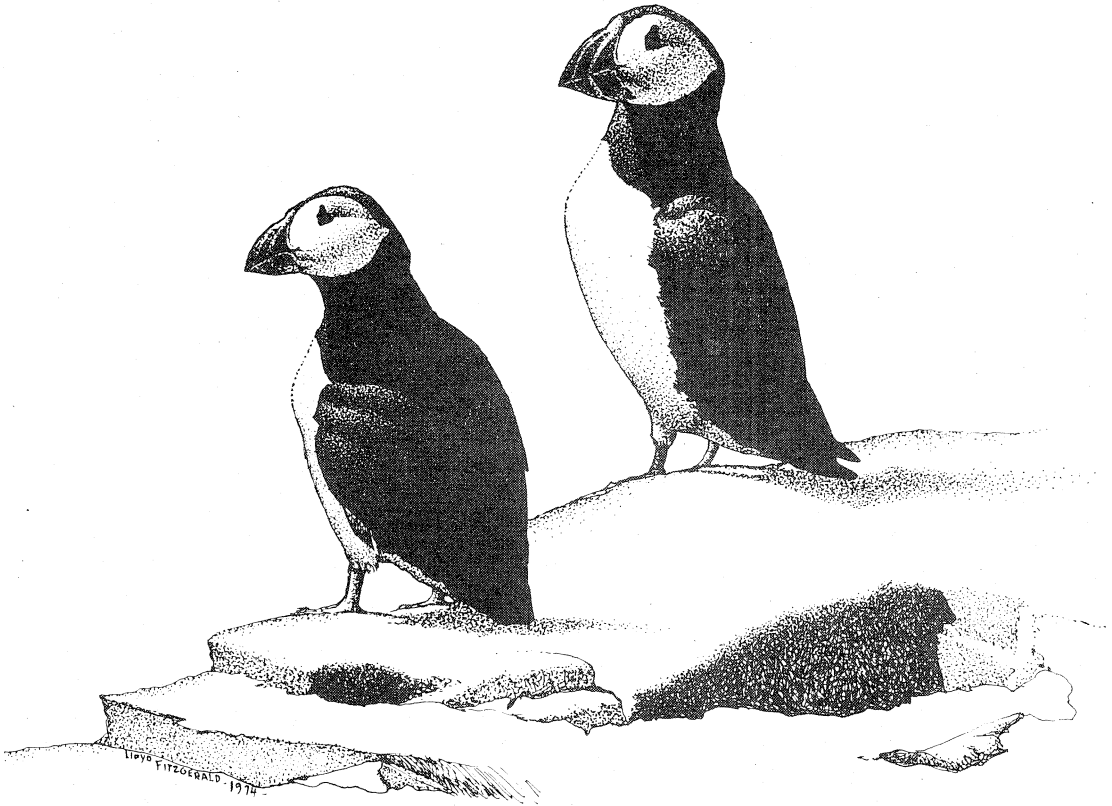


NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

JULY 1976

VOLUME 18 NUMBER 3

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THE SPRING MIGRATION

March 24 to May 24, 1976

The above period covers the spring movement of most birds migrating to, from or through Nova Scotia. A few earlier and later dates occur in our following report, the earlier ones for perspective, the later ones to round out the picture. Also, if we stuck strictly to the defined period we would miss the first of the early-coming Redwinged Blackbirds and the first of the late-coming Sharp-tailed Sparrows, possibly also the Common Nighthawk. This year the Sharptail made it (to Seal I.) in May, and a few Nighthawks are here, so our list is complete.

As far as the weather went, a mild last-of-March and all of April, with fewer April showers than usual, led to a cold, wet and windy May. Plant growth, off to an early start, slowed almost to a standstill. Many deciduous trees were not fully leaved out until well on in the second week of June. Heavy rains brought up the water level, which was needed - lakes and brooks were brimming by May 24. Insect life does not appear to have been affected, but although there were plenty of Blackflies, they did not seem to bite as much as usual. Someone has suggested that the wind kept them off, which is quite believable. A study of an annotated calendar gives 22 days in May marked "breezy" to "high wind". The official weather summary for May has not yet arrived, with wind speeds and directions, but evidently conditions were near enough normal to bring the birds in on time.

Arrival dates and population numbers appear to be usual throughout. Referring to the Nighthawk, it may be found to be an exception and genuinely scarce this year. It is fast approaching the status of endangered species in New England. The editors of this Newsletter would be grateful for records of sightings, particularly at the fall migration.

It would be a pleasure to quote in full some or all of the accounts of the spring migration, as it appeared to many of our members this year, but space does not permit. One must be included in part at any rate, as it illustrates so vividly the excitement of the height of this season, at a place where it is most clearly seen - Seal Island in mid-May. Eric Mills has written:

"May 15-17, 1976. We probably missed a very interesting morning on the 15th when strong southerly winds subsided and shifted to NNW. By afternoon when we arrived a number of warblers were still evident, with a few orioles, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and a male Scarlet Tanager. Mrs. Hamilton's garden produced quality again - a fine Clay-colored Sparrow burst out and sheltered on the beach, where the four of us watched it at very close range. A Snowy Egret, very wild, was in the pond. The Crow-ells said it had been around for about a week. A singing House Wren near the Light was present throughout the weekend, and a female Bluebird made a survey of the southern end of the island, calling frequently. A Warbling Vireo stayed near the east-side village for at least two days, as did a pair of Indigo Buntings, a Field Sparrow, a Mockingbird and about 25 White-crowned Sparrows....

Winds were light northerly on the 16th and the morning was clear. The south end of the island was alive with warblers, 17 species in all, dominated by Magnolia, Yellow-rumped, Black-poll and Black-and-White; and Lincoln's Sparrows were abundant and relatively tame. Two Ospreys, three March Hawks and Sharp-shinned Hawks appeared. A Gnatcatcher moved along the edge of the woods ahead of us. When we reached Cranberry Pond after noon two brilliant female Wilson's Phalaropes in breeding plumage had arrived. While I went around the birdless north end of the island to complete the circuit the other three stayed nearer home and saw a fine Kentucky Warbler near the southern tip.

Our last day, the 17th, mainly showed variations on the same themes. Warbler numbers were low, but the species composition had changed: Tennessees, Nashvilles and Blackburnians were more abundant. A Wesper Sparrow had arrived at the west side. The Wilson's Phalaropes, Snowy Egret and Indigo Buntings had gone, but the resident Mockingbird, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, White-crowned Sparrows and a Gnatcatcher were still around. A few Siskins and Red-winged Blackbirds seemed to be coming in, and the occasional Arctic Tern changed course to look at Cranberry Pond. Swallows were disappearing, and so did we, late in the afternoon, back to the mainland..... (110 species in all) (ELM)"

(Things had slowed up by the end of the month -)

May 29-31, 1976. "The most striking feature of this later trip to Seal Island was the lack of change during the three days of fine weather and SW to W winds. Birds like the Brown Thrashers, Northern Orioles and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks we saw on the first day were still in the same places when we left. A mixed flock of Swallows, Martins and Swifts stayed close to Cranberry Pond, though they made forays as far south as the lighthouse. There were virtually no shorebirds except for two Least Sandpipers (perhaps they will nest) and 5 Ruddy Turnstones which appeared on the morning of the 31st. A lovely female Northern Phalarope flew into Cranberry Pond on the morning of the 30th and spent part of the day chasing midges on the water or picking them off rocksFog settled in on the night of the 30th, and so did Leach's Petrels, which were heard as far south as the North Home, near Cranberry Pond, as they flew in after dark...(ELM)"

Eric's account is rather too bespangled with rarities for general purposes, (Seal Island is like that), but we are grateful to him for giving us a glimpse of the kaleidoscope of color and movement, an echo of the chorus of song to be found in the aviary which Seal Island becomes in the spring.

Members of the Seal I. trip May 15-17 were Eric Cooke, Sylvia Fullerton, Eric Mills and Willett Mills. On the May 29-31 trip, members were Eric, Anne, Chris and Karen Mills, Dick Brown and Sheila Byers.

At Brier Island, besides the Lents, Eric Mills and family, Helen McGloin and Larry Neily, a party "counting and banding" May 21 through 24 consisting of P. Smith, C. Coldwell and Mrs. Coldwell, P. Hicklin, J. Wolford, O. Morehouse and Mrs. Morehouse - sent us reports of their findings (29 Species for the last group) during the time of their stay(s). Many thanks to all.

PRD Ed.

Further contributors to this report are as follows:

Jeanne Addelson; C.R.K.Allen; Ross R. and Mary Anderson; Norm and Thelma Bowers; Dr. and Mrs. D.St.J.Brown; Beula Burman; Roger Burrows; T. Hugh Byrne; Winnie Cairns; Curtis H. Chipman; John, Shirley, Chris and Lise Cohrs; Cyril Coldwell; Ralph D. Connor; Eric H. Cooke; Ethel Crathorne; Russell J. Crosby; Robert Cunningham; Con Desplanque and Kelvin; Gerald E. Dickie; the F.W.Dobsons; P.R.Dobson; Reginald Doucette, Charles and Andrew; Michael and Rosemary Eaton; Jim and Gillian Elliott; Bernard Forsythe; Sylvia J. Fullerton; John B. Hardie; James S. Harding; Bessie Harris; Frank and Thelma P.Hawkins; Ray and Ethel Helpard; Frank Hennessey; Dave and Marie Henry; Marion W. Hilton; Barbara Hinds; Eric Holdway; Peter R. and Lorraine Hope; Adele Hurlburt; Dr. and Mrs. J. R. Jackson; Evangeline Killam; D.B.Kirk; Mrs. Anton Kleiner; Wickerson and Madeline Lent; A.R.Lock; Bob Lohnes; James M. Loughlin; Simon Lunn; Helen J. MacGloin; Mrs. Frank MacIntosh; K.T.MacKay; Ian A. McLaren; Olive and Gordon MacLeod; Robert G. MacNeil; Rainer, Sandra and Jan Meyerowitz; Ted Miller; Eric L. Mills; Willett J. Mills; H.P.Moffatt; Oscar W. Morehouse; J. C. Morrow; Eric Mullen; Larry E. Neily; M.A. Nickerson; Cheryl Olsen; George D. Perry; J. Israel Pothier; M. Rankin; Dorothy Rawlins; Annie Raymond; J. Redmond; A.A. Richard; Hilda Robbins; Henry Ross; Tom Sheppard; Sidney, Betty June, Locke and Beverley Smith; Francis and Edgar P. Spalding; Rick Swain; Karl, Wendy and Derek Tay; Bob Thexton; Stuart I. Tingley; Robert Turner; Terry Wentzell; W. E. Whitehead; Richard J. Whitman; Ralph S. Widrig.

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Many of the birding areas in Nova Scotia "crop up" regularly in the following reports. To prevent repetition of locations of these areas in the body of the text we include this list for reference.

- Yarmouth Co. Pinkney's Point, Tusket, Cranberry Head, Cook's Beach, Melbourne, Eel Brook.
- Shelburne Co. Cape Sable Island, Barrington Bay, Jones Harbour, Brass Hill, Upper and Lower Ohio, Upper Clyde, Lockeport.
- Queen's County Port Joli, Port Hebert

Lunenburg Co. Cherry Hill, Broad Cove, Petite Riviere, Green Bay, Crousetown, Crescent Beach, Bayport.

Halifax Co. Grand Desert, Three Fathom Harbor, Conrad's Beach, Lawrencetown, Martinique Beach, Cole Harbor.

Digby County Brier Island

Colchester Co. Economy

Annapolis Co. Wilmot, Smiths Cove, Round Hill.

Cumberland Co. Lusby Marsh.

Guysborough Co. Wine Harbor

A.P.B.S. is Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary.

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LOONS, GREBES

Although most lakes in SW Nova Scotia were ice-free by early March COMMON LOONS did not move in to take possession until late in the month: March 29 at Turtle Lake (N&TB) and March 31 at Eel Lake (PRD). April 16 was the reported date of the first arrival in fresh water in the Wolfville area (OWM) and May 2 at Mooseland Lake still farther northeast (K&WT).

RED-THROATED LOONS were first noted in Minas Basin March 25 and a maximum of 20+ were there April 23 (FS). There was a rather late bird at Brier I. May 21-24 (CC et al.)

Single RED-NECKED GREBES were noted in southwestern coastal waters up to May 24 and 15 were observed at Cape Sable on April 12 (S&BJS).

A single HORNED GREBE April 12 at Lr. Economy is the only spring record for this species from that area (FH). The only other reports are of one in Yarmouth Harbor April 19 (MWH et al.), 9 at Cape Sable April (S&BJS), and 6 at Conrad's Beach April 13 (WC).

Con Desplanque reports a PIED-BILLED GREBE at APBS April 1 and a build-up to 10 by April 16 with further increase to about 20 in early May. Only one other report is of one at Port Hebert April 20 (RSW).

CRKA Ed.



FULMARS, SHEARWATERS, STORM-PETRELS

Chris Cohrs, on the way home from Senegal, saw 4 light-phase NORTHERN FULMARS following CSS Baffin on April 13, about 75 miles ESE of Sable Island. There was another on May 29, about 5 miles east of Seal Island (RGGB). Our only shearwater reports come from James M. Loughlin of the Manomet Bird Observatory. He saw a SOOTY SHEARWATER on April 19 on Baccaro Bank (about 50 miles SE of Cape Sable), and another, plus a MANX, on April 22 at Brown's Bank (about 50 miles SW of Cape Sable). The Smiths report a LEACH'S STORM-PETREL dead at Cape Sable light on April 27-28, and another on May 23, while several were seen in the lighthouse beam on May 1. Half a dozen or so were singing near the North Home on Seal Island on May 30 (RGGB).

GANNETS, CORMORANTS

The Smiths saw an early GANNET off Cape Sable on March 28. There were 10-20 off Brier Island on May 23, and half a dozen east of Seal Island on May 29 (RRA, RGGB).

The only GREAT CORMORANT report is of three birds in the Wine Harbor area on March 27. All the other sightings are of DOUBLE-CRESTED. The breeding records are the most relevant at this time of year. Eric Holdway reports two on April 4 at the Pictou Harbor causeway colony, but 48 on April 11, 114 starting to nest on April 18, 99 nests on May 2 and 128 nests ("near capacity") on May 23. Oscar Morehouse recorded 93+ nests on Boot Island, Minas Basin, on April 19. Of the non-breeding records there was an early sighting of a single bird at Economy on March 29, and an inland bird at Keji on May 11 (FS, PH).

RGGB Ed.

HERONS, EGRETS, BITTERNS

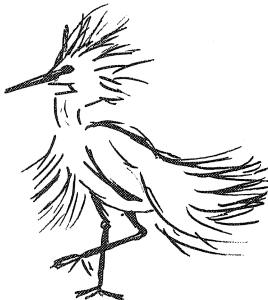
Judging by reports GREAT BLUE HERONS made their first landfall in extreme SW Nova Scotia and then worked their way up both sides of the province in a general northeasterly direction. There was one at Cranberry Head March 19 (MWH) and then arrival dates from our records are as follows: March 28 Grand Pre and Lawrencetown, Halifax Co; last week of March Hawk Point, Shelburne Co.; April 3 Port Hebert and Amherst Point; April 7 Economy; April 11 Cole Harbor; April 17 St. Esprit, C.B.; April 20 Pictou; April 24 Keji Park; April 29 Sonora, Guysborough Co.; May 16 Marion Bridge, C.B. A colony composed of 26 nests was seen at Boot Island in Minas Basin April 19 by Oscar Morehouse and party.

One of our kind American friends, James M. Loughlin, has sent us word of a GREEN HERON which landed on board of the NOAA R/V Albatross on Brown's Bank April 25, and was released in Yarmouth Harbor the next day. Another Green Heron was at Seal I. May 30-31 (RGG, ELM) reported to have arrived there on the 26th (under its own steam). Possibly from Yarmouth Harbor?

An injured CATTLE EGRET was picked up near North Sydney May 13 and kept for several days in an unsuccessful attempt to nurse it back to health (LM, KTM). Another, also a terminal case, was reported by W.J. Mills who heard of it from Mr. Frank O'Neill, Portuguese Cove, Halifax Co., who was feeding it earthworms. It was taken over by Eldon Pace of the Shubenacadie Wildlife Park but it eventually died and its skin now rests in the Nova Scotia Museum.

A GREAT EGRET was seen on May 23 at the Kentville Sanctuary by Jim and Gillian Elliott; and we have just received word of another of these large waders seen June 3 at Jones Harbor by Winnie Cairns and Ralph Widrig.

A SNOWY EGRET was on Brier I. the week of April 11 (M&WL, HJM, LEN) and another or the same one seen there May 19 (M&WL). One was seen near Lockeport May 15 and 22 (GDP, RT) and one at Abrams River, Yarmouth Co., May 10 (CRKA).



Keji leads the field for early AMERICAN BITTERN arrivals, with one April 16, which is also an all-time early record for the Park (THB). Other April sightings were of one on the 23rd at Berwick and another on the 24th at APBS, both by Con Desplanque, who also saw single birds at Cape Jourimain and Tantramar, N.B., and at APBS on May 3, 10 and 15 respectively. The first for Economy was one on May 7 (and present thereafter); for Argyle, Yarmouth Co., May 9 (CRKA).

Apparently the APBS and surrounding area was the only locality visited by the GLOSSY IBIS this spring. Here the Desplanques, father and son, saw from one to 8 birds on seven occasions between April 29 and May 15.

CRKA Ed.

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GEESE, DUCKS

Observations of CANADA GEESE from March on are well-nigh impossible to classify as either wintering birds or spring migrants. In any event there were 1350 geese seen on the "Circuit" east of Halifax February 29 (WC), "many thousands" on the Wolfville dykelands mid-February (OWM), and up to 4000 at Lusby Marsh on March 20 (CWS officials). The latest reported sighting is of 3 still at Port Joli May 23 (RT).

BRANT were still passing up along Digby Neck on April 17 when 400+ were seen at Freeport and 16 at Brier I. (HJM&LEN); a small flock, probably non-breeders, was seen again at Brier May 21-24 (CC and party), and a fragment of the much smaller Atlantic coast migration was observed at Argyle Sound April 10 in the same resting area where about 1000 were seen April 3 last year (D&MH).

Two SNOW GEESE (white phase) were at Economy April 18, the day the first Canadas arrived there (FS&FH).

