 4 young were quite well feathered, could be heard begging for food on June 23 and came out of the nest box July 2 "to sit very unsteadily, preening and trying their wings for hours, and by evening they had flown over to the woods" wrote Thelma Hawkins. The greatest number of Kestrels reported from any one locality was an estimated 5-10 at Seal Is. Oct. 19-21. All other sightings were of 1-4 birds.

GROUSE AND PHEASANTS PLENTIFUL

Observations of the SPRUCE GROUSE remain scanty, but the birds are to be found in appropriate habitat, if looked for, since 4 were seen at Musquodoboit Harbor Aug. 18 (MC&EC) and 5, Sept. 2 in the Ingonish area (SMaCL). The RUFFED GROUSE had downy young out of the nest June 22 in the Pictou area, and broods were noted early in July in both Digby and Cape Breton Cos. One female, for protection of her family, adopted aggression rather than distraction display and took to chasing cars, in the Wine Harbor, Guys. Co. area, unfortunately however was finally killed by one.

(GMacL). Hunters say that grouse are fairly abundant this fall (easy to put up 8 on a trip), although in some cases it has been difficult to locate them. For some reason there was a complete failure of the wild apple crop in central N.S. and the grouse have been forced to find other foods - notably cinque-foil leaves, rose hips and other berries (HPM). In Yarmouth at Lake Annis one was found eating cotoneaster berries in a garden (FG), and not far away 6 were feasting on a barberry hedge. The RING-NECKED PHEASANT also did well, mentioned in a number of reports - the two largest numbers being 6 along the Annapolis Basin Sept. 23 (JT) and 12, the same day, flushed from back of the beach at Petite Riviere, Lun. Co. (GE&PD). There are usually 2 or 3 to be found in this area, 12 was a notable increase.

Reports of our two "common" RAILS (they may be common but we seldom manage to see them) are: VIRGINIA, one Aug. 7, Brier Is. (ELM); 2 Sept. 16, Sable Is. (NSBS party); and one, found dead Oct. 3 at Cape Sable (CS&SS); SORA, 10 Sept. 16, Sable Is.; one adult, dead, Sept. 21, Cape Sable; and 2 Oct. 8 at Seal Is. (NSBS party). The only AMERICAN COOTS this fall were 2 immatures, banded and released Aug. 23 at Jolicure, mentioned in Stuart Tingley's report of the NS-NB Border Region birds.

MANY SHOREBIRDS, INCLUDING RARE SPECIES

Reporting on his visit to Seal Is. Aug. 27-Sept. 1, Ian McLaren said shorebirds were more plentiful than he had ever seen them, and the records of several other observers suggest that the breeding season was a good one on the tundra. SEMI-PALMATED PLOVER nest in fair numbers along our coast, but the movement of the more northern breeders can be spotted readily by careful consistent observers. A group of Yarmouth birders has sent in a series of records which shows a build-up in that area from a handful of birds in late July and early August to a peak of approximately 300 at Cook's Beach Aug. 29, still about 200 at the same place Sept. 26 and then a rapid fall-off to a few sightings by Oct. 11. Gordon MacLeod says that migrants began to arrive in Wine Harbor, Guys. Co. by Aug. 1, and Cape Bretoners report large numbers by late August. The peak was reported at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co., the week-end of Sept. 15, and at Sable Is. on the same date. The last sighting was of 8 at Yarmouth Hbr. Oct. 14, although a few stragglers are doubtless still around.

One lone PIPING PLOVER is reported on Sept. 23 at Economy of all places. Apparently no one took a good look at the silvery sands of Shelburne Co.! KILLDEERS, once one of the rarest of our plovers, have been well reported the past five or six years and still seem to be on the increase, particularly in the south-west. There were 2 at Cape Sable, first seen June 6 which behaved like a nesting pair, but disappeared after about two weeks. One was seen at Yarmouth airport June 18, 2 at Pictou July 29 and another there Aug. 5. There was one at Cherry Hill, Lun. Co., Sept. 1, 2 at Sable Sept. 13-16, and 2 at Seal Oct. 6-8. The Killdeer centre of the province appears to be the Yarmouth area, particularly Cranberry Head and Point, a few miles up the Fundy shore from town. There were 6 there on July 20, and an increase to 10 Aug. 19, 12 Aug. 29, 14 Sept. 8, then 12 Sept. 13, 10

Sept. 30 and 2 Sept. 25. The last reported sighting is of one at Cook's Beach near Yarmouth Oct. 20, although in recent years records of over-wintering birds have been received.

Eric Cooke reports more AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER than usual and wonders if this is really so or if his skill at identifying them is improving. The number of sightings tends to bear out his first impression. The Cohrs also say that there are "many" this year at Crescent Beach and Cherry Hill. They have been seen in ones and twos and up to 20 birds at Amherst Pt., Economy, Brier Is. and Cranberry Head, on the Bay of Fundy shore; at Seal Is. in the mouth of the Bay; and at Morien Bar, C.B., Lawrencetown, Hfx. Co., the Lunenburg beaches already mentioned, Cape Sable and Sable Is., at which last place they numbered 60, 45 and 50 birds on Sept. 13, 14 and 15 respectively. Ian McLaren says there were 15 still at Sable on Oct. 24. The first Golden Plover appeared at Morien Aug. 5-8 when singles were seen there, and also a lone bird at Cranberry Hd. Aug. 25. All other reports are for Sept. and the first week in Oct.

First sightings of southbound BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER were 3, July 14 at Economy, followed by reports of singles or several birds at Crescent Beach Aug. 4, Wine Hbr. and Cook's Beach on the 13th. Sightings of 2 June 26 at Morien and one June 29 at Glace Bay Sanctuary were probably of non-breeders, but the single bird at Morien July 20 could well be the spearhead of the fall movement. Peaks reported were quite consistent: Sept. 8-13 in the Yarmouth area, Sept. 13-15 at Brier and Sept. 15 at Crescent Beach. Many hundreds of birds involved. There are, of course, fair numbers of Black-bellies still around and a few may well get themselves included in some of the Christmas Counts.

RUDDY TURNSTONE reports are rather scanty and do not therefore give much of a picture. First appearances were 2 July 17 at Green Bay, Lun. Co.; 3 July 29 at Pictou; 50 the same date at Economy; 30 Aug. 5 at Cape Sable and one Aug. 13 at Cook's Beach. Largest numbers seen other than the Economy sighting were 40 at Brier Is. Aug. 27, 60 in the same place Sept. 1 and 40 at Sable Is. Sept. 15. The last sighting received was of 2 at Cherry Hill Oct. 6. Ian McLaren reports Turnstones feeding on a stranded whale at Sable and says that they habitually feed on carrion and even their own excrement. This may explain why the old-time market gunners seldom wasted powder on them.

Hunters in central Nova Scotia say that the AMERICAN WOODCOCK, abundant all summer, moved out from there about two weeks earlier than usual, as dry weather had sent the earthworms down beyond reach; and that the few birds which remained behind were very thin. Casual observations in the Tusket, Yar. Co. area bear out the first part of this report, as Woodcock became more common about mid-Oct. in that region, and almost any night several could be seen fluttering like big moths across the road in the headlight beams. COMMON SNIPE, although probably not as abundant as Woodcock, are more often seen and reported because of their habitat in open wet pastures and bogs, and their more diurnal habits. As with all resident breeders, detection of a migratory movement is not easy unless careful count is kept for a specific area. The Yarmouth birders may have detected such a movement at Cranberry Head, where

a single sighting on Aug. 11 rose to 11 on the 19th, then 10 on the 25th, 9 the 29th, 10 Sept. 13 and 6 Sept. 25. At the NS-NB border a count of 150+ Snipes on Aug. 20 also sounds like a movement in progress. All other reports are of singles to several birds during summer and early fall from the length and breadth of the province.

The WHIMBRELL is one of the earlier shorebirds to arrive from the north. First record for this past season is of 30-35 at Cape Sable July 7, followed by an unspecified number at Glace Bay Sanctuary July 11. All other reports are in Aug., Sept. and Oct., and come from the Glace Bay area, St. Esprit, LaHave Islands, Baccaro, Cape Sable, Seal Is., Pinckney's Pt. and Brier Is., (Atlantic shore); and from the NS-NB border region and Economy, at the head of the Bay of Fundy. The Whimbrell is one shorebird which does not seem to have recovered to any great extent due to the protective laws of recent years. Sara MacLean says, however, that they are more numerous in the Glace Bay Sanctuary than she has ever seen them before, and records 150 there Sept. 7. Several other flocks of 20-40 were reported from points along the South Shore.

The Smiths at Cape Sable say that about 30 pairs of SPOTTED SANDPIPERS nested on the island this past summer. The only other breeding "records" are of downy young at Morien Bar and at Petite Riviere estuary. Being a summer resident and being just as solitary as the following species, fall movements of this sandpiper are difficult to detect. For the most part they just disappear. The last sightings received are of one at Green Bay, Lun. Co. Oct. 6 and 3 at Seal Is. Oct. 8. As usual the SOLITARY SANDPIPERS slipped through the province almost unnoticed on their southward trip. And, to confirm their name every one of the few recorded sightings is of a single bird. The first was July 29 at the Dartmouth Piggery. Of the other 9 sightings, 4 were in Aug. and 5 in Sept., the latest being Sept. 23, two birds in the Dartmouth-Cole Hbr. area. All reports, except for one at Maccan, Cumb. Co., were from the SW part of the province.

From about mid-May until early August the air over Nova Scotia's salt marshes vibrates with the concupiscent, conjugal and parental hysteria of breeding WILLETTS. The birder who ventures into these regions during that period knows what a hawk experiences when mobbed by a gang of crows. On the other hand, all birders, we think, rejoice in the dramatic comeback of these big showy shorebirds during the past half-century. The only definite notes on breeding this summer were of newly flying young at Conrad's Beach and in the Petite Riviere area, late July. Willets depart early, and this year the final sightings were of 4, at Glace Bay Sanctuary; 19 Oct. 8 at Petite Riviere estuary; and the flock of 50-100, flying about like immense butterflies over the marsh at Pinkney's Pt. on Aug. 29, which must have represented good local (i.e., Nova Scotia) breeding success.

The GREATER YELLOWLEGS appeared on the scene early this year - 3 at Cape Sable July 7; one at Glace Bay Sanctuary on the 13th and one at Economy on the 14th. Cape Bretoners report them as "very plentiful" by early August, and in the Yarmouth area

where careful consistent counts were made, the peak occurred during the first half of September (40-50-#'s on the beaches monitored, decreasing after the 13th). July sightings of LESSER YELLOWLEGS are both from Pictou, one July 13 and one July 23. The Yarmouth group reports 4-5 on Aug. 13 (and to excuse themselves for this small number said "scope not working"). Cape Breton had the largest number of reports with 4 Aug. 19 at Homeville; 6+ Aug. 21 at Glace Bay Sanctuary, one there Sept. 3. They were also seen by the NSBS Field Party at Cheticamp on Sept. 15.

When is a Knot not? The A.O.U. has come to our rescue by changing this bird's name to RED KNOT. This can still be punned, but it takes a special kind of person to do it. The first report this year is of one bird July 17 at Cape Sable. There were 4 at Conrad's Beach July 29 and one the same date at Economy. Other reports of singles to several birds came from Digby Neck, Economy, Cape Sable, Crescent Beach and Glace Bay during August and September. The greatest numbers seen at any one time and place were 40 at Evangeline Beach Aug. 11, 13 at Sable Is. Sept. 14 (NSBS) and 30+ at Crescent Beach Sept. 16 (S&JC). The last reported sighting was 2 Sept. 23 at Economy (FS). The first PURPLE SANDPIPER was at Seal Is. Oct. 21 (NSBS party). Consistently Cape Sable, one of the jumping-off places for migrants, records the first of the southbound shorebirds, and has done it again for the PECTORAL SANDPIPER. There were 2 there July 28 and 14 Aug. 4. The only other August record is of one at Brier on the 28th. There were sightings of singles to several birds through September at Sable and Seal and at Crescent Beach and the Yarmouth area. The greatest numbers in any one sighting were 14 at Dan's Head and 13 at the Hawk Beach on Sept. 5; 40 at Cape Sable Light Sept. 7 (DWF, J&CG), 18 at Cherry Hill Oct. 6 (J&SC) and 16 at the NS-NB border Oct. 13, which is the latest report for this species.

Three observers state that WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPERS were scarce this fall, at least in the Lawrencetown (Hfx. CO.) and Crescent Beach - Cherry Hill (Lun. Co.) regions, and this seems to be borne out by the few reported sightings - one at Homeville, Cape Breton, Sept. 24; none in the usual places at Crescent Beach; one at Cherry Hill Sept. 8 and again Oct. 8, and 5 in the same locality Oct. 14. Single birds were at Brier Is. Aug. 27-29, and at Sable Is. where there were fair-sized flocks of 50 Sept. 13, 20 Sept. 14 and 100 Sept. 15. White-rumps are late stayers, and there are no doubt still a few on the beaches. BAIRD'S SANDPIPERS, rapidly losing status as rarities, were seen at four localities on six separate occasions this fall by careful experienced observers. The Cohrs report one, Oct. 7 at Cherry Hill; there were 2 at Seal Aug. 27 - Sept. 2; 3 at Pond Cove, Brier Is., Aug. 22 and one in the same place Aug. 27 - Sept. 1. A Baird's was seen at Cape Sable Sept. 7 (DWF et al) and another (or the same) on Sept. 21 (S&BJS). LEAST SANDPIPERS, the abundant little "peep" of the muddy marshes, showed up in surprisingly small numbers in this fall's reports. Two at Cape Sable June 14 could have been breeding birds, but the first flight of returning migrants was reported there July 7. There were 15 July 20 at Morien Bar and 12 at the other end of the province the same date at Pinkney's Pt., Yar. Co. Greatest numbers seen in the Yarmouth area were 20+ Aug. 24 and 24 Aug. 29. They appeared at Economy July 14 and

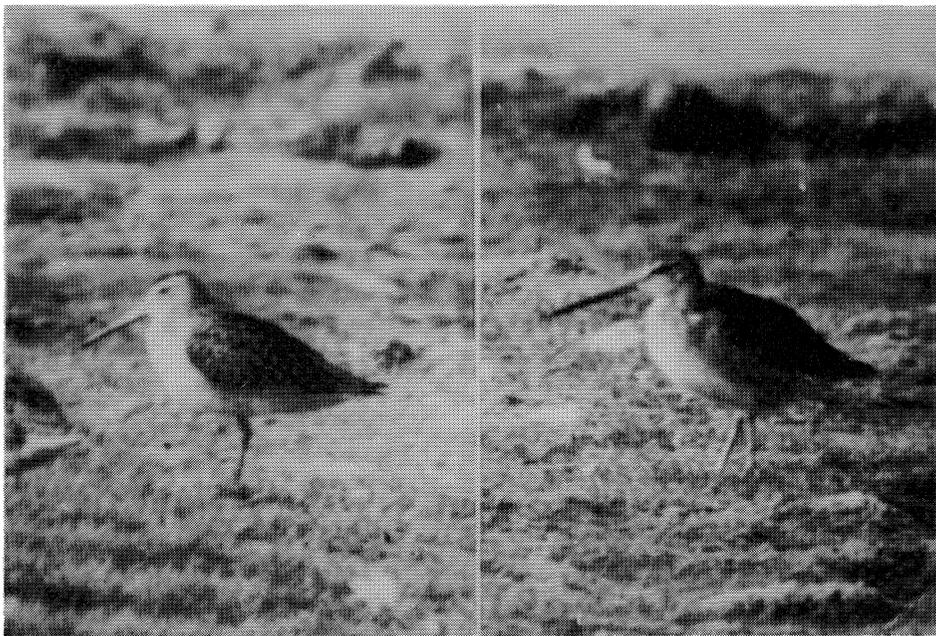
were still present there at the time of reporting - Oct. 15. The greatest numbers in one sighting were at Brier: 30 Sept. 1; and on Sable: 25 Sept. 13.

