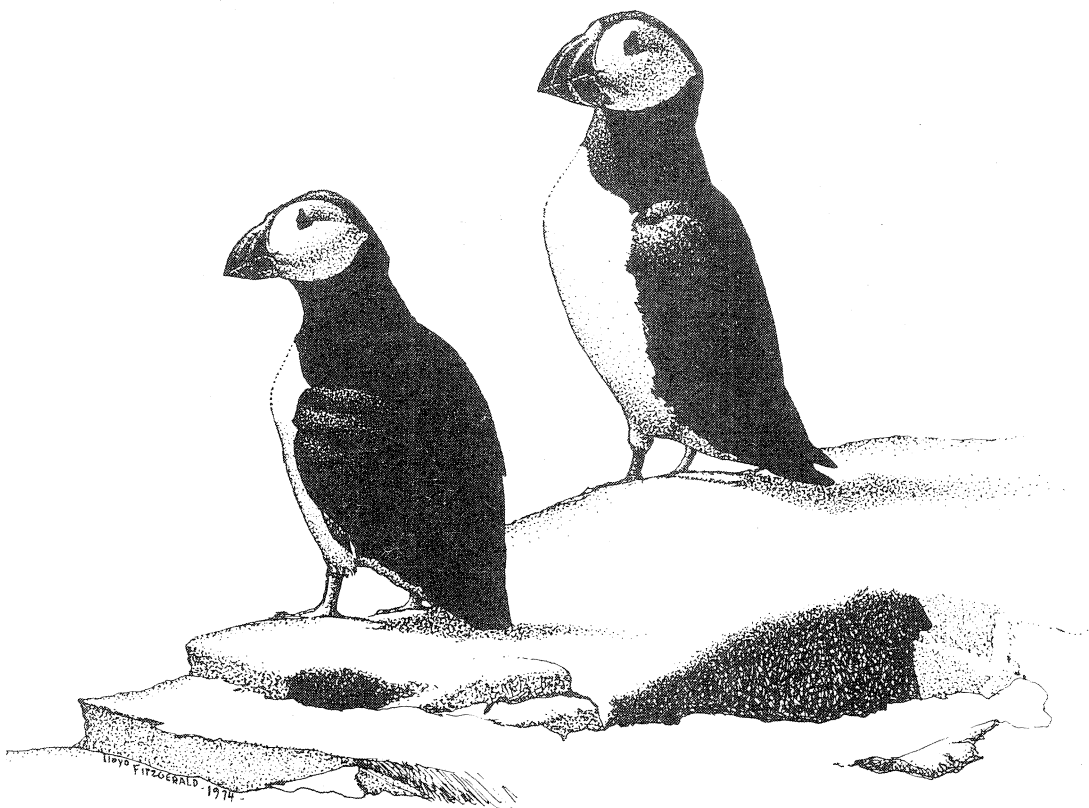


NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

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THE BIRDS OF NOVA SCOTIA

Summer and Fall, 1977

A winter of unprecedented severity followed by a cold wet spring and summer made inroads upon our bird population in Nova Scotia, 1977, although not as much as might have been expected. The severe conditions affected the wintering grounds of some of our birds, notably the Winter Wren, the Ruby-crowned Kinglet and some of the sparrows. Only one wren was heard this spring (here) and less than half the usual number of Ruby-crowneds. Warblers were not noticeably affected nor the flycatchers as a whole (although where was the Olive-sided?) but the unpropitious weather seemed to dishearten both birds and watchers. And it was unpropitious - not until July 20 did the cicadas start singing. That was a really hot day - even the birds were panting!

By the second week in July conditions began to appear "normal", that is, a woods walk taken July 8 produced 22 species, 7 of them warblers, along a two-mile stretch of road which had appeared lightly tenanted up until then.

Breeding success of the birds which came cannot be judged accurately on the basis of our casual observations of fall flocks, and even the more sophisticated data of the Breeding Bird Surveys may or may not reveal the truth next year. So many factors must be considered. David Christie, in his last report to us wrote "I'm inclined to believe that the increase noted for Swamp Sparrow, Rusty Blackbird, and possibly Yellowthroat may be related to higher water levels and thus more of these species in roadside habitats". This was in New Brunswick, but the principle remains.

However, by the looks of the telephone wires in August the Tree Swallows did well, and David Christie also wrote that Tree Swallows had "increased over every route in Nova Scotia" this year over last.

There is no doubt that we had fewer robins than last year, but it would be well nigh impossible not to, there were such vast numbers then, more than we could comfortably support. As for the rest of the species, time will have to tell the tale.

The first sign of migration in SW Nova Scotia was a big mixed flight noted early a.m. on August 27. This passed quickly through, and the next concentration was not noted until September 19, after which small "waves" went through - with one very large one October 7-8, especially the 8th, which brought a flood of small birds from dawn to dusk, including chickadees, robins, orioles, mixed finches and many sparrow types. By the end of October the flights dwindled to a trickle, and our winter species were arriving.

The cone crop looks to be light this year; on the other hand hawthorn and Canadian holly are heavily laden with fruit, particularly the latter at present (December 5) blazing up through the first snow spectacularly in Yarmouth county - (so are the rose hips, which H.P. Moffatt and other hunters assure us are eaten regularly by grouse and pheasants). In Pictou, according to E. Holdway "weed seeds were abundant and were available throughout November. No berries on the Mountain Ash (*S. decora*) this year, apparently not pollinated during the cold period in May, but other wild fruits were abundant. Honeysuckle, Red Osier and Alternate-leaved Dogwood were stripped of their berries completely by mid-November.

There is still plenty left for wintering birds. If the weather remains more clement than last year we should have some good birding this season. Look out for Northern Shrikes, Bohemian Waxwings, Redpolls and Purple Sandpipers!

P.R.D.

Many thanks to our contributors, upon whose reports the following account is based. These were: Joanne U. Addelson, C.R.K. Allen, Rita Backman, James Baird, Dan B. Banks, Leslie S.F. Blackburn, Ethel and Roy Blakeburn, Norm and Thelma Bowers, George R. Boyd, George Brown, R.G.B. Brown, Roger T. Burrows, Roland Chaisson, Elizabeth Chant, Margaret A. Clark, Evelyn E. Coates, Archibald Cohen, John L., J. Shirley, Chris J. and Lise A. Cohrs, Ralph Connor, Eric H. Cooke, Ethel A. Crathorne, Russell J. Crosby, George Crowell, Albert A. d'Entremont, Carl d'Entremont, Delisle d'Entremont, Gill A. d'Entremont, Isreal d'Entremont, Kim d'Entremont, Raymond S. d'Entremont, Bertin F. D'Eon, Ted C. D'Eon, Ethel Desborough, Con Desplanque, Gerald E. Dickie, P.R. Dobson, Christopher Elson, Allison Ferguson, Mary Ferguson, Spencer Ferguson, Bernard L. Forsythe, Roberta B. Fraser, Sylvia J. Fullerton, Constance D. and J. Roswell Gallagher, Ross Hall, Edgar and Vernita Hamilton, Brian Hatfield, Thelma P. Hawkins, Ruth D. Hebb, C. W. Helleiner, Frank Hennessey, Peter W. Hicklin, Marion W. Hilton, Barbara Hinds, Eric Holdway, Peter and Lorraine Hope, Hedley Hopkins, (Sr. and Jr.) Adele Hurlburt, Gerda Janson, Evangeline (Van) Killam, Dorothy B. Kirk, Sue MacCormack, Paul MacDonald, Andrew R. G. MacInnis (and group), George MacInnis, David MacKinnon, Wally MacKinnon, Ian A. McLaren, Sara MacLean, Olive and Gordon MacLeod, Brian MacNeil, Robert MacNeil, S. MacRury, Bruce D. Mactavish, Ranier, Sandra and Jan Meyerowitz, Eric L. Mills, Willett J. Mills, H.P. Moffatt, William and Jean Morse, Hugh and Hazel Munro, Margaret A. Nickerson, M. Oliver, Fred J. Payne, George D. Perry, Merrill H. Prime, Alban A. Richard, L. Roberts, Ella E. Roland, Howard Ross, Eric and Barbara Ruff, Barry C. Sabean, Sydney, Betty June, Locke and Beverley Smith, Arthur Spencer, W. Stobo, Rob Stokes, Rick Swain, Charles A. Symonds, Robert Thexton, Stewart I. Tingley, Gwen Trask, Robie W. Tufts, Robert M. Turner, Dwight Webster, Terry Wentzell, W.E. Whitehead.