Paired MALLARDS were seen at several localities during April: April 11 at APBS (ELM), April 17 at Green Bay, (Cohrs) and, of all places, the Halifax waterfront near the Dartmouth Ferry terminal (CJC). They were present in 1's and 2's up to 10 birds at APBS from April 10 on, the 10 being seen on May 23 (CD). A single bird was also at Cranberry Head April 25 (MWH).

Pairs of BLACK DUCKS began exploring the little back-country ponds in early March wherever these were ice-free, and by early April the courting season was in full swing. The only report of a brood so far is from APBS, May 23 (CD).

Lusby Marsh near Amherst must surely be the PINTAIL centre of Nova Scotia. Numbers there quickly increased from 18, on March 31 to 60, April 1; by April 10 there were 70, a week later 150 and on April 29 a peak of 200. There were still 100 on May 2 and 20-40 during the rest of May, there and at APBS (CD). The only reports from other localities are of a female at Seal I. May 15 (NSBS) and a pair at Economy April 15 (FS).

On May 1 Lusby Marsh in addition to its 100 Pintails produced a COMMON (EUROPEAN) TEAL for the Cohrs, Andersons and C. Desplanque who observed it there from April 29 to May 8. On April 29 the GREEN-WINGED TEAL population there and at nearby APBS peaked to 200 from their first appearance, when there were 5, on March 27 (CD&ST). All other observations of this species are well within the normal range as to arrival dates and numbers of individuals. Earliest record of BLUE-WINGED TEAL is from Lusby where a single bird appeared on March 31. Numbers there rose to 25 on the week of April 17 and fluctuated between 20 and a peak of 200 during May. A brood was observed on May 25 at APBS (CD). First sighting in the Economy area

was a male at Highland Valley April 28. Other records for this region are a pair at Economy May 5-6 and one bird at Glenholme May 7 (F&EPS, FH). Only other records are of a pair which stopped over at Cape Sable May 1-10 (S&BJS), a pair at Seal I. May 15-17 (NSBS), a male at Lr. Ohio May 8 (BH) and 2 males at Hemeon's Head, Shelburne Co. May 24 (RJC).

Along with their other "goodies" Lusby and APBS produced at least two EUROPEAN WIGEONS this spring: 2 at the Sanctuary April 16, one still there April 24 and one at Lusby April 29 (CD).

A pair of AMERICAN WIGEONS was in the Sanctuary at Debert, Colchester Co. April 11 (ELM) and several there still April 28 (FS). There were 8 at Lusby April 16 and a peak by April 24, at which place about this number - fluctuating between 20 and 40 - was present during May (CD). Ian McLaren photographed a pair of this species at Sable I. on May 2.

Four SHOVELERS appeared at APBS April 16 and there were 10-20 there and at Lusby during May (CD); 2 were seen by the NSBS party at Seal on May 16.

A pair of WOOD DUCKS was at West Middle Sable April 9 (RT) and 2 on May 9 and one May 15 were seen at APBS (CD).

An early report of RING-NECKED DUCKS is of 12, March 27 at Short Beach, Yarmouth Co. (AH&DBK). Next sightings are of a pair on Mary Lake, Queen's Co. April 15 (PRH) and 10 April 16 at APBS where numbers peaked to 20 by April 24 and remained at 10-20 during May (CD).



The 25 GREATER SCAUP at Cape Jourimain, N.B., March 28 (ST) may be considered a spring report although we have no information as to ice conditions in Northumberland Strait. On that same date there were 450 at Bayport, Lunenburg Co. (ELM). Numbers at Pictou on April 6, 11 and 18 respectively, 24, 14 and 60+ (EH). Lusby Marsh produces not only Greater but LESSER SCAUP as well, and there were up to 4 of the former and 6 of the latter present during late April and early May there (Con Desplanque, the Cohrs and the Andersons).

Ten COMMON GOLDENEYES at Black Point, Yarmouth Co. March 27 (DBK&AH) and single birds at Economy April 8 (FS) and at APBS April 24 (CD) are the last sightings of this winter species.

BUFFLEHEADS tarried longer - well into May in fact. There were 15 at West Middle Sable May 8 (RT) and 3 at Cole Harbor (RE); and 5 at Parrsboro on May 13 (FS).

Laggard OLDSQUAWS were at Allendale, Shelburne Co. (RJC) and at Green Bay, Lunenburg Co (SC) on May 24 - one at the former and two females in "mixed up" plumage at the latter place.

The last HARLEQUIN DUCKS were 2, a pair, April 17, and 8 April 20 at Port Hebert (RSW).

The first COMMON EIDERS seen in Minas Basin were 12 in a flock on March 27. Sid Smith reports: "many flying east all week from April 4, and a flock of about 100 young males remaining in the vicinity of Cape Sable Light". Forty to 50 Eiders were at Conrad's Beach April 13 and a similar number off Cadden Beach during the last days of the month (WC). The Cohrs reported well over 1000 Eiders off the point at the head of Green Bay "very active and noisy" on April 18, and R. J. Crosby had over 30 at Hemeon's Head on May 16, with about the same number there on the 24th. Along the Eastern Shore where these birds breed in considerable numbers Karl and Wendy Tay saw 50 pairs near Taylor Head on May 25.

The Cohrs report that there were 800-1250 SCOTERS at Green Bay April 16-19 and that the proportion of BLACK SCOTERS to SURF SCOTERS was one to nine. No WHITE-WINGED SCOTERS could be seen in this flock, but on May 21-24 in the same place a flock of about 200 consisted mostly of this last species. Whitewings first appeared in late March at Lower Economy and by May 25 there were still over 50 there (FH). Surf Scoters first appeared in this same area March 26 and were still present in fair numbers on May 25 (FS&FH). Concentrations of Black Scoters were seen at Conrad's Beach where there were 100-120 on April 17 (WC) and at Lr. Economy, where 100 were seen May 1 (FH).

There is one lone report of HOODED MERGANSERS - a female and a male in juvenile plumage at Port Hebert March 25 (RSW).

Apparently the late winter flocks of COMMON MERGANSERS had dispersed by early April. There were 10 on March 7; 18, March 21st on the West River at Pictou (EH); 6, April 3 at Maccan and 5 April 17 at APBS (CD), but other reports are of single birds seen here and there, mostly on fresh water.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSERS first showed up at Economy April 9, when there were three males and two females seen (FS). The April peak for Lusby Marsh was 30 on the 25th, and there were 10-20 there during May (CD). All other reports are of one to several birds, still on their inshore wintering grounds.

CRKA Ed.



SHOREBIRDS

During spring migration most shorebirds bypass the Atlantic Provinces, making their way to the subarctic and arctic through the center of the continent. Spring never pre-sages the almost unbelievable numbers and diversity of birds reaching us in the fall. Despite this, 21 species of shorebirds and phalaropes (excluding the more terrestrial woodcock and snipe) were recorded between March and the beginning of June, and some of the records were exceptional.

SEMPALMATED PLOVER were only sparsely recorded: the first at Cape Sable, April 28 (SS), and 1-4 birds at Baccaro, Cadden Beach and Mathews Lake, Shelburne Co., on various days between May 8 and 24 (WC,RJC).

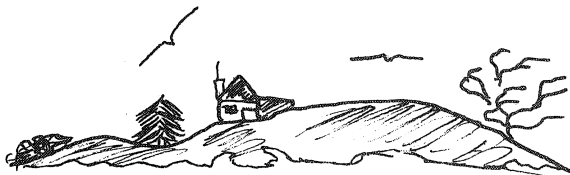
Winnie Cairns' study of the breeding biology of PIPING PLOVER gives us very full records for this species. The first arrival was March 28 at Cape Sable (SS), and in Shelburne Co. the first were reported at Louis Head and Port Hebert, April 5 (GDP,RSW). In Halifax Co. the first record was April 13 at Conrad's Beach (WC). By April 17 there were four birds at Conrad's, but only two were present by June 4 (ELM). On her study area in Queen's Co., Winnie Cairns found the first nest on April 27 and the first complete clutch May 1, and reported a few pairs in residence on many beaches from Lunenburg to Shelburne Co's.

The arrival and spread of KILLDEER were widely reported. Birds were arriving in the Amherst-Sackville area 25-26 March (SIT) and this coincided with the first records from Yarmouth Co., at Cranberry Head (HR). In Colchester Co. the first was reported at Bass River on April 4 (FH) and on the 11th and following days migrants were also reported from Economy (FS). Records were regular after those dates into mid May, but no Killdeer showed up on Seal I. during the two trips in mid and late May.

A GOLDEN PLOVER was reported from Brier I. 21-24 May (CC et al). There are very few spring records of this species, but no supporting details were given with the report. BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER, the most reliable of the spring migrants, occurred in unusual numbers. Between April 17 and 28, 1-12 were present at Cape Sable (S&BJS) and on the mainland of the province the first was recorded May 9 at Cadden Bay. (WC). The group on Cape Sable had grown remarkably to about 200 (accompanied by dowitchers) on May 16 (S&BJS) and 100+ were reported from Brier I. May 21-24 (CC et al). Many of these birds were in small groups of 10-20, often very restless and much on the move (ELM). On the same weekend 68 Black-bellies were present at Chebogue (AH) and 16-20 at Mathews Lake (RJC). "Sizable flocks" were present in the Wolfville area up to May 27 (CC). Numbers were down by the end of the month, except at Mathews Lake, where Russel Crosby reported 40-50 on May 30. A few lingered on into early June in most parts of the province.

The arrival of WOODCOCK can be pinpointed quite nicely, March 19-21, by reports from Eel Brook (PRD), Lockeport (RT) and Port Hebert (RT NSBS). Inland, the first report is by the Bowers at Turtle Lake on March 25, and after that the records are well-spaced but regular, all from western Nova Scotia except the bird seen at Sable I. between April 12 and 14 (AAR).

The first COMMON SNIPE was recorded in the last report, 20-21 March at Cape Sable (S&BJS). Thereafter the next record was March at at Turtle Lake (N&TB), and in Keji nearby arrival was noted only on April 18 (SL). Records are regular in the western part of the province in early April, but the first record from the border area was the 24th at APBS (CD) and in Halifax Co. April 28 (PWD). There are only two records from Cape Breton, Marion Bridge, April 30 and May 15 (KTM).



According to several reports SPOTTED SANDPIPERS arrived in Shelburne and Yarmouth Counties between May 6 and 10 (WC, GDP, BH, MWH, AH) and there was a nest at Lockeport by May 19 (GDP). An early arriving bird reached Wolfville April 23 (OWM). Elsewhere, the first was noted at Turtle Lake May 15 (N&TB) and in Keji the following day (PRH). In Guysborough Co. the first report was May 20 at Wine Harbor (GM). Our only report of a SOLITARY SANDPIPER comes from Port Hebert May 7 (RSW).

WILLETS, as befits their appearance and personality, were well recorded beginning with three at Lockeport on April 22 (RT, GDP) and regularly thereafter in Yarmouth and Shelburne Co's, including three on Cape Sable, April 28 (S&BJS). There is no evidence of a marked peak of arrival. In Halifax Co. the first was heard at Cole Harbor May 1 (RE) and on May 15 at Seal I. three appeared, apparently still in migration (NSBS). On Crescent Beach 25 on May 22 had increased to 50+ on the 24th(SC).

GREATER YELLOWLEGS show a protracted migration. Our first record is from APBS 24 April (CD) and the next are from Allendale, Shelburne Co. (RT) and Highland Village (FS), both on April 28. At Cape Sable one appeared on May 3 and a few were present until the 15th (S&BJS). The peak of migration appears to have been May 8-9; 25 at Cole Harbor (RE), 10+ in the Lawrencetown area, Halifax Co. (IAM, ELM, BM) and four at Argyle Head (CRKA). At Seal I. between May 15 and 17, 1-4 per day were seen in passage, (NSBS), but on a later trip, May 29-31, not a single Yellowlegs appeared (ELM, RGBB). There is only one record from Cape Breton, three seen at East Bay, C.B., on May 19 (KTM), and the latest record at hand is a single bird on May 30 at Mathews Lake.(RJC).

LESSER YELLOWLEGS are distinctly uncommon in Spring. One is reported from Sable I., 17-31 April (AAR, ARL).

RUDDY TURNSTONES, sparse and late spring migrants, were reported only three times: one, May 22, Crescent Beach (SC); four at Mathews Lake May 30 (RJC) and five at Seal I. May 3 (RGBB). For a change RED KNOT appeared more frequently in the records than Turnstones. Two were among the Smiths remarkable early season gathering of shorebirds at Cape Sable on April 18. seven on the 24th and three on the 28th, all in winter plumage. One was reported from Brier I. 21-24 May (CC et al), and a lone and very restless bird in winter plumage paused briefly at Conrad's Beach on eastward passage June 4 (ELM,AHM).

LEAST SANDPIPERS breed in the province at Sable I. and at least occasionally on the mainland. Despite this they were recorded sparsely: a maximum of 18 at Seal I. 15-17 May; six at Pond Cove, Brier I. May 22 (ELM); one at Crescent Beach the same day (SC) and two at Seal I. 29-31 May (ELM,RGBB). On Sable I. Ted Miller is studying the breeding biology and behaviour of Least Sandpipers - more about his work in a later report.

DUNLIN may still be passing through in low numbers as I write, but there is only one report: two with Sanderlings at Cape Sable April 28 (S&BJS). SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHERS are almost equally infrequent: 10-12 with 200 Black-bellied Plovers at Cape Sable, 16 May (S&BJS); one with Turnstones, Yellowlegs and peeps at Mathews Lake on May 30 (RJC).

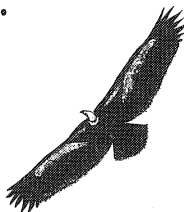
All reports of SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPERS are in the 1st two weeks of May. There was a maximum of seven with 18 Least at Seal I. May 15-17 (NSBS), 18-20 at Cape Sable on May 23 (S&BJS); 12 at APBS May 25 (CD) and 25-30 (were there any Least?) at Mathews Lake May 30 (RJC).

Without doubt the most unusual shorebird of the season was the BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER found by Ralph Connor on April 8 and confirmed and photographed the following day (WC, IAM,ELM). This is almost certainly the first spring record for the province. Only slightly less rare was the RUFF (Reeve) found at Conrad's Beach April 24 (EHC), and another (or possibly the same bird) seen in the same area on May 4 (BM). Just outside the area, at Cape Jourimain, N.B., a Ruff in partial breeding plumage was watched by many May 3 (CD et al).

SANDERLINGS appear to show a double peak of passage; wintering birds from our area or just a little farther south on the move from the end of March, peaking about April 29 (20 at Cadden)(WC), then a small passage of birds, many in breeding plumage, in late May and early June. Selected records: nine, Louis Head, 28 March (GDP); one to eight, Cape Sable, 18-28 April (S&BJS); five to 20, Cadden Bay, 22 April to 9 May (WC); eight, Cadden Bay 23-31 May (WC); one breeding plumage, Conrad's Beach, June 4 (ELM, AHM)

Two female WILSON'S PHALAROPES in breeding plumage spent a few hours in Cranberry Pond, Seal I., on May 16 (NSBS). NORTHERN PHALAROPES were seen first at Cape Sable on May 8, one (S&BJS), and three on May 15 just west of Clark's Harbor (NSBS). By the weekend of the 21-24 their migration was in full spate. At Brier I. many thousands of birds, probably tens of thousands, ringed the island, moving from place to place with the tide, feeding in smooth patches and along the edge of rips with the terns. The numbers were very hard to estimate, but the flock sizes ranged from 100 to about 1000 and at time virtually the whole of the island was surrounded by flocks. Despite much earnest searching no Red Phalaropes could be found in this spectacular spring congregation of Northern. (ELM, RRA, CC et al).

ELM Ed.



HAWKS

The first TURKEY VULTURE for the season was one seen at Turtle Lake by the Bowers, who report that it is the first record for that area. Between May 16-24, one to two Turkey Vultures were seen at Brier I., and another was seen at Tusket on May 31 (CRKA).

GOSHAWK reports this spring totalled six with one female on the nest at Lake Munro on April 30 (TB). Many observers commented on SHARP-SHINNED HAWKS but most of the hawks were probably feeder watchers or "feeder feeders". Francis Spalding noted a few passing eastward of Economy in the second week of April and Eric Mills reports two to three per day with one arriving from the south on Seal I. May 16-17.

RED-TAILED HAWK reports were few in number, four, but Francis Spalding feels that one individual on April 5 near Economy was on its breeding ground. An early BROAD-WINGED HAWK was seen at Keji by Peter Hope on April 21. Other reports are one May 19 Economy, and small numbers seen on Brier I. May 21-24 (CC and party). The last ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK report was from APBS where one was seen May 15 (CD).

BALD EAGLE reports are down with a total of only 13 being seen. This consists of seven adults, three immatures and three unknown.

MARSH HAWKS were first noted on April 5 at Tusket (CRKA) and a female April 7 at Lockeport (RC). By the middle of April they were reported from most other areas in the province. OSPREY reports are numerous. The first one was soon on the Grand Pre Meadows at the early date of March 28 (JRJ). The next report is of one at Schooner Cove, April 5 (ELM). An interesting sighting is of one seen on April 25 by James M. Loughlin 24 kilometers south of Brown's Bank. On April 27 three pairs were examining nests at Indian Path, Lunenburg Co.

A single PEREGRINE FALCON was seen April 10 at APBS (CD). There are five reports of MERLINS this spring but whether they are wintering birds or migrants is hard to determine.

AMERICAN KESTRELS may have staged one of their heaviest flights into the province in recent years. The first reports are from Yarmouth Co. March 27 at Sanford and March 21 at Chebourg (MWH). From then until April 19 there are many individual sightings; between April 19-25 over 50 sightings occurred with the highest number being noted at Brier I. April 19-22 when Wickerson Lent saw seven.

RRA Ed.

GROUSE AND MARSH BIRDS

Only five reports of SPRUCE GROUSE were received all from the western end of the province. RUFFED GROUSE reports were normal with drumming first heard May 15 at Marion Bridge, C.B., (KTM). Only four reports were received for RING-NECKED PHEASANT, two from Yarmouth, one from Amherst and one from Berwick. There were no GRAY PARTRIDGE reports.

Rails were reported only in the Amherst area (CD), with one VIRGINIA RAIL calling May 23, one SORA at the Tantramar Marsh May 10, and eight at APBS May 15. The only report for COMMON GALLINULE comes from Amherst where one was seen and two heard May 25. AMERICAN COOTS were well reported from the Amherst area with the first being noted April 17 when five were seen (CD). Dartmouth's notorious wintering Coot was last seen April 22 by Ethel Crathorne.