All DUNLIN sightings are for October except for one be-draggled specimen seen at Cherry Hill during the Sept. 15 storm. The next seen there were 3 Oct. 7 and 7 Oct. 8 and 14, while 2 were at nearby Crescent Beach Oct. 8. There were 5 at Cook's Beach Oct. 20, and the 15 at Sable Oct. 24 was a record number for the island. Bob Lamberton also reported a record (for him) of 40 at Evangeline Beach Oct. 2. The first wave of SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHERS at Cape Sable July 17 was a good one - approximately 300 birds. The Smiths report "large flocks flying overhead out to sea and back again. Around in great numbers for three days, then in small flocks along the beach, on the flats, etc.". Fifty were also at Crescent on the 7th and increased until the week-end of July 13-15, when the Cohrs estimated 2500 there. About 150 were still there Aug. 2-3 and 10 remained to Oct. 6-7. The peak for Yarmouth area was about 125 on July 30. Smaller numbers were at Brier during August, and at Sable in mid-September. The only records from any region other than the Atlantic coast are of two sightings of 5 and 2 birds at Economy July 16 and Aug. 17 respectively.



Long-billed Dowitcher at Sable Is. September, 1972. Close-up of bird photographed in the accompanying picture, note chesty appearance and set-back legs.

Ian McLaren reports LONG-BILLED DOWITCHERS at Sable Is.: one Sept. 13; 5 on the 14th and 4 on the 15th. The two accompanying photographs illustrate very clearly the distinctive appearance of this bird. Eric Cooke found one of this species at Seaforth, Hfx. Co. Oct. 13. It was observed at 20 yards with scope and was flushed twice, when the characteristic call was noted.



An exceptionally short billed Short-billed Dowitcher and an exceptionally long billed Long-billed Dowitcher. Taken at Sable Is. Sept. 14, 1972, by Ian A. McLaren. Note that even with the bill difference (not always so extreme) the Long-billed is a different bird in shape with a "chesty" appearance and with legs set far back.

Approximately 12 STILT SANDPIPERS turned up in the province during September, all in a rather short period between Sept. 4 and 15. There were 2 at Cape Negro Sept. 4, 2 at Dan'l's Head Sept. 5 and 2 at Matthew's Lake Sept. 6, all of these localities being in Shelburne Co. (DWF, J&CG). There were up to 5 birds on Sable during the period Sept. 14-16, some of these possibly repeat sightings. A lone bird of this species was identified by the NSBS field party at Cheticamp Sept. 15. First reports of the SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER came from Pinkney's Pt., Pictou, Economy, and Cape Sable during the period July 20-29, flocks of 20-29 noted. Flocks increased in size expectably throughout August (no very large numbers, 100-200 mostly) except at Evangeline Beach Aug. 11, where the huge migratory flocks assemble each year; this year estimated at 15,000 by members of the NSBS field party. Numbers at large were maintained through September, dropping off the end of that month, a few left on Seal Is. Oct. 1 (6) and fewer the next week there (2-3). WESTERN SANDPIPERS, like Baird's, Stilts and the following species are appearing more and more often in our reports. (An increasing number of these birds or of experienced observers?) A Western Sandpiper at Pond Cove on Brier Is. was seen by many observers and photographed. This was during the NSBS Field Trip of Aug. 29-Sept. 1. The Gallaghers and Davis Finch found another at The Hawk, Cape Sable Is. on Sept. 5, and were able to study it at leisure. Ian McLaren saw one at Seal Is. Aug. 31 and 2 there on Sept. 1, and was able to get photographs. He also reports one at No. 3 Station, Sable Is., Oct. 24. (The experts above say that if you see a genuine Western Sandpiper, it is impossible to mistake it for any other species. This statement receives our full endorsement for the experts only. Someday we hope to become an expert and join the group, or, quicker, join the group and become an expert. Ed.)

Twelve years ago (see: The Birds of Nova Scotia) there were two records of BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPERS, one in 1910 and one of questionable value for 1882. Since then the number of sightings of this species by responsible experienced observers has been increasing and this season we have reports of a minimum of 38, all at Sable Is. or in the SW quarter of the province. Taking the Sable birds first, there were 5 Sept. 13-14, 1 Sept. 15 and 2 on the 16th. (We counted only the 5 seen on the 13th in the final addition, assuming the others to be repeats). There were 1-3 birds at Seal from Aug. 27 - Sept. 3, and 2 at Cherry Hill, also on Sept. 3 where one was again seen Sept. 15-17. Four at The Hawk, Cape Sable Is. Aug. 26 had dwindled to one on the 28th. Three were seen at the Grand Pré Aug. 22 (John Kearney et al), one at Pond Cove, Brier Is. Aug. 27-29, one at Dan'l's Head Sept. 5 and a fantastic 18+ at Cape Sable Sept. 7, by Davis Finch and the Gallaghers.

The first southing HUDSONIAN GODWIT stopped to refuel at Crescent Beach Aug. 5. There were 2-4 birds at Morien Bar Aug. 2-8, and 4 at Lingan Aug. 12. A single bird was at the Grand Pré Aug. 25, 2 at Pinkney's Pt. Aug. 29; one at Dan'l's Head Sept. 4-5; 7 at Matthew's Lake Sept. 6 (these both on Cape Sable Is.) and one at Cape Sable Sept. 7. The Smiths report a REEVE, which spent two and a half days at Cape Sable, Aug. 5-7, long enough for a leisurely study under good conditions to check

out all identifying marks. First SANDERLINGS appeared at Cape Sable in small flocks July 17, and built up to "good numbers" by mid-August. Other early sightings were 2 at Pinkney's Pt. July 20 and 20 July 29 at Economy. Later flocks were larger: 50 Aug. 27 - Sept. 1 at Brier; "several hundred" Sept. 20 at Cranberry Head; 600+ Oct. 2 at the Grand Pré and 150 at Yarmouth Oct. 14. Bob Lambertson says that the Grand Pré flock this year is huge, and quotes John Kearney, a regular visitor to this locality, as saying that he has never seen so many there before. Reports of this bird from Cape Breton and Pictou are scanty: "seen" (no numbers) at Cheticamp Sept. 15; 2 at Lingan Sept. 23 and 2 Sept. 4 at the Sanctuary. The only report from Pictou is of 8 on Sept. 13.

There was a considerable concentration of RED PHALAROPES off Brier Is. the latter part of August - flocks seen fluctuated between 600 and 10,000 depending on wind and tide. A WILSON'S PHALAROPE seen by members of the C.N.F. field trip to the Grand Pré was a "lifer" for many (DWF et al). This is one of the rarest of our shorebirds, but is reported in unusual numbers this fall. Davis Finch has commented that he saw 10 in Atlantic Canada Aug. 10 - Sept. 7. Included in these are 2 at Dan'l's Head, Cape Sable Is. Sept. 4 and one at Cape Sable Sept. 7, these 3 also seen by the Gallaghers. Two other records are: one Sept. 15 at Sable Is. (NSBS) and one at the NS-NB border Sept. 21 (ST). NORTHERN PHALAROPES, southbound, appeared in early July, 15 seen in Northumberland Strait and 3 in the Gulf of Maine (5 hours out of Yarmouth). Further sightings in the Northumberland Strait (Pictou area) built up to 50 Aug. 9. This pelagic species was well off base at the NS-NB border when one was seen Aug. 25, a first record for this region, and 8, no less, Sept. 21, reported by Stuart Tingley. One other sizable August record is 20 Aug. 26 at Brier, where 150 were seen Sept. 1. The only phalarope records for the Atlantic region are one Red and one Northern picked up dead on Cape Sable Sept. 21, and one live Northern in the pond near the Light there Oct. 7.

JAEGER VENTURES INLAND

A most unusual sighting of a PARASITIC JAEGER Sept. 9, inland, has come from J.S. Erskine, Wolfville. The bird was seen from the Gasperaux River bridge near Melanson, and was sitting in the water near 4 Herring Gulls. When flushed, it sailed upstream, swung over the marshes, and dropped near 2 Black Ducks, which shot up, shrieking, and took off with the Jaeger after them. It was, by description, an immature bird (spotted brown sides, wide, curved, slate-colored wings, underwing pattern reminiscent of the Skua) and evidently failed in its chase, as the 2 Blacks were found, safely returned to their homeplace next day. Other Jaegers reported were one Aug. 13, North Sydney; one Aug. 26 off Brier Is. and 2 in Nova Scotia waters from the "Princess of Arcadia", seen by Davis Finch, who commented "not a Jaeger year at Brier".

Two SKUAS are put to our credit, from the Bay of Fundy off Yarmouth, seen from the "Bluenose" July 23 (WT), and 2 more (possibly the same?) from the "Bolero" Aug. 6 (RL), who saw them 4-5 hours out and finds this within the ABA's definition of "Nova Scotia". Two very early ICELAND GULLS appeared, one Sept. 30 at

Seal Is. (RBBB) and one Oct. 10-11 at Glace Bay (SMaL). Comments of "usual numbers" of the GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL, all for the Atlantic shore came from Yarmouth to Glace Bay. The count at Seal Is. Sept. 29 was 120, at Morien Bar Aug. 22 was 150. The same comments were made about the HERRING GULL, but consistently it was found in larger numbers (200 at Seal Sept. 29, 200+ at Morien Bar Aug. 22). The 300+ at Pictou Aug. 19 had many immatures among them (EH). The counts at Morien Bar were only local, and do not represent the numbers of gulls in the Glace Bay area, where an estimated 10,000 rose from a roost at the Sanctuary, Sept. 19, "both species, all ages", the landfill dump supports hundreds of these, according to SMaL.

A few RING-BILLED GULLS were noted in the Yarmouth region, one adult with an imm. Sept. 8 at Pinkney's Pt. (AH); 2 at Glenwood Oct. 7 (DBK) and one imm. hunting over a salt marsh at Surette's Is. Oct. 21 (MWH). One only was seen late Sept. to Oct. 6 at Glace Bay (SMaL). At least 50 had settled in their favorite spot at Grand Desert, Hfx. Co., Oct. 28, and a like number were scattered along the Eastern Shore, found the same day by Ian McLaren. A report of a very early BLACK-HEADED GULL, a winter plumaged adult, Sept. 4 at Dan's Head, came from the Gallaghers and Davis Finch; another early one, an immature, was found Sept. 15 in the Cheticamp area (NSBS field party). According to Sara MacLean, the earliest previous date for Cape Breton was Oct. 14, in a period of nine years. A stray LAUGHING GULL was watched fishing with a Common Tern, July 9, near the bridge at Dan's Head, by the Gallaghers, who described it as a probable first year bird, having a mottled brownish-black head, and tail with dark band. The first BONAPARTE'S GULL noted was one at Economy, Aug. 8 (FS), then 9, increasing to 52 Aug. 9 - Sept. 16 at Caribou Is., Pic. Co. (EH), who wrote that the 12 seen on Aug. 19 were feeding on flying insects over a grassy field, probably on grasshoppers moving to another feeding area, at an estimated height of about 1,000 feet. Aug. 11-12 brought Bonaparte's Gulls to Lingan, C.B., at least one imm. among them; others of this species were seen late in Aug. and Sept. at Crescent Beach and Cherry Hill, Lun. Co.; at Brier Is. and at Port George on the Bay of Fundy. A few BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKES came close in to be observed in Aug. at Brier Is. (ELM); in Sept. at Musquodoboit Harbor (BAS) and in Oct., 20 at Seal Is. (NSBS).

BLACK TERNS NUMEROUS

The Smiths at Cape Sable report poor breeding success in the colony of COMMON TERNS there, but a few immatures were seen July 22. The colony at Glace Bay Sanctuary was inundated during the June 17 storm, but at least 2 terns were seen in the nests later that month (SMaL). Although many had left by mid-Aug., some adults were still feeding young at that time. Migrating flocks were noted Sept. 20 and on, quite generally, the last seen, 2 birds at Crescent Beach Oct. 6 and one at Seal Is. Oct. 7. A ROSEATE TERN was observed among the Common Terns near the nesting ground at Cape Sable, July 22 (S&BJS). The first of an exceptional number of BLACK TERNS were 5, in June, off Wine Harbor, seen by the Hugh Munros of Ottawa, reported by Gordon MacLeod. On Aug. 2, 10, including 3 imm., were seen at Front Lake, Jolicure, one imm.

staying until Aug. 21 (ST); on Aug. 19, 29 in a flock were watched on a calm sea and in flight by Eric Holdway, who suggested they were off course due to poor visibility; one last one was noted Sept. 13 at Sable Is. (ELM et al).

The BLACK GUILLEMOT was frequently sighted during the summer, one or 2 at a time in all N.S. coast waters, the only large concentration being 30+ at Seal Is. July 13 (MWH). The COMMON PUFFIN was present in the Bay of Fundy, seen in greater numbers than usual - 12 Aug. 25 (WT), 30+ Aug. 26 out in the Bay and 20 Sept. 1 near Brier Is. (DWF,ELM).