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Many of the birding areas in Nova Scotia "crop up" regularly in the following reports. To prevent repetition of the 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, Matthews Lake.
Queen's Co.	Port Joli, Port Hebert, Turtle Lake.
Lunenburg Co.	Cherry Hill, Broad Cove, Petite Riviere, Green Bay, Crousetown, Crescent Beach, Bayport.
Halifax Co.	Grant Desert, Three Fathom Harbour, Conrad's Beach, Lawrencetown, Martinique Beach, Cole Harbour, Mooseland.

Digby Co. Brier Island, Smith's Cove.
 Colchester Co. Economy.
 Annapolis Co. Wilmot, Round Hill, Sandy Bottom Lake.
 King's Co. Wolfville
 Cumberland Co. Lusby Marsh.
 Guysborough Co. Wine Harbour.
 APBS Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary.
 CBHNP Cape Breton Highlands National Park.

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LOONS AND GREBES

At long last we can pep up our report on COMMON LOONS with an unusual story - that of a man who personally hatched a Loon chick. Arthur Spencer found a pair of adults incubating two eggs in the Mira area in early July. One egg hatched on the 15th and the parents took their first-born out on the lake. Arthur Spencer then visited the abandoned nest with its remaining egg, which turned out to be very much alive as he could hear the young bird "peeping" inside. He cradled the egg in his hands, where, perhaps because of the heat, hatching actually took place. The chick was apparently deformed, however, and the end is sad, it did not survive. The other young bird was last seen with its parents on September 11.

According to Peter Hope "the 1977 summer was a near disaster as far as young loons in the Kejimikujik National Park are concerned". Eight adults seen on Beaverskin Lake November 28 is the latest fall record for this area (RMT). A large number of Common and RED-THROATED LOONS was observed in Green Bay on September 18. There were approximately 100-125 birds in close groups of 8-10 and about 40% were the latter species. (JL&JSC). Twenty-five Red-throated Loons were at Tidnish Dock, Cumberland Co. October 30, about half of which still retained much of their breeding plumage (SIT). There were 6 at Cape Sable October 23 and a flock of 13 a bit later (SS). Four were seen at Morien Bar October 21, and 3 at Louisbourg November 9 (RTB).

HORNED GREBES have already shown up in good numbers, a total of about 75 having been seen so far. Largest number was 18+ at Tidnish Dock October 30 (SIT), closely followed by 15 at Marriott's Cove October 26 (RDH). There were 10 at Crescent Beach October 22 and 10+ there November 27 (Cohrs). Earliest record is October 6 at Louisbourg where up to 4 were present each day thereafter until the 15th (RTB). As yet none has been reported from Bay of Fundy waters. Con Desplanque reports over 50 broods of PIED-BILLED GREBES at APBS in July and says that in August these birds were so common that they could be seen "in any setting of the 'scope". They had dwindled to 20 by October 22 and 15, October 30. The last was seen in that locality November 14. All other sightings are of one or several birds only: 2 at Three Fathom Harbour September 11 and one newly arrived at Seal I. October 11 (ELM et al); one at Glace Bay October 8 (RTB), 2 at Cape Sable October 24 (SS); one at Middle River September 24 (HI); one at CBHNP October 24 (RBF); one October 29-31 in the Argyle River (CRKA) and finally 2 late stayers at Sable I. in mid-November (IAM).

CRKA Ed.

FULMARS, SHEARWATERS, STORM-PETRELS, GANNETS, CORMORANTS

We have only one report of NORTHERN FULMARS, about 20 including 2 dark-phased individuals off Seal I., October 3 (ELM). The various kinds of shearwaters, however, were frequently seen and reported from early June onwards. GREATER SHEARWATERS were as usual the most abundant species: 500 were seen by the NSBS pelagic trip, Brier I., September 3. Numbers decreased thereafter, 10-15 at Cape Sable September 27 (S&BJS) and still a few at Sable I. in mid November (IAM). SOOTY SHEARWATERS followed a similar pattern, but in lesser numbers: 100 at Brier I. September 3, 25-30 at Cape Sable September 14 (S&BJS). 9 MANX SHEARWATERS turned up for the Brier I. pelagic trip September 3; some were seen at very close range on the water.

Several reports were received of LEACH'S STORM-PETRELS IN distress October 17-18 after a severe storm: one dead on Cherry Hill beach (PM), another apparently exhausted sitting on the water at Sandy Cove (near Marriott's Cove) (RDH) and a third stunned by flying into a window and later released at Pubnico (TD'E). WILSON'S STORM-PETREL was reported only once: "Numbers off surf line after heavy storm", September 15, Sable I. (IAM).

Surely one of the most startling Nova Scotia records in years is the WHITE PELICAN(S) in Cape Breton. A detailed report appears elsewhere in this issue. One was seen and photographed October 19-31 at West Bay, Inverness Co. (Ross MacLeod, Tom & Marina Young). A possible, but unverified second pelican was at Troy.

The usual autumn migration of GANNETS along our coasts was observed. Reports cover the period September 14 (Cape Sable, SS) September 16 (one, Louisbourg, RTB) October 1-8 (200-300, off Seal I., ELM, IAM) October 22-24 (30+ each day Seal I. SJF) and finally November 19 (one, Lawrencetown, EHC). An unusual report of 200-300 on September 15 at the Canso Causeway comes from Rob Stokes. Possibly they were hunting fish blown against the causeway by a strong westerly wind.

GREAT CORMORANTS were reported from Cape Breton through the summer, mostly in pairs and single birds (SMacL). Elsewhere they turned up as expected in the fall: September 2 (one, Brier I., JSC), October 21 (400, Cape Sable, SS) and November 6 (one, Three Fathom Harbour, CE). DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS are widespread in the summer. The nesting colony at Pictou had 159 nests, with most of the young left by the end of July; the 200 or so birds in mid August had dwindled to 20 by the end of October (EH). Flocks probably on migration were reported from Cape Sable (25, September 17, NSBS), Pubnico (throughout September and October, TD'E) and Seal I. (October 8, ELM, IAM). The last report from Sandy Cove was of one, October 26 (RDH).

CWH Ed.

Unfortunately, due to inefficiency, strikes and general chaos in our Port Office the reports of Herons through Ibis, Hawks and Marsh Birds, and Doves through Woodpeckers were not received in time to be included in their correct places. If possible (i.e., if the P.O. finds them) they will appear at the end of this issue.