RRA Ed.

JAEGERS, GULLS, TERNS, ALCIDS

There are only three JAEGER reports - all of POMARINE. James M. Loughlin saw a light-phase bird on Brown's Bank (50 miles SW of Cape Sable) on April 22; there was a bird off Boot Island, Minas Basin, on April 19, and a light-phase bird heading SE past Seal I. on May 29 (OWM, ELM).

Our latest GLAUCOUS GULL reports are single birds at Cape Sable on May 2 (Smiths), at Lockeport on May 10 (RJC), and up to 6 at Sable I. on May 2-4 (IAM). ICELAND GULLS were as usual commoner and later. There had been a sharp drop from winter levels at Halifax by April 4 (ELM), but there were at least 70 on Sable I. on May 2-4 (IAM). Our latest records are of a bird at Lockeport on May 22 (RJC), and "occasional" sightings off Cape Sable as late as May 26 (Smiths). HERRING and GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULLS were seen as usual. Perhaps the only record which needs noting is Rick Swain's sighting of a Black back at Keji on April 2 - the first record there this spring.

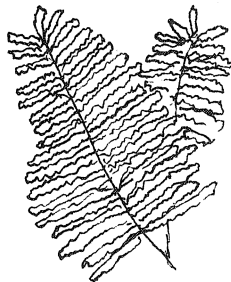
The only RING-BILLED GULL record was of two birds at Economy on April 3 (FS). For once, BONAPARTE'S GULL reports outnumber BLACK-HEADED. The only Black-headed reported were single birds at Cranberry Head on March 27 and Lunenburg on March 30, plus two at Eel Brook on April 1 (DK&MWH, GED, CRKA). On the other hand, there was a Bonaparte's at Lunenburg on March 30 (GED), 13 at Eel Brook on April 1 ("hijacking food from Red-breasted Mergansers", CRKA), one at Lockeport on May 1 (RT), four at Seal I. on May 16 (ELM), and one at Brier I. on May 21-24 (CC and party).

We keep the best till last - two Arctic species. Chris Cohrs saw an immature SABINE'S GULL on April 13, 75 miles ESE of Sable Island, and an adult 40 miles SE of the island. These would be regular spring migrants, but our IVORY GULL sighting (from Sable I. - where else?) is an exceptionally southerly vagrant. A. Richard and J. Redmond (vouched for by Ian McLaren) saw an adult bird ("black bill and legs, pure white, more tern than gull") on April 25 and again on April 30.

The earliest TERN report is of "flocks" outside the Bald Tusket Islands on April 29 (JIP). Phyllis Dobson saw COMMONS over Eel Lake on May 14 and notes that they had been around the shore for a couple of weeks. Terns "arrived" on Brier I. on May 7 (Lents). On May 22-24 there were 500-1000 on the Peter Island colony in Grand Passage there (ELM); at first there seemed to be 80-90% ARCTICS, but the Commons seemed to increase later in the weekend. The first record for Halifax County - 6 Commons with 200 Arctics near Causeway Road - was on May 9 (ELM). The first sighting on Tusket River at Upper Wedgeport was a Common on May 10 (DK&MH), the first birds at East Bay sandbar, Cape Breton, were a pair, probably Commons, on May 11 (KTM), the first at Keji a Common on May 16 (PH et al) and the first terns heard at Wine Harbor were on May 19 (GM). Our only ROSEATE report is of four birds at Mathew's Lake on May 30 (RJC).

Alcid records are sparse. There were five large alcids (probably RAZORBILLS) off Brier I. on May 23 (ELM). There were eight BLACK GUILLEMOTS off Cape Sable on April 12 (Smiths), one off Brier I. on May 21-24 (CC and party), and about 20 around Seal I. on May 28-31 (RBB). Finally, Bob Lamberton found DOVEKIES quite common west of Sable I. on May 18. This seems rather late to see so many so far south. On the other hand, Tony Lock has found Dovekie remains in fresh gull pellets on Sable as late as July, so perhaps some non-breeders are actually summering here, unsuspected.

RBB Ed.

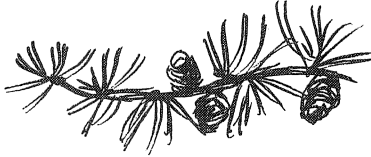


DOVES THROUGH OWLS

MOURNING DOVES were first reported April 7 at the Cohrs feeder in Halifax, perhaps the same pair as last year. On April 16 four were reported near Port Williams and three birds were heard singing May 16 at Port Hebert (RW).

GREAT HORNED OWLS were reported in fair numbers with one nesting pair seen in Pictou through April and May (EH). A sick SNOWY OWL was seen in APBS April 24-26. BARRED OWLS were reported from Keji April 19, Halifax April 5, and Yarmouth May 26. A single SHORT-EARED OWL was reported on Cape Sable by the Smiths April 25. A nesting LONG-EARED OWL was found on the Wolfville Ridge May 27 (BF). The only SAW-WHET OWL report was of two calling in Keji April 19 (N&TB, L&PH).

RRA Ed.



CAPRIMULGIDS THROUGH KINGFISHER

Only one WHIP-POOR-WILL is reported, that from Granite Village where it was first heard May 10.

A very early NIGHTHAWK was one heard by Mary Anderson April 20 in Halifax. Another early record is one at St. Esprit, C.B., May 1 (RM). The other reports are all at the end of the month: May 29 two at Lower Ohio (BH), one at Brookside Road, Halifax Co., May 30 (FWD), and one May 30 at Tusket (MWH). All in all, too few reports. Is it a later migrant than we think, or is it a very scarce bird this year?

The first CHIMNEY SWIFTS were seen April 30 at APBS by the Cohrs. Oscar Morehouse reports that the colony at Wolfville had been re-established by May 14, and on May 18 Marion Hilton saw 20+ circling the Yarmouth Museum.

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRDS arrived May 13 at Yarmouth (AH) and on the same day at Round Hill, Annapolis Co. (WEW). By the 17th they were seen in Granite Village and Economy and by the 20th they were in Cole Harbor and Amherst.

The first migrant BELTED KINGFISHER is hard to determine. One seen April 3 at Centreville by Sid Smith is probably a migrant. By the middle of April many observers reported them. The first Cape Breton record is one at Northside East Bay on May 11 (KM). The Seal I. group reported them still arriving May 17-19, and on May 27 the first nest with 10 eggs was found on the Wolfville Ridge by B. Forsythe.

RRA Ed.

WOODPECKERS

The first reported COMMON FLICKER was one at Economy April 4 (FS). A possible wave was noted April 16-17 with 30+ reported by the Smiths on April 16 at Cape Sable, and 12+ at Cherry Hill and Green Bay on the 17th (Cohrs). Gordon MacLeod reports that the first one at Wine Harbor was April 20.

PILEATED WOODPECKER reports are normal with a pair probably breeding in Keji for the first time.

RED-HEADED WOODPECKERS were spotted on Brier I. May 21-24 (CC and party). One May 24 at Central Grove, Long I., Digby Co., seen by Anne Mills, may have been the Brier I. bird. The first park record for Keji of this species was seen May 27 by Cheryl Olsen.

Only six reports were received for YELLOW-BELLIED SAP-SUCKERS: one on April 18, Crousetown (Cohrs), one at Wolfville April 18 (OWM), one April 19 at Economy (FH), one April 29 Marshland (DK, MH), two on April 21, the earliest record for Keji (PH) and one April 29 Lower Ohio (BH).

HAIRY WOODPECKER reports totalled six with two pairs nesting at Keji and a possible arrival on Brier I. May 24 (ELM).

Only four reports were received for DOWNYS.

BLACK-BACKED THREE-TOED WOODPECKERS were reported from Amherst on April 3 and from Lower Ohio April 15 (BH).

RRA Ed.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS

An unusually early report of an EASTERN KINGBIRD comes from Cape Sable where Betty-June Smith observed one on April 25. It was feeding on insects along a line of kelp below the crest of the beach. No others were reported until May 8 when there was one at Tusket (CRKA). In the following few days they were seen on Brier I. (10th)(M&WL), Cape Forchu (13th) (MAN), Lockeport (16-17, RJC&RSW). By May 15 at least ten a day were moving through Seal I. (NSBS) and by the 22nd the same was true on Brier (ELM).

Evelyn Dobson writes of a possible WESTERN KINGBIRD on April 25 at Brookside. Unfortunately, visibility was poor at the time so no positive identification could be made. She noted "bird of 8-10", appeared grey-brown above and pale buff (yellow) under". Alternatively it could have been a GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER. There were no other reports of either of these species.

Another extremely early report comes from Beula Burman who saw a single EASTERN PHOEBE March 29-31 on Seal I. On April 6 a Phoebe appeared at Lr. Ohio and by May 8 it had acquired a mate and established a nest containing three eggs. Five young were successfully hatched on May 28 (BH). Other reports of Phoebes come from Brier I. (one, April 17), Lockport (one, 18), Wine Harbor (one, 18-19, three on 20), Marchland (one, on 21) and New Grafton, Queen's Co. (one, April 30). Latest reports are of one at West Middle Sable May 5 and one on the NSBS Hant's Co. field day on May 29th.

No YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHERS were definitely identified. Earliest LEAST FLYCATCHER report is from Simon Lunn who heard one at Turtle Lake, on April 17. Apparently no others were seen and/or heard until May 10 at Lr. Ohio (one, BH). On May 14 they appeared at Round Hill (EHW) and Wilmot (TFH) and on 15th were passing through Seal I. at a rate of approximately 10 per day (NSBS). By the 17th they were heard at Economy (FS). First Brier I. bird reported was on May 24. On 26th and 27th CRKA saw five Leasts in areas around Yarmouth Co. where they had become "common" by 29th.

The only two ALDER FLYCATCHER reports are of one at Brier on May 23 (ELM) and the first seen at Eel Brook on May 30 (PRD).

An EASTERN WOOD PEWEE sang at Upper Wedgeport on May 7 (RD) and MWH saw one in Yarmouth town on 12th.

Five reports of OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHERS were received - all of single birds. They are: May 17 at Upper Wedgeport (D&MH), May 23 at Pictou (EH) and at East Sable (GDP, RT), May 24 at Brier (RRA) and at Keji (PH).

Probably, next to the Robin the first TREE SWALLOW sighted is the most exciting spring bird event. This was reflected on the plethora of reports sent in. A pattern emerges thus: 6-8 birds present at Tusket Falls on March 29 (CRKA, PRD), seven at South Berwick, Kings Co. April 3rd, increasing there to 50 by 13th. First Shelburne Co. Tree Swallow was on April 6 at Lr. Ohio (BH) with one at Cape Sable the same day. (BJS). D&MH at Upper Wedgeport had the early mainland Yarmouth Co. bird April 9. By 13th 50 had reached Pictou (EH) and by 15th there were 50 a day on Seal I. and a large flock of 200+ at Harmony, Queen's Co. On 17th they were seen at Digby Neck and Brier, Cherry Hill and Brookside. The NE movement took 200 into APBS on April 18th where by 25th there were "100's, perhaps even 1000's" (CD). They reached Sheet Harbor and Wine Harbor on 19th. By 24th they were reported from Economy (FS) and by 25th from Sable I. (IAM).

BANK SWALLOWS appeared almost a month later on May 15. Francis Spalding saw one at Economy then and there were 50 on Seal I. the same day, dropping to 25 on 16th and 17th. BJS had 50 at Cape Sable on 16th and one was seen on Brier on that date. Latest reports are of one at Cape Forchu on May 22 (CRKA) and 10 at Crescent Beach on 24th (SC).

Two ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOWS are reported by Ralph Widrig at Port Hebert on May 21st.

BARN SWALLOWS, almost as heavily reported as Trees, form a pattern as follows. They arrived on Sable I. April 17 (IAM), but were then unobserved until 24th when Peter Hope established the earliest report for the park at Keji. On 30th Rosemary Eaton saw her first at Cole Harbor and by May 1st they had arrived at Economy and Annapolis Royal (FS, WEW) and Brier I. and Tusket had Barn Swallows on May 2nd and Lr. Ohio on 4th. Thereafter reports are very numerous. West Middle Sable, Brookside, Sheet Harbor and Tusket on May 5th, 6th, 7th and 9th, Wine Harbor, Marion Bridge and St. Esprit on 11th, 13th and 14th. "Abundant" on Seal by May 15th (100-150), by 20th they were at APBS by the hundreds.

Ten reports of CLIFF SWALLOWS were received, two of nesting birds. Locke Smith on Cape Sable saw the first migrant on May 10th and by 16th there were four pairs there at work on nests. "Several" were around on May 11th at Lr. Ohio (BH). There were two at Port Hebert on May 13th (RSW) and "a dozen" at St. Esprit the week of the 17th (RM). On 16th they were also seen at Seal and Brier and at Economy on 17th. Arrival at Pic-tou was noted on May 23 when 32 were present. (EH). Mrs. Anton Kleiner at Central Chebogue has Cliff Swallows nesting under the porch eaves (per MWH).

A few PURPLE MARTINS were reported. IAM saw one on Sable I. on April 18. Two arrived at the Rose colony on May 2 (CD). On May 15 there was one at Cadden Beach (WC), one at Lockeport (RJC) and three on Seal. Bessie Harris (Lr. Ohio) saw her first of the year Martin (male) on May 18, followed by two females on the 23rd. They showed interest in the Martin house (condominium style) but at latest report (May 31) had not yet moved in.

CORVIDS THROUGH WRENS

Corvids remained much as usual, as did BLACK-CAPPED and BOREAL CHICKADEES.

RED-BREASTED and WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCHES attended less often at feeders and were encountered more often in the woods as the season advanced.

One BROWN CREEPER report is of interest. A Creeper was seen April 16 at Cape Sable where there are no trees. There's a true migrant!

With the exception of one HOUSE WREN (Seal I. May 15-17) all Wren reports are of the returning WINTER WREN. Dates here stretch from May 29 when one was singing at Lr. Ohio to May 29 when PRD reported that 'tho present, Winter Wrens were not common in her (Eel Brook and environs) area this spring. Predictably the earliest sightings were in the western end of the

province: Cape Sable on April 16, Upper Wedgeport, Brier and Little River, Digby Co., on 17th. On 20th they were heard at Port Hebert and Turtle Lake; on 23rd at Economy and on 24th at Lockeport. They reached Guysborough Co. (Wine Harbor) on 29th, and by May 16th were heard in Halifax Co. on the Greenhead Road field trip and at Susie Lake.



MIMIDS

At least nine MOCKINGBIRDS were seen, possibly a few more. Oscar Morehouse, Wolfville, writes of a mocker in the snow April 11 feeding on a chopped apple put out for the Robins. On April 12 a pair arrived at last year's nest site at Cliff St., Yarmouth town. On 17th two were seen on Brier and on 30th one sang in W. E. Whitehead's garden at Round Hill. A Lockeport Mockingbird was sighted off and on up to May 11th (GDP, RJC). Seal I. hosted one on May 16-17 - this had increased to "several" by May 21-24.

Con Desplanque writes of the earliest GREY CATBIRD seen at APBS May 1st. On 9th Catbirds were seen at Eel Brook and Cape Sable (PRD, S&BJS), and on 12th at Round Hill (WEW). Small waves are apparent from May 15-23 with steady reports from the "western end": 25+ on Seal May 15-17 and 20-30 on Brier May 22-23. One reached Cole Harbor on 22nd, and 26th was the first date from Keji. From then on they have been seen in their usual widespread locations and in "average" numbers.

The BROWN THRASHERS were all on Seal, Brier and Cape Sable. Dates are: May 9 (one) Cape Sable, May 15-17 (many) Seal, May 19 (one) Brier (SS, M&WL, ELM).

ROBIN THROUGH KINGLETS

The first truly "spring" AMERICAN ROBINS were seen in Wolfville on March 18. There were 15 of them and they were the "dark, northern species" (OWM). During the following week they arrived in ones and twos around the province; March 19 at Yarmouth (EK), 20th at Lockeport and Crousetown, Lunenburg Co. (RSW, SC), 23rd at Wilmot (TPH), 24th at Tusket (CRKA), Halifax (WC) and 27th at Liverpool (TW). By 30th they reached Wine Harbor (GM) and by April 2 Pictou (EH). These, it is to be noted, were singles or at the most two birds. First report of waves are from CRKA who writes that by March 26 there were many bright new Robins around the Tusket area. "Quite a wave" hit Halifax on April 2 (HWM). First arrival at Pictou was on April 2, and by 16th 90+ could be counted. The Smiths at Cape Sable had a crowd for their first spring sightings on April 3rd - a pair, closely followed by 30 more later in the day. Cape

Breton's spring Robins were at Grand River on 5th April and they arrived at Amherst on 6th where they had consolidated by 7th (CD). By April 12 they seem to have been well established in most areas. A successful nest was at Economy where young were found hatched on May 27 (FS).

Two WOOD THRUSHES came to notice this year, one at Seal on May 15 and one heard calling at Keji on May 22. The latter bird was the first in the park since 1973 and the earliest ever in park records.

Peter Hope also writes of another park record for an early date - a HERMIT THRUSH on April 18. The earliest Hermit of all was at Cape Sable (April 4) but the main migration took place during the second half of April. Seen or heard in Port Hebert on April 20, Granite Village and Lr. Ohio on 21st, Lr. Economy on 24th, they arrived in "great numbers" at Port Joli on 26th (JH). They reached Wine Harbor on 29th and were heard constantly in Yarmouth Co. from May 2 onwards. They were regular at APBS throughout May (CD).

More lightly reported were SWAINSON'S THRUSHES. Later than the Hermits, as usual, they were seen and heard on Seal on May 16, Lower Wedgeport on 17th, Economy on 20th and Little Salmon River (Halifax Co.) on 25th.

VEERY reports come from Yarmouth, Annapolis, Queen's and Lunenburg Counties. CRKA heard two calling at Tusket from May 6 to press time (May 31) and one was heard at Zwicker Lake on May 9 (HJM, LEN). Seal I. produced one on May 16. Thelma Bowers observed and heard one at Turtle Lake on May 21 and she notes that this is her first spring record of a Veery in that area.

At least five EASTERN BLUEBIRDS were seen, perhaps more for the Brier I. birds may have been different ones. The Lents saw one there on April 13 and one on May 10; other NSBS members saw two (both males) there May 21-24. A male and female were seen at Lr. Ohio on April 25 (BH) and another (female) was on Seal I. May 15.

Last spring's record of nine BLUE-GREY GNATCATCHERS on Seal I. (Vol. 17, No. 2, p. 91) was too much to expect a second time, but there were two seen there on May 15, one remaining on 16th.