A SNOWY OWL IN JULY

The MOURNING DOVE population has remained stable, around 67 reported from sixteen localities, widely distributed, the highest numbers in one place being the 10-25 on Seal Is. Oct. 7-31, and the 12 at Sable Is. Oct. 24. Rick Howie found 2 in Keji Park - very rarely seen there. A YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO was killed at Cape Sable Light and found (June 21) by the Smiths; and another, live and well, had strayed down a back road at Green Bay, Lun. Co., discovered there Oct. 8 by the Cohrs and friends, "who became acolyte birdwatchers on the spot" wrote Shirley Cohrs. About a dozen BLACK-BILLED CUCKOOS came back to us this summer, a real increase, but not enough to deal effectively with our outsize crop of tent caterpillars. The cuckoos were seen at Round Hill, Anna. Co., 2, on June 16 (WEW); at Pleasant Lake, Yar. Co., one July 25 (CRKA); at Maccan, one Aug. 15 (ST); at Brier Is., one Aug. 29 (DWF,ELM); at Sable Is., one to 4 Sept. 13-14; and at Seal Is., 2 or more Aug. 27 to Oct. 20 (NSBS parties). The GREAT HORNED OWL was heard calling in September in various places, at Homeville (J&GC), at Yarmouth (CRKA), at Brier Is. (NSBS), and at Wilmot, where 2 of these owls were hooting at one another on the Frank Hawkins' roof at 4:15 a.m. Sept. 25, "they hooted at different pitches and twice simultaneously, so there must have been 2, one with a very deep voice, the other quite a bit higher" (TH). We have 2 breeding records, one from Pictou Co. in June, of a pair raising 2 young, meanwhile preying on the nearby cormorant colony (EH); and one from Shelburne Co. of one adult and 2 young, near the Roseway River (between McKay's Lake and Deception Lake, discovered by the Gallaghers July 4, who wrote "Two young owls were perched side by side about 30 feet from the ground on a branch of a large dead tree, ten yards back from west bank of the Roseway River. About 100 yards downstream on a branch of another large dead tree there was an adult Great Horned Owl. About an hour later we saw this bird drop onto the water from its perch about 25 feet above. It kept its wings outstretched on the surface. After a minute or two, with difficulty, it flew up carrying in its feet an 8-10 inch fish which it carried back into the woods."

A most extraordinary report of a SNOWY OWL present the week of July 22-28 at Seal Is. came from Ben Doane, who watched it hunting along the shore close at hand. Perhaps, like the Black Terns, it got lost in the fog. A good place to look for the BARRED OWL seems to be Shelburne Co., where the Gallaghers saw one June 28 at Upper Clyde and another Aug. 23 at Upper Ohio. The SHORT-EARED OWL was reported only from the Border Region, by

Stuart Tingley, one seen there Aug. 2 and 3, Sept. 22. These owls must be abundant near the marsh, as up to 15 have been seen in the area at one time (Ted Pulford per ST). Two other Short-eared Owls were noted on the Aug. 11 Field Trip to Evangeline Beach (NSBS). Besides the SAW-WHET OWL reported in Halifax city this spring, by Hilton Page, one other has been noted, resident at Lower Ohio, where it was heard down by the river throughout the summer, by Bessie Harris and the Gallaghers, who were able to tape the call one evening in late June.

The above three reporters also heard a WHIP-POOR-WILL at Lower Ohio this summer, and were able to record the song 10:30 p.m. July 17 - the bird responding to a previously taped recording. Two other Whip-poor-wills were seen at West Northfield, 9:15 - 9:45 on July 16 (JCM) who found them quite distinguishable from the Nighthawks which were extremely abundant in the area. The COMMON NIGHTHAWK flights began the first week in August and continued throughout that month, flocks numbering 12 to 100 and over - 40 at Round Hill (WEW), 50 at Cambridge (ACH) both Aug. 7, 65 at Barrington to Jordan Ferry Aug. 27 (J&CG) and 100 around Caledonia Aug. 29 (RH). On Aug. 19 Bessie Harris watched swirls of these birds tending southward over Lower Ohio, for half-an-hour. The summer season for CHIMNEY SWIFTS began in May, but one was found (dead) on Cape Sable June 9 (Locke Smith), after which none appeared there until Sept. 18. Flocking was noted, generally, by Aug. 9, up to the last of September. In Cape Breton, the last date for the RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD was Aug. 26. On the 27th a "concentration" of 10 at Brier Is. (usually one only noted) suggests migration. A few lingered there and elsewhere up to Sept. 25. The BELTED KINGFISHER was well and generally reported this season, except in Cape Breton, where there were only seven reports, July 6 to Sept. 6 and Sara MacLean commented that they seemed less plentiful than formerly. Four reports on Sept. 13, including one of 5, near Yarmouth and 2 on Sable Is. may indicate some Kingfishers on their way. Two were still at Seal Is. Oct. 6-8.

FLICKER YEAR

The COMMON FLICKER (Yellow-shafted Flicker) was abundant on mainland Nova Scotia this summer, noted very generally up to early October, when numbers fell off sharply (GMacL,DM,WEW,CRKA). About 100 were counted on Seal Is. Sept. 29, at least 250 the next two days and 75 still there by Oct. 7, and 15-25, Oct. 19-21 (NSBS parties). Six other woodpecker species noted were one PILEATED on the Roseway River (J&CG); 2 imm. RED-HEADED at Seal Is. Oct. 6-7, still there Oct. 19-21 (IMcL); and 2 imm. at Digby Neck Nov. 2, identified by Louise Daley. (An even later one showed up, an immature, on our cold Nov. 6, in the Willett Mills' garden, Halifax.) Six reports of the YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER added up to 9 birds, 3 of them imm., 2 of these the usual 2 found at Seal Is. each fall, and seen Sept. 29-Oct. 1, still there Oct. 8; 3 HAIRY and 5 DOWNY which have recently come out of the woods along with the chickadees; and the BLACK-BACKED THREE-TOED WOODPECKER which was nesting near the Herbert Harris', Lower Ohio, who saw young at the nest-hole entrance by June 26, already showing the yellow crown patch; also one other Black-backed Three-toed, a male, at Upper Ohio, July 24 (J&CG).

WESTERN KINGBIRDS, CRESTED FLYCATCHERS

A family group (number not given) of EASTERN KINGBIRDS spent the summer (July-Aug.) at Economy (FS). In the Valley and at Yarmouth these Kingbirds gathered in great numbers, noted particularly Aug. 27 (DM,CRKA) and at Brier Is. Aug. 28 - Sept. 1, 6-8 were among the many migrants present on the island for the Labor Day week-end. The only later reports are all from Yar. Co., seen there through Sept. in various places, the largest number 4, Sept. 12 at Chebogue, the last one (only) Sept. 20 at Chegoggin (AH,MWH). Early and late summer reports of the WESTERN KINGBIRD are: 1 June 23 at Cape Sable (SS); 1 Sept. 13 at Brass Hill, Barrington (J&CG) and 1 Sept. 29 at Seal Is. (NSBS). Two or three GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHERS were also identified: 1 June 23-24 at Brass Hill (J&CG); 1 (dead) Sept. 22 at Cape Sable (S&BJS) and 1 Oct. 7-8 at Seal Is. (IMcL,ELM,IMacG). One very late Western Kingbird was seen at Second Peninsula, Lun. Co., Nov. 1, following several days of high winds, by Tim Barksdale, our American visitor.

Reports of the EASTERN PHOEBE came in from Wine Hbr. in June (GMaCL); from the Valley - one at Rockland Aug. 16 and 4 at the Cornwallis River Sept. 8 (the only fall concentration noted, ACH); one at Port Hebert Sept. 22 (RW) and one at Seal Is. Oct. 7-8 (NSBS), still there Oct. 19-21 (IMcL). The EMPIDONAX group began to show up in Yar. Co. about mid-Aug., peaked around Sept. 1 and were gone by the 18th. At Brier and Seal Islands, a clear migration picture emerges for the period Aug. 27 - Sept. 1, when the YELLOW-BELLIED, ALDER (Traill's) and LEAST Flycatchers were present in numbers at Brier (up to 5 Yellow-bellies, 20 Alders and 30 Least); and, at the same time, Aug. 30, the total number of Empidonax species at Seal Is., i.e. individuals of, was 165. Trailing far behind, one each of the three species was found at Seal Oct. 19 by IMcL. The EASTERN WOOD PEWEE similarly "peaked" during the same period: at Brier, 3 Aug. 27; 6 Aug. 28; 15 Sept. 1; with a count of 80 Sept. 1 at Seal. A few were seen later at Sable Is.: 2 Sept. 13, 1 Sept. 14 (NSBS). The OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER (only about half of the number of reports of this bird received, compared with last summer) also showed a small peak as above: one Aug. 27, 4 Aug. 29 at Brier; 1-3 Aug. 29 at Seal Is. A few HORNED LARKS have appeared again in small flocks: 2 Sept. 13 at Pictou (EH); 8 Oct. 7 at Cherry Hill (S&JC) and 6-8 Oct. 20 at Cook's Beach (MWH).

Nine pairs of TREE SWALLOWS nested at Cape Sable this summer. Among other successful breeding records one refers to a nest in an unused mail box at Wine Hbr. (GMaCL), and the history of another at Glace Bay is as follows: "June 25, male swallow feeding the female on the nest (never did that here before). July 16, young heard twittering within the nest. July 18, young looking out of nest-hole. July 20, swallows flew in the afternoon. Great excitement all day, with visits from other swallows both young and old. Upon examination later, the nest was found to have fewer feathers than usual, but more mud pellets, and the corpse of a dragonfly was found; also one egg with a hole pecked in it - family planning?" (SMaCL). Tree Swallows were plentiful, and left in the fall during the first week of September for the most part. Flights passed through Cape Sable Aug. to late Sept.; one bird was

found at Sable Is. Sept. 13 and 4 at Seal Is. as late as Oct. 7, although they had been very scarce there earlier. The BANK SWALLOW met with disaster at Homeville in Cape Breton (probably in other places too) when many of its nesting places were washed away in the inundation produced by the heavy storm on June 17. The 200 pairs on Cape Sable fared better, and the Smiths report flights of these swallows heading south through mid- to late September. Very few were seen in the fall elsewhere, only one, Aug. 29 mentioned at Brier Is.; the last date seen at Economy, 2 Sept. 20.

The BARN SWALLOW also nested at Cape Sable, six pairs, only two broods. It was well reported about the province, and 15 young were seen flying at Wine Hbr. Aug. 24. There was a large gathering of Barn Swallows at Port Williams Aug. 27, 50 at Brier Is. Aug. 28, 20 there Sept. 1. The last seen in Cape Breton were 4 Sept. 24 at the Glace Bay Sanctuary (RB) and the last at Cape Sable 15+ (non-residents) Sept. 25; the last at Yarmouth, 2 at Chebogue Pt. Sept. 26 (CRKA) and the last at Economy 3-4 Sept. 27 (FS). CLIFF SWALLOW nests were noted this year on the church at Marble Mountain (Echant); not as usual at St. Esprit (SM); at Wine Hbr. and Sonora (GMacL) and a pair nesting over the door of the library in Annapolis Royal (WEW). Two pairs settled at Cape Sable, one built on the north side of the hen house, one on the west side. The north brood was successful (4 young), the other was not successful. It was too late being finished and no eggs were laid. This was converted from a Barn Swallow nest. Only 2 Cliffs were among the migrants on Seal the Labor Day week-end, and the only other mentioned was an unusual looking Cliff Swallow seen on Seal Oct. 8 (NSBS field party), a white-rumped bird, probably Great Basin race, hypoleuca, according to Ian McLaren.

Immature GRAY JAYS (very young) are reported as late as July in Cape Breton. Like others of the boreal birds, these jays have come out of the woods during late fall, and some are already helping themselves at feeders. BLUE JAYS, very numerous throughout the summer, came into town about Sept. 20 and are still around (end of October), but indication of one migration peak comes from Seal Is. again - 10 Jays there Oct. 6, 75 on Oct. 8 (ELM et al). Flocks of 10's of the COMMON RAVEN, 100's of the COMMON CROW became more in evidence the first weeks of October, immatures observed among them. On Oct. 16, J.C.Morrow watched 9 (instead of the usual 2) Ravens in the air at once, "putting on a remarkable display" as these huge but playful birds love to do.

HOUSE WREN, MARSH WREN

The BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE, abundant this year, came out of the woods around Sept. 15, and has begun to frequent feeders regularly. One late breeding record came from Glace Bay, of parents feeding young at a feeder Aug. 15-25. The BOREAL CHICKADEE remains scarce, but a few have been seen and/or heard in Guysborough, Halifax, Queens and Shelburne counties, also in Cape Breton, and noted as "plentiful" Oct. 8 at the NS-NB border. Instead of the 100's seen in former years at Seal Is., there were only 4-10 counted, Oct. 1-8, 6 also the highest count on Brier Is., at the Labor Day week-end field trip. Both the WHITE-BREASTED and the RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH were "conspicuous by their absence" at Green

Bay in Lun. Co. this fall, according to the Cohrs, who found the Red-breasts very numerous there last year. Ralph Widrig reported none at Port Hebert, and CRK Allen found them reduced in numbers compared with this time last year. The only report of "many" came from D. Moore, Aug. 27 at Black River, King's Co. At Brier Is. on this same date, Aug. 27, there were 4, on Sept. 1 10 of the Red-breasts, and on Seal Is. only one Oct. 1. The BROWN CREEPER, never as abundant (or as well reported as the nuthatches), appears to have maintained its numbers, and even showed a small migration peak at Seal Is.: 6 seen Oct. 6, 8 Oct. 7 and 20 Oct. 8 (6-8 of these birds were probably permanent residents, as they were counted again and again). The HOUSE WREN was also identified on this trip to Seal Is., one seen on both Oct. 7 and Oct. 8, almost certainly the same bird. The WINTER WREN was heard singing late into the summer in various places, in fact wherever one might expect to find a Winter Wren. The highest count was 5, Sept. 30, on Seal Is., one only found there Oct. 6-7. A SHORT-BILLED MARSH WREN was discovered on Seal Sept. 29, a real rarity, although fairly common at the NS-NB border, where 2 were resident this summer, heard singing daily until Aug. 27 (CWH and party on Seal, ST at the Border).

The MOCKINGBIRD stays with us, at least a dozen sightings throughout the season, 2 seen in June, one at Cape Sable (S&BJS) and one at Wine Hbr. (the MacLeods and the Munros). There were 3 at Lingan in August, 2 adults with one imm. observed several times through the month (A&FR); one at Markland, Yar. Co. Sept. 8 (MWH,AH); one at Cape Sable Oct. 1, following high winds for two days (BJS); one at Lake Annis, Yar. Co. Oct. 13 (MWH,AH); one at Lower Ohio Oct. 15, in the multiflora rose hedge at the Harris', observed also by Edith and Sylvia Bower and 4 at Seal Is. Oct. 20 (one seen there Sept. 30) (NSBS parties). The GRAY CATBIRD (new name) seen frequently all summer, disappeared early in October. Late sightings were: 3 Sept. 26 at Chegoggin, one Sept. 28 at Round Hill, 5 Sept. 30 at Seal Is. (one still there Oct. 7-8), one Oct. 8 at Economy and one last one Oct. 11 in Yarmouth town. The BROWN THRASHER was not as common this fall as it often is, only about 9 birds seen in all: one June record (June 15) at Cape Sable, another there Sept. 27 (BJS), 6 Sept. 30 at Seal Is., 3 there Oct. 6, 4 Oct. 7 and 2 Oct. 8 (NSBS party) and one also on Oct. 8 in the Border Region noted by Con Desplanque and Stuart Tingley.