Ed.

GEESE AND DUCKS

The earliest CANADA GEESE seen arrived at Port L'Hebert August 31 (RMT&GDP). They then showed up in a number of localities but in small numbers through September: 25 at the Ingram River (LAC), heard at Wine Harbour September 7 (C&GM), 4 at Martinique September 9 (ARGM), 29 at Cherry Hill September 17, two of these being exceptionally large birds and 5 much smaller than normal (Cohrs). There were a dozen geese at St. Esprit September 21 (R&SM), about 75 in Antigonish Harbour September 24 (GC), a "small flock" at Three Fathom Harbour September 25 (EHC) and 50 at Glace Bay Sanctuary September 26 (M. Oliver). October reports were fewer but of larger numbers, the largest being 1000 or more at Port Joli October 24 (E&VH). In November the numbers in that area had swelled to 4600 at Port Joli on the 3rd, and 3600 on the 14th (RMT). Roland Chaisson reports that the last geese seen in the Antigonish area were on November 17, nine days earlier than last year.

A single BRANT, possibly an injured bird, appeared in a pond with domestic ducks at Cape Sable July 6-9. Other sightings, probably of the same bird were on July 16 and October 21 (SS). The first of the fall migrants to be reported are 10 at Tiverton, Digby Co. November 15 (MHP). There were 15 Brant flying over the APBS on November 19 (CD) and 200 at Lower Canard November 25 (GRB).

The MALLARDS reported as common in Sydney Harbour during the summer could, according to Sara MacLean, be roamers from a nearby Park flock. The other sightings however because of their locality are more apt to be wild birds: 3, September 11 at Lawrencetown Lake (ELM); one male September 11 Port L'Hebert (RMT); another male Cherry Hill Beach October 8 and November 6 (SJF); a pair, male in partial breeding plumage Glenwood Marsh October 8 (CRKA); several, up to 4 at APBS in late October and early November (CD) and a lone lorn female at Sable I. November 13-14 (IAM).

BLACK DUCKS are rather lightly reported during late summer and fall and in surprisingly small numbers; the largest flocks being 95 at Glace Bay Sanctuary November 9 (RTB), 153 at Lewis Lake July 4 and 800+ at Port L'Hebert August 17 (RMT). No sightings at all were sent in from the Bay of Fundy region except APBS and none for the Atlantic coast from Louisbourg to Cape Sable. The only GADWALL reports are from APBS where there was a pair on October 19 (SIT) and at least 4, October 22 (CD&NSBS party). There was a peak of PINTAILS at APBS on September 4, when 100 were seen there. Numbers then dwindled, 40, September 10 to 20, October 22 to 4, October 30 and finally 3, November 6 (CD). Port L'Hebert had 12, August 27 and 20, September 11 (RMT) while on the latter date there were 5 at Three Fathom Harbour (ELM). Two females were seen at Crescent Beach October 9 (JSC) and the last reported sighting was of 5, at Antigonish Harbour November 19 (RC).

Up to 100 GREEN-WINGED TEAL were observed regularly at Lusby Marsh and APBS through July and August. Numbers at the latter locality rose to 200 September 4 and 10, and had dropped to 10, by November 12, and finally to 2, seen there November 19 (CD). Over 50 at Port L'Hebert August 17 was the next largest number reported (RMT), while Cape Sable had just one sighting of 11, September 21 (SS). Smaller numbers, up to 7, were seen at various points in Cape Breton from late August to early October (RTB). A completely albino BLUE-WINGED TEAL was observed by Andrew MacInnis at Martinique Sanctuary, September 3. MacInnis says "The bird appeared completely white, wing included. Plumage of the head seemed soiled, dingy. The eye looked to be dark and the bill appeared dark gray". The bird was seen until September 21. A late brood of six very small young

Blue-wings was seen in the Mira area August 21 - no doubt a second attempt (SM). The only report of any considerable numbers of this species were 200+ at Port L'Hebert August 17 (RMT) and 80+ at Caribou I. September 18 (EH). Blue-wings leave early, and the only records after September were of 2 at Sand Beach, Yarmouth Co. October 5 (CRKA), one at APBS October 23 (RTB) and 2, still there October 30 (CD).

A single EUROPEAN WIGEON was seen at APBS May 26, and another or the same at nearby Lusby Marsh on June 12 and July 3 (CD); AMERICAN WIGEONS were present in this area in numbers ranging from 10 to 20 during the summer. On September 4 numbers had increased to 50 and on the 10th had reached a peak of 500. They then dropped off to 20 during October, and a single bird was seen in November (CD). The only other reports of this species are of 1, September 11, Three Fathom Harbour (ELM); 30+, October 1, Eel Lake (CRKA); 4, October 8, Glace Bay Sanctuary and 8, October 22, APBS (RTB).

Eric Cooke and Ralph Connor observed a pair of NORTHERN SHOVELERS at Three Fathom Harbour on June 11 and several times thereafter and suspected a nest. These suspicions were later confirmed by Ian McLaren and Eric Mills who found 6 full-grown young in the same spot in early September. Con Desplanque who reported a brood of 8 at APBS said they all grew from ugly ducklings to handsome birds with orange bills by August. Four, possibly of this same brood remained in the Sanctuary long enough to be seen by the NSBS party on their field trip October 22, providing "lifers" for a number of the members. There was one other sighting of Shovelers this summer, 2, seen September 16, at Sheffield Mills (BCS).

There were at least three broods of WOOD DUCKS this past summer, and adults were seen regularly in numbers up to 10 during September, at APBS (CD). The last record was of three November 12. There were 3 Wood Ducks at Great Pubnico Lake September 4 (Id'E); a male at Seal I. October 8, a male with 2 females there October 22 (NSBS parties) and another male at Robertson's Lake October 19 (RMT). One last Wood Duck was seen December 4 at Glenwood, a bright male ornamenting the marsh there in company with a Great Egret (CRKA).

The brood of REDHEADS at APBS July 1&2 was reported in the September News Bulletin. These were noted by Con Desplanque, and later RTB saw 4 of them, October 23, same place. There were 100 RING-NECKED DUCKS at APBS September 3 but the peak came in October when 200 were seen there on the 22nd, still 15 there November 19. Christopher Elson reports many observations of this species in the Halifax area with up to 20 at one time in a lake near Sackville, N.S., There were also 19 near Pugwash October 23 (RTB).

GREATER SCAUP records are few since we have no reports from the Northumberland Strait region where the autumn concentrations should be. There were 8 at Lewis Lake September 7 (RMT), 2, September 26 at Morien Bar (SM, RTB) and 2, October 22 at APBS (CD). Two LESSER SCAUP were seen at APBS October 23 in company with Ring-necks.

The first COMMON GOLDENEYES reported were 2 at APBS October 23 (RTB) and 6, at Salt Bay, Yarmouth Co. November 8 (CRKA). One showed up at Cape Sable November 25 (SS) and 10 at Crescent Beach November 27, seen by the Cohrs, who remark on the absence to date of Greater Scaup at Bayport - one of their regular autumn "stop-offs". Four immature BUFFLEHEADS were present at APBS throughout the fall and were still there November 22 (SIT, PH, CD). One appeared near Pugwash October 23 (RTB); 4, were at Cherry Hill October 30 (SJF), and about half-a-dozen in Abram's River, Yarmouth Co. November 19 (CRKA). At least one OLDSQUAW arrived at Louisbourg on October 15, where the next sighting was of 10 on November 9 (RTB). One other October record is of 22 at Northport on the 22nd (RMacN). On November 6 there

were 7 at Lr. Economy (FH) and 3 at Morien Bay (SM) while on the 8th over 95 were observed at Cape Sable (SS). The only HARLEQUIN DUCK record to date is of 5 seen off the north beach of Sable I. September 28-October 5 by Alban Richard. This is the first record of this species for Sable.