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLETS, whose numbers were down so much last winter continued to be rather scarce judging by the paucity of reports. As those there were faded into deep woods for the breeding season, the RUBY-CROWNED KINGLETS took over. The first appeared singing lustily in the west, pushing gradually eastward during the last half of April. On 16th they were observed on Cape Sable and at Kempt (Queen's Co.), on 17th at Upper Wedgeport and Brier, on 18th at Lr. Ohio, Wolfville and Green Bay, on 19th at Economy, and on 25th at Five Islands Lake (Halifax Co.) (HPM). They had reached Wine Harbor by 29th. (GM).

PIPITS THROUGH STARLINGS

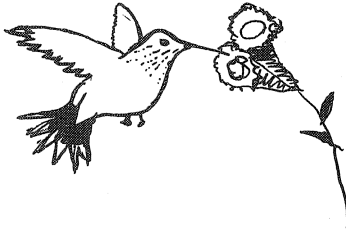
Abundant in the fall, the WATER PIPIT is scarce here during spring migration. Only three were noted: one at Cherry Hill April 17 (Cohrs); one on Seal May 15 (NSBS) and one on Brier May 21 (CC).

The many large flocks of BOHEMIAN WAXWINGS reported in the last issue (p.68) presumably are no longer with us - only one flock was mentioned - 35 birds in Halifax on May 29(WC). One CEDAR WAXWING was on Seal I. May 15.

Four NORTHERN SHRIKES were seen, one each on April 11 at Lr. Ohio (BH) and Lusby Marsh (CD), one April 19 in the Northport area (RGM) and one April 27 at Milton, Queen's Co. (PH,RS).

Con Desplanque sums up the STARLING situation most succinctly - "always seen".

SC Ed.



VIREOS, WARBLERS

Of our two common VIREOS, the SOLITARY is always first to arrive, and a very early one was heard and seen on May 5 at Keji, by Norm and Thelma Bowers and Peter Hope. The next arrival date was May 13 at Economy (FS) and during the week following reports came in from all over. The arrival of the RED-EYED VIREO overlapped the last of these reports - the first being one, May 19 at Lockeport, noted by Russell J. Crosby, then generally reported during the next ten days. An unexpectedly good chance to identify a PHILADELPHIA VIREO came to George D. Perry on June 1 when a bird struck his window, fell to the ground but was picked up still alive. It remained perched on his finger for at least five minutes, while his wife fetched Peterson and all characteristic field marks could be noted, and the bird then flew away to perch in a nearby tree. One other of our rarer vireos arrived at Seal I. on May 15, a WARBLING VIREO, and two were seen there next day by the NSBS party present.

The WOOD WARBLERS arrive for the most part in May of each year, and come in "waves", the exact timing governed, it is believed, by weather conditions. Wind direction and air pressure seem to be what count more than humidity and temperature. This year April was warm and dry, May, wet and cold. Last year it was exceptionally cold all spring. And yet a comparison of arrival dates of the warblers shows just half of them slightly earlier, half slightly later this spring than last - the YELLOW WARBLER here on exactly the same date. First sightings are rather meaningless statistically (although one of the greatest pleasures on earth to the observer, and after all, we each have our own "first" sighting), and speak less of the enterprise of the species than of the observer.

This year, official credit goes to Peter Hope and Rick Swain of Keji for the BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER, May 5; to NSBS party (per Eric L. Mills) at Seal I. for the TENNESSEE, May 15; to Thelma Hawkins at Wilmot, Annapolis Co., for the NASHVILLE, May 6; to Thelma Hawkins also for the first NORTHERN PARULA, May 3; to Marion W. Hilton of Yarmouth and the Lents at Brier I. for the YELLOW, May 10; to the Lents also for the MAGNOLIA, May 10; to Ralph S. Widrig of Port Hebert, Shelburne Co., for the CAPE MAY, May 6; to Russell J. Crosby of Lockeport and the NSBS Party at Seal for the BLACK-THROATED BLUE, May 15; to Bessie Harris of Lr. Ohio, Shelburne Co., for the YELLOW-RUMPED, April 10 (although this is a hard warbler to pin down, and most reports were for the week April 17-24); to Reginald Doucette of Upper Wedgeport, Peter Hope and Thelma Bowers of Keji and Turtle Lake, for the BLACK-THROATED GREEN, May 8, (earliest arrival date so far for the park); to Francis Spalding and Frank Hennessey of Economy and the NSBS part at Seal for the BLACKBURNIAN, May 15; to Ralph S. Widrig of Port Hebert for the CHESTNUT-SIDED, May 11; to Margaret A. Nickerson of Yarmouth (Cape Forchu sighting), Russell J. Crosby (Cranberry I. near Lockeport sighting) and Sidney Smith of Cape Sable for the BAY-BREASTED, May 15; to the NSBS party at Seal for the BLACKPOLL, May 15; to Locke and Betty June Smith at Cape Sable for the PALM, April 14; to Rosemary Eaton of Cole Harbor, Halifax Co., for the OVENBIRD, April 28; to Peter Hope of Keji for the NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH, May 6 (another earliest park record); to Eric L. Mills at Brier I. for the MOURNING, May 24; to Rosemary Eaton at Cole Harbor for the COMMON YELLOWTHROAT, April 29; to Edgar P. Spalding at Economy for the WILSON'S, May 20; to the NSBS party at Seal for the CANADA, May 16; to Terry Wentzell at Liverpool for the AMERICAN REDSTART, May 8.

Two rare strays seen this spring were a PROTHONOTARY WARBLER May 26, reported satisfactorily to Ian McLaren, from the north end of Halifax; and a KENTUCKY WARBLER, May 16, at Seal I., found by the NSBS party, photographed by Sylvia Fullerton.

It is interesting to note that the two major warbler waves, May 16-17 and May 23-24 were noted simultaneously in various parts of the province - the first one, besides at Seal, at Economy (where some of the birds actually preceded the Seal I. wave, coming in at the head of the Bay of Fundy on May 15), at Susie Lake in Halifax Co. (NSBS field trip) and at Yarmouth in the Eel Lake area where it was noted "May 16, warblers arrived in good numbers, very numerous by May 29", also in the Lockeport-Sable River area; and the second wave showing up there as well as at Brier I. and at Rawdon, Hants County. Many of these birds evidently travel overland as far as possible, and perhaps make better time that way.

N.B. A late report from Eric Mills reads: May 29-31. No detectable migration at Seal I.; birds present include 2 Red-eyed Vireos, 4 Parulas, 25+ Yellows, 4 Magnolias, 20+ Yellow-rumped, 5 Black-throated Greens, 1 Bay-breasted (May 30), 75 Blackpoll (both sexes), 20 Yellowthroats, 1 Canada (May 29), 10 Redstarts.

ICTERIDS

Twenty-seven reports of the BOBOLINK refer to anything from 1's and 2's to "large flocks" - the first ones mentioned at Economy, May 9 (FS), all bright males. The first females started coming May 17, one seen at Cape Sable (SS). Eight reports coincided on May 15-16, (when 10-15 per day were coming in at Seal I.), but migration continued for the rest of the month, with 10-30 per day arriving at Brier I. May 22-24 (ELM), and 2-3 each day May 29-31 at Seal I. (ELM, RGG). Eric Mills wrote "according to Elton Crowell a large flock left Seal on the 27th or 28th". As with all of the common blackbirds distribution is now general.

Two EASTERN MEADOWLARKS were probably migrants, one seen April 13 at Conrad's Beach(WC) and one April 15 at Brier I. (Lents).

The first obviously "new" REDWINGED BLACKBIRD was seen at the mouth of the Bay of Fundy for a change, at Upper Wedgeport, March 7 (D&MH), the second, March 8 at the Border (SIT) and the third March 9 in Halifax County (FWD). Redwings continued to spread over the province well into April, the first seen in Cape Breton April 10 at St. Esprit by the Meyerowitz family, and the "second week in April" at Marion Bridge by Joy and K.T. MacKay; migrants still coming in at Cape Sable April 16 (SS). Numbers appear to be normal.

Three ORCHARD ORIOLES came to Nova Scotia in May this spring, two, May 2 at Brier I. (M&WL) and one (imm. male), May 11-15 settled at Jim and Gillian Elliott's feeder at Little Salmon River Drive, Halifax Co., where it "feasted happily on grapes".

Seventeen reports of the NORTHERN ORIOLE include up to 30 individuals. Starting May 2 (seen at Brier I., M&WL) and at Halifax (WJM) sightings continued up to May 25. Northern Orioles were coming into Seal I., 2-5 per day, May 15-17; into Brier I. 3 per day May 22-24, and still at Seal, 3 each day May 29-31, with a note by Elton Crowell that around 15 left West Side Village there on the 28th. Adele Hurlburt noted one, May 11 at Richmond, Yarmouth Co., and MWH had 1 (female) at her feeder in Yarmouth town on May 12, then a male on the 16th, when they were reported elsewhere - "heard all over town by the 18th". These orioles prefer to nest in towns, no doubt due to the presence of big shade trees. Willett Mills now has (May 31) a male oriole singing in his garden, and hopes for a nesting pair. He says that area in Halifax has long been a favored nesting site for orioles. The other reports of the Northern Oriole were five more from Yarmouth Co. (MAN, D&MH, JIP, R Doucette & CRKA), (The one from the Henrys at Upper Wedgeport mentions "a male, feeding avidly on orange and grapefruit in a hanging feeder"); four from Shelburne-Queen's (JSH, RT, BH, RJC); one from Halifax Co. (FWD's) and two from the Valley-Greenwood (LEN, HJM) and Wolfville (OWM).

The RUSTY BLACKBIRD was first noted April 6 at Economy (and a nest with 5 eggs May 30) by Francis Spalding. Only three other reports have come in: good numbers (40-50) went through Round Hill, Annapolis Co. April 10 (WEW); one only was spotted among the grackles and cowbirds at Pictou May 12 (EH), and Karl and Wendy Tay of Mooseland Lake, near Sheet Harbor write that they have seen "many Rustys" this spring at their cottage there - which confirms our suspicion that these birds maintain a good population on territory, but that sightings of them are rare because of their secluded habitat.

Of the sixteen reports of the COMMON GRACKLE, the first comes from Economy, a small flock noted there March 20 by FS, who also mentioned that they were on nesting grounds by March 26. The second comes from Amherst, 8 birds seen March 27 by Con Desplanque, in his garden, with 30 there March 31. By March 23 they were at Pictou (EH), by March 24 at Wolfville (OWM) and by the 27th at Lockeport (RJC). April 4 brought them to Yarmouth (MWH), April 7 to Halifax Co. (FWD), April 9 to Sherbrooke, Guysborough Co. (GM) and "the second week in April" to Cape Breton (Joy & KTM). As with the Redwings, numbers appear normal both in residential and woodland areas, where nesting is now the main concern. Eric Holdway says that they nest in spruces, preferably near water, which perhaps explains their predilection for iron bridges - quite noticeable. Some of us equate "bridge grackles" with summer.



The most we can say about the migration of the BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD this spring is that the big wintering flocks broke up in March and April and small flocks (2-6) usually moved in to feeders, hanging around country feeders especially, among the singing (newly-arrived) warblers and sparrows, no doubt on the watch for a suitable nest. The distinction of having large flocks of cowbirds goes to Greenwood - 80 (20 females) April 12 (HJM&LEN); to Pictou, 60+ (11 females) April 12 (EH) and to Milton, Queen's Co., where flocks number 60+ (JSH).

TANAGERS

Six or seven SCARLET TANAGERS came in with the migrating species this year, from May 15 to May 24. There was a bright male at Seal May 15-17 (NSBS), and on the 19th one was seen at Port Joli by the K. M. Nicholsons, reported to Winnie Cairns. On May 20 the Lents at Brier noted a Scarlet Tanager; and on the 21-24 banding trip to Brier, Cyril Coldwell and party found "several" (reported by OWM); and Ross and May Anderson saw one

of these there May 23, Eric Mills et al heard one singing there May 24. In Halifax Co., at Boulderwood, Mrs. Jansen had one of these gorgeous birds in her garden, May 23, staying to the 24th, which she reported to Willett Mills, who kindly relayed the report of the sighting to us.

N.B. A late report came in from Dr. D.D. Sameoto of Dartmouth who had an adult male Scarlet Tanager there on May 18th (per RGBB)

GROSBEAKS, FINCHES

Five, possibly seven CARDINALS have been seen this spring in widely separate regions. It is impossible to decide whether these are new arrivals or the few remaining from our invasion several years ago. A female Cardinal remained at the Fred Nickerson feeder until around May 1, when it disappeared. One was seen the last week of May by Henry Ross at nearby Markland. This may have been the Nickerson bird or a new arrival. At Lockeport George Perry reported a female Cardinal at his feeder April 13-16, and R.J. Crosby noted one - "same female seen frequently until April 17", which was probably the same (Perry) bird. The third Cardinal, also a female, was seen April 20 at Halifax by Ray and Ethel Helpard, and on April 30 this bird (or another female?) was present at the Cohrs' feeder in Halifax (LAC). Since a bird of this description was reported in Halifax during the winter it is not possible to claim this (or these) as newly arrived.

N.B. June 1. We have just received the news that the pair (male and female) which spent the winter at the MacDonalds on Grove Road outside of Yarmouth has returned after a short absence, and hopes are that they will remain to nest again.

The ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK, one of the few true migrants in this group has returned in exceptionally good numbers. Start in April, it is possibly still coming in, five per day noted May 29-31 at Seal I. (ELM, RGBB). The first report received was of one bird, April 19, in the garden shrubbery at Adele Hurlburt's in Yarmouth, the next four reports also in April - bright males at Milton, Queen's Co. April 23 (JSH), at Sable River April 24 (RSW), at Port Joli April 26 (JA) and at Little Harbor, Shrlburne Co. April 27 (GDF). After that the May sightings multiplied (20 in all), females coming in by the middle of the month, and distribution wide - the first seen in Cape Breton, 2, May 16-19 at Marion Bridge (KTM). Rosebreasts were numerous at both Seal and Brier during the periods of observation there this spring, and are now in full song, to be heard on any field trip in appropriate habitat.

This was also an exceptional season for the INDIGO BUNTING with fourteen reports, representing at least 23 individuals. Most of these were bright males - the first seen April 23 at Lower Wedgeport by Israel Pothier. Two other April sightings

were at Western Head, Shelburne Co. (RT) and at the K. M. Nicholsons at Port Joli, where two males and one female appeared later, May 13, seen there also (May 15) by Jeanne Addelson. One male bird reached Cape Breton May 10 and stayed a week at the K.T.Mackay feeder "feeding voraciously on cracked corn and oats all during the day". At Seal I. May 15-16 both a male and a female Indigo Bunting were seen, and a bright male at Keji, May 22 was a "first of this species" for the Park (seen by Peter and Lorraine Hope, Simon Lunn and others). At Lockeport on May 18 George Perry observed an immature male "blue mottled with brown" and wrote that "several adult males had been accurately described by students" in the town. It is still a mystery why Indigos come here so early, why they come at all in fact (although some have nested in southern Maine and southern New Brunswick) and what becomes of them when they leave here ...?



As we look at other birds returning, we look at the EVENING GROSBEAK leaving. Large flocks were still around up to mid-March, after which the flocks dwindled and the last birds disappeared by the end of April. As to where they went, one appeared at Cape Sable April 24, one at Brier May 24, and quite a number (20+) at Economy in mid-May, also 10+ May 26 at Amherst. This seems to be all the evidence we have - if it is evidence - of departure routes. A very few may have stayed: two (males) were at West Middle Sable May 17 (RT), one at Wind Harbor May 17 (GM), three in residence at Mrs. Hamilton's feeder on Seal I. May 15-17 (ELM), "Evening Grosbeak" seen on the Blomidon-Hants Co. trip May 23 (no number given) by the Elliotts, 1-2 flying around the countryside in Yarmouth County through April-May (CRKA), and a pair seen frequently at the MacDonalds, just outside of Yarmouth which may decide to nest near there (MWH).

The PURPLE FINCH was late this year, missing its mid-February invasion altogether, and with only three observations in March - one each at the Elliott feeder in Halifax County March 25, at Tusket March 26 (CRKA) and at Cape Sable March 29 (Beverley and Sid Smith). April brought them in, but slowly and not many, mostly from the 20th on. Only one at each place was seen at Seal and Brier I. in May, and the only large flock mentioned (mixed males and females, about 100) was at Economy May 23 (FS). During this month they finally became well distributed around the province, in force, singing everywhere, with "feeder flocks" of 10-20 birds, brilliant adult males, immature males and females, ratio about 2:1:4.

The last COMMON REDPOLL mentioned was one (male) March 21 at Rockingham, Halifax County (the R.J.Jacksons).

The PINE SISKIN has been present in scant numbers for the past three years and remains so this spring. Of the ten reports received, five mentioned single birds seen, one, two individuals seen, and one three individuals. The largest flocks were the five, May 12 at Milton (JSH), and 2-5 per day at Seal May 16-17 and the 10 per day arriving at Brier May 23-24. Two singing Siskins were noted by ELM et al at Seal May 30.

The AMERICAN GOLDFINCH remained partly independent of feeders throughout the winter, but as spring approached small flocks (2-8) more or less settled down in various locations, some still in winter plumage, some changing, and by May in full black-and-gold finery. At this time flocks increased in size and number about the countryside, where they are now (June 1) to be seen and heard very generally. One goldfinch was at Cape Sable May 22, two there on the 24th (SS), but not a single mention of one comes from Seal or Brier. Con Desplanque at Amherst had one in his garden May 8 and eight on May 12. Frank Hennessey wrote "none seen in Lower Economy until May 23". A self-contained population.

RED CROSSBILLS were relatively abundant in the Rockingham, Halifax Co. area throughout February, 1976, and some are still around. Two, a male and a female were present in a tree beside the Jackson feeder on April 4. The "only conifers in the region were salvaged Christmas Trees, set up on the lower deck". Our boreal birds are reaching hard straits.

SPARROWS

May 1 was arrival day for the RUFIOUS-SIDED TOWHEE, one each that day at Cape Sable (a male)(SS) and Seal I (NSBS). On the 16th one, a female, reached Port Hebert near Johnson's Pond, Shelburne Co. (RSW) and that or another female was seen at Lockport May 21 (RJC). Spring arrivals of the towhee are now expected, but were fewer this year than last. We had no winter records.