According to reports received, the ROBIN remained scanty in Cape Breton, below normal numbers in June becoming normal by July in Pictou and Guysborough counties, abundant in the Valley, and in normal numbers throughout the season elsewhere in the province. By the 25th of Aug. the Robin population began to thin out around Wine Hbr.; became abundant in small flocks of 5-10 birds passing through in Sept. and Oct. at Pictou; a well-marked wave going through the Valley Sept. 18; another going down the South Shore Sept. 23; a small peak (15 to 20 to 40) Oct. 5-8 at Seal Is.; "the usual waves still going through, no apparent diminution from last year" Oct. 21 at Yarmouth and around 50 at Lake Loon, Hfx. Co., Oct. 23. In fact, there has been and still is a steady flow of Robins "down" the province through October and it hasn't slowed perceptibly yet (Oct. 30).

THIRD SIGHTING OF THE WHEATEAR

The WOOD THRUSH did not return to Kejimikujik Park this year, but 2 were seen at Seal Is. Oct. 6 (NSBS). Most of the HERMIT THRUSH population left us during the latter part of August, with late reports in October: 4 Oct. 1 at Lake Annis, Yar. Co. (AH,DBK); one Oct. 5 at Economy (FS); five reports Oct. 8 of 1 or 2 from Wilmot (TH), West Caledonia, Queen's Co. (RH), Crescent Beach (SJF), Green Bay (S&JC) and Brier Is., 3 Oct. 7, 2 Oct. 8 (NSBS). Even later 4 were seen at Seal Is. Oct. 20, and one at Sable Is. Oct. 24 (IMCL). (The bird at Wilmot spent the day eating berries off an asparagus bush near the house, the bird at Crescent Beach was a male in bright plumage.) The SWAINSON'S THRUSH was not reported as well as the Hermit, although said by some to outnumber the other this summer. One possible migration wave may be marked by the 6 Sept. 1 at Brier Is., and, like the Hermit, a later wave, probably out-of-province birds, indicated by the 2 Sept. 30 at Seal Is. and the 2 Oct. 8 in the Amherst area(CD). Two GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSHES were among the many migrants at Brier Is. Sept. 15 (ELM), the only ones of this species reported. Two EASTERN BLUEBIRDS (twice the usual number) have been reported. They were first noticed by Paul Bogaard in the morning during a Chignecto Naturalist Club field trip Sept. 22, and were found in the same location in the afternoon. This was at Advocate, and Con Desplanque suggests a check for nesting next year. A third sighting of a WHEATEAR was by Barry Sabean, Sept. 19 at Moser River, Hfx. Co., "the bird sighted on the Naugler Settlement road of Moser River.....was the size and shape (including beak) of a Water Pipit. The back was gray with very distinctive white rump patch (especially in flight). The underside was buffy - no streaks. The wings were dark, no wing bars, narrow strip of white appeared to be on tips of primaries, but may have been on the tail. There was a fine black line through the eye. The bird was seen flying and perched on top of small buildings, where it seemed to move off the peak as if to break the silhouette. Observations from 50' with 7x50 binoculars, (clear view). The bird dipped its tail like a Spotted Sandpiper." Our first sight record came from Ward and Phyllis Hemeon, at Five Islands, Col. Co., Aug. 16, 1969 (NSBS Newsletter:11,106), the second sighting from Ian MacGregor and others of the Cape Breton Branch, the bird seen at South Bar in Sydney Harbor, Aug. 11-19, 1972 (NSBS Newsletter: 14,159). It is time we obtained a good picture of this Greenland visitor and established it as an authentic addition to our list of birds which have occurred in Nova Scotia.

The GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET remained abundant this year, and considerable numbers were seen in migration at Seal Is. in October (unless they plan to winter there in preference to the mainland). Counts of 150, 50 and 100 were made on Seal Sept. 29, 30 and Oct. 1 respectively; 50, 75 and 200 on Oct. 6, 7 and 8, and 200 still there Oct. 19-21. Owing to the habits of this little kinglet, these are certainly minimum counts. The RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET also has crowded onto Seal Is. Although numerous through the summer, there have been very few fall reports, and those of ones and 2's; but at Seal, a maximum of 25 was present Sept. 29-Oct. 1; 70 Oct. 6, 75 Oct. 7, 100 Oct. 8, up to 250 there Oct. 19-21. The WATER PIPIT migration was extensive, seen from

Sept. 11 to Oct. 21, from Cheticamp to Cape Sable, in flocks of 6-200 birds, the first 2 at Jordan Bay (BH); present at the Grand Pré (RL) and the opposite shore, at Crescent Beach (SC) the same day, Oct. 6; the largest flock at Cape Sable, 200+ Sept. 26, and last seen at Seal Is., 110 late October (IMCL). A few of these Pipits scattered inland, 3 noticed on Westmount School Grounds Oct. 2 by Margaret Clark, and 1 or 2 at Round Hill Oct. 1-2 (WEW). The CEDAR WAXWING was rather scarce this summer, small flocks were widely scattered, 5 July and Aug. at Homeville, 8 at Glace Bay Sanctuary in Aug. (in Cape Breton); 15 at Greenwood in the Valley in Aug. (ACH); a "resident flock" (unnumbered) at Petite Riviere, South Shore, all summer (SC); a few at West Northfield, Lun. Co., in July (JCM); up to 20 at Yarmouth in Aug., the same number at Brier Is. Aug. 27-Sept. 1; a high of 35 at Sable Is. Sept. 14, 10 there the following day, and at Seal Is. 9 Oct. 1, 6 Oct. 7 and 2 Oct. 8. STARLINGS had assumed their speckled winter coats by late Sept., when large flocks (600-1000) began to assemble about the countryside.

YELLOW-THROATED AND PHILADELPHIA VIREOS

A YELLOW-THROATED VIREO was one of the Seal Is. specialties for the season, identified there Oct. 6 by ELM and party. An earlier one was reported Aug. 21 at Port Hebert by Ralph Widrig. The SOLITARY VIREO has been regular on territory, with one or more families noted at West Northfield (JCM); diminishing in numbers in mid-September, and a few late records: 2 Sept. 30 at Seal Is., 1 Oct. 1 at Lake Annis, 1 Oct. 5 at Keji, 5 Oct. 6 at Seal and 1 Oct. 8 in the Amherst area. The RED-EYED VIREO was as usual abundant very generally, called the most numerous migrant at West Northfield with the exception of swallows. At Brier Is. one was seen Aug. 29, 20 Sept. 1 when there was a sharp peak of 30 at Seal Is. (IMCL); at Conrad's Beach, Hfx. Co., the Cohrs came upon a flock of 15+ in company with goldfinches and mixed warblers, Sept. 23; at Cape Sable the Light took a toll - 1-4 found dead overnight from time to time through Sept., and at Seal Is. 5-7 were seen Sept. 29 to Oct. 8. A surprising 7-8 PHILADELPHIA VIREOS have been identified late August through Oct., in Yarmouth Co. and on Brier and Seal Is.: 1 Aug. 28 at Seal (IMCL); 1, possibly 2, a week apart, Aug. 22-29 at Brier Is. (RRA, DWF,ELM); 1 Sept. 26 at 23 Baker St. in Yarmouth town (MWH); 1 Sept. 29 at Seal Is. (CRKA) and almost certainly another at Seal the next day on the other side of the island (SJF),(CWH); 1 Oct. 2 at Tusket Falls (CRKA); 1 Oct. 7 at Port LaTour (MWH,AH,DBK) and 1 Oct. 13 at Lake Annis, Yar. Co. (AH,MWH).

MANY EXOTIC WARBLERS

Eight exotic species brought our list of WOOD WARBLERS to an unprecedented high of 30. These included no less than 4 PROTHONOTARY WARBLERS, 1 discovered along the main street of Westport, Brier Is. Aug. 23 and identified (also photographed) by Davis Finch, and seen by others of the CNF conference group. On Aug. 28, another Prothonotary was seen and photographed on Seal Is. by Ian McLaren, photo reproduced next page. The third Prothonotary was found in a garden at New Waterford, taking a bath in a small pool, on "one of the three perfect days during

the last week of September", and was one of a migrating flock of warblers (plus an oriole), some of which came out of the trees in answer to a recording being played by the Frank Robertsons; and the 4th of this species, a bright male, was spotted by Tony Dobson, late on the afternoon of Oct. 28, when the vividly colored, rather confiding little warbler appeared on a low limb of a dark spruce, in strong sunlight immediately in front of the cottage door at Petite Riviere, Lun. Co. Subsequent identification was by F.W. and Evelyn and P.R. Dobson.



Prothonotary Warbler, Seal Is., August 28, 1973.
Taken by Ian A. McLaren.

A GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER, a female, Aug. 30 at Seal Is. was a "first" (1) for Ian McLaren, who had already seen and photographed a BLUE-WINGED WARBLER, Aug. 28, also at Seal. M.W. Hilton, an experienced birder, watched two warblers for several minutes on Oct. 13 at 20-25' in her garden at Yarmouth, as they fluttered from one shrub to another, and described them as dull greenish yellow with white wing-bars and white outer tail feathers, white under the tail; and gives a tentative identification of immature PINE WARBLER. Five or 6 PRAIRIE WARBLERS came our way, 2 individuals at Brier Is. Aug. 29-Sept. 1 (DWF, ELM and others) on the same dates, 2 were at Seal Is., identified there by Ian McLaren; one other was found on Sable Is. Sept. 16 (ELM); and either one of the earlier Seal Is. birds remained, or another had come by Oct. 19, seen there also the next few days (IMCL). A CONNECTICUT WARBLER was found again on Seal Is., identified Sept. 30 by Sylvia Fullerton. A fantastic number of YELLOW-

BREASTED CHATS collected at Seal Is., 16 found there Oct. 6, only one seen there earlier, Oct. 1, and one found again Oct. 20. Besides these, there was a Chat at Brier Is. Sept. 1 (AAMGL); another found Sept. 9 at the extreme tip of Wedge Is. (Hfx. Co.), "the unlikeliest imaginable spot for a chat" (CWH), and one at Cape Sable, Sept. 21 (SS). The last of the rarities was a HOODED WARBLER, seen Oct. 7 and 8, at Mrs. Hamilton's, Seal Is. (NSBS).



What is this bird? Readers are invited to send in their guesses. The picture is diagnostic. I.A. McLaren.

Owing to the weather, perhaps, our regular warblers were not well reported early in the season, but there has been a heavy migration lasting through September and October. Eric Mills noted a large influx of birds, particularly warblers, Sept. 1 at Brier, and the list of birds killed at the Cape Sable Light the night of Sept. 5 to 6 included 14 species of warbler, of which 53 (out of 87 individuals of all 20 species identified) were: Northern Waterthrush, 21; Blackburnian, 11; Bay-breasted, 11 and American Redstart, 10. Besides these, there were 1-3 each of the Black-and-White, Tennessee, Yellow, Cape May, Chestnut-sided, Blackpoll, Ovenbird, Mourning, Northern Yellowthroat and Canada. Such mixed flocks seem to be the rule, and this year it has been difficult to find peaks in the warbler waves, the effect being more of a pulse, or steady flow of birds, with no large build-ups. The most sharply defined peaks occurred Sept. 1, 5, 23 Oct. 6-7 and 19-20, as indicated by our records. The first date, Sept. 1, showed the top of a several-day increase in Magnolias (35), Cape

Mays (50), Northern Waterthrush (12), Northern Yellowthroat (40), Wilson's (60), Canada (30) and American Redstart (70), all these on Brier Is.; and on the same day, at Seal Is. there were peaks of the Black-and-White (35), Yellow (85) and N. Waterthrush (20). In all 17 species of warbler were represented in the Sept. 1 wave of migration. These included a few Black-throated Greens, our only warbler to show a genuine fall scarcity. A few also appeared with the Sept. 23 wave, which was otherwise notable for a Black-poll movement, with some Blackburnians and others (CWH,SS,MWH,S&JC) As usual, our most abundant warblers through the season were the Yellow-rumped (Myrtle), Yellow, and N. Yellowthroat; but the Redstart almost caught up, having what W.E. Whitehead called a population explosion, in favored habitat with floods of birds in the vicinity early August on. October observations at Seal Is. have shown repeated peaks of Yellowrumps and Palms, involving 100's of birds, and the last report, Oct. 19-20, showed 200 Palms still there (IMCL). Immature Palm and Yellow-rumped Warblers began to appear in flocks around July 25 (CRKA and others), which means these flocks (of mostly immatures) have been moving out for three months. We rarely see Palm Warblers, in any number, where do they all come from, on Seal Is.? The Yellowrumps, on the other hand, are still to be seen around the province in good numbers (end of Oct.), and of course, some will stay the winter.

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD, SPRING AND FALL

The BOBOLINK continues its incursion into Shelburne Co. and along the South Shore. Six, in pairs came in at Cape Sable in June; the Gallaghers saw 2 males at Brass Hill in Barrington June 12, one male seen almost daily after that, "the female only on July 6. The male was very upset whenever we walked through our meadow or on the road near it, but we were unable to locate the nest." One male was seen near the Barrington Railroad Station June 14, another June 19 near the bridge over Bloody Creek, Shel. Co. and another June 29 at Port Clyde (J&CG). At Caledonia, Queen's Co., Rick Howie found 3 Sept. 30. At Indian Pt., Lun. Co., the Michael Eatons found a nest with 4 young; and at Petite Riviere small flocks of Bobolinks were seen all summer up to Sept. 3 (J&SC, the Dobsons). There is only one Cape Breton record, a male, June 25 at Homeville (SMacL); two records from Pictou, 9 July 30 and 3 Aug. 12 (EH). Migration must have been in progress the night of Sept. 5-6, since 12 Bobolinks were among the birds killed at Cape Sable Light. Two peaks were obvious, one earlier, at Brier Is., Aug. 27, with 10 birds, 6 on the 28th, 30 on the 29th and 40 Sept. 1; and later at Sable Is. - 15-100-40 on Sept. 13, 14, 15 successively. We have only October records of the EASTERN MEADOWLARK: 2 Oct. 5 at Cape Sable (SS); one Oct. 13 at Lower Ohio (BH) and up to 5 on Seal Is. Oct. 19-21, one of these suspiciously pale, but not seen well enough to call a Western, according to Ian McLaren. A YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD was seen and well-examined by Sid and Betty June Smith, June 10, at Cape Sable; and another, Sept. 5, was found at Dan's Head, Cape Sable Is. by Davis Finch and the Gallaghers. It was in company with Cowbirds, and eluded good observation for nearly an hour, but finally lit on a shed roof, and a recognizable photograph was obtained.