The first young COMMON EIDERS appeared at Lr. Economy July 3, later than usual this year, and (the same area) a concentration of 525 was seen at Economy Point on July 30 (FH). There were 900 Common Eiders at Jones' Harbour, Shelburne Co. on September 5 (RMT) and on September 17 there were 45 at Cherry Hill (Cohrs) while at Cape Sable Sid Smith reported flocks passing by all day and for several days thereafter. They were plentiful there in migration until November 7. On October 7 a flock of 30-35 was seen well up the Bay of Fundy at Greenwich, Kings Co. (CE); and on November 6 at flock of 27 flying SW over Fort Lawrence, evidently crossing the isthmus of Chignecto from Northumberland Strait (SIT&BDM). Last report is of one "forlorn female" on the flooded beach of Sable I. November 13-15, this being only the second record of this species from Sable (IAM).

Frank Hennessey reports that the scoters are usually gone from the Lr. Economy region by late June and that this year the first southward migrants, all WHITE-WINGED SCOTERS, were back by August 14. Numbers of scoters "peak" by early November, when 200 were seen this year, about 60, November 30. Whitewings make up the great majority in this area during the peak period, comprising about 60-65% with SURFS about 30% and the balance made up of BLACK SCOTERS. On September 17 a flock of scoters consisted this year of 70 Whitewings, 30 Surfs and 20 Blacks (FH). At Cape Sable small flocks of Whitewings were plentiful up to October 1 as were SURF SCOTERS, both species being about normal in numbers this year (SS). The only definite BLACK SCOTER observations are of 13, first seen at Cape Sable September 20 and good numbers passing for several subsequent days (SS); a single bird at Three Fathom Harbour November 6 (CE) and two females at Louisbourg October 10 (RTB).

Just two RUDDY DUCKS made the Report this fall: one at APBS on October 22-23 (NSBS party & RTB) and one at Upper Canard October 20 (FJP).

A definite breeding record of the HOODED MERGANSER was a female with a brood of eight young about 1/3 the size of the adult, seen in the Mersey River in Keji July 14 (PH&RS). A female also seen in the Park September 28 is the latest record for that area although a male and female were at Turtle Lake (in close proximity) up to November 18 (N&TB). Other sightings of this species are: 2, at Gilbert's Cove, Digby Co. September 2 (CRKA et al); a female and an eclipsed male at Three Fathom Harbour September 4 (IAM) and a female at the same place September 11 (ELM). COMMON MERGANSERS had begun to appear in tide-water by September 7, when 7 were at Petite Riviere (Cohrs). There were 11 at Sandy Cove September 30 and about a dozen at Eel Lake and 6-7 at nearby Argyle River October 2. A few days later they also showed up at their regular feeding grounds near the head of tide in the Tusket River (CRKA). At Lr. Economy 7 appeared on November 6 (FH). The Smiths write that some RED-BREASTED MERGANSERS were seen at Cape Sable every day since October. Strange to say all other autumn records for this species are from Cape Breton: 19, September 9 Morien Bar; 3, September 16 at Louisbourg; 14, September 25 at Morien Bar again, and 3, October 21, same place. There were 4 at Cap Rouge and 5 at South Pond, Aspy Delta, September 25 (RTB). It would seem that their movement to salt water had not begun in the more southern and western regions of the province.

CRKA, Ed.

(Raptors, etc., - please see Page 4).

SHOREBIRDS

The fall shorebird migration followed conventional lines this year. Most of the species, including the common rarities were well reported, though the main features of migration show up primarily in the careful systematic reports from the Smiths at Cape Sable, Roger Burrows in Cape Breton, Eric Cooke at Lawrencetown, the Cohrs at Crescent Beach, Sylvia Fullerton at Cherry Hill and Charlie Allen at Cook's Beach.

Three pairs of SEMIPALMATED PLOVER were found breeding at Sable I. in June, the first time since 1964, though with limited success (HR,IAM). A breeding pair was also present in June at Matthews Lake. James Baird sends us a report of an agitated pair observed around the flat gravel roof of a terminal building at Halifax airport in June, 1976. The peak of the fall passage occurred between July 31 (350 at Matthews Lake, GP, and 107 at Morien Bar, RB), and August 12 (652 at Cape Sable, S&BJS), although large flocks persisted along the south shore and elsewhere until early September. PIPING PLOVER nested at Conrad's Beach (EHC,CE) where 8 present on July 19 were gone by August 14, and at Cherry Hill (SJF) and Cape Sable (6 breeders in June-July, S&BJS). None were reported in August, but the last birds were seen at Matthews Lake on September 14 (GP).

Our resident KILLDEER were not reported at all, but by mid July birds were on the move - 5 at Highland Village, Col. Co. on July 17 (FH), 4 at Sable I. on July 19 (IAM) and one at Cape Sable on July 22 (S&BJS). Thereafter, all records were in late August through November, all in small numbers, at locations from Cape Breton through Sable I. to Cape Sable. Our latest record is one November 27 at St. Esprit (R,S &JM).

GOLDEN PLOVER were frequent this summer and fall. One was present at Cape Sable on June 26 (S&BJS) and on July 4 another appeared at Pinkney's Pt.(CRKA), though the first arrivals at Sable I. were on August 10, where up to 75 were present in mid September (IAM). Elsewhere, records show a peak in late August-early September: 300 near Amherst in late August, reaching 500 September 6-7 and 10-11(CD), 9 at Louisbourg September 17 (RB), a minimum of 20 at Matthews Lake September 30 (GP,ELM) and a fine flock of 70 on a golf course at Hartlen's Point, Halifax Co., on October 16 (IAM), down to 12 on the 19th (EAC).

Summering BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER merge with the early migrants. 7 at Matthews Lake on June 26 (GP) and 12-14 at Pinkney's Pt. on July 4(CRKA) must have summered, or possibly they were failed breeders from farther north. Numbers built up steadily throughout the province from the end of July through September: 52 at Cape Sable, July 30 (S&BJS); 170 at Grand Pre, 1 August (AGN); 77 at Morien Bar, August 13 (RB); 250 at Cape Sable, August 28 (S&BJS); 50 near Amherst, September 1-3 (CD); 459 at Cape Sable, September 25 (still 334 on October 23, and 25 on November 21 (S&BJS); 4 still present at Crescent Beach on November 26 (J&SC).

We have a detailed analysis of WOODCOCK occurrences by Hardy Moffatt and a number of other records. The rather abundant birds in Hants and Colchester Counties in early October had mostly gone by the 10th, apparently moving west in the province; at Corberrie, Digby Co., 25-30 were put up from one cover on October 15 (BH), but farther east 3 experienced hunters saw only an average of 2.3 birds/hr. in 100 hours during the rest of the month (HPM). One bird arrived at Cape Sable on October 29 followed by 3 on November 8 (BS), and the last left Eel Brook on November 7 (PRD). COMMON SNIPES were sparsely reported. At Amherst, Con Desplanque reported fewer than usual, though in early September 75 were seen at Sheffield Mills, Kings Co. (BC\$). The last reported at Antigonish was on October 22 (RC).