A few "IPSWICH SPARROWS" as usual came by in April on their way to Sable, (although one early one was seen March 28 at Louis Head, Shelburne Co. by GDP). There were 10 at Conrad's Beach April 9 (ELM, IAM) and three that day at Cadden's Beach (WC). At Conrad's, the Ipswiches were gone by the 17th, but Winnie Cairns continued to see them at Cadden's, two April 13-17, three April 22-25, and four on the 28th. At Cape Sable one was present April 17-18, one again April 24-25 (SS).

The SAVANNAH is an early comer also, noted from April 12 (one at Louis Head, GDP) on, and trickled in in small numbers; on the 15th at Lr. Ohio (Bessie Harris), the 16th at Economy (FS & FH), the 17th at Brier I. (HJM, LEN), and 18th at Lusby Marsh (at the Border) by CS, the 18th also at Chebogue, Yarmouth Co. (DBK,AH), the 19th at Cape Sable (SS); thereafter generally seen and heard in good numbers, provincewide.

On May 15 at Seal I., a CLAY-COLORED SPARROW "in fine breeding plumage was well seen by the four of us in a good light at 25-75' for close to $\frac{1}{2}$ hour" (NSBS per ELM). How soon this difficult little bird has become a "regular stray"!

We are glad that the SHARP-TAILED SPARROW made it in time for this report. Usually a late comer, one was found "singing" (call it a song?) at Seal I. May 15 (NSBS).

Two (increasingly rare) VESPER SPARROWS can also be included, one April 18 at Economy (EPS) and one May 17 at Seal (NSBS).

We were short of DARK-EYED JUNCOS all winter, but they came back early and eager and in plentiful supply - the first migrants easy to spot: three, March 24-26 at Cape Sable (Locke and Beverley Smith), and one next day at Keji - "the earliest Park record for all years reported", seen by Roger Burrows. At Eel Brook in Yarmouth County the first "new" one was recorded March 28, and further notes read "trilling everywhere by the 31st" (PRD). From then on numbers grew to 20 and 30 per sighting, a high of 50, April 12 at Brookside, Halifax Co. (FWD's), of 100+ April 13 at Brier I. (HJM, LEN) and 200+ a week later at Milton, Queen's Co. (JSH). At the Border CD counted 20 at APBS April 7, in Cape Breton the first seen were on April 10 "flying in a snow storm" at St. Esprit (Meyerowitz's) and at Pictou, Holdway noted "Numerous small flocks the last week of April".

Late TREE SPARROWS stayed into March and April: 1-3 at the MacLeod's feeder in Wine Harbor up to March 24, 1-4 at the Elliott's feeder, Halifax County to March 28; then two, singing at the APBS April 11 (ELM), one seen April 12 at Wilmot (TPH), 10 on April 30 in Amherst in CD's garden and finally 8-10 May 1 at APBS, still singing!(Cohrs et al).

Two reports of the CHIPPING SPARROW were for April: the 20th at Wolfville (OWN) and the 23rd at Amherst (CD). From May 6 on: "first one seen" at Wilmot (TPH) and "first noted" at Economy (FS) were followed by provincewide reports on each successive day thereafter, 1-2 birds per report, up to the 15-17 May trip to Seal I. when the NSBS party noted 15-20 per day there. The early Chippies seem to have taken the shorter route across the Bay of Fundy, but then they are smaller than the Juncos.

Three FIELD SPARROWS were among the spring-returning birds this year: one April 20 at Cape Sable (BJS); one May 15-16 at Seal I. (NSBS), and one, May 16 at Markland, Yarmouth Co. (MAN,DR).

Three WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS were ahead of the rest, seen April 22 at Brier I. (M&WL), and two May 2 at Round Hill, Anna. Co. (WEW). The rest came in from May 14-17, with possibly another small wave on the 24th. Reports are well scattered, the earlier group seen: one, male, May 14-18 at Marion Bridge (KTM); one May 15 and two May 16 at Cape Sable (SS), around 25 per day May 15-17 at Seal I. (NSBS), one week of May 16 at St. Peter's (Eugene Hawley per Sandra Meyerowitz), and one May 17 at Amherst (CD). The second wave is suggested by three single birds all seen May 24, two at Lockeport (GDP, RJC) and one at Lr. Obio,

all in Shelburne Co., and one other the same day, singing, at Brier I. (ELM). These may of course be birds from the first invasion, spreading to the mainland from Seal, where one last one was found still present on May 30 (RGG). An interesting record from Wolfville reads: "An immature White-crowned Sparrow, which had become a regular at the feeders, disappeared in late March, only to reappear in early April in full breeding plumage and remain till the end of the month". (OWM).

The WHITE-THROATED SPARROW was rarely seen in Nova Scotia last winter, but a few were regular, especially in Yarmouth Co., where they started to sing in late March and early April this spring. Early reports from this region are suspect, but the one, April 16 at Cape Sable was probably an arrival, as "more came in from then on, 2's and 3's to a dozen around the yard by April 30"(SS). Other spring records of first work their way up the province almost day by day: April 18 at Keji, April 18 at Wilmot, April 20 at Pictou, April 24 at APBS, April 29 at Lr. Economy, May 1 at Wine Harbor and May 8 at Marion Bridge, C.B. Whitethroats, to judge by their song in the woodlands are present now in normal numbers.

A very small fraction of the FOX SPARROW spring movement brushed Nova Scotia this year. Scattered individuals seen earlier may have been wintering birds, but the one at Cape Sable April 4 was probably a newcomer, as were the two at Pictou April 5-6, and 7 at Round Hill April 8 and the two at Milton, Queen's Co. April 9. FS at Economy reported "perhaps a dozen" April 12, and there were three at Turtle Lake, Queen's Co. April 17 (N&TB). Since there have been no later reports we may assume the two weeks April 4-17 covered their migration period and brought us at least 15 Fox Sparrows.

The LINCOLN'S SPARROW is marked "abundant migrant, 3-6 per day" at Seal I. May 15-17. For the Lincoln's this is probably abundant, although in its preferred habitat many can be found in season. This habitat is however limited, a fact borne out by our only two other reports of Lincoln's: May 18 at Wine Harbor "singing in usual places on the hill and over the road" (GM) and May 20 at Economy "first seen on normal summer grounds" (FS). People who live near the Lincoln's Sparrow are privileged, we used to walk miles on our early morning May trips out of Halifax to hear its song.

Eight reports of the SWAMP SPARROW start with April 17, two at Hibernia, Queen's Co. (SL) and continue to May 9, two at Cad-den Beach (WC). Only 1-2 birds per report is normal for this species, and such reports were from widely scattered areas. Swamps are probably much more common than indicated by the above, but (being appropriately named) are not so easily encountered as birds of the woods and roadsides. You need a discerning ear to recognize that trill at a distance.

As with the Whitethroat, March reports of the SONG SPARROW are suspect, but four reports simultaneously on March 24, followed by three March 25, two March 26 and three on the 27th of singing birds in bright plumage cannot be ignored as indicating

spring arrivals. No doubt a few were earlier, but the first at Cape Sable was one of the March 24 reports, and the others on this date were widely spaced, at Yarmouth Co., Wilmot and Economy. Song Sparrows appear to be present in their usual and cheerful abundance.

One lone LAPLAND LONGSPUR has been noted, April 31 at Cape Sable I. (A. Richard). (Shall we call it April 30 or May 1?)

SNOW BUNTINGS lingered into April, a few seen at Economy and at Cadden Beach, but much more surprising were the 2-3 seen near Lockeport May 1 by GDP and RJC, and the one May 4 at Sable I. (IAM). Last year with a much colder spring they were all gone by April 6. We tend quite naturally to think of Snow Buntings as cold weather birds, but other influences must govern their movements - food supplies most likely, to a great extent.

PRD Ed.

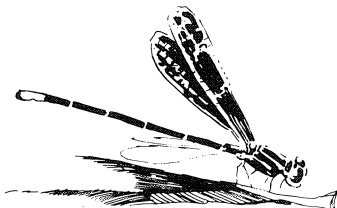
DEADLINES FOR RECEIPT OF REPORTS

July 31 - Reports of unusual summer sightings and items of special interest.

There will be an information bulletin issued in the fall with details of winter activities and other events of note.

November 30 - Reports of fall migration for the January issue.

Address: Dr. P. R. Dobson,
RMB 170,
R.R. 1, Ste. Anne du Ruisseau,
Nova Scotia.
BOW 2X0



CHAMPLAIN'S GARDEN AT PORT ROYAL, 1605

...."Champlain created a little garden near the habitation, with a cabinet, a sort of gazebo where he might take his ease. Close by he dammed up spring-fed brooks to make a pond for live trout, and on the harbour's edge he constructed "a little reservoir" of salt water for keeping sea perch and rock cod alive.

"We often went there," he wrote of this place, "to pass the time; and it seemed to please the little birds of the neighbourhood; for they assembled there in great numbers and made such a pleasant warbling and twittering, of which I have never heard the like."

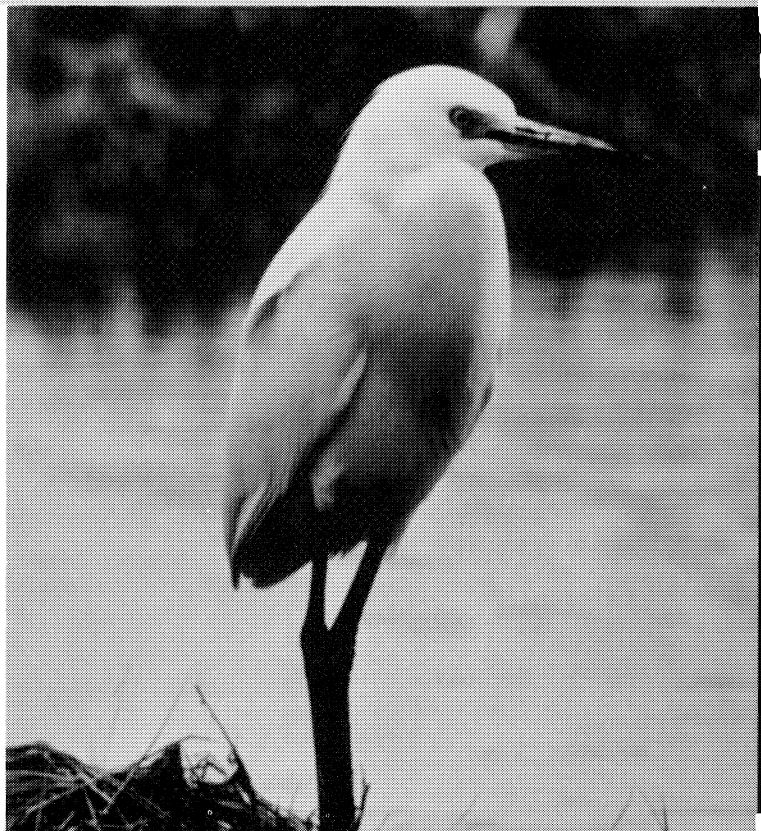
From "SAMUEL DE CHAMPLAIN, FATHER OF NEW FRANCE" by Samuel Eliot Morison. Quoted by kind permission of the publishers: Little, Brown & Company.

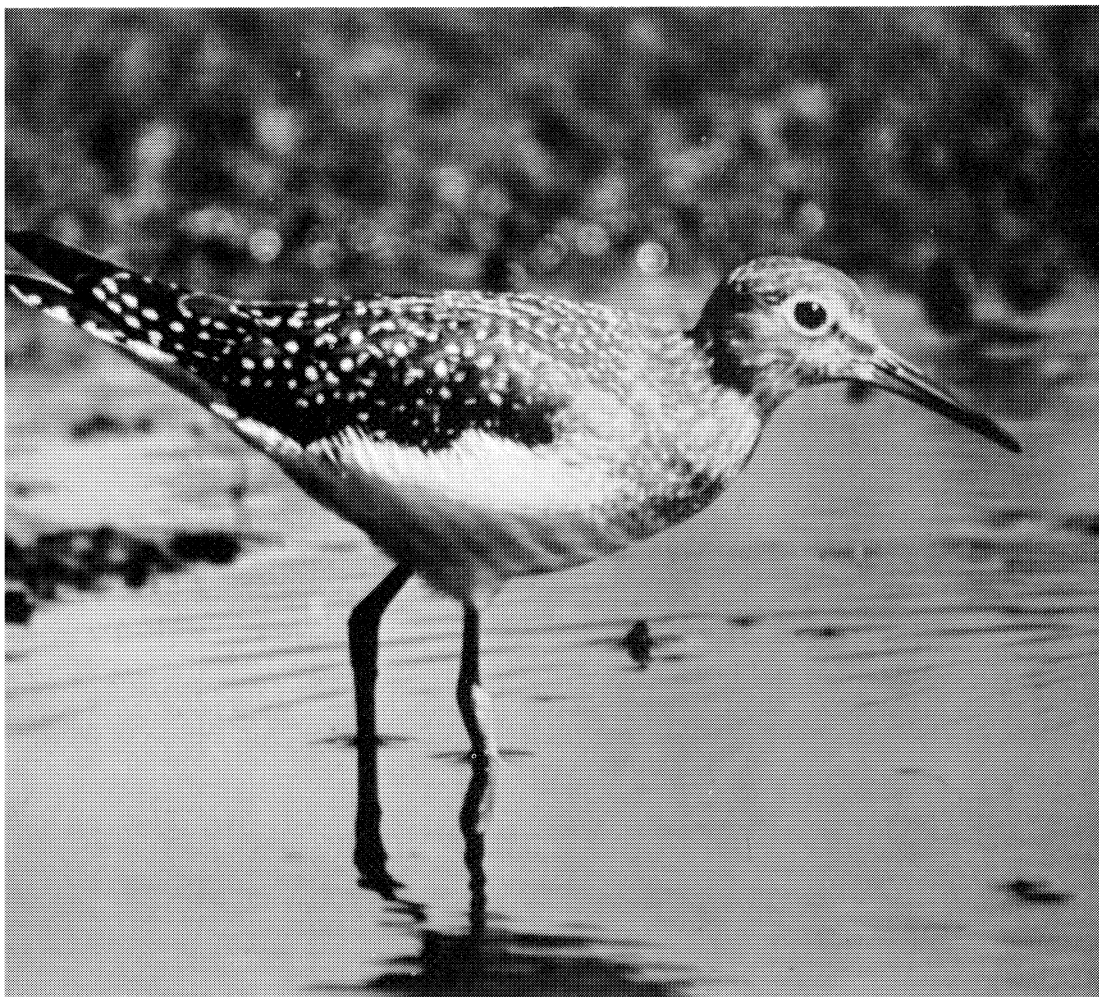
A footnote. Since there are written records, and Champlain's own sketch of the Habitation and gardens available, I think it would be very nice if the National Parks Branch would recreate Champlain's fishponds and gardens, and rebuild the summerhouse and crucifix. This would enable us to see the place as it was over 370 years ago. Surely many visitors - besides birders - would listen with equal pleasure to our twentieth century birds as Champlain did to the songbirds of his time.

Rosemary Eaton.

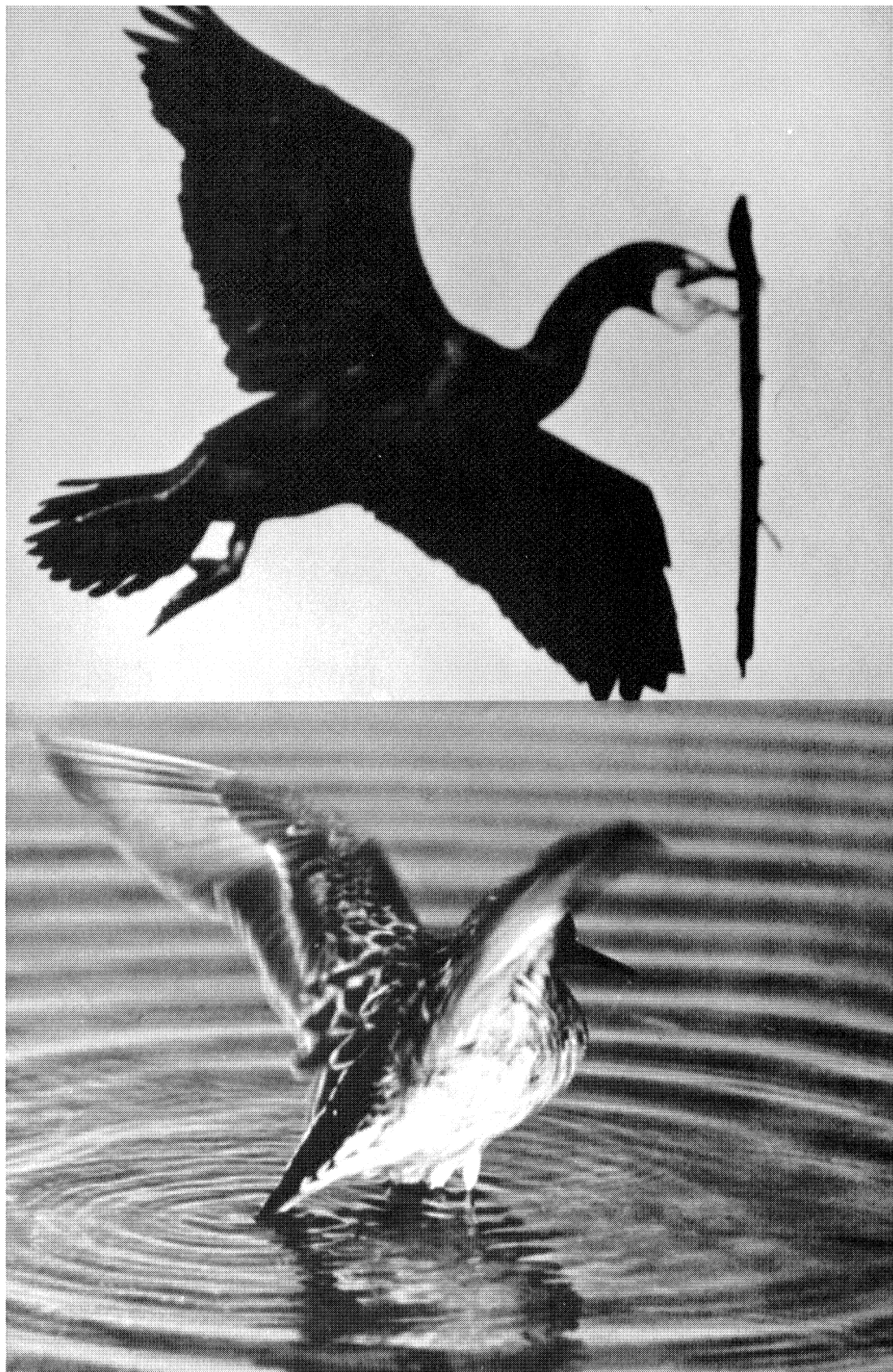
Opposite Page: This elegant snowy Egret was photographed on Sable Island by Ian A. McLaren using a telescope attachment 100 ft. from the Egret. On the following page are two studies of a Snowy Egret at Conrad's Beach, Lawrencetown on 25 April 1976. The flight shot shows the Egret's identifying "Yellow Shoes". Photos by Ralph Connor.