REDWINGED BLACKBIRDS were noted still feeding young,

Aug. 8 at East Slope, near Glace Bay (SMacL), but by Aug. 27, 15 migrants were seen on Brier Is. A large flock, 50+, was at the Piggery, near Dartmouth, part of the Sept. 23 huge movement of birds (J&SC) and a flock of 30 was seen by Rick Howie Oct. 8, at West Caledonia. The NORTHERN (Baltimore) ORIOLE nested again in Yarmouth town, one nest still to be seen at 23 Baker St., 3 birds in all present there during the summer (MWH); 2 immatures seen much later in Yarmouth were probably migrants from elsewhere, observed eating insects in an apple tree, by Annie L. Saunders. Orioles were observed during the summer also at New Waterford (FFR), Economy (FS), Port Williams (DM) and leaving from Brier Is. 2 Aug. 27-Sept. 1; 10 seen on Seal Is. at the same time, 2-3 still there Oct. 1; 2 from Cape Sable Sept. 17 and 2 Sept. 20 (SS); the only large number seen, at Sable Is. - 15 Sept. 13, 25 Sept. 14 and 2 Sept. 15. The RUSTY BLACKBIRD came out in the open in September, a flock of 30 Sept. 16 at Lower Ohio; 3-35 in flocks at Sydney Forks Sept. 22-28 (RB); 50+ at Seal Is. Sept. 29, which dropped to 35 by Oct. 1, and 20 still around Oct. 8. Summer reports of the COMMON GRACKLE limit themselves to "as usual", and the only "native" migratory movement noted was Aug. 26 (25+ in Yarmouth), Aug. 27 "numerous" at Brier, 10 there Sept. 1. Later waves in Oct. occurred Oct. 7-8, 10-11, 14-15 and 20-21, noted again at Yarmouth and at Seal Is., flocks of 20-30 at the peaks. On Oct. 24 a large flock of Blackbirds at Wilmot (over 200) was mostly Grackles, with a few Redwings, Rustys and Cowbirds (TH). A partial albino Grackle was seen at a feeder at the Eric Mills', Head of St. Margaret's Bay, Oct. 13. This bird had a white head speckled with glossy deep-blue feathers. The BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD as usual was little seen all summer, but we have one breeding record. A Chestnut-sided Warbler raised a Cowbird (watched feeding it Aug. 7-9) at St. Croix, Hants Co.(MC). Flocks appeared Aug. 13 in Yarmouth Co. and then through September, noted also in Guysborough Co. and at Brier Is., where 80 were counted Sept. 1.

We had 5 reports of the SCARLET TANAGER in the spring, and have eight or nine for the fall: 2 Aug. 29 at Brier Is. (ELM); 1 (F) Aug. 30 at Kejimkujik (RH); 1-2, Aug. 27-30 at Seal Is. (IMCL); 1 Sept. 5 at Brass Hill, Barrington; 1 Sept. 15 at Sable Is. (ELM et al); 1 (imm.) Sept. 23 at Cape Sable (SS); and 1-2 at Seal Is. Sept. 29-Oct. 7 (NSBS).

BLUE GROSBEAK, INDIGO BUNTINGS, DICKCISSELS

At West Northfield, Lun. Co., on June 10 a male ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK sang most of the day, a few feet from J.C. Morrow's veranda, but apparently failed to attract a mate, as he was not seen again in the vicinity. The Grosbeak which arrived at Round Hill, Anna. Co., June 24 had better luck, according to W.E. Whitehead, as 3 were seen, 2 of them young, feeding on raspberries in this area July 28-30, one still around Aug. 12. Another pair was sighted Aug. 27 at Black River, Kings Co., but no young noted (DM). The earliest Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Seal Is. was seen Aug. 29 (IMCL), 2 there Oct. 1-8; one at Brier Sept. 1 and 3 at Sable Is. Sept. 13 (NSBS). Willett Mills was notified of a very late sighting of a BLUE GROSBEAK, in the W. Lawrencetown area, Oct. 31, following 24 hours of high winds; seen by Tim Barksdale, a visitor to N.S. from West Virginia, who came in

search of alcids. Another stray, a female INDIGO BUNTING, was brought in by the storm to Pine Hill, Halifax, Nov. 2, found by J.B. Hardie on his grounds that morning. Other fall Indigo Buntings were all seen at Seal Is.: 2 Oct. 5; 10 Oct. 6; 3 Oct. 7; and 2 Oct. 8 (NSBS). Two "very yellow" DICKCISSELS were found dead at Cape Sable the morning of Sept. 24 (SS). Early in Oct., 2 were seen at Lower Ohio (BH) and 3 Oct. 6, 1 Oct. 7 and 1 still there (or another) Oct. 19-20 at Seal Is. (NSBS). Louise Daley writes that she has had a pair of Dickcissels at her feeding tray for the week Oct. 26 - Nov. 2, at Digby. A surprising observation was the visit to Cape Sable of 2 EVENING GROSBEAKS June 2 - were they coming or going? Widespread reports of these birds come from Sydney Forks, Marble Mountain and Cheticamp, in Cape Breton; from Guysborough, Queen's, Digby, Annapolis and Kings counties on the mainland, June through August, 3-6 birds as a rule reported, the only larger number, 15, Aug. 16, at Rockland (ACH). A female feeding young was noted at Round Hill July 20 (WEW). First returning flocks were 12 Sept. 16 at Bear River (J&JT); 20 Oct. 12 at Economy (FS) and 3 to 15 to 26 Oct. 26, 28 and 30 at the Topples', Lake Loon, just outside of Dartmouth.

The PURPLE FINCH, very plentiful in June, disappeared in July, reported in that month only from the South Mountain (Black River) and Wine Harbor. In August a few appeared again, mostly immatures and seen at feeders. A small build-up at Brier was: 1 seen Aug. 28, 5 Aug. 29 and 6 Sept. 1. Three were at Sable Is. Sept. 13 and 2 on Seal Is. Oct. 1, one there Oct. 7. "Many" PINE SISKINS were seen at Marble Mountain (E.Chant), and many in the Cheticamp area (NSBS) in mid-September. At Seal Is. Siskins built up from one Oct. 1 to 170 Oct. 6, 60 on the 7th and 125 on the 8th, a definite migratory movement - 50 there Oct. 19-21 (IMcL et al). The AMERICAN GOLDFINCH was one of our best reported birds this season, with good reason, since it was very abundant generally, and could be heard as well as seen. Late flocks, probably migrants, were 30 Sept. 1 (2 the day before) at Brier Is.; 40-50 Sept. 16 at Round Hill; 20+ Sept. 22 at Cape Sable; 75+ (20 the day before) in the Pinkney's Pt. area; 15 up to 40 Sept. 29 to Oct. 1 at Seal Is. and 20 up to 250 there Oct. 5 to 8, 75 left there Oct. 19-21. (A few RED and a few WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILLS have been seen this summer, about half as many of the Whitewings, and mostly in Cape Breton. One only sighting on mainland N.S. of the Whitewings was of 3 Oct. 9 at Keji, by Rick Howie.)

HARRIS' SPARROW CONFIRMED

Twenty members of the next group - the Sparrows - is six or seven more than we might have expected. Our native species have done well, and it was definitely a Junco year - they have flooded the countryside this fall. Some of the exotics are becoming old friends; we welcome two new ones. Brief comments then on these birds in check-list order are as follows: the RUFIOUS-SIDED TOWHEE, 2 fine-plumaged males, were present on Seal Is. Sept. 29 to Oct. 7, seen on 6 of these days, one or both of them, by members of the NSBS field parties. Ipswich Sparrow was always a misnomer, but the new name for this bird - SAVANNAH SPARROW, SABLE IS. RACE, is cumbersome. Out of respect for Dr. Ian McLaren, who has become fond of his (well-deserved) title "Mr. Ipswich Sparrow", we shall,

at least for a while, refer to this bird as the "Ipswich Sparrow". Whatever its designation, the species had one of its best years to date, summer of 1973, with an estimated almost 15,000 birds on Sable Is. in mid-September, with good numbers still there on Oct. 4 (IMcL). One was found on Seal Is. Oct. 8, at least 3 there Oct. 19-21, and 6-7 on the Eastern Shore beaches Oct. 28. The SAVANNAH was abundant in appropriate territory, one nesting pair noted in July at Glace Bay Sanctuary, concentrations of 50+ at Brier Aug. 27-29, a second well-marked peak at Seal Oct. 8. The GRASSHOPPER SPARROW (now an old friend) continues to favor Seal Is., 3 there Oct. 6, up to 5 Oct. 19-20. One or two families of the SHARP-TAILED SPARROW were pursued through the beach grass at Conrad's (Hfx. Co.) Aug. 11, 6 at least birds seen, some very immature (PRD); the greatest concentration, 15 at Cherry Hill mid-Sept. (SJJ); the latest reports from Economy, one Sept. 22-23 and one Oct. 13 (FS). A SEASIDE SPARROW was again identified at Economy, found in the same place as last year's, by Francis Spalding, on Oct. 13. A Vesper Sparrow, identified both by sight and song was a first for the Cohrs family, who found it in a scrub spruce in a blueberry pasture on the Somerset Road, Lun. Co., Aug. 4, a new location for the Vesper. On the 27th of Aug. "many" were seen at Black River, Kings Co., their usual home, by Douglas Moore. One Vesper joined the huge Sept. 22 movement of migrants, seen then at Lower Ohio (BH), and other reports from Seal Is. are of 1 Oct. 1; 1 Oct. 7; 6 Oct. 8; and 10 Oct. 19-20, mostly in one group, 5 found there Oct. 21 (IMcL).

Four LARK SPARROWS came our way: 2 noted on Seal Is. Aug. 28-Sept. 2 (IMcL); 1 at Western Light, Brier Is., also on Aug. 28 (RRA, DWF, ELM), and one at the side of the highway on the Port Clyde road near Cape Negro, Shel. Co., found there Sept. 4 by Davis Finch and the Gallaghers. The DARK-EYED JUNCO (certainly more poetic than the "Slate-colored") has been hard to count in October, growing more numerous as the month progressed, along the roadsides, at the shore areas, until by Oct. 21 CRK Allen was reporting "hordes everywhere" from Yarmouth Co. The Juncos did not seem abnormally high throughout the summer, these late October birds may have come from a much larger territory. There was only a small peak of Juncos at Brier Aug. 27-29 (5-15-10), but the build-up at Seal Is. was 200 Oct. 1, 10 Oct. 5, 75 Oct. 6, 100 Oct. 7, 150 Oct. 8 and 500 Oct. 20. (One Junco nest at West Northfield was found in July, with a Cowbird egg in it. J.C. Morrow, who found the nest, removed the Cowbird egg, but found the nest deserted the next week-end, all eggs gone.) The first TREE SPARROW was discovered by Roberta Beecher, Sept. 24, at Lingan. Those who remember the incident at St. Croix, of the nest of the CHIPPING SPARROW blown out of a cedar tree in the June 17 gale, the eggs broken, will be pleased to hear that the birds returned to build in a nearby Syringa, to succeed in raising a family, young out of the nest Aug. 6 (MC). Like the Junco, the Chipping Sparrow seemed present in normal numbers through the summer (although not reported from Cape Breton and called scarce at Pictou), but put on a heavy fall migration in October, and perhaps for the same reason, i.e. Nova Scotia was the flyway, not the source of the migrants. Concentrations of Chippies were noted at Port Hebert Oct. 8, and on Oct. 14 Rick Howie counted 30 at Middleton, 40 at Bridgetown and 25 at Annapolis Royal, "numerous" along the Valley highway in be-

tween. There was a Chipping Sparrow at Cape Sable Oct. 4-7, and the peaks at Seal were Oct. 7 (100 birds) and Oct. 19, again 100, falling to 25 next day.

The Smiths at Cape Sable have written: (Two small birds) "came to the yard following a period of poor visibility, Oct. 5. They seemed fine, fed busily around the lawn, hopped on the lawn furniture, seemed reasonably tame. We were able to observe them almost as well as if we had caught them. A Chipping Sparrow was also in the yard at that time, nice for comparison of size." (We identified them) "by the light stripe through the crown, clearly seen; facial markings definite, bill color and general color quite noticeably different from Chipping or Tree" as CLAY-COLORED SPARROWS. These strange sparrows, which Betty June called "dear little birds" stayed around another day, for further observation. Many of us have been looking hard for this species for years, and although somewhat envious, feel that the first observation of this prize goes deservedly to Sid and Betty June Smith. The Clay-colored Sparrow was found in New Brunswick, 1 May 26, their first, we must keep a watch for it in future.

Fourteen FIELD SPARROWS were counted on Seal Is. Oct. 6, 1 on the 7th and 5-15 Oct. 19-21 (NSBS). These are unusually large numbers for the Field Sparrow.

An entirely satisfactory HARRIS' SPARROW (*Zonotrichia querula*) was spotted and identified on Seal Is. Sept. 29, by Barbara Hinds, and seen that day and during the next two days by six others of the NSBS, one of whom, Sylvia Fullerton, obtained a diagnostic photograph (reproduced below). This bird was in



Harris' Sparrow, Seal Is.
September, 1973

Taken by
S. J. Fullerton

partial plumage, but its size (larger than a Fox Sparrow), markings and behavior made it quite unmistakable. We have had a few tentative sight records before, and are glad to have at last an authenticated record. Our regular Zonotrichia stray, the WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW, was seen in Cape Breton (2 Sept. 26-28, Mrs. R.B.) and at Wine Harbor fairly frequently around that time, all other sightings in October: 1 mature, 2 immature Oct. 2 at Lr. Ohio (BH); 1 imm. Oct. 5 at Yarmouth (23 Baker St., MWH); 1 imm. at Keji Oct. 9 (RH). There were at least 3 peaks at Seal Is. involving many more of this species than usual: 25-75-60 Sept. 29-Oct. 1; 15-5-80-40 Oct. 5-8 and 150-70 Oct. 19-20 (N5BS). The third in this group, the WHITE-THROATED SPARROW was called scarce in Cape Breton (SMaCL) but was well reported elsewhere, concentrations noticeable from late August on, a small peak at Brier (10-15+-10) Aug. 27-Sept. 1; "several" at Cape Sable Sept. 23; 2 on Sable Is. Sept. 15; then in Oct. "flocks, 10+ passing by at Glace Bay Oct. 1-3; a flock of 12 in a garden at Yarmouth Oct. 2; 10 at West Caledonia Oct. 8; at Seal, 40-50-30 Sept. 29-Oct. 1; 5-50-40 Oct. 5-8 and an estimated 200 Oct. 20.