Eight still lingered on the Wolfville Ridge on November 23 (BLF), and no doubt a few will be seen on Christmas counts here and there.

On August 19 an EUROPEAN WHIMBREL was seen with two of the North American race at Martinique Beach (AGM). Our own WHIMBREL was widely reported, beginning with 2 at Cape Sable on July 10 (13 on the 12th) and 2 at the same place October 11 (S&BJS). The remaining records are well scattered, for example: 7 at Caribou I., Pictou Co. July 17 (EH); 17 at E. Baccaro, Shelburne Co., July 19 (JRG, CDG); 72 near Amherst, August 8 (CD); 5 reports from Louisbourg and Morien Bar, August 10 - September 9 (RB), 54 in a group feeding on blueberries near Sackville, N.B., August 22-23 (PH); 21 at Sable I., August 18-20 (HR); 24 at St. Esprit, August 31 (S&RM); etc. The last records were of 2 at Seal I., October 2 (ELM) and 2 at Cape Sable, October 11 (S&BJS).

UPLAND SANDPIPER was reported three times (all single birds): Sable I., May 29-June 3 and September 12 (HR), and Cape Sable October 9 (S&BJS).

The Smiths' report of 13 SPOTTED SANDPIPERS nesting at Cape Sable is the only one for the breeding season, despite the abundance of this species. The Cape Sable birds reached 21 on July 30, 16 on August 12, and two on September 17 were the last seen. The last records for the season were of 4 at Middle West Pubnico, September 25 (E&VH), 2 at the Windsor causeway, Hants Co., October 8 (BLF). Records of SOLITARY SANDPIPER extend from July 16 at Lawrencetown (EHC) to September 17 at Cape Sable (NSBS). The main migration period, mid August to early September shows up in records of 4+ at Lockeport, August 16 & 19 (RJC), 5 in Antigonish Harbour, August 21 (RC), 6 at Sheffield Mills, September 6, 5 at the Piggery, Dartmouth, on September 11 (J&SC, ELM), and 3 on the Tobetic watershed, Queen's Co., September 13 (BCS).

WILLETS leave very early. One bird at Canard, Kings Co., a new record for that area, may have been one of the first to move (RWT). The peak of flocking and southward movement was July 16-August 13. 24 reached Cape Sable on July 16 (S&BJS) and by the 18th there were 70 at Matthews Lake (GP). At Crescent Beach numbers built up to 145 on July 31 and at Morien Bar 10 were present on August 13. Thereafter numbers declined sharply and the last records are of single birds at Matthews Lake September 17 (GP) and at Cheticamp, September 24.

In late June-early July there were 2-10 non-breeding GREATER YELLOWLEGS at the John Lusby marsh (CD) and after July 4 migrants appeared throughout the province in increasing numbers, though the early season peak shows only in the numbers at the Lusby marsh - 40 on July 23 and 100-200 regulars in August (CD). The last bird at Antigonish was recorded August 31 (RC), but there was a peak of 39 at Lawrencetown on September 10 (EHC). 5-15 were at Cape Sable between September 25 and October 23, and 20 remained through November 13 (S&BJS). LESSER YELLOWLEGS appeared very early and showed a minor peak in late August-early September. On July 9 there were 16 at Matthews Lake (GP). 20 at the Lusby marsh the following day increased to 100 on July 15 and 200 on July 23 (CD). At Lawrencetown the peak, 80, was reached on July 16 (EHC). Numbers then dropped very sharply, though on August 31 Roland Chaisson noted 25 (the highest number) at Antigonish. A complete albino spent a few days at Three Fathom Harbour through September 11 (ELM). Two late fall reports were received: 1 at Morien Bar on September 26 (RB), and, remarkably late (with no notes) 4 at Morien Bar on October 30 (AS fide SMAcL).

Two non-breeding RUDDY TURNSTONES spent July at Sable I. (HR). The migrants first appeared at Cape Sable on July 16 (4), where there were 103 on July 30, 31 on August 5, 241 on August 12 and still from 1-7 between September 17 and October 23 (S&BJS). Another fine mid-summer flock of 46 was reported from Caribou I. on August 1 (EH). The last birds of the season were 3 at Morien Bar on September 26 (RB) and 2 at Seal I. October 10 (IAM,ELM). The RED KNOT capitol of Nova Scotia is Matthews Lake, where there were 2 on July 9, 11 on the 18th, 33 on the 31st and 105 on August 4 (GP,RJC). The first migrant appeared at Sable I. on July 14 (HR) and at Cape Sable the Smiths counted 82 on July 24. Numbers at Morien Bar increased to 44 on September 9 (RB), and at the opposite end of the province there were still 5 at Cape Sable on September 17. Perhaps Matthews Lake will provide us with another Christmas Count record.

PURPLE SANDPIPERS began to show up during this reporting period, before their winter maximum 40 had reached Conrad's Beach on October 9 (EHC) and there are 6 other records of 1-24 birds each in Lunenburg and Shelburne Counties from late October to the end of November (SJF,RJC,J&SC,S&BJS).

There was a lone PECTORAL SANDPIPER at Sable I. on June 26 (HR), but the first certain migrants were 4 at the John Lusby marsh July 12 (CD). Low numbers were noted at several localities through early September and 1-2 several days between September 16 and October 19 at Louisbourg (RB), but no one documented the September-October peak of this species. Another late migrant, the WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER, arrived July 9 at Matthews Lake (1)(GP), but was not seen again there until July 25, on the latter date 30 arrived at Sable I. (IAM). 37 at Morien Bar on July 31 had increased to 106 on August 13 and 117 on August 27 (RB). Our last records are of 27 at Cape Sable on October 9 (S&BJS) and 1 remaining at Morien Bar, October 2 (RB).

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER was scarce this year. 6 at Brier I. September 3-5 were the first reported (ELM); other records were 1 at West Lawrencetown, September 4 (IAM), 1 at Cherry Hill, 17 September (J&SC), 1 undated in Cape Breton (HH&HHJr, fide S.MacL) and a very late bird, October 15 at Lawrencetown (EHC). Even LEAST SANDPIPERS, mousily inconspicuous but abundant migrants, were sparsely reported. Records from Cape Sable, Cape Breton and the shore-bird surveys give a pattern of early arrival (20 at Matthews Lake July 5, GP), migratory peak 24 July-12 August (399 at Cape Sable July 24, dropping to 116 on July 30 and to 59 on August 12, S&BJS), and a late summer peak, 28 August to September 11 (69 at Morien Bar August 28, RB; 50 at Brier I. September 3-5, ELM; 32 at Cape Sable September 10, S&BJS, etc.) 2 at Cherry Hill on October 16 (SJF) were very late.

DUNLIN were seldom abundant, and all the records but 3 were after the first of September: 1 at Morien Bar on July 31, August 13 and 27, increasing to 50 on September 9 (RB). Thereafter small numbers appeared in southwestern Nova Scotia up to November 26, when the Cohrs found 3 still present at Crescent Beach.