A single Solitary Sandpiper photographed
by Ian McLaren on Seal Island. August 1974.



Opposite Page (above): Double-crested Cormorant
flies with a "log" to build a new nest on the
Pictou Causeway. 17 April 1976.

Opposite Page (lower left) and Below: A Least
Sandpiper at Conrad's Beach, Lawrentown.
20 May 1975.

Photos by Ralph Connor.





The Osprey planes
above the salt marsh.

(Below) The Black
Duckling on its nest.

Photos: Connor and
Eaton.



A Saw-whet owl attracted by playing a
tape-recording in Keji Park just after
dark June 1975.
Photo by Norman Bowers.



(Left) Pond and farm buildings at Cole Harbour.

(Below) Common Snipe photo graphed by Ralph Connor at the Pond in late March, 1976. Incidentally, he fell through the ice getting this photo.



AN URBAN WILD POND - CAN GOOD PLANNING SAVE IT?

The marshy pond beside Dorothea Drive at Cole Harbor is known to many of our members living in the metropolitan area. Until a few years ago the pond was surrounded by farmland but now the area is being developed by the N.S. Housing Commission. The vast subdivision called Forest Hills, which may eventually house 20,000 people, is rising on former pastures.

The Housing Commission planners are well aware of the need for open green space in urban areas and a green belt is planned for the eastern shore of Settle Lake, the stream draining it and part of the Dorothea Drive pond. Dartmouth City limits are to the west of this watercourse and the city planners also favour a greenbelt.

The attention of Warden Ira Settle (County representative of the area) and other planning authorities and the museums has been drawn to the rich bird life of the pond. Eric Cooke wrote to these authorities recommending that an undeveloped area be left around the pond. He sent in a list of 58 species of birds seen in the area by some of our members in the past few years and pointed out that if the pond were left in its natural state "such a wide variety of birdlife near the new developments would bring both beauty and pleasure to the residents" - as well as to our members.

The Cole Harbour Rural Heritage Society is planning a community farm in co-operation with the N.S. Housing Commission and the County. This would be sited on the former Stewart Harris farm, just to the east of the pond. This Society was intrigued to learn of the great variety of birds which had been recorded so close to the busy Cole Harbour Road - soon to be a 4-lane highway. This group is just as anxious as the NSBS that this little pond and its birds remain as undisturbed as possible.

R.E.

FIELD TRIPS

DARTMOUTH LAKES, May 9th

On Sunday, May 9, 14 members of the Society visited a forgotten area of Dartmouth - Morris and Russell Lakes. The weather was pleasant and we were rewarded for our efforts by 55 species of birds. All members were surprised by the number of insects - so many in fact that we ended up at Rainbow Haven for our lunch. Some of the highlights were a Phoebe, excellent views of a male Goshawk, Ring-necked Duck, Green and Blue-winged Teal, Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler, Barn and Tree Swallows, Kingfisher, and at Rainbow Haven the year's (for us anyhow) first Willet.

Ross Anderson

GREENHEAD ROAD, May 16th

A few select birders braved cold temperatures (40°F) and gusty winds for a rewarding day welcoming the warblers. Greenhead Road, which connects with the old St. Margaret's Bay Road, is a mixed habitat of spruce woods, hardwood stands, lakes, bogs and abandoned homesteads. This was reflected in the variety of birds encountered - a Red-tailed Hawk, Winter Wrens, Vireos, Loon, Spotted Sandpiper, Hermit and Swainson's Thrushes, etc., etc., and the aforementioned warblers: Black-throated Greens, Nashville, Ovenbird, Myrtle (Yellow-rumped), Magnolias, Palm and Redstart.

The sun finally came out to warm the luncheon site amid the mayflowers and bluets and the walk homeward was warmer but no livlier than the outward journey.

Shirley Cohrs

SUSIE LAKE, May 19th

Participant: F. Dobson (leader) - weather: thick fog - 10°C - light winds. Great Black-backed Gull 1; Herring Gull 5; Robin 6; Flicker 3; Downy Woodpecker 2; Flicker 3; Downy Woodpecker 2; Ruby-crowned Kinglet 3; Golden-crowned Kinglet 3; Black-capped Chickadee 2; Solitary Vireo 1; Warblers - Black-throated Blue 4; Black-throated Green 5; Black and White 15; Parula 6; Nashville 5; Yellow-rumped 4; Yellowthroat 9; Chestnut-sided 5; Redstart 1; Palm 2; Dark-eyed Junco 4; White-throated Sparrow 10; Song Sparrow 6.

Fred Dobson

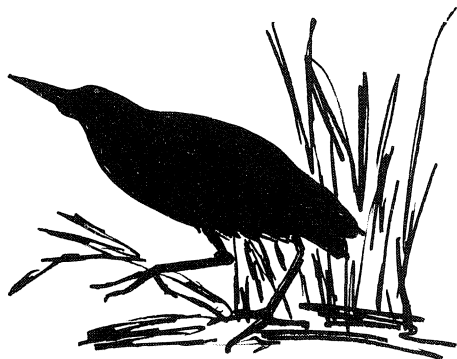
HANTS COUNTY, May 29th

The annual Hants County Field Trip took place Saturday, May 29, under warm sunny skies. Nineteen birders started out at Mount Uniacke Picnic Park. The black flies seemed to disappear as the sun shone brighter and the warbler count became higher. Seventeen different warblers made themselves noticeable by their song and colors.

One of the highlights of the day was seeing the American Bittern in its renowned stance and not in flight as is usual on the Hants County Field Trip. Seventy-eight different species were identified. Smiley's Park was our usual lunch stop and the Clarks supplied the "Saturday Night Supper".

Those who took part were: Nellie Adams, Charlotte Allen, Shirley Brothers, Hazel Carmichael, Margaret and Rae Clark, Molly Claydon, the Cohrs (3), Ethel Crathorne, the Dobsons (5), Willett Mills, Frank and Mary Himsl.

Margaret Clark



Errata:

The Egret on Sable Island, November 17, 1975 (Newsletter Vol. 18, No. 2, p. 51) was a CATTLE EGRET and not a GREAT as reported.

The (non-existent!) caption under the Tern photographs in the same issue should have been "Black Terns at Missisquash Marsh, June 12, 1975. The left-hand photo is by S. Tingley, and the right-hand photo by B. Barrow".

UP-COMING FIELD TRIPS.

Sunday
Aug. 22

MacNab's Island. Please contact the leader, Ross Anderson at 463-4188 one week in advance, so that the boat hiring can be arranged.

Labour Day
Week-end
Sept. 4,5,6

President's Trip - Brier Island. Boat trips and field trips will be arranged. Camping spots available. Please come to the registration booth at the end of Peajack Road on your arrival.

Saturday
Sept. 25

Cheticamp Island. Combined trip with the Cape Breton Branch. Meet opposite the Armbridge Cabins in Cheticamp at 8:00 a.m. Leader to be announced.

Saturday
Oct. 2

MacNab's Island. Contact the leader, Ross Anderson at 463-4188 one week in advance for boat hiring.

Week-end
Oct. 9,10,11

Seal Island. Contact the leader Ralph Connor at 469-8370 at least one week in advance.

Saturday
Oct. 23

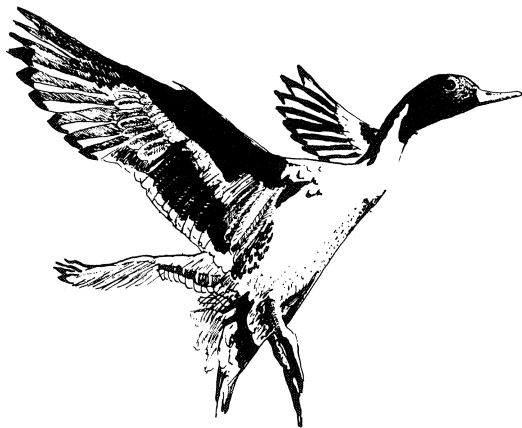
Amherst. Meet at the Amherst Point Sanctuary at 8:30 a.m. Morning will be at the Sanctuary; afternoon at Cape Jourimain. Leader: Con Desplanque 27 Harding Avenue, Amherst.

Saturday
Nov. 6

MacNab's Island. Contact leader Ross Anderson, at 463-4188, one week in advance for boat hiring.

Saturday
Nov. 20

Eastern Shore. Meet at Holiday Inn, Dartmouth, at 8:00 a.m. Leader: Eric Cooke. Tel: 429-2642.



MORE ON THE FULVOUS TREE DUCK(S)

Latest news of the Bon Portage Fulvous Tree Duck (See Vol. 18, No. 2 p. 100) is that there were several - possibly many around that day on the island. One of the lightkeepers there brought a frozen body to the home of Mrs. Evelyn Richardson at Barrington. She writes: ". . . . Mr. Nickerson arrived here one February morning, at my door, and presented me with a frozen bird body which he explained was one of a flock of fourteen Fulvous Tree Ducks which had landed on the lighthouse point".



There is also some hearsay evidence that a flock of 25 landed on the savannah of the island the same day when they were shot at by local gunners.

The Barrington bird will be forwarded to the Nova Scotia Museum for mounting.

BALD EAGLE SURVEY.

In the spring of 1973 I gave a report of a ten-year Bald Eagle Survey taken at my feeding station at the Gasper-eau River. In view of the fact that the numbers have changed somewhat since that time I am enclosing the following counts which I think will prove quite interesting.

1963	2 adult; 1 immature	1970	1 adult; 1 immature
1964	2 adult; 1 immature	1971	1 adult; 1 immature
1965	2 adult	1972	3 adult; 3 immature
1966	4 adult	1973	3 adult; 5 immature
1967	1 adult; 1 immature	1974	5 adult; 7 immature
1968	2 adult	1975	4 adult; 10 immature
1969	1 adult; 1 immature	1976	11 adult; 13 immature

Although the winter of 1976 showed a large count, the number of first year birds was noticeably down. Of the 13 immatures counted only 2 were the dark plumage juveniles. It would appear that 1975 was not a good year as regards nesting success.

Cyril Coldwell, Wolfville

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor, NSBS Newsletter.

Report for this "neck of the woods" - May-August, 1975

Woodpecker, Pileated - June 4th. Near Clementsvale, Anna. Co. Sighted entrance to nest, 40 feet up in white birch. Observed one bird entering and leaving nest at dusk. Ten feet below was the nest of a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, which we observed. Sighted by Margaret Cheesman, Granville Nickerson and Truman Potter (the man who located the nest).

Woodpecker, Black-backed (Arctic) three-toed -
 (1) At Branch Lake, Anna . Co. - May 7th - both male and female starting hole in a 5" spruce, 5' from the ground. By May 24th the nest was completed. On June 6th we observed both adults going out alternately for food, and heard a very faint cheeping. A week later the cheeping was much more distinct, but we were unable to see how many young there were. On June 20th and 25th we observed both adults feeding the young from the lip of the hole. The youngsters by this time were very noisy. By July 1st the nest was empty. Observers, Margaret Cheesman, Norm Bowers, Azor Milner and Granville Nickerson.

(2) Little Annapolis Lake, Anna. Co. Male and female observed June 22nd. Sighted by Margaret Cheesman and Granville Nickerson, O. Sperry.

Osprey - On August 9th, on Middle Crocker Lake we saw a nest at the top of a dead pine tree (the tree was surrounded by water, this lake had been dammed). One adult was flying around the nest and feeding two immatures.

On August 11th, at McGill Lake, we saw another nest in exactly the same type of tree in another dammed lake. We saw one Osprey on the nest and two flying in the vicinity. Observed by Margaret Cheesman and Granville Nickerson.

Granville B. Nickerson
 Annapolis Royal, N.S.

Editor, NSBS Newsletter

I would like to report the birds seen during a recent ocean trip, leaving Halifax and steaming just east of south for about 120 miles across Emerald Basin and Emerald Bank to the 2000 fathom line. While not strictly speaking Nova Scotia birds, the results may be of interest to any readers contemplating a pelagic trip or a sea trip to the Caribbean in May.

The trip began May 17 and recording began at 6 A.M. on the 18th. Birding was done from 6 to 7.30 A.M.; 12.30 to 1 P.M. and 4.30 to 6.00 P.M., more or less. Most days were sunny and calm, one was foggy and one was a rainy day.

The chronological summary of highlights is as follows:

- May 18 - Emerald Basin - 35 miles S-SE Halifax
Fulmars - up to 10 in attendance at all times.
1% dark phase birds. Many Petrels - 50% each
Wilson's and Leach's of those approaching closely.
Black-backed and Herring Gulls.
- May 19 - Emerald Basin - 5 miles from Emerald Bank. Same
numbers of Fulmars and Petrels. 60% Wilson's Petrels,
5% dark phase Fulmars. Three Pomarine Jaegers.
- May 20 - Foggy - 5% dark phase Fulmars.
- May 21 - Beyond Emerald Bank on Continental Slope -
95-105 miles from Halifax. Many Greater Shearwaters,
3 to 20 in sight at least 50% of viewing time. Sooty
Shearwaters - 3; Dovekies - 2 small flocks, under 10
each; Murre - one (sp); Skuas - 3; Red Phalaropes -
flocks of 5 to 10 every 10 minutes for 4 hours;
Northern Phalaropes - two small groups (5-10); many
Petrels - 80% Wilson's.
- May 22 - Beyond slope at 1500-2000 fathoms line. Few Petrels,
Shearwaters or Fulmars. Great Cormorant - 2 at 1500
fathom line; Skua - one; Rose-breasted Grosbeak - 1
landed aboard, left headed for Sable Island. Wilson's
Petrel - 1 eaten by ship's cat.
- May 23 - Running south at 1000 fathom line. Many Greater
Shearwaters in groups of 8-20. One Cory's Shearwater
clearly viewed in flight of seven Greaters. Size and
markings very clearly seen in company. Many Fulmars,
up to 30 around ship - 10% dark phase.
- May 29 - Little viewing - Emerald Bank. Many Greater Shear-
waters; two Sooty Shearwaters; five Red Phalaropes;
one Laughing Gull - reported and well described,
but not actually seen by me.
- May 25 - Inner Edge Emerald Basin - 55 miles from Halifax -
at 2.00 P.M. in one five-minute period in one small
group 200+ Petrels, mostly Leach's; five Herring Gulls;
five Black-backed Gulls; two Common Murres; one Skua;
25 Fulmars; two Skuas; two Pomarine Jaegers; 25 Black-
backed Gulls; five Fulmars; four Greater Shearwaters;
two Sooty Shearwaters.
- May 26 - No viewing.
- May 27 - On way in to Halifax from 30 miles out to 12 miles
out. The sea was covered with birds as far as the
glasses could view. A ten-minute running list of
birds reads: Flocks of 10 to 25 Red Phalaropes
crossing every 3 minutes; one Sooty Shearwater; three
Fulmars; one Murre (sp); one Savannah Sparrow aboard;

one Tern (sp); Group of 50 Petrels, 80% Leachs; three Tern (sp); 25 Sooty Shearwaters; four Greater Shearwaters; four Greater Shearwaters; two Common Murres;

Please appreciate that these are not the full number of all the birds seen. Birding covered only one-fifth of the daylight hours. Sometimes there were no birds in sight except an occasional petrel and the ever present Fulmars - at other times the field of view of the binoculars was filled to the horizon with birds. The time of year seems to be right for a pelagic trip at some future date.

John Cohrs
8 Rosemount Ave., Halifax

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Those who have followed with interest the learned discussions in the Newsletter by Charlie Allen and Dick Brown on the subject of "swishing" and perhaps have heard these gentlemen practise their art, may appreciate my thoughts after following them on a Hants County Field Trip.

Listen! Could that be a bird?
Strangest sound I ever heard!
No, alas, despite my wishin'
Tis only Charlie Allen -
Swishin'!



Birding brings strange sights and sounds,
Laughing loons and
Bitterns thumping
Owls that blink and
Cormorants fishing
Dick and Charlie "swishing".

Eric C

BOOK REVIEW ON NOMENCLATURE

Birds of the World: a Checklist by James F. Clements (Two Continents Publishing Group, New York, 1974, \$15.00) is exactly what its title suggests: a list of 8,904 species of birds recognized by ornithologists. Mr. Clements holds degrees in both zoology and journalism, has travelled widely in search of birds and observed almost three thousand species. His text includes the geographic range of each bird and occasionally a note concerning its probable status as endemic, rare or extinct.

Clements acknowledges the variation of opinion among ornithologists concerning the systematic classification of birds which extends even to differences concerning the number of species that should appear on such a list. To make his task more difficult, he found that whereas scientific names vary from place to place, even from expert to expert, there may be any number of common names. He has settled for the usage adopted by the most authoritative field guide for each region, including in his text both the scientific and the locally accepted common name for each species.

There is probably a real need for the existence of such a book as this one but there are several ways in which the information in it might have been made more readily available to the non-professional birder. The scientific names are indexed and there is a table of orders and families, with page numbers, at the front of the book. Although a single common name for each species is included in the text, there is no index of common names. Similarly, there is no key to the geographic information other than the end-paper maps indicating the seven major faunal regions of the world. Admittedly additional indices would add to the cost of an already costly book-making project, but most non-professional birders are likely to think from common to scientific names or from a geographical region to the birds that occur there. For the average bird-buff, the lack of indices limits the book's usefulness.

Writers, editors, teachers and ornithologists might well find this a compact and authoritative tool and for bird-listers in the Six-hundred-plus Club, Clements' book offers an attractive repository for their life-lists.

Edward S. Gruson has written a very different sort of book, Words for Birds: a Lexicon of North American Birds with Biographical Notes, (Quadrangle Books, New York, 1972, about \$10.00). It amply documents his contention that "taxonomy in England and the United States (follows) an almost mystical line of thought". He considers American birds that occur north of the Rio Grande, offering wherever possible the etymology and translation of both the common and the scientific names. He is obviously most interested in the people for whom birds have

been named, dealing satisfactorily with such lurking questions as, "Who in the world was MacGillivray?" or "why Baird's Sandpiper, Coue's Flycatcher, or for that matter, why Lucy's or Virginia's Warblers?"