Just a breath of the FOX SPARROW migration has touched us as yet anyhow, with one reported in a garden at Amherst Aug. 9 (CD), 1 at Wilmot Oct. 24 (TH) and 6 at Lake Loon and in the vicinity Oct. 24 (BT). The LINCOLN'S SPARROW, whose home appears to be in Guysborough Co. was reported as "not uncommon" in the area at Wine Hbr., "stopped singing Aug. 1" (GMacL). An unusual sight of one in town was at 23 Baker St., Yarmouth, when it was identified among some Song Sparrows near the bird bath "lurking about among the bushes" (MWH). There were 2 or 3 at Sable Is. Sept. 15-16 (ELM), 2 or 3 at Seal Is. Sept. 29-Oct. 1; 5-6 there Oct. 6-8 and up to 15 Oct. 19-20. The SWAMP SPARROW was noted in usual habitat this summer, but the early migration was mostly unrecorded, only 4 seen at Brier Aug. 27; a few scattered over Sable Is. Sept. 16. At Seal there were 4-3-1 in that order Sept. 29-Oct. 1; 4-6-20 Oct. 6-8, and a surprising 125 Oct. 19-21. "I have never seen so many", commented Ian McLaren. The SONG SPARROW was abundant Glace Bay to Yarmouth, with young out of the nest by June 15, and evidently second, perhaps third nestings, since young were noted pursuing parents for food as late as Sept. 6. By Oct. they were numerous in the Yarmouth Co. area, but not abundant as the Juncos, "1 to 50 at a rough guess" wrote CRK Allen. On Brier Is. there were 25 Aug. 27, 20 Aug. 28-29; at Seal, 75-100-25, a nice peak Sept. 29-Oct. 1; 10-50-80-150 Oct. 5-8; no record for the later period. Obviously Seal Is. is the place to study sparrows, in October, and the later in the month the better.

The LAPLAND LONGSPUR came back in September, first one seen in Cape Breton at Morien Bar Sept. 10. Up to 10 were counted at Sable Is. Sept. 15; 2 at Seal Is. Oct. 6; 1-3-6 at Cherry Hill, Lun. Co. Oct. 7-8, 14 in that order (SJF); 25+ at Glace Bay Sanctuary Oct. 8; 1 at Fish Pt., Yarmouth Oct. 14-20 (MWH et al) and 3 at Seal Is. Oct. 20. The day before, Oct. 19, at Seal Is., the SNOW BUNTING made its appearance, 20 in a flock (IMcL), appropriately bringing our fall report to a close.

Observers at Brier Is. during the late August period and over the Labor Day week-end included Eric Mills, Eric Cooke, Ross

Anderson, Davis Finch, visitors to the Canadian Nature Federation Conference and members of the NSBS Field Day party. At Sable Is. Sept. 13-15, observers were Ian McLaren, Eric Mills, Dan Welsh, Pierre Beland and David Sergeant; for a brief trip Oct. 24 - Ian McLaren. At Seal Is. Sept. 29 to Oct. 1, Barbara Hinds, Sylvia Fullerton, Eric Cooke, C.R.K. Allen, Chris Helleiner, Dick Brown and P.R. Dobson were present for part or all of the time. On the Seal Is. trip Oct. 5-8, the observers were Eric Mills, Ian MacGregor and Ian McLaren; and during the Oct. 19-21 period, the Ian McLaren family. Other reporters for this summer and fall season were: Allen, CRK; Anderson, RR; Beecher, Roberta; Blakeburn, Roy & Mrs. Roy; Brown, RGB; Clark, Margaret A.; Clayden, M.; Cohrs, J&S and Chris; Cook, Francis; Cooke, EH; Crathorne, E; Crowell, G&J; Cunningham; Norman; Daley, Louise; Desplanque, C; Doane, Ben; Dobson, F&E, Anthony, PR; Eaton, M&R; Elliott, G; Erskine, JS; Ferguson, C; Finch, DW; Fullerton, SJ; Gallagher, JR&CD; Goudey, F; Griffin, George; Hardie, JB; Hawkins, Thelma; Harris, Bessie; Helleiner, CW; Hilton, MW; Hilton, SC; Hinds, B; Holdway, E; Hopkins, AC; Hopkins, H; Howie, Rick; Hurlburt, A; Killam, Van; Kirk, DB; Lamberton, R; MacDonald, Sandy; MacLeod, Edith; MacLeod, Gordon; MacLean, Sara; McLaren, Ian; Meyerowitz, R&S and Jan; Mills, EL; Mills, WJ; Moffatt, HP; Moores, D; Morrow, JC; Nichols, GH; Rawlings, D; Robertson, Frank; Sabean, Barry; Saunders, Annie L; Smith, S&BJ and Locke; Spalding, Francis; Spencer, G; Sutton, RA; Symonds, C; Timpa, J&J; Tingley, Stuart; Topple, Betty; Townsend, W; Whitehead, WE; Widrig, Ralph; Williamson, Hazel.

NOTES

Excerpt from Fair Isle Bird Observatory, Report for 1972
(Fair Isle, Shetland, Scotland)

Contributed by Dr. and Mrs. J. Roswell Gallagher

Fulmar

FS14575 Pull 19.07.71 Fair Isle
x 15.11.71 3 ml SSW of Cape Roseway Light, Shelburne, Nova Scotia
43°36'N 65°20'W.

The pullus (nestling) recovered in Nova Scotia covered a remarkable distance in a short time (it would have remained on Fair Isle at least a fortnight before fledging), but this movement is not atypical of the species.

Magpie

An apparently wild Black-billed Magpie was present in Saint John West April 22-26, the same bird or another 70 mi. east at Cape Enrage April 26-27 (v.o. fide DSC) and the same or another at Brier Is., N.S., May 14-18 (DWL et al). This route around the Bay of Fundy is one that might well be followed by a wandering bird and the dates suggest that such may have been the case.

.....From the report by Davis W. Finch on the Northeastern Maritime Region Spring Migration, American Birds:27, No.4, 750, August, 1973.

Bald Eagle Survey

For the past 10 years I have maintained an eagle feeding station on the banks of the Gaspereau River in Kings County. Eagles arrive in this area around Dec. 1 and leave shortly after March 1, following. Although their nesting locality is only 5 miles distant, around the Black River Lake flowage area, they almost never put in an appearance at Gaspereau during the spring and summer months. Birds are fed slaughterhouse refuse and dead farm animals. I have kept records of their numbers and I think the following data will prove quite interesting.

	<u>1963</u>		<u>1964</u>		<u>1965</u>
2	adults		2	adults	
1	immature		1	immature	
	<u>1966</u>		<u>1967</u>		<u>1968</u>
4	adults		1	adult	
			1	immature	
	<u>1969</u>		<u>1970</u>		<u>1971</u>
1	adult		1	adult	
1	immature		1	immature	
	<u>1972</u>		<u>1973</u>		
3	adults		3	adults	
3	immature		5	immature	

It can be seen from the above figures that during the 1963 - 1970 period the adults were much more in evidence, but from 1971 on the picture changes rapidly with the immatures getting the high counts. To me, this is a very healthy sign as it indicates the Eagles are having better nesting success again. It is these immature birds that will influence our future populations.

Numbers in this report were determined by the total number counted at any given time during the winter, so they represent a minimum total. Others may have come and gone, but I do not think so as the birds spent most of the day, after feeding, perched in the tall elm trees along the river bank.

At present I am constructing a big stick nest in a large pine tree at the back end of my property about one-quarter mile from the house, where it can be viewed with binoculars. I am hoping that when some of the immature birds reach maturity and are looking for nesting locations, they might find this structure to their liking. In the past I have had ready success with stick nests constructed for Horned Owls; so, who knows? With public opinion changing the way it has over the last decade, they would be even safer nesting here than back in the wilds. The problem, however, is getting this idea across to the birds.

- Cyril Caldwell

SUMMER SEASON - P.E.I.

Excerpts from the report of A. Angus MacLean

The summer season saw hot, humid weather pervade Prince Edward Island, especially from June 16 to the last of July. Except for a wind and rain storm on June 15-17, which had a marked effect on Great Blue Heron nesting colonies, weather patterns were unspectacular.

Storm Petrels

Two Wilson's Storm Petrels were observed from the ferry at Wood Islands on Aug. 12.

Heronries

Two heronries were studied intensively this summer - one on a small island in Squaw Bay (near Alexandria) had 230 nests with 200 active. The storm of June 15-17 had a devastating effect killing an estimated 130 birds (64 picked up on the ground and an estimated equal number dead in nests). Very few Great Blue Herons re-nested. Nevertheless there was good nesting success, 55-60%.....The smaller heronry at Rustico Island, with 92 nests, also suffered with 42 found dead. Fledged young produced - 149.

Waterfowl

Some of the most interesting news of the summer season

centered on certain breeding species in this category...The large flock of Brant which annually group at Brackley Marsh left as usual (4 out of 5 years) on June 6. A small flock of 5 stayed most of the summer, being seen off and on during late June and July - a most unusual occurrence....Two broods of Mallards were successful at Indian River (Game Sanctuary) and another brood was found in the National Park at Lake of Shining Waters near Cavendish. These (totally wild birds) have been fairly common for a number of years. Sometimes flocks of a dozen or more are seen in the fall and a few usually winter. The most amazing breeding records of all were two successful nestings of Gadwall at Indian River. Besides being the first on the Island, it is most likely a first for the Atlantic Provinces.....There were also two successful nestings of Shovelers at Indian River....Wood Duck broods were on the increase with three at Selkirk where nesting boxes were provided, and about three other scattered brood reports. Two Ruddy Ducks were noted at Indian River for a period.

Osprey

Two Osprey nests were found on Fox Island in Cascumpec Bay. It appears that 2 young were successfully reared in each.

Shorebirds

Semi-palmated Plovers were especially abundant this period, hundreds being noted Aug. 4 spread-over a large salt marsh and still numerous this date (Aug. 21). These were never noted in large flocks before, 48 being the largest for our records. Black-bellied Plovers seem to increase in abundance each year....Willetts nested again at Tracadie Harbor (chicks observed) and 2 other nestings were apparent in salt marshes near Brackley. A Curlew Sandpiper in full plumage was observed at Little Harbor Beach (east of Souris) on July 21 by Ian McLaren. This is a first provincial record. Seventy Hudsonian Godwits were counted in 3 locations between Covehead Bay and St. Peter's Harbor on Aug. 26. The second Ruff of the year was observed at Brackley Marsh on Aug. 4.....Three Ruddy Turnstones were observed at Cavendish Sandpit on June 2, for one of the very few spring records. Five Northern Phalaropes spent the day of Aug. 4 in a rain-created pool at Rustico Island Causeway....

Thrushes, Waxwings

A Gray-cheeked Thrush was observed at very close range by Bruce MacLean at Milton on June 3. The bird actually walked right by his feet while he stood still. This was the first provincial record and served to remove this species from the hypothetical list. A Bohemian Waxwing was observed at Dalway on June 14 by Stella MacLean. This was most likely a leftover from the few scattered flocks we had last winter.

Warblers, Grosbeaks

An early migration wave was noted on Aug. 12 at Milton (Bruce MacLean) which included a number of warbler species, particularly immature Tennessee Warblers. Cape May Warblers, usually

rare in the province, were unusually abundant (5-10 per day) this summer, responding to the outbreak of spruce budworm. Canada Warblers, another rare species normally, were noted more often and there were at least 3 nestings in the National Park where none had been recorded before. Evening Grosbeaks are now nesting in the province in fair numbers, apparently established over the past several years.

CANADIAN NATURE FEDERATION

Members at large of the Nova Scotia Bird Society may take pride in their Society's contribution to the Canadian Nature Federation in the year 1973. Our former president, Dr. Ian A. McLaren, has been elected President of the National Federation, and Dr. Roger Pocklington was chosen by acclamation for Provincial Director 1973-1975. The Conference, held August 23-26, 1973, at Acadia University, Wolfville, was an unqualified success. Everything went as planned without a hitch, and Dr. H.P. Moffatt, Organizer-in-Chief and his hard-working committees deserve sincere congratulations.

The speakers were excellent, the field trips rewarding, Acadia campus beautiful, the weather perfect and the lobsters delicious. Because of the unexpectedly large registration (270, plus about 100 casually for special events) and the early arrival of many registrants, it was necessary to organize two extra trips on the spur of the moment - a pelagic trip off Digby, and a half-day spent in pursuit of mushrooms, during which 100 native species were discovered and examined, including one new species for the region. On the pelagic trip off Westport, August 23, among the birds seen were 550 Greater Shearwaters, one Sooty, 4 Manx, 2 Wilson's Petrels, a Cormorant, a Great Blue Heron, 20 Eiders, 600 Red Phalaropes, 6 Northern Phalaropes, Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls, 2 Guillemots, 3 Puffins, one in breeding plumage, and some whales for good measure. Guests were transported from Wolfville by bus, and the one hitch (yes, there was one) occurred when a bus refused to proceed off the Westport ferry, finally requiring that the tail-pipes be sawed off - a strenuous measure (costs nobly borne by the MacKenzie Busline!). Thereafter, passengers embarked at the first ferry dock, in an operation not unlike the evacuation of Dunkirk, according to one participant, as the long line of local fishing boats drew in to the dock, filled with passengers and roared away to make room for the next.

Aug. 24 and 25 were given over to meetings, both formal and informal, and special speakers were J.G. Ogden III ("The Imprint of the Past"), Derek Davis ("Life on the Seashore"), Eric Mills ("Life of Sea Islands"), R.G.B. Brown ("Birds of the Sea"), Ed. Mitchell ("Mammals of the Sea"), Lloyd Dickie ("The Over-fishing Problem"), and Hans Neu ("Energy and the Sea"). The

lobster boil was at the Agricultural Research Station, Kentville, many thanks due to the officials there; the final banquet at Wheelock Hall, Acadia University, the address given by John Fraser, MP.

Much of the success of the Conference was due to the kind and efficient co-operation of the people at Acadia; in particular to Mr. P.J. Austin-Smith, in charge of Accommodations and Transportation, John Kearney on the pelagic seabird trips; Dr. S. Bleakney, the salt marsh trip; Drs. K. Harrison and D. Grund, the mushroom trip and Bob Lamberton, seabird and Cape Split field trips.