I received 6 well-documented records of LONG-BILLED DOWITCHERS: 4 at the Lusby marsh July 1, 2 & 10 (CD); 1 at Cook's Beach August 12; and the following at the expected time of year: 1 at Sable I. September 13 (IAM); 1 at Seal I. October 2 (BM,SIT); and individuals on September 25 and October 8 at Lawrencetown (EHC). SHORT-BILL DOWITCHERS (or just "Dowitchers" of some reporters) were abundant beginning with 20 at the Lusby marsh (CD) and 11 at Crescent Beach (J&SC) on July 2. At Matthews Lake a flock of 110

peaked at 300 on July 18 (GP), and on the same day there were 220 at Crescent Beach (J&SC). At Cape Sable, 25 on July 8 increased to 300 on the 10th and 792 on the 24th; this flock declined slowly to 465 on August 12, 55 on the 28th, and on October 5, 5 were still there. Pride of place goes to Cook's Beach where Charlie Allen estimated 4400 on July 27. The maximum reported in Cape Breton was 43 at Morien Bar on August 13 (RB). Only one October Dowitcher was certainly this species, the bird reported October 10 at Seal I. (BM). Several others might well have been the late-migrating Long-bill: 5 at Cape Sable October 2 (S&BJS), 2 at Cherry Hill October 8, and 1 at Crescent Beach October 22 (J&SC).

STILT SANDPIPERS were probably not uncommon, but these grey and elegant waders require an extra look. Con Desplanque found the first at the Lusby marsh July 29, and single birds appeared at Matthews Lake on August 4 and 27 (GP&RJC). There were 2 at Sheffield Mills on September 7 (BCS), and in the heart of Stilt Sandpiper country, Lawrencetown, only 2 records, 1 August 6 (EHC) and 2 September 11 (ELM).

The seasonal increase and equally dramatic decrease of SEMI-PALMATED SANDPIPERS (10 of which appeared on July 4 at the Lusby marsh, CD) is documented in the numbers at Cape Sable: 18 on July 6, 164 on the 16th, 484 on the 24th, 1985 on the 30th, 2185 on August 5, dropping down to 645 on August 28. Throughout this period the numbers at the Lusby marsh increased from 1000-1500 on July 20 to an estimated 100,000+ on August 6, then decreased to 500 by September 3 (CD). The enormous numbers in Minas Basin may have been counted, but no report reached me. Large numbers were reported from several other places, examples being the peak of 800 at Matthews Lake on July 25 (GP), 1000+ at Cook's Beach July 28 (MWH &SCH), 1000 at Apple River, Col. Co., August 1 (FH) and 4500 at Highland Village August 14 (FH). There is some indication of a second peak in September: 1000+ on September 17 and 780 on the 25th at Cape Sable (S&BJS) after an early-month low. 46 remaining at Cape Sable on October 23 were the last reported this fall.

Only one WESTERN SANDPIPER was reported among the hundreds of thousands of Semi's that passed before birders' binoculars - a well-described individual seen by Roger Burrows at Warren Lake, CBI, August 16. BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPERS, inexplicably rare last fall, were back in nearly normal numbers, there being 10 records of about 30 individuals: 2 and 1 at West Head, Lockeport, August 19 and 25 (GP); 1 at Sable I., August 21 (HR) and 6 September 13-15 (IAM); 2 and 7 at Cape Sable, August 28 and September 17 (S&BJS); 2 at Brier I., September 3-5 (ELM); 3 at Cherry Hill September 17, and one at Morien Bar, September 25 (RB). Most remarkable is the one found with Golden Plover on October 16 at Hartlen's Point golf course, Halifax Co. (IAM).

The HUDSONIAN GODWIT at Sable I. on July 2 was very early (HR). 5 at Matthews Lake July 9 increased to 10-20 present throughout the rest of July and August (GP); the last record was August 27. Elsewhere, there were 15 at Evangeline Beach on July 29 and 18 two days later (AGM), 13+ at Morien Bar on August 13 (RB), 15 on the 27th (RB) and 8 were reported on the remarkably late date of November 6 (SMAcL). The only non-coastal report is from Central Onslow, Col. Co. on September 15 (LB). Our two other records are from the Atlantic side of the province: 1 at Louisbourg September 16, and 1 at Rose Bay, Lunenburg Co., October 22 (J&SC).

The pattern of SANDERLING records shows a steady increase of numbers from mid July (first record 4 at Sable I., July 13, HR) until late September, when numbers dropped sharply. The peak at Cape Sable was 604 on September 25, dropping to 100 on October 2,

up to 350 on the 9th, and then rapidly downward (S&BJS). 450 were counted at Evangeline Beach, September 13 (AGM). Late in November Sanderlings were still common at Matthews Lake (GP) and one lingered at Crescent Beach to November 26 (J&SC).

For some reason Phalaropes were poorly reported this year though there's every indication they were as common as usual offshore. On July 20, Dick Brown, on a trip from Brier I. saw no RED PHALAROPES, but 5 days later one was seen at Cape Sable and on July 29 there were 3000+ off Brier (R&GB). The Brier I. flocks totalled at least 5000 on September 3 (ELM, NSBS). On Sable I. Ian McLaren found one August 26-27 and saw 2 after a gale, September 15. The great concentrations of these birds undoubtedly lie on the oceanic front seaward of the island. We estimated no more than 50 NORTHERN PHALAROPES in the Brier I. flocks on September 3 (ELM, NSBS), and there were 2 at Sable I. with the storm-driven Reds, September 15, (IAM). Several were found dead at Cape Sable Light on October 13, the remnant of passing flocks (S&BJS). One inland record completes the saga - an individual at Sheffield Mills, Kings Co., September 23 (BCS).

ELM Ed.

JAEGERs, GULLs, TERNS, AUKs

An exceptional number of JAEGER sightings are reported this fall. As usual, many are "just jaegers", but some positive identifications were possible. A LONG-TAILED JAEGER, usually the rarest of the three was well seen (HR&SM) at Sable Island, June 12. Also at Sable I. PARASITIC JAEGERs were seen in 2's and 3's in August and September. The same species (probably) was seen in dozens on George's Bank at the end of August (RSd'E) as well as by ELM in smaller numbers at Seal I. in the first week of October. POMARINE JAEGERs were seen at Sable I. (2, September 14-16, IAM), off Seal I. (2, October 3, ELM) and Cape Sable (3, October 30, S&BJS). Three skuas, probably GREAT SKUAs were seen June 3 at Sable I. (IAM). The intriguing possibility that some of "our" skuas are wandering Antarctic skuas has recently arisen; those of us lucky enough to see skuas should be on the lookout.