Many North American birds owe their names to part-time naturalists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Some were military men, others physicians, surgeons or ministers who described and collected birds while they pursued their usual duties. Out of courtesy and friendship, ornithologists working on the classification of birds named a number of newly identified species for these colorful amateurs as well as for members of their own families and their friends. Gruson's biographical sketches of these people make fascinating reading. One is left with a sense of astonishment, however, that any sort of agreement or systemization was achieved by the pioneers and individualists who worked, independently of one another, to identify and classify American birds.

Gruson points out some names that have unusual origins. Sulidea, the generic term for Gannets and Boobies, is a "New-Latinism from the Icelandic sula meaning 'gannet'." The generic, Xema, for Sabine's Gull, however, is "an arbitrarily coined word of no meaning". At another point he notes that the suffix cilla, as in Bombycilla (Waxwing) and albicilla (Gray Sea Eagle) dates back to "an error in early ornithological history (that) must be retained by the canons of nomenclature". A fourteenth century translator of Aristotle's works named Gaza used the suffix to mean "tail", but as Gruson points out, "no such word exists in Latin or Greek". Similarly, Pliny's name for the cormorant translates to "bald raven"; it is still in use though "the bird does not look bald at all". Aristotle's word for a seed-eating bird has become the specific name for the Yellowthroat - which is, of course, an insectivore. More recently, in the seventeenth century, the "English natural historians, Ray and Willughby incorrectly identified ...Manx Shearwaters as puffins..." This error, too, has been perpetuated and the Manx remains Puffinus puffinus.

As Gruson says, "the mistakes live on". Professor Antonio Vallisneri was an Italian naturalist after whom Linnaeus named a species of wild celery. The ornithologist, Wilson, noting that the Canvasback duck had a passion for wild celery, named the bird Aythya valisineria. Later on it was discovered that he had misspelled the Italian name. But misspelled it remains on the checklists. More remarkable is Trudeau's Tern. "Audubon described and named this species in 1838 from a specimen taken by his friend James de Berty Trudeau at Great Egg Harbor in New Jersey. Audubon's authority is so great that the species remains on the Northern American checklist-even though it has not been seen since". (Clements also includes this bird in his list but gives its location as Southern South America).

Gruson's biographical sketches are both enlightening and entertaining. Under Baird's Sandpiper, one finds the following entry.

"Spencer Fullerton Baird...was an indefatigable administrator; persuasive politician, learned scholar and tireless writer. His life spans an era from grab-bag collecting to the scientific clarification of the North American fauna, for much of which work he was in large measure responsible..."

Baird's marriage to the daughter of the Inspector General of the Army enabled him to play an important role in shaping the discovery of the natural history of the American West. It was through Baird's influence that the surgeons sent to army posts in the west, and those that accompanied the various railroad and boundary surveys, were also enthusiastic ornithologists and natural historians who were expected to collect and send back specimens."

Baird became one of the early Secretaries of the Smithsonian and was largely responsible for persuading Congress to appropriate funds for this national museum. Before his death in 1887, he also created the United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries and founded the oceanographic research station at Woods Hole, Massachusetts.

The work of the early collectors was not without obstacles. Gruson's sketch of Elliott Coues, who served as an Army doctor in New Mexico about 1846 notes that "life for a naturalist in the army at that time was made difficult and dangerous not only by Indians but also by the soldiers who would steal the preserving alcohol, regardless of whether or not the jars contained specimens".

Coues' own descriptions of birds are both humorous and romantic. He says Linnaeus named the Greater Prairie Chicken, Tympanuchus cupido, "after the son of Venus, not with any allusion to erotic concerns, but because the little wings on the bird's neck were likened to Cupid's wings". The scientific name for the Wood Duck, Aix sponsa (Aix, Greek for water fowl; sponsa, Latin for birds), Coues find "Prettily applied to this lovely duck" because for him it appears "as if the bird were arranged for a bridal". In contrast, the Ruff, Philomachus pugnax, he finds "notorious for pugnacity, salacity and profligacy".

To return to the girls and MacGillivray. Lucy was Baird's daughter; and Virginia, the wife of one of Baird's surgeon-naturalists. The courtesy here is evident. But MacGillivray was another matter; Audubon owed him money. MacGillivray was a Scots naturalist hired to assist Audubon with the text of his Ornithological Biography and his Synopsis of the Birds of North America. "Audubon, as usual, was late in paying MacGillivray for this work," says Gruson. Instead he hoped to settle matters by naming a warbler after his collaborator. But the young Scot was not to be bought off so easily; besides he needed the money. Ironically, history credits the ornithologist John Kirk Townsend

as the first to describe the species Audubon named for MacGillivray. Townsend called the bird Oporornis tolmiei after William Fraser Tolmie, a Scots doctor and officer in the Hudson's Bay Company. Today that remains the scientific name for MacGillivray's warbler.

Gruson's enthusiasms and perceptions are contagious; one finds oneself playing etymological games. Why, for example, is the generic term for the Snowy Owl Nyctea (from the Greek nycteus, meaning "nocturnal") when this probably the most diurnal of owls? Twenty-five species on the North American bird list have names of Indian origin, according to Gruson. Why are the only two of these names from North American Indian tribes? (The remainder are of Central and South American origin with more than half derived from the Tupi tribe of Brazil). Among the Indian names is that of the Caracara, Caracara cheriway. Gruson claims that "cheriway" is also an Indian word, and is probably "echoic" in origin. Listen to the recording of this bird's voice on the Peterson Field Guide Records and see if you agree.

Nova Scotia, or collectively Nova Scotia and New Brunswick as Acadia, appears only three times in Gruson's catalog of North American birds. William Cooper, the American zoologist for whom the Cooper's Hawk is named, "directed several excursions to Nova Scotia," says Gruson, not in search of birds, however, but "supervising dredging operations to find shells. Gruson mentions that the Acadian Flycatcher is poorly named because the species does not reach Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The Saw-whet Owl, Aegolius acadicus, however is truly ours since Acadia is "the type locality". Perhaps the little owl should have his day on the cover of the NSBS Newsletter?

One can fault Gruson's book for a number of unexplained references, misprints and a few questionable assumptions; occasionally, too, he give us a blinding glimpse of the obvious - e.g., "Lesser suggests that this species is smaller than the Greater". But Words for Birds is a source of much information and a great deal of entertainment; it cannot help but add a stimulating dimension to anyone's consideration of birds.

Marie C. Henry
Upper Wedgeport



ANALYSIS OF ARRIVAL DATES OF SPRING MIGRANTS
IN THE ECONOMY AREA.

Of the 113 spring migrants so far recorded for the Economy area more than 80 can be relied upon to make an annual appearance. This year, as part of my attempt to keep track of them, I examined my records for the past four: by taking the mid-point of the range of first sightings and noting the divergence from it, species can be grouped according to the consistency with which they have been sighted about a given date. Below are the results for the most reliable species, amounting to about a third of those occurring regularly:

I	Least Flycatcher	May 16	+ 1
	Solitary Vireo	May 13	+ 1
	Parula Warbler	May 13	+ 1
	Northern Waterthrush	May 14	+ 1
II	Great Blue Heron	April 5	+ 2
	Spotted Sandpiper	May 15	+ 2
	Chimney Swift	May 14	+ 2
	Olive-sided Flycatcher *	May 30	+ 2
	Bank Swallow	May 15	+ 2
	Red-eyed Vireo *	May 28	+ 2
	Nashville Warbler	May 13	+ 2
	Yellow Warbler	May 14	+ 2
	American Redstart	May 17	+ 2
III	White-winged Scoter	April 5	+ 3
	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	May 18	+ 3
	Belted Kingfisher	April 17	+ 3
	Eastern Wood Pewee *	May 30	+ 3
	Olive-backed Thrush	May 19	+ 3
	Magnolia Warbler	May 16	+ 3
	Black-throated Green Warbler	May 14	+ 3
	Bay-breasted Warbler	May 26	+ 3
	Blackpoll Warbler	May 18	+ 3
	Ovenbird	May 20	+ 3
	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	May 23	+ 3
	White-throated Sparrow	May 1	+ 3

* This year's data not included.

A few points may be made with regard to this sort of analysis. The date for common, easily visible birds, large (e.g., Great Blue Heron) and small (e.g., Chimney Swift) are apt to reflect closely their actual arrival dates. Likewise, consistent annual dates for less visible but equally common woodland birds at least suggests they may be close to the actual arrival dates. In this connection it is interesting to note that the Flycatchers appear to be much more regular in their migrations than the Swallows though the latter are much the easier to see on first arrival. If similar records were available for a number of localities, the progress of the spring migration might be traced more clearly, but with respect to time and direction.

It is my impression that the Swift, for instance, is one of the few birds to approach Economy from the east; it might turn out, however, that many others do, or that it does not. While records of this kind add to one's appreciation of an area's bird life, there is no danger that the birds themselves will pay any attention to attempts to order too rigidly their comings and goings. The Parula that "arrived punctually on the 13th of May" for three years in a row could not be sent back for being noticed on the 12th last year, nor be considered hopelessly erratic for delaying until the 14th this year.

Francis Spalding
Economy.

SHOREBIRD INFORMATION WANTED



The Canadian Wildlife Service has asked us to publish the following request for information on color-marked Shorebirds.

In 1976 the Canadian Wildlife Service will again be carrying out extensive banding and color-marking of shorebirds in James Bay. Last year a highly successful programme resulted in over 70 reports of color-marked birds in eastern North America and South America from amongst c. 4000 banded in southern James Bay. Much valuable information on migration routes is being obtained and observers are again asked to look out for and report any color-dyed or color-banded shorebirds that they may see. Reports should include details of species, place, date, color-marks and, if possible, notes on the numbers of other shorebirds present. For color-dyed birds, please record the color and area of the bird that was dyed. For color bands and standard metal leg bands, please record which leg the bands were on, the colors involved, and the relative position of the bands if more than one was on a leg (e.g., right leg, blue over metal, etc.). All reports will be acknowledged and should be sent to Dr. R.I.G. Morrison, Canadian Wildlife Service, 2721 Highway 31, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 0H3.

In 1976 and 1977 the Surinam Forest Service plans to color-band large numbers of Semipalmated and Least Sandpipers along the Surinam coast, northeastern South America. The objective of this study is to obtain more information about the origin of the birds visiting Surinam and about their migration routes to and from this country. All birds will be banded above the tarsus ("knee") with

one standard aluminum Fish and Wildlife Service band and two Orange color-bands of about the same size as the aluminum band.

Should you see any of these birds, please write to Arie L. Spaans, Surinam Forest Service, P.O. Box 436, Paramaribo, Surinam, South America, mentioning species, location and date of observation, the position of the aluminum and color-bands (left or right, and, if more than one band is on a leg, which band is above and which below), and number of color-banded birds involved.

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A FIRST FOR ROBIE TUFTS -1910.

I recall that I was an enthusiastic snow-shoer, often setting out alone for long hikes. January 10, 1910, was an ideal winter's day. The temperature was plenty low and there was an abundance of newly fallen snow. I headed for the Wolfville Ridge and from there went down into the Gaspereau Valley and followed the unbroken highway to a point near White Rock. I had covered about four miles without incident worth recording when I saw a bird sitting on the snow in a near-by field apparently feeding on weed seeds. It was a Mourning Dove and though I had never before seen one I recognized it immediately from the illustrations I had seen in my books.

Now my bird-loving readers will, I hope, forgive when I say that I wanted to shoot it for a specimen to be added to my treasured collection of mounted birds. But I had no gun with me. Mine was in Wolfville and without taking time to consider the pros and cons I quickened my pace and started to retrace my steps homeward. On arrival I grabbed my gun and some ammunition and headed back for White Rock. About two and a half hours had elapsed before I again reached the spot where the much coveted bird had been feeding and my readers, above classified, will probably be very glad when I mention that the dove had not waited for my return for there was none in sight. However, the day was far from being a 'lost' one for I had added a new bird to my list and in addition had enjoyed a 16-mile hike.

And despite the passing of so many years that particular field has changed in appearance but little and as, in latter years, I motor over the adjacent highway, long-since hard-surfaced, I never fail to recall the incident of my first encounter with a Mourning Dove.

R. W. Tufts

N.B. This was probably the fifth or sixth sighting of a Mourning Dove in Nova Scotia, only five noted between 1898 and 1916 in the E. Chesley Allen records. (Editor)

THE PERVERSITY OF BIRDS

Too many fine articles have appeared extolling birds. Many and eloquent are the spokesmen for our "feathered friends". Rarely do we hear of the fickle Mallard drakes, the frivolous and flighty female Phalarop, the male chauvinist Eider and the aggressive and hysterical Willet. Never before have we heard of the deliberate perversity of the watched bird of whatever species. However gentlemanly (birdly?) the unwatched bird may be, however kindly a parent, whatever the species, they display a miserable and malicious streak of perversity when under observation by the average bird-watcher.

What kind of perversity? Let me recount the ways.

Firstly, consider the bird, rare or common, first or last of the year, the only one of a species on a Christmas Count. Observe it closely; see it pose in profile displaying all its field marks; lower your glasses to fix its position and call to your companions to confirm your sighting; - Look again - Flown or vanished? Accident or coincidence? No - perversity! That bird is hiding, motionless except for the heaving of its tiny shoulders as it suppresses its laughter. Perversity!

Again, practise assiduously "spshing". Learn to call the birds to you by "spsh", whistle or grunt. After a year of careful practice, carried out on solitary walks, watch them settle on your shoulders and fly around your head. They fly in from three ridges away at your every call. THEN, walk out with a NSBS field party, stop in a grove crowded with birds and call twice. Listen to the interminable silence! Avian perversity!

Consider the post-picnic lunch stroll on a casual birding day. Your companions loll about regretting that last sandwich. Few birds have been listed this trip. 200 ft. from the picnic site you find a "hot spot". Exotic Flycatchers snatch flies from each other, birds walk in phalanxes across the meadow, warblers abound - you scarcely know where to look first. But - you follow the golden rule of birding and summon your companions to the feast. Panting and shouting you summon them - for what? - one small song sparrow who has remained behind presumably to recount the joke to his departed friends! All afternoon you avoid the speculative glances of your companions. Do they question your sense of humour or your sanity! Perversity again.

A last but telling perversity, the mystery song. After a dedicated spring of sorting out songs using records, early walks and infinite patience, you sally forth to act the expert with family and friends. Each birdsong heard is matched to field marks and all approval is met with a self-satisfied smirk. Just as you venture into "night flight note of the grey-cheeked thrush" or "fifty golden plover overhead" a thrilling and vibrant song is heard. Certainly you've never heard it before. All eyes turn to you and you waffle "perhaps a rose-breast? - no, maybe an oriole? a summer tanager?" Finally the hidden songster hops around a branch. A Purple Finch!! And, cocking its head to one side it gives forth the normal sound of its species. Accidental my foot - this is a deliberate act.

What proof can one find of this birdy malice?

On your nest party outing linger behind the crowd as they wander through the woods. Walk at the limit of vision. Then, watch the birds circle back and congregate behind the main group. Imagine their conversation as they hop from branch to branch, keeping the main party in sight. Are they defining the plumage of those birdwatchers on the left? Are they attempting to classify the rearmost member as a "short" or a "long-binocularized" laggard? Are they speculating on the species of the foremost birder? is he a mustached leader, a whiskered ornithologist, or merely an unshaven early riser? No, none of these, they are just plotting their next move.

The moral of all this?

Watch the birds, enjoy the birds, protect the birds, but never, never feel sorry for them. They are up there, perversely planning their next moves to aggravate and confound us all!

John Cohrs



WELL VERSED BIRDS

The blanks in these quotations are all names of birds.

1. "Thence up he flew and on the Tree of Life,
The middle tree and highest there that grew,
Sat like a _____."
2. "As _____s catch fire, dragonflies draw flame"
3. "The _____ himself is hoarse"
4. "Proud Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early,
Sweet _____sits in the bush,
Singing so rarely"
5. "He was but as the _____ is in June,
Heard but not regarded"
6. "Wreathe iron pokers into true-love _____"
7. "And honoured among foxes and _____s by
the gay house
Under the new made clouds and happy as the
heart was long"
8. "Ay springes to catch _____s"

(Answers on Page 158)



BIRTHDAY NOSTALGIA

Continuing our look into the early days of the Society, we reprint here a description of an investigating field trip to Brier I. in 1955. The last paragraph is particularly memorable

NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY EXPEDITION TO BRIER ISLAND

A field party from the Nova Scotia Bird Society visited Brier Island, Digby County, from September 9 to 15, 1955, for the purpose of investigating bird migration. Members of the party were Willett J. Mills, Fred Helleiner and Harrison F. Lewis. Helleiner was obliged to leave the island on the morning of September 11 to keep another appointment. While the field party was formally authorized by the Society's Executive, it met its own expenses, without charge against the Society funds.

Brier Island, the westernmost land in Nova Scotia, is situated in 44°15' N. Latitude, 66°23' W. Longitude. It is slightly more than 4 miles long and less than 2 miles wide. It is the southwestern extreme of the strip of trap rock that includes the North Mountain, Digby Neck and Long Island. It exhibits two parallel ridges, trending NE-SW, and an intervening swampy trough. Maximum elevation, which is on the northwestern ridge, is about 100 feet.

The village of Westport, with a population of about 500, is situated beside the harbour formed by a bight of Grand Passage, which separates Brier Island from Long Island. Good accommodation for visitors is available at the Denton House in Westport, but reservations should be made in advance. The island is easily reached by car or bus, travelling via Route 17 from Digby and crossing two ferries. Short dirt roads on the island give access to the northern and western points and can be travelled by car. Much of the island is covered with scrubby mixed woods, but there are also extensive open fields, a large bog and two small ponds.

The principal lighthouse is at the western extreme of the island. A smaller lighthouse stands on North Point. Grand Manan, New Brunswick, is 38 miles northwest of Brier Island,

from which it is visible in clear weather. Due west of Brier Island the coast of Maine is about 95 miles distant. Cape Cod is southwest of Brier Island and about 230 miles distant.

Details of weather conditions, recorded throughout each day, are here summarized. September 9 was fine and calm. The 10th was marked by light frost in the morning and a minor thunderstorm in the afternoon. September 11 was mild, sunny and hazy, with light showers before sunset. The 12th began with a strong wind from SSE and steady rain. The afternoon was foggy and calm, but at sunset SW wind brought showers, followed by clearing. The 13th and 14th were clear and cool, with light winds and no frost. September 15th was mild and mostly clear, with light S wind.