Credit is due to our own members, who gave unstintingly of their time and effort as Hardy Moffatt's special committee: Shirley Cohrs (treasurer), Molly Clayden (secretary), Ian McLaren (program), Jack Brayley (publicity) and Sylvia Fullerton and Barbara Hinds (assistant registrars). Eric Mills, Davis Finch and Ross Anderson were chief experts-in-charge on the Brier Is. pelagic trips; Hazel Carmichael and Roger Pocklington met the incoming planes and made countless trips between Kelly Lake and Wolfville, taxi-ing guests to the Conference; Curtis Chipman, who gave competent help on the entertainment committee. We are deeply indebted to Mr. Linton Martin for assistance and accommodation at the Nova Scotia Museum, and most particularly to Bernard Hart (and his delightful assistant, Debbie Trask) for undertaking the task of Registrar, most efficiently carried out. The Museum staff also organized and took charge of the children's program, supplying transportation and providing two people to accompany each outing. There were two outings, one on the Friday, one Saturday; the first included a visit to the museum, a water-front drive, a trip to Dartmouth (panoramic view of the Harbor) and a visit to the Shubenacadie Wildlife Park; the second, a trip to Peggy's Cove, on to Oak Island, and finally the Ross Farm.

Last, but not least, sincere thanks to the Government of Nova Scotia, Imperial Oil Limited, National Sea Products Limited, Nova Scotia Savings and Loan Company, L. E. Shaw Limited, and Mr. Frederick A. Lane, Halifax, for their generous contributions towards the expenses of the Conference.

Bird Society News

The Executive Committee of the Nova Scotia Bird Society has held two meetings during the summer-fall season, 1973. At the first of these, July 17, the President was in the chair and six members were present. The following reports were given, and items discussed.

R. Pocklington reported that tourists had been making

use of the NSBS list of Field Trips supplied to the N.S. Tourist Bureau by J.A. Elliott; two Quebec birders attended the President's Field Day at Necum Teuch.

J. Elliott reported he had contacted the N.S. Museum about a "publications shelf", and they have agreed to set aside such a shelf in the Information Room.

P. Dobson asked for a report on progress in finding an Editorial Board for the Newsletter. F. Dobson asked if Mrs. Dobson would provide a list of suitable candidates and she agreed to do so.

J. Elliott reported that in general the Field Trips to date have been successful, with good turnouts. The meeting agreed that it should be the duty of the organizer of Field Trips for the year to ensure that the individual leaders supplied reports on their trips for the Newsletter.

E. Crathorne reported 454 paid memberships. There were 474 at this time last year. This leaves about 240 memberships still outstanding.

J. Elliott and F.W. Dobson reminded the President that they would be away from July 28 to October 7. They asked if it was thought necessary to appoint a Vice-president and Secretary pro tem. This was left under consideration.

H. Carmichael gave a financial statement showing a balance on hand of \$670.39.

R. Pocklington will apply to the Museum for a supporting grant. There is just enough in the account to pay for the July Newsletter. The increase in cost of the Newsletter, coupled with less paid memberships to date, has left the Society in the same financial position as in past years, in spite of the increase in dues.

P. Dobson proposed that members be sent one bill per year, separate from the Newsletter, as it would be more business-like, less confusing, and would mean more reliable payment of outstanding accounts. The meeting was generally in favor of the idea. It was decided to put a statement in the Newsletter to the effect that as of 1974 one bill would be sent to each member or family.

The President asked whether the meeting thought the Society should present a brief to the Provincial Recreation Department concerning plans for MacNab's Island. He has contacted the Recreation Department, but has found that no formal statement has been made.

The President passed on to the Executive an invitation from E. Tull to take part in the Annual General Meeting of the N.B. Nature Federation on Sept. 8. He felt it was most important that one at least of the Executive attend.

The local Cablevision company is looking for societies who might like to use its "local information" time slot (up to

one-half hour per week). The Executive saw no immediate use for this, but thought it should be used. The members agreed to consider possible uses.

G. MacNeil of the Dartmouth Free Press has approached R. Pocklington about setting up a weekly nature column. The meeting espoused such a scheme with great enthusiasm. R. Lambertson's column in the Bridgetown Monitor was mentioned as a source of (a) inspiration or (b) material. It was decided that it was a good thing for the Society to do. R. Pocklington agreed to try to organize it. P. Dobson offered help in editing the columns, and F. Dobson offered six columns on edible mushroom hunting, early in 1974.

R. Pocklington has been nominated as a Director of the Canadian Nature Federation.

The Dartmouth Night School course "An Introduction to the Birds" is to be given again this year. E. Crathorne noted that four of the members of last year's class had joined the Society as new members.

R. Pocklington read a letter from "Information Metro" asking for briefs on the proposed MAPC plan for the Halifax Metro area. Our principal interest was in the planned uses for MacNab's Island. The meeting agreed with the MAPC proposals and asked the president to contact CRK Allen and RA Kaningsberg to see if they would assist with a brief to MAPC. The deadline is August 1.

The New Hampshire Audubon Society has contacted R. Pocklington asking if several of its members can take part in the Brier Is. Field trip on Labor Day. The President will extend the invitation.

The Society has received an invitation to take part in the organization of an official Canadian section of the International Council of Bird Preservation. The President is a member, and will represent the Society in the organization meeting, which will be held during the Canadian Nature Federation Conference in Wolfville.

Dr. H. P. Moffatt, the Chairman of the NSBS Organizing Committee for the C.N.F. Conference, has asked the Executive for help in arranging transportation, for those who write ahead requesting it, from the Halifax Airport to Wolfville. The Executive agreed to ensure that the pick-up of C.N.F. guests at the airport would be their responsibility.

Meeting adjourned.

At the Sept. 18 Executive Meeting, the President was in the chair and six members were present. Eric Mills was appointed as temporary Vice-president, Ross Anderson as temporary Secretary in the absence of Jim Elliott and Fred Dobson, appoint-

ments in effect until October 11. The following items received attention.

Roger Pocklington stated that the forming of the Editorial Board was to be brought forward during the annual meeting of the Society.

The feeders in the park were discussed, with the possibility of the program being financed, as has been done in Ontario, by means of a special grant.

The matter of supplying checklists to some bookstores was discussed and it was decided to give them free checklists which were to be inserted in Roger Tory Peterson's book when sold.

Eric Cooke, who attended the New Brunswick Nature Federation's annual meeting on Sept. 8, reported that this meeting was very interesting and quite successful, with field trips and workshops going on before and after the general meeting.

The idea of having a field trip or small outing with our annual meeting was then discussed and deferred to the next executive meeting.

The Dartmouth Night School course "An Introduction to the Birds" has been over-subscribed and enrolment had to be cut to 25 people. Members of the executive expressed appreciation of R. Pocklington's successful efforts.

The briefs on MAPC were to be in before the deadline of the end of October. It was decided that our brief would be on MacNab's Island.

E. Crathorne reported the following membership statistics:

11 students	55 family	344 single	with 36 new members enrolled.
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(Last year, 519 paid members with 86 new people joining.) It was decided that dues notices be sent to the 240 people who are late in paying their dues this year.

The financial statement given by the Treasurer shows \$92.61 on hand to date.

The NSBS has been asked to exchange publications with "The Ring", the Newsletter of the Polish Ornithological Society. It was agreed to do so.

What happens to the NSBS Newsletter that is sent to the schools in Nova Scotia? It was suggested that Fred Dobson send a letter with the next Newsletter, asking if they felt the NSBS Newsletter was worthwhile to them and would they like to continue receiving it.

A formal vote of thanks was extended to Dr. H.P. Moffatt and the Canadian Nature Federation Convention Committee for a job well done. Applauded.

E. Cooke moved that the NSBS continue to support the Canadian Nature Federation and pay dues at the appropriate rate in 1974. This was seconded by E. Mills.

It was reported that the N.S. Museum would have space available in the main foyer of the Museum for an exhibition from the NSBS for May of 1974.

R. Pocklington reported that an invitation had been received from the Canadian Nature Federation for someone to attend a seminar and demonstration in Montreal on spruce budworm spraying and the effects thereof. This was declined with regrets.

Meeting adjourned.

Nova Scotia Museum Foyer Exhibition

The Nova Scotia Museum has issued an invitation to a number of affiliated organizations to arrange an exhibit in the foyer of the Museum, May 1974, in order to acquaint the public with the activities of such organizations. Plans were discussed at a meeting on October 15, 1973, when Dr. Roger Pocklington, President of the Nova Scotia Bird Society, committed the Society to undertake an exhibit. Work will start in the new year, first meeting Wednesday, January 2 at 7:30 p.m. in the Museum. Anyone with ideas, suggestions or willingness to work is invited to attend. (It is drawn to your attention that 650 people pass through the foyer daily.)

FIELD TRIPS

Eastern Shore Bird Sanctuary, June 30, 1973.

This was the President's Field Day, led by Roger Pocklington, the President himself, the rest of the party being Dick Brown, Helen Stein, Karen Somers, Sandra Myers, Ward Hemeon, Shirley Brothers, Fran Cook, Brenda and Felix Hilton of Dorval, P.Q. and Margaret Monks and Elaine Deveau of Montreal. The weather was cold and foggy (although better than last year which featured a violent hail-storm). As a consequence, the two-boat party was again unable to explore the offshore islands, confining its

activities to those within the harbor. Duck Island was well explored, looking for petrel burrows (none found) and young Eiders (already afloat), but some gull nests were still active, and a young Great Black-backed was caught and examined. On a second smaller island, many broken tern eggs were scattered about, but the story was that nesting had commenced earlier in the season, and had been disrupted by human interference.

Roger suggests that radar-equipped boats be tried another time, to make it possible to reach the far-out islands and prevent a third disappointment. The bird list was creditable, however, with shorebirds (Spotties, Willets, Yellowlegs, Semipal Sandpipers) and landbirds, including Kingfishers, swallows, Catbirds, Robins, Blackpolls and Yellow-rumped Warblers and the Northern Yellowthroat, Boreal Chickadee, Hermit Thrush, White-throat and Song Sparrows, and a Fox Sparrow. Loons and cormorants in the bay.

July 7 Trip to Bird Islands.

The party set out from Mountain View Lodge at 9:15 a.m. Operation of the Lodge has been taken over by the van Schniks, and "Captain van Schnik had that week accepted delivery of his new boat, which was on its way back from the Bird Islands with the real early birders who had embarked on the 5:30 trip. The Captain was slim, bearded and picturesque, and before we were allowed aboard, the seven van Schnik children swarmed over the vessel, swabbing decks, cleaning windows and making all shipshape for our benefit. They made very sure we would not miss a single feather of any bird seen for the windows were so clean as to be invisible."

"The day was perfect and the porpoises and whales put on a great show for us. The sea was so high we didn't see very many seals on the rocks, but the count for birds during the day was 43 species." This included Razorbills, Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls with young, Black Guillemots and Common Puffins; and back at the Lodge, terns and shorebirds. "We returned about 12:30 to find lunch ready, served by Mrs. van Schnik, who is a superb cook. The seven children helped, and made sure we were all filled to the brim."

Some of the party left at noon, but four carloads drove to New Campbelltown and adjacent areas, to look for land birds, which were rather scarce, but other creatures of interest were studied, e.g. fish, frogs, water beetles, dragonflies, etc., and the party had a good look at a deer, in no particular hurry to get out of the way of the cars.

Present were Edith MacLeod of Glace Bay, the Hedley Hopkins, Charles Reid and son Andrew (Betty was in Newfoundland), Gordon Naish, Russell Evans, Norma and Arch Currie, all of Sydney; Mr. and Mrs. Myron Wells of Atlanta, Georgia, Lynn Zimmerman of Margaree, Mrs. Helen Stern and Karen Somers of Halifax, Dr. W. Spencer of Buffalo, New York, Stephen, Claudia and Shirley Brothers of North Sydney, Dr. William and Dr. Mary Deem and young Michael of New Jersey, Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Matheson and sons Ian and David of Thornhill, Ontario.

"This trip to the Bird Islands is an annual event and we recommend it to anyone", wrote Hedley Hopkins, joint reporter of the above account, along with Edith MacLeod, 20 Currie Street, Glace Bay, who adds a postscript asking for the negatives of any snaps taken the day of the boat trip, and promises to return them promptly.

Evangeline Beach, August 11, 1973.

John Kearney led this trip, the party consisting of Roger Pocklington, Dick Brown, Margaret Clark, Frank Himsl, Bob Lamberton, Angus MacLean, Helen MacLean, Eric Mills and Larry Neily. The weather was hazy, but did not spoil visibility, and the bird list was exceptional. On the dykes and meadow "we saw Blue-winged Teal, Black Ducks, a male Marsh Hawk, (50) Black-bellied Plovers, Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs, Great Blue Heron, then Sharp-tailed Sparrows, plus Songs and Savannahs. Farther on... were one Hudsonian Godwit, in a mixed flock with Dowitchers, Red Knot, and "peeps"; three Kestrels, a female Marsh Hawk and two Short-eared Owls, one almost tailless (imm.), also Eastern King-bird, and Yellow Warblers. On Evangeline Beach itself the magnificent spectacle counted as follows: 200 Semipal Plovers, one Killdeer, one Golden Plover, 400 Black-bellied Plovers, 20 Ruddy Turnstones, one Solitary Sandpiper, 40 Red Knots, 20 White-rumped Sandpipers, 100 Least Sandpipers, 500 Dowitchers, 15,000 Semipal Sandpipers, 17 Hudsonian Godwits, 3 Sanderlings, plus 25 Herring and 5 Great Black-backed Gulls. A wonderful day.

MacNab's Island, Sept. 8, 1973.

This trip was led by Ross Anderson, and members present were Ethel Crathorne, Shirley Brothers, Marion Burke, Margaret Clark, John, Shirley and Chris Cohrs, Frank Himsl, Margaret Ouellette, Karen Somers, Helen Stein, Roger and Richard Pocklington. Accompanying the main party was a Junior group, led by Mary Barret, consisting of Robin and Mary-Jean Barret, Angela Masters, Mark and Pam Matthews and Lorna Willis. This latter group came well equipped with binoculars and field guides, and found interest not only with the birds, but with other aspects of nature as well (green snakes, blackberries, etc.), and in fact acquitted themselves so well that they have become invited to become a "group member" of the Society, and have been urged to come again on a field trip. The day's list of birds came to a total of 63, and included 11 species of shore-birds (again a Golden Plover and a Solitary Sandpiper to highlight the picture), and 16 species of warblers, besides such specials as an oriole, a Rose-breasted Grosbeak and three species of large hawk, a Rough-leg, a Marsh and an Osprey. The weather was good and it was a very satisfactory trip.

Sept. 17 trip to Cape Breton Highlands National Park.

The group met around 8:00 a.m. on Sept. 15 at the Cheticamp Information Bureau, CBH National Park, and was soon under way for a one-mile hike into Le Buttreau, an abandoned settlement just north of the Cheticamp River. While passing through a dense spruce forest, a large population of dwarf mistletoe was observed. Once into the now abandoned field, the group also observed numerous

anthills, rose bushes, the flowering Barnet and that delicious fruit on the plum tree!

Several hours later, the group visited Cheticamp Island to pick up several "lifers" for some members (and then devoured lunch next to the lighthouse). An uneventful trip over the beaches east of Cheticamp returned us to the beach at Petit Etang where a large number of Myrtle Warblers were observed, then back to the Information Bureau to disperse at 4:30 p.m.