The first GLAUCOUS GULL of the season was seen at Glace Bay, October 15 (SMAcL). An early September ICELAND GULL was seen at sea (AF), and single birds were reported from Glace Bay and Halifax (SIT) at the end of October, as well as one from Cape Sable on November 25 (SS). HERRING and GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULLs were "as usual". The famous Digby LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL has returned again! First seen November 6 (BCS). RING-BILLED GULLs were seen occasionally in small numbers through the late summer but appeared more abundantly through September and October (for example at Eel Brook PRD reports increasing sizes of flocks from 30 to around 100 from late September to early November; EAC had a small flock November 1 at Sullivan's Pond, Dartmouth; Peter Hope saw 3 at Maitland Bridge, September 14 - the first recorded there). BLACK-HEADED GULLs began appearing as early as September 3 (3 at Brier I., JSC). More usual arrivals mid September onward were at Glace Bay (SMAcL) and east Halifax (ELM, JSC, CE). LAUGHING GULLs in numbers from 1 to 4 were seen at Sable I. in July, October and November. BONAPARTE'S GULLs were seen through the summer along the Northumberland Strait in small numbers (EAC, GED, RH, EH) as well as at Lake Ainslie (BCS). Flocks remained until the end of October (Antigonish, RC and Caribou I., EH). A very unusual sight record of 2 IVORY GULLs at Cape Sable comes from Charles & Annie Symonds. BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKES were seen in Cape Breton in the summer, and in September-October at Cape Sable and Seal I. (SS, SJF). An interesting observation of large

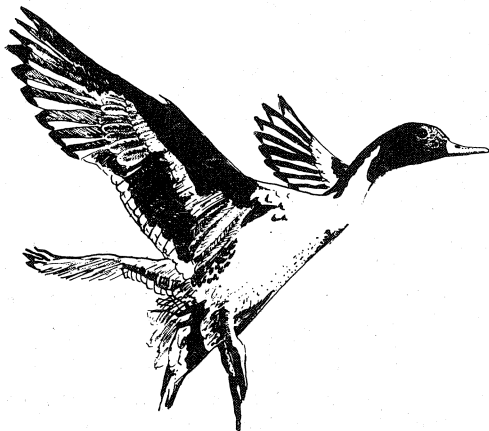
flocks totalling perhaps 1000 comes from SIT& BDM, November 5, Canso Causeway: "They would circle high over the causeway, then fall rapidly to the water, then fly way up high again until they were invisible to the naked eye". The first confirmed Nova Scotia record of SABINE'S GULL, an adult photographed June 12 at Sable I. comes from IAM.

Distinguishing ARCTIC from COMMON TERNS in the fall is not easy. Both species were present through the summer: "COMIC" TERNS continued to be reported until early October, at least in the southwestern part of the province (for example 1000 or more September 1 at Brier I. JCS) 20 on October 6 at Cape Sable (S&BJS), one on October 5 at Sable I. (AAR), and a very late one, October 30 at Cherry Hill (SJF). ROSEATE TERNS are considerably less abundant than "comic"; we have reports of 10 or so at Matthew's Lake from the first week of August (RJC). The last one was seen at Sable I. September 2 (IAM). A colony of BLACK TERNS has established itself at Amherst Marsh (CD); about 10 young and 6 adults were seen July 23. A very late straggler or wanderer appeared at Cape Sable November 20-23, by now in winter plumage (S&BJS).

Both RAZORBILLS and COMMON MURRES were present at the Bird Islands at the end of June, as expected (HH). The first winter DOVEKIES appeared at Cape Sable (November 25, LS) and Mahone Bay (November 27, JSC). BLACK GUILLEMOTS are reported from various locations through the summer as well as occasionally in the fall. Only a single report of COMMON PUFFIN, an immature at Cape Sable November 18 (S&BJS).

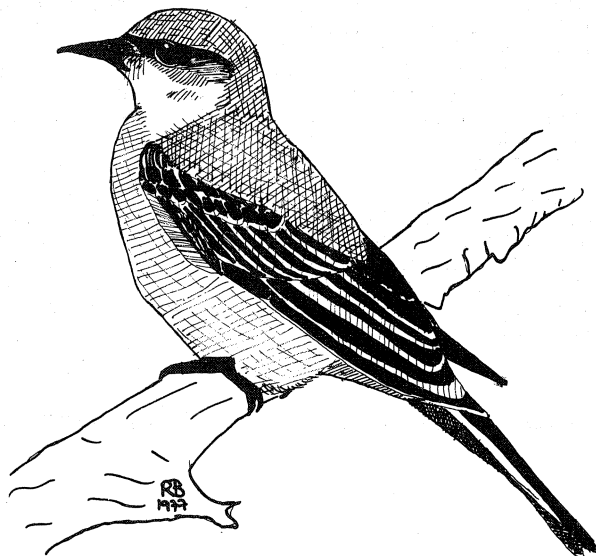
CWH Ed.

(Doves, through Woodpeckers - please see Page 4)



FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS

Both of our tyrant flycatchers were well reported. Robie Tufts found fewer EASTERN KINGBIRDS around in the Valley during the summer but a fair number gathered at many locations in the second half of August. First evidence of a migration was on August 17 when CRKA saw three in the interior of Yarmouth Co. By 26th numbers had risen to fives and sixes in S.W. Nova Scotia (JR&CDG, Ad'E, CRKA). A wave of 12-15 were moving along the Noel Shore on August 27 (EAC). After September 1st numbers dropped off with the latest sighting being October 15 at Lower Economy (FH).



The WESTERN KINGBIRD is a stray in Nova Scotia and seldom seen as often as it was this year. At least six, and possibly seven individuals were noted. There was one on Seal I. October 5 (ST, BMCt) and one at Louisbourg November 2 (RTB). At Lawrencetown on November 6, a fine Sunday, a Western Kingbird rested in the sunshine on the windowledge of a house from which it made forays to fly-catch. It remained for at least three hours enabling eight or more Halifax birders to get a good view (JLC). The other birds were at Pubnico on November 10 (RSd'E, JCd'E) and two at Little Harbour November 16-17 (RT).

A GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER appeared on Sable I. June 27 (HR) and another on September 29 at Louisbourg (RTB).

EASTERN PHOEBES arrived in usual numbers at the usual time but were late in leaving. A late bird stopped briefly at Cape Sable October 8 (BJS), another at Seal October 23 (SJF et al) and yet another at Lower W. Pubnico October 28 & 29 (RSd'E).

The EMPIDONAX group of flycatchers appeared as a "fairly common" breeding species. All three were heard in CBHNP throughout the summer and Con Desplanque reported that LEAST and ALDER were

regular at APBS. At Eel Brook the Alders nested as usual, the young hatched by July 12 (PRD) Phyllis Dobson writes that it was a particularly good summer for Alders in her area where they sang well into August. A late Empidonax (sp) was seen September 23 at Chebogue Pt. (CRKA).

As no reports were received of any concentrations of EASTERN WOOD PEWEE they presumably sneaked southwards unobserved. A few late goers were noted - September 23 at Chebogue Pt., October 5 at Cape Sable and October 22 on Seal (CRKA, SS, SJF et al).

Sorry to report a poor year for the OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER. They were "rare" in CBHNP, and absent in the Valley area (RSB, RT). PRD writes of having heard only one (late June) in Yarmouth Co. and the distinctive call was heard only twice by the Cohrs in Lunenburg Co.

Although seen at Port Morien in August and at Cherry Hill September 17 (HH, JL&JSC) there were not many HORNEED LARKS about until October. At Cape Sable numbers built steadily from October 9 (2) through 17th (20), 23rd (50+), to November 6 when there were 300+ (BJS). Fourteen were at Economy on October 16 (FH) and by 20th two flocks of 20 each were at Chebogue Pt. (CRKA). On November 2 a flock of 30-40 were in the Grand Pre meadows (RWT).

Most correspondants felt that TREE SWALLOWS were "as usual" in 1977, except for Eric Holdway in Pictou who found Tree and Bank swallows to be fewer in number while Barn were "better than usual". For the second year a pair of Tree Swallows raised a brood on Sable I. (IAM). "Trees" were seen in ones and twos throughout October with the latest date being November 13 when one was seen at Cape Sable (about the same time as 1976).