Observers took suitable stations, chiefly at the N and W lighthouses, daily, at or before dawn, remaining until shortly after 8.00 a.m., ADST, and at about 6.15 p.m., remaining until nearly dark. In forenoon and afternoon, visits were made to various part of the island where migratory birds were likely to be found.

The following observations of migration behaviour were made.

Sept. 9 (evening only). Voices of passerine migrants were heard overhead at 10.00 p.m.

Sept. 10. Between 7.10 and 8.10 a.m. Helleiner at North Point observed numerous small birds moving through scattered coniferous woods to northernmost trees, about 200 yards back of extreme of point. From there they customarily flew on about 200 yards back of extreme of point. From there they customarily flew on about 100 yards toward the point, spiraled to gain altitude, then turned and flew SE the shore of the island that faces Grand Passage. Birds observed to participate in this movement were Myrtle Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Yellow-throat, unidentified warblers, American Pipit, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Chipping Sparrow, unidentified vireo. One Bobolink was seen to fly SW and one unidentified warbler was seen to fly NW. Many other birds remained concentrated in the woods at the Point.

Mills at W light saw a Pigeon Hawk, after one false start, fly W out of sight, and saw a group of 4 unidentified swallows fly SW out of sight.

Sept. 11. No observable migration. A freshly dead Yellow breasted Chat picked up.

Sept. 12 and 13. No sign of migration at any hour.

Sept. 14. at 7.42 a.m., Lewis at North Point saw a group of 4 Bobolinks, at an elevation of about 100 feet, fly NE out of sight. This course would take them along the outer shore of Long Island, toward Digby Neck.

This investigation is in a very early stage and no conclusions concerning manner of migration to and from Brier Island are warranted at this time. Observations made suggest that, in September, migration is most evident immediately after exceptional low temperature, especially frost, has been experienced. Courses followed by strong fliers (swallows, Pigeon Hawk) were toward central Maine coast or more southern New England, by relatively long over-water flight, without northerly component. Weaker fliers migrate chiefly at night and when moving by day tend to follow land and keep over-water flight to a minimum, regardless of direction.

The party recorded 95 kinds of birds on Brier Island or over surrounding waters. Three additional species observed on the island in May by Lewis bring the Society's list of Brier Island birds to 98. A detailed list is filed with the Secretary. Members who observe birds on Brier Island are asked to report their observations to the Secretary, so that this list may be rounded out as rapidly as possible.

The following records deserve special mention.

Both the European Cormorant and the Double-crested Cormorant were present. In general, the former occurred on more open waters, the latter on more sheltered waters.

One Golden Plover was seen at Pond Cove on September 10.

A Black Tern was observed near North Point on September 9.

A freshly dead Yellow-breasted Chat was picked up, on September 11, from the road leading to cottages on the W side of Pond Cove. Cause of death was not apparent.

A Scarlet Tanager in yellowish-green plumage was seen at North Point in the concentration of small birds that occurred there on the morning of September 10.

A Dickcissel, not an adult male, was observed on the beach of Pond Cove on the afternoon of September 13. It was carefully studied, at close range and in good light, through a x25 telescope by Mils and Lewis and the usual characteristics were noted in detail.

A Lark Bunting was observed on the beach of Pond Cove, two or three hundred yards from the Dickcissel, on the afternoon of September 13. It was carefully studied, at close range and in good light, through x6 and x7 binoculars and a x25 telescope, for about half an hour, by Mils and Lewis. The large cream-coloured or off-white patch in each wing and other characteristics were clearly seen. This species has not previously been found in Nova Scotia.

It is to be expected that some species, when migrating out of Nova Scotia in autumn, will occur on Brier Island after they have left most or all other parts of the province. Some dates of occurrence that are interesting because of their lateness are:

Willet	September 12
Nighthawk	September 10
Chimney Swift	September 14
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	September 13
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	September 13
Tree Swallow	September 14
Cliff Swallow	September 14
Yellow Warbler	September 12
Ovenbird	September 10
Mourning Warbler	September 13
Wilson's Warbler	September 13
Bobolink	September 14

It is also of interest that the party did not observe on Brier Island any Mourning Dove, Hermit Thrush, Yellow Palm Warbler, Rusty Blackbird or Bronzed Grackle. Apparently migration of these species was not under way in that area during the period of the investigation.

By way of comparison, it may be stated that about 150 persons taking part in the annual Cape Campout of the Massachusetts Audubon Society on Cape Cod, September 9-11, 1955, recorded 136 species of birds. Their list includes 1 Yellow Palm Warbler, 1 Yellow-breasted Chat, and 2 Dickcissels. The number of species that occur in both the list from Brier Island and the list from Cape Cod is 66.

Brier Island proves to be an interesting, important and convenient place for the study of migration and the discovery of casual and accidental species. The field party recommends that the Nova Scotia Bird Society continue its investigations there.

Harrison F. Lewis



Answers to WELL VERSED BIRDS on Page 154.

1. Cormorant (John Milton)
2. Kingfisher (Gerald Mauley Hopkins)
3. Raven (Shakespeare: Macbeth)
4. Robin (Sir Walter Scott)
5. Cuckoo (Shakespeare, Henry IV, Pt. 1)
6. Knot (S. T. Coleridge)
7. Pheasant (Dylan Thomas)
8. Woodcock (Shakespeare: Hamlet)

WINTER BIRDING IN SOUTHERN ONTARIO

(Reprinted with the permission of the author)

While visiting my relatives in Hamilton, Ontario, during the festive season I had occasion to do a little birding in the area. My brother Don, my friend Peter Hamel and I decided to scour the Ancaster Hills west of Hamilton, then follow the Niagara River from Fort Erie to Niagara-on-the-Lake on December 28, 1975. Ancaster is situated just west of Hamilton and practically the whole area is a series of hills and valleys comprising a small part of the Niagara escarpment. This area is on a line which separates the Upper Austral and Transition Biomes, or plant-animal communities. This is particularly evident in Winter when one can see both Winter and Spring birds in fair numbers.

Before dawn we parked the car on the old Mineral Spring Road overlooking Sulphur Springs in Ancaster. A horned owl hooting from a white pine woods was the first bird of the day. It was soon joined by redpolls, pine grosbeaks, cedar waxwings and evening grosbeaks flying in the darkness overhead. We had picked an excellent area as nearby were several feeders close to a water course banked by a fine stand of eastern hemlock. We soon added downy and hairy woodpeckers, juncos, song and tree sparrows, siskins, purple finch, white-breasted nuthatch, blue jays, cardinal, golden-crowned kinglet, goldfinches, a robin and a tufted titmouse. A pileated woodpecker flew across the road as we were returning to the car.

Driving to Fort Erie we counted a number of red-tailed, sparrow and rough-legged hawks usually found sitting on the still remaining snags of dead white elms, gaunt reminders of the recent Dutch Elm disease. The disease has been so thorough one has to drive almost as far east as Ottawa before seeing an appreciable stand of white elm.

The Niagara River remains open all year and undoubtedly there are few rivers north of here to have so many birds during the Winter. The Canadian side offers the best observation points for birding. Besides the elevation over the river one usually has the sun at one's back. The Canadian side is also less built up and more area is open to the public in the form of parkland; consequently, there isn't too much river that can't be covered from the north side. The river has a fast current and the ducks allow themselves to be repeatedly carried down mid-stream a hundred yards or so before flying upriver again. While watching these flights consisting of bufflehead, common goldeneye and scaup, a small dark-winged duck flew by; a harlequin duck. It landed fifty yards upstream and we were elated to watch it drift by no more than 30 feet from the river bank. These ducks are uncommon on the river although three or four reports are recorded every Winter in southern Ontario. Just each of the bridge joining Buffalo and Fort Erie is a storm sewer outlet near where red-breasted mergansers, black and mallard ducks, and American widgeon were dabbling. Beyond in mid-stream, we picked

up three scoters and thousands of old squaw ducks. Between Fort Erie and Chippewa large pure rafts of canvasback and greater scaup were diving in the many relatively quite spots along the river. I do not understand why these two species separate out along the river unless it is their propensity for different appetites as during migration they are often seen together. We saw a male kingfisher at Chippewa.

The falls area is probably the most spectacular single spot for winter water birds in Southern Ontario. We counted large numbers of herring, ring-billed and Bonaparte's gulls, several great black-backed, five glaucous and two Iceland gulls over the water. Among the many rocky islets were small groups of gadwalls, redheads, pintails, hooded and common mergansers. It was interesting to watch the diving ducks feeding almost at the brink of the falls. I often wonder how many are swept over in their zeal to feed. The top of the falls has been the site for some real rarities: ivory and Sabine gulls; European smew, a relative of our mergansers, purple sandpiper, kittiwakes and both king and common eiders to name a few.

At Queenston Heights is one of, if not the largest, concentrations of Bonaparte gulls in Ontario during the winter. Upwards of 10,000 have been estimated here in January.

We found a winter wren, swamp and white-throated sparrows in an alder coppice near an open spring clogged with water cress. We gathered some cress for our sandwiches and then searched in vain for a dickcissel which was visiting a feeder in the town. As we were pressed for time we proceeded towards Niagara-on-the-Lake and saw a mockingbird along the way.

The mouth of the Niagara River empties into Lake Ontario at the latter town and a rather interesting phenomenon occurs here. Shortly before dark gulls and ducks fly out towards the lake often in large numbers of small groups. From the south bluffs one can leisurely scan these flocks in search of rarities. In the past we have picked up eiders and black-headed gulls. Today we settled for a pomarine jaeger which was found in a flock of ring-billed and herring gulls. It was being watched by a group from Hamilton when we arrived at the bluffs so it was like a gift. What we found remarkable was the fact that it did not scare the other gulls. It was slung low in the water and I must confess that I could not differentiate between it and its close relative the parasitic jaeger as it was some distance out. However, the Hamilton group had surprised it earlier sitting on the shore and were able to study it thoroughly. Jaegers usually let you know when they are flying nearby as all gulls in the area will take wing on sight. They fly very much like a hawk or heavy gull without the latter's lopsided flight. This species and the parasitic are regular visitors to Hamilton and area from late September to November.

One of the Hamilton group told us of a bird which was a new record for Canada. It had first been seen during the Christmas bird count on December 27th near Wallacetown, Ont., some 90 miles west of Hamilton. A birder was counting birds in a farm yard when a small black bird with whitish primaries and black crest landed in front of him. Unable to relate it with any picture in his bird guide he quickly contacted other birders in the area. The stranger was a Phainopepla not normally seen north of California and Texas. As we headed back to Hamilton with 54 species for the day we discussed plans for the next day to see it.

At 7 a.m. the following day we were on the way to Wallacetown. We reached there about 9 a.m. and turning towards Lake Erie on Coyne Side Road we were soon at the entrance to a long lane bordered on both sides by mature Norway spruce. This was the farm of the Fosters. Mr. Foster greeted us in his yard where we found a large stand of sumac, some red cedar and several old apple trees complete with clinging frost-bitten apples. Juncos, goldfinches, rusty and red-winged blackbirds, cowbirds, meadowlarks, mourning doves and grackles were flying about with so much excitement we tried to examine everything in case we might miss the Phainopepla. We suddenly heard a series of rather soft whistles not unlike those of a cardinal, but more repetitive and easier to mimic. Imitating these notes attracted a black bird from within the underbrush to within 20 feet...our first Phainopepla! It had a black crest, red eye, and a tail which it jerked from side to side making it unmistakable. It looked like a small black cardinal but with a much thinner bill. It also acted quite differently. Although it frequented the underbrush like a cardinal, it wasn't afraid to expose itself in the open and perched conspicuously on a juniper and even at times on the top of a Norway Spruce. It wagged its tail, frequently spreading it. I likened its flight to an eastern phoebe. It would dart here and there and was aggressive in its behaviour towards other birds, chasing them away from its perch. A sub-adult, not quite so black, its primaries although light grey when perched, flashed much brighter in flight contrasting considerably with its darker body. Dr. Don Gunn, from Mississauga, Ontario, took some excellent photos while we were there and I was able to see the slides of the bird the following week.

There was some interesting speculation as to how the bird, one of four species of silky flycatcher, reached this area far from its natural habitat of mesquite trees of the southern Texas and California deserts. There had been a violent storm across the great south plains in November and it's quite possible that the bird was blown here by the storm. It was still there and doing quite well feeding on the apples and sumac on January 6. The day wasn't without its humour. As we were leaving the Fosters, two birders were walking up the lane. We heard a middle-aged lady with a strident voice ask them, "Are you looking for the paraphernalia?"

(George Holland, Winnipeg, Man., March 1976)

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT

At a recent meeting of several members of the Conservation Committee (Anne Linton, Fred Dobson, Eric Cooke), practical policies and guidelines for the Committee were discussed and redefined. It was decided that the goals of the Conservation Committee should be two-fold. First, the Committee must acquire adequate information by establishing communications with appropriate individuals and agencies in the province. Second, the information should be circulated to the membership and the public, and when appropriate, acted upon by the Committee either independently or in co-operation with other conservation organizations.

The choice of issues which are to be acted on by the Committee must reflect the interest of the Society. To this end, a categorization scheme was proposed, which could be applied to most issues. The first category incorporates those issues which deal specifically with birds; a project presently being developed will concentrate on publicizing the needless killing of birds of prey.

The second category encompasses issues which do not deal specifically with birds, but nonetheless affect them. For example, the Bird Society co-sponsored a Spruce Budworm Symposium to inform the public on the possible dangers or benefits of a spraying program in Cape Breton. Although not dealing with birds directly, such a program could have serious effects on the bird-life in the area.

The third category encompasses those issues of a more general nature, the building of a nuclear power plant in Nova Scotia would be a possible candidate.

Action taken by the Committee on issues in the last two categories would require prior approval of the entire executive. Such action will likely be in co-operation with other organizations such as the Halifax Field Naturalists or the Nova Scotia Resources Council.

Letters requesting information from individuals and agencies have been sent out, and what remains to be done is to enlarge the Committee, and to seek out Bird Society members holding office in other agencies, who can help keep the Committee informed of these agencies' plans and actions.

Anyone interested in becoming actively involved in the Committee's operations please contact Anne Linton, c/o the Biology Department, Dalhousie University, Halifax.

EXECUTIVE MEETINGS

A meeting of the Executive of the Nova Scotia Bird Society was held at the home of Ralph Connors on Tuesday, April 20, 1976, at 7.30 p.m. Present were Ross Anderson, Eric Cooke, Ralph Connor, Hazel Carmichael, Ethel Crathorne, Anne Linton, Shirley Cohrs, and Margaret Clark.

In the absence of the President, the Vice-president, Ross Anderson, presided.

It was moved by Eric Cooke, seconded by Ethel Crathorne, that the Minutes of the last Executive Meeting be accepted as read. Carried.

A report of the Museum Display indicated that two persons were still needed to be at the Museum between 12-5 p.m. on Saturday, May 1, and Sunday, May 16. Other volunteers include Frances Cook, Roger Pocklington, Eric Cooke, and Shirley and John Cohrs.

Hazel Carmichael moved, Eric Cooke seconded the adoption of the Treasurer's report. Carried.

Ethel Crathorne reported the membership now stands at 258 single, 85 family, and 24 student.

A report entitled "A Proposal for the Protection and Wise Use of a Beautiful and Unique Area of Lunenburg County" was brought to the attention of the Executive. This was drawn up by concerned Biology Teachers of Lunenburg County and concerns the preservation of the LeHave Island primarily for educational purposes. This report was submitted to Anne Linton as Chairperson of the Conservation Committee.

Shirley Cohrs reported on her findings into the price of second hand typewriters. After some discussion a committee to consist of Ethel Crathorne and Phyllis Hemeon was appointed to look into the matter of purchasing a typewriter.

It was moved by Eric Cooke, seconded by Shirley Cohrs that authority be requested at the General Meeting to be held at the Museum on Thursday, April 22, to purchase a typewriter for the Nova Scotia Bird Society to the value of \$400.00. Carried.

Hazel Carmichael moved for adjournment at 9.00 p.m.



A meeting of the Executive of the Nova Scotia Bird Society was held at the home of the Secretary, Margaret Clark, Tuesday, May 19, 1976, at 7.30 p.m.

The President, Fred Dobson, presided. Also present were Ross Anderson, Hazel Carmichael, Ethel Crathorne, Ralph Connor, Eric Cooke, Shirley Cohrs, and Margaret Clark.

Ethel Crathorne moved, Eric Cooke seconded, the approval of the Minutes as typed. Motion carried.

An excellent display was held at the Museum, ;this being the last day of the exhibit. The committee of Heather Harbord, Peter Hope, Ralph Connor, and Fred Dobson are to be commended for the quality of the display and the great amount of time and work put into it. The President is to write a letter of thanks to Heather and also to the Museum for this co-operation.

Shirley Cohrs reported the purchase of a Smith-Corono electric typewriter. This was purchased under the authority given the committee at the April General Meeting.

Ethel Crathorne will be the official typist for the Newsletter, hence the typewriter will be in her care. Ethel will continue as Membership Secretary, with an understudy who is yet to be appointed, until the next Annual Meeting.

A portfolio of facts, pictures and information on Conrad's Beach is being compiled. Ralph Connor reported having material from talks and interviews with Rosemary Eaton. Another study on the Cole Harbour/Conrad's Beach area done by Bill Smith and four students of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design will be scrutinized by the President to see what information from it might be useful for inclusion in this portfolio.

Hazel Carmichael moved, Eric Cooke seconded, the adoption of the Financial Report. Motion carried.

Ethel Crathorne reported that as of May 18 our membership included 265 single; 87 family and 25 student members.'

The Executive agreed that the Rare Bird Alert list should be reorganized in the fall.

Meeting adjourned at 9.30 p.m.



MEMBERSHIP and DUES

Single Membership	\$4.00
Family Membership (one mailing)	6.00
Student Membership (Bona-fide student registered for full time attendance at any institution of learning)	2.00

NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY

Application for Membership

I, hereby apply
for membership in the NOVA SCOTIA
(Single, Family, Student)
BIRD SOCIETY for the year 19.... and enclose \$.....
as annual membership dues.

Mailing Address

.....

.....

To:

The Treasurer,
Nova Scotia Bird Society,
c/o Nova Scotia Museum,
1747 Summer Street,
Halifax, Nova Scotia.