Our thanks to Mr. & Mrs. Chas. Joy of California for their information on western birdings, Mr. & Mrs. H. Hopkins for their support, Eric Cooke for his identification of the Golden Plovers, Walter MacKinnon for his leadership through the herd of Bos beefus (sic), Karin Somers for volunteering as recording secretary.

The possibility of organizing a winter field trip to locate nests of Gray Jays and what have you remains as such - a possibility.

Please find checklist attached.

K. Sonnenberg,
Chief Park Naturalist
C.B.H. National Park

(Unfortunately, the checklist did not accompany the above report. - Ed.)



Lloyd Stone, Baddeck, whose broken hip and crutches did not prevent him from enjoying the bird watching every step of the way. Glace Bay Beach, April 21, 1973.

NOVA SCOTIAN BIRD RARITIES IN PERSPECTIVE

PART I. LOONS TO COOTS

By Ian A. McLaren

Nova Scotia is one of the better parts of North America for the rarity-seeking birdwatcher. Jutting into the Atlantic, halfway between the warm and cold ends of the continent, the province is a cul de sac for strays from the west, a haven for overshooting and reverse migrants from the south in spring and fall, and a landfall for European wanderers. The Editor has asked me to write something about such matters. I am certainly, as many readers know, a compulsive rarity seeker. I am not certain of any other qualifications for this task. I have depended on accounts for the Northeastern Maritime Region by Davis Finch (and earlier, those of Aaron Bagg, Robert Woodruff and Ruth Emery) in Audubon Field Notes and its successor, American Birds. I have, of course, gleaned Phyllis Dobson's accounts in our Newsletter (other published sources are mentioned later), and have also benefitted from personal communications with Dick Brown, Davis Finch, Wickerson Lent, Eric Mills, and others who play the same game.

Of course our rarities are often commonplace elsewhere. Sometimes our observations reflect important changes that are occurring in the bird's normal range. Sometimes, also, our observations cannot be fully appreciated (or even accepted) without reference to sightings elsewhere. Some of our "hypothetical" species are rendered more likely, and some less likely, in this perspective.

Clearly we need a more efficient, province-wide "rare bird alert", so that some of those birds can be better corroborated. The more observers the better. Almost any bird that can be seen well can be photographed well, with adequate equipment, and there are a number of Bird Society members who have such equipment. Perhaps readers could find out where such members live, and make use of them when something brand new or hitherto "hypothetical" turns up.

I have arranged the account in the order of the "A.O.U. list". Some favorite rarities may not appear, simply because I can't think of anything to say about their status. Some are only rare at seasons. Others that I include are not to be found on any other Nova Scotia list, even as "hypothetical" (e.g. Macpherson and Allen, 1973), but I think they may have indeed occurred. Some are discussed that have never been recorded in Nova Scotia, but which might be looked for. In all this, I have used my judgment; which is to say, I am responsible for any nonsense herein. I would appreciate any comments or criticisms so that subsequent parts may be improved.

ARCTIC LOON. This bird, whose migrations from the Central and Western Arctic normally take it down the Pacific Coast, has been reported a half-dozen times in Nova Scotia, first in '60, and has long been a "traditional" (i.e. Peterson-Field Guide) rarity in the northeast. However, it has always been a difficult one to identify, and New England authorities are now loath to accept sight records of birds in winter plumage. Trouble is, in part, the recently recognized occurrence in our region of a race of small Common Loons from the western U.S. The Arctic Loon is one of the few species for which a specimen might be in order, but a good telephoto of a winter bird alongside a Red-throated Loon could do. Best of all would be a photo of a bird in summer plumage, such as occurred in New Hampshire in the spring of '65.

HARED GREBE. The excellent sight record by C.R.K. Allen and others on the '67 Christmas Count in Halifax West is one of a fair number of sightings of this prairie grebe along the east coast. There have been more sightings in recent years, including one (the same bird?) that turned up at Gloucester, Mass., between '63 and '70. There are also spring and summer records. A photograph would suffice to confirm the species. The possibility of occurrence of the European race (the Black-necked Grebe) is another matter.

WESTERN GREBE. The excellent description of the grebe seen by Betty June Smith on Feb. 6, '70; at Cape Sable, has one puzzling element: "one large wing patch, close to the body, on rear of wing only". The Western Grebe has white secondary feathers (dusky at tips), and white bases on its primaries - giving an effect like the wing stripe of the Greater Scaup. In future sightings, it will be important to note the bill color; and the remote possibility of a Great Crested Grebe from Europe should be kept in mind. Certainly the Western Grebe occurs in the east, with possibly 3 on the Mass. coast in the winter of '72-'73.

YELLOW-NOSED (&BLACK-BROWED) ALBATROSS. Wickerson Lent saw two albatrosses, probably Yellow-nosed, from the ferry to Tiverton, Digby Co., on August 14, '70. These can be added to Wm. Thompson's sighting in July '68 from the "Bluenose" ferry. There are Canadian specimens (1970) from the Gulf of St. Lawrence and New Brunswick. (Chauvinistic note: the latter is rendered as "New Brunswick (between Machias Seal Island and Grand Manan, August 1, 1913)" by Godfrey (1966) and as "off Machias Seal Island, Maine" by McDaniel (1972).) McDaniel documents the recent increase of albatross sightings on the east coast. One or two sightings of the Black-browed Albatross off Massachusetts and 2 birds off North Carolina in '72 are the first for North America, although this species, rather than the Yellow-nosed, is the one that occurs in the eastern North Atlantic. Any pelagic tripper or promontory sitter should get to know the difference.

NORTHERN FULMAR. Not a rare bird hereabouts, but it is seldom seen inshore by birders. This may be changing. A notable increase recently in the northeast, with new state records to the south, appears to be, finally, an indication of spread in the western North Atlantic comparable to that which occurred across the ocean. They were found nesting in Newfoundland this summer, the first Canadian colony south of the eastern arctic.

CORY'S SHEARWATER. This has long been known off our coast, and is actually the most abundant shearwater off Long Island. There is a hint of decrease in numbers in the northeast in the past couple of years. A warm-water species, it might decline with the current climatic cooling. If you want it for your list, try the "Bluenose" ferry in late summer.

MANX SHEARWATER. I don't think this can be accounted as a rarity any more. I hazard that more of these occur in our coastal waters in summer than do, say, Black-headed Gulls in winter. Our first observations were in '64, and our first confirmation was a corpse, banded in Britain the year before, from Sable Island in 1970. Since then there have even been early winter sightings. All this buildup has culminated in a breeding record, first for North America, on Penikese Island, Massachusetts, this summer! Can we hope that they will soon settle in Nova Scotia?

LITTLE SHEARWATER. Our old Sable Island record is the only one confirmed for Canada and one of two for North America. An "Audubon-type" shearwater reported from the "Bluenose" ferry in summer, '71, was probably this species. Dick Brown observed several, almost certainly this species, at the tail of the Grand Banks in late winter, '71. Pelagic trippers should be alerted to the field marks of this small, Manx-like shearwater, with its fluttering rapid wing beats.

BLACK-CAPPED PETREL. This bird has recently proved more abundant in its colonies in the West Indies than hitherto believed. Our Canadian record is of a hurricane victim in Upper Canada, which is unfair. There is a recent good sighting on July 14, '72, about 75 mi. SSE of Cape Sable. It should be watched for.

HARCOURT'S STORM PETREL. Our Canadian record is again from Upper Canada, and one was seen off Atlantic Beach, N.C., in June '72.

WHITE-FACED STORM PETREL. There is a handful of inshore records from eastern U.S., including a sighting off Delaware in August, '72. To be looked for after hurricanes?

EUROPEAN STORM PETREL. One sighted off the "Bluenose" ferry on June 28, '70, may have been the first "acceptable" North American sight record. The Sable Island specimen in August of the same year lends credence. A moribund individual was found in North Carolina in June '72. Pelagic trippers should alert themselves to the, perhaps subtle, field marks of this bird from European field guides.

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT. This is a rare bird - in winter. A group has wintered in Connecticut for years, but it is generally rare on the outer coast even up to Long Island. The February '65 sighting from Sable Island, and reports from Yarmouth and Saint John on last year's Christmas Counts are a bit less astonishing in view of the 10 occurring on Counts, then, in Massachusetts. There may be a real trend in the offing.

LITTLE BLUE HERON. This "southern" species has bred in the Appeldore Island heronry in New Hampshire, beginning in '71.

SNOWY EGRET. Although a "southern" stray, it has in fact bred for some time in southern Maine, and has recently ('72) begun nesting just south of Portland, Maine, about 220 mi. west of the nearest part of Nova Scotia.

LOUISIANA HERON. This southern coastal heron has strayed more to the northeast in recent years. Our first sighting by the late T.H. Morland in '67 was a forerunner. The '69 and '72 sightings were part of a bigger regional push.

REDDISH EGRET. This is not just another southern heron. It is much more southern and less prone to wander than the others. It does not nest in Florida. In fact there appear to be few good U.S. records north of South Carolina. Thus our three sight records must automatically be viewed with suspicion. Both adults and young can be confused with the Little Blue Heron, which has, note, a (darker) reddish neck as an adult. However, our '65 record, especially, seems particularly good. This bird must be telephotographed, which should be easy enough.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON. This bird may now be nesting in the NS-NB border region, although elsewhere still a stray.

GLOSSY IBIS. This has been known as a stray since the last Century, but has, of course, become much more regular recently. It is moving north as a breeder faster than other herons. It began nesting just south of Portland, Maine, in '72, and may indeed, someday take up nesting in Nova Scotia.

WHITE IBIS. Our accidental bird in '59 remains one of the very few for the northeast, although it is common enough coastally in the Carolinas.

AMERICAN FLAMINGO. Our '69 record is one of a spate of recent ones from the northeast and east coast.

BARNACLE GOOSE. Our November '69 observation of a group of seven exhausted birds at Port Hebert is a particularly good one with respect to the probable wild origin (Greenland?) of the birds. An individual in May '72, in New Brunswick, is more likely to have been an "escape".

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE. Our hunter kill in '49 was of the Greenland race. Birders should familiarize themselves with the features of the races of this species, as the orange-billed, dark-breasted Greenland form is less likely to be an escape. Other European relatives should also be kept in mind.

FULVOUS TREE DUCK. Although not on any Nova Scotian list, Wick Lent's sighting of a few years ago should be noted. There were numbers in the northeast in '64 and '65 and a first sighting for Maine in May '72. The bird has shown sporadic "outbreaks" from the south in the past.

GADWALL. The big increase in sightings in the northeast, including N.S., in the seventies is perhaps attributable to its rapid colonization of the American east coast. It is said to be the most common breeding duck on Long Island, and now breeds as far north as Massachusetts, and as of this summer, '73, Prince Edward Island, where there were two successful nestings at Indian River. Sightings of 6 on Cape Breton in spring '73, and of a pair looking over Sable Island in June, suggest that we may expect a spontaneous addition to our breeding list.

SHOVELER. Like other "western" ducks, this one is now established in the east. Our breeding record from Missaquash in '68 removes its "stray" status.

REDHEAD. Coastal birds should be looked at carefully in case they are European Pochard. Scott (1965) exaggerates the differences, but a very light (Canvasback-like) Redhead should be an occasion for calling in the experts.

TUFTED DUCK. There are scattered records in the northeast, and 1 (or 2) wintered at Falmouth, Mass., from '63 to '72. I always give the Dartmouth waterfowl pond the once-over in passing - a likely habitat.

RUDDY DUCK. This "western" duck bred in Massachusetts in '68 and was expected to breed in N.B. last summer. It could easily enough do so soon in N.S.

SWALLOW-TAILED KITE. One or 2 over Cape Cod in May of '72 and '73 gives us some hope of duplicating our old record. (The Mississippi Kite in May '69, in Massachusetts is probably too much to ask for.)

RED-SHOULDERED HAWK. The early records are said to be unsatisfactory (Tufts 1961). One was seen by an Ontario visitor in July '66, near Wallace, Cumberland Co. This sighting is rendered more plausible by recent trends in N.B., where a pair was seen in the Cape Tormentine region last summer. There is suitable habitat along the Northumberland Strait, and the area should be searched next summer.

SWAINSON'S HAWK. The species is not on N.S. lists, but Wick Lent is sure that he saw one, with Barry Kent MacKay (an able backup) on Brier Island in Sept. '64, during a Broad-wing flight. There is nothing outrageous about this, as the species does occur casually in the east. It occurred in Massachusetts in '64, and there were several records in the northeast in '65. The light phase (like the Brier bird) could readily be identified. The dark phase (such as occurred in Rhode Island in Feb. '71) is more difficult, but the barred tail and harrier-like flight are useful marks.

GOLDEN EAGLE. Our recent records serve to point out that the bird still nests in the northeast, including perhaps somewhere in the Maritimes (Spofford 1971), and also in Ungava. One rumored around Halifax last winter was not seen by dyed-in-the-wool birders, which is a pity.

OSPREY. Christmas Count records recently from N.B. and other unaccepted reports in early winter in N.S. could, Davis Finch suggests, be young, very whitish Bald Eagles. Charlie Allen suggests that light-phase Rough-legs over coastal marshes might also be confused by beginners.

MERLIN. Though we have been casually recording it in winter for years, New England birders north of Massachusetts were inclined to be sceptical. Our records seem to be an example of "Scotia shadow" - a term coined by Aaron Bagg to describe the occurrence of some forms in N.S. and Mass., but not in between, perhaps because of migrations across, rather than around, the Gulf of Maine.

SANDHILL CRANE. Records from Maine in '67, '68 and '72 suggest that we should keep our eyes open.

LIMPKIN. The two Sable Island sightings by the Bells (McLaren and Bell, 1972) of course remain hypothetical. Wick Lent came across one, in the mid-fifties, identified retrospectively, being mauled by a cat in the village of Westport, Brier Island. It escaped under the maze of wharf pilings. I can find no other record of this bird north of Maryland, and its sedentary nature makes our records doubly extraordinary. Yet it is not a bird that could readily be confused with something else. Clearly someone should be standing by with a camera for the next one.

YELLOW RAIL. With Davis Finch's "rediscovery" of these birds on territory near Sackville, N.B., we should be searching like regions in N.S., particularly near the border.

AMERICAN COOT. This "western" stray is in fact breeding in the east, first in Mass. in '57, and recently in the Missaquash marsh near Amherst. Coastal birds in fall or winter might be scrutinized for European Coot (Newfoundland-Labrador records in 1927). But note that the American Coot can hide its white undertail coverts for an agonizingly long time when swimming.

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REPORTS FOR THE NEXT

NEWSLETTER

DUE MARCH 1, 1974.