Andrew MacInnes found a colony of BANK SWALLOWS at Noel Point and counted 250 burrows. Late dates for Banks were October 23, 24 at Petite Riviere and Centre, Lunan. Co. (Cohrs) and November 13 at Sable I. (WS).

ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOWS, rare but regular lately, were not reported this fall.

Unlike EH at Pictou, W.E. Whitehead at Round Hill found BARN SWALLOWS to be down in number locally with some of the nesting sites vacant. At least two pairs nested on Sable I. for the third year (see Vol. 19, No. 1, p. 32) and a tardy pair were feeding young in the nest in Shelburne Co. on August 20 (JR&CDG). They stayed much later this season - November 21 at Cape Sable, November 25 at Tiverton and November 27 at Antigonish (SS, MHP, RC); on November 29 there were two at the fish plant at South Side, Cape I. They flew into the plant where they were captured and fed flies the men caught for them, even taking them from the hand. (Lester d'Eon).

Gordon MacLeod saw CLIFF SWALLOWS in Sherbrooke and Port Hilford while Barry Sabeau observed that they were quite common on the lower ten miles of the LaHave River. They also appeared regularly at Crescent Beach and Petite Riviere (JL&JSC). A colony of four nests was established near APBS and two nests were completed in Annapolis Royal (WEW). Nesting activity in Cape Breton was disappointing with nests at Baddeck and Marble Mountain (June) being destroyed because of the "dirty mess" they made.

We would like more news of the PURPLE MARTIN colonies. Con Desplanque wrote in the spring that 14 of the 16 houses at the Rose colony were occupied and that 30 houses were full at the Amos place. No news since. Two martins were seen August 26-28 and one September 13-15 on Sable I. (IAM).

CORVIDS THROUGH WRENS

GREY and BLUE JAYS reappeared from their nesting areas in September. Bluejays were particularly plentiful with "many more than usual" reported from Antigonish, Wine Harbour and Pubnico (RC,GMaC,L,TCd'E). The Meyerowitz's at St. Esprit, who usually do not have any Bluejays had one arrive on October 12 and stay until press-time, causing widespread comment there. "A great number" were seen in late September and early October in Halifax Co. and there are many still around there (HPM).

COMMON RAVENS and COMMON CROWS remain (predictably) the same. No nests were noted.

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEES became "common" and "plentiful" in September. Hardy Moffat writes of a "wave" of Black-caps in the interior of N.S. in the last week of October, while the Cohrs noted "dozens, all active, noisy and on the move" at Green Bay and Petite Riviere October 22-24 (a repeat of the big wave in 1975 on the same date). Another big wave passed through Yarmouth Co. on November 5, followed by several smaller movements later in the month (PRD,CRKA).

BOREAL CHICKADEES were reported in normal numbers except from Yarmouth Co. where they were more common than usual. CRK Allen saw Boreals mixed with flocks of moving Black-caps on November 24 - of one flock of 20 almost all were Boreals.

For the past several years WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCHES have been very few in number and virtually absent at times. It is exciting to report that they have made a come-back this fall. At least 26 birds have been seen occasioning comments like "first I've ever seen here at Marriott's Cove, or for that matter anywhere else in N.S." (RDH) and "I have not seen one in our neighbourhood since 1972" (EER, Truro). Let us hope this trend continues.

At Sandy Bottom Lake a pair of RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES overwintered 1976-77, nested last June, and successfully produced a pair of young. The fledglings came to the suet log where they were fed by the parents (GBN,MCC). They appear to be attendant at feeding stations in steady numbers. The only migration report came from Brier I. where 50 a day passed through September 4-5 (NSBS).

Fifteen BROWN CREEPERS have been seen - a good number for early fall. The sightings range throughout N.S. from Sydney Forks to Pubnico.

All the HOUSE WRENS seen were on Seal I. Bruce McTavish and Stuart Tingley had five on October 4 and 3-4 daily thereafter until October 10.

Everyone must know by now what a catastrophic year this has been for the WINTER WREN. Its voice was missed on the warbler walks and Hant's County Field Trip. It was missed all over the province by many correspondents. None were seen or heard in Yarmouth Co., only one in Cape Breton, one at Turtle Lake and one at Somerset Rd., Lunenburg Co. No other reports.

Like the House Wren, all the LONG-BILLED MARSH WRENS were seen on Seal from October 1-10.

MIMIDS

Obviously, MOCKINGBIRDS are here to stay. Numbers continue to increase with each season. At least two pair nested in Yarmouth town and successfully raised broods. Mockers, singly and in twos and threes appeared from Sable to Seal and most places in between. Heaviest concentrations were in the S.W. of the province and Seal I. had the most at one time - one or two going through daily from October 1-10 with a high of 10 birds on October 7.

GREY CATBIRDS, heard more often than seen, were present in average numbers in most areas. They nested at Eel Brook again and the young were out of the nest on July 3. Reports of lingering catbirds are: September 18 at Antigonish and Petite Riviere (RC, JLC), September 22 at West Pubnico (TCd'E) and Sable I. October 15 (IAM).

A late spring migrant BROWN THRASHER arrived on Seal June 14. The other reports are all for fall and all from the S.W. area. There was one at Petite Riviere October 8 (JSC) and a succession of birds through Cape Sable on September 28 (2), October 4 (1), October 10 (1) and October 22 (1) (SS). They were also seen daily on Seal October 1-10.

ROBIN THROUGH KINGLET

It was not to be expected that ROBINS would be as numerous this year as in 1976 when they were present in unprecedented numbers. They were steady, however, and widespread in the usual places - in other words, more normal. The migration began early - they began flocking August 9 at Tusket (CRKA). A wave passed through Wine Harbour on September 19 and another on 21st (GMacL). At St. Esprit they were "all over the place" on September 30 and over 100 passed through on October 25. Flocks passed through Yarmouth and Shelburne Counties in early October at the same time that flocks were noticed at Round Hill. On October 17th another wave went through Yarmouth Co. and birds continued to move there in decreasing numbers until 31st. Robins were still around in November in small numbers and perhaps a few may overwinter where there is an adequate food supply.

Ella Roland in Truro saw comparatively few HERMIT THRUSHES there this season. Perhaps "her" birds were all down in Yarmouth Co. where numbers were reported to be up. All three common thrushes, Hermit, SWAINSONS and VEERY were heard singing frequently there, all summer, and Yarmouth Co. residents feel it was a "thrush year" (PRD, CRKA). A very late Hermit lingered at Cherry Hill November 19 (BH, SJF). Late Swainsons (which were reported as normal with no other mention of any migratory movements) were September 25 at Round Hill (6) (WEW), and October 11 at Black River, Kings Co. (3) (BLF).

GREY-CHEEKED THRUSHES were reported only from Cape Breton and from Sable I. Roger Burrows saw eight Grey-cheeks in and near CBHNP in June and July. The Sable I. report is very late and of one, possibly two birds 13-15 November. Ian McLaren notes the presence on Sable I. of very late Swainsons and Grey-cheeked Thrushes in the past suggests a hitherto unsuspected late migration.

The VEERY, never a heavily reported bird was, however, present in good numbers in Yarmouth Co. (see above) and in Cape Breton, and was heard from time to time in the woods near Petite Riviere.

Birders were warned that the GREENLAND WHEATEAR might appear here (Vol.19, No.1,p.36) and sure enough two did arrive. A spring Wheatear was seen and photographed on Sable June 18 (second Sable record)(HR) and a fall bird, September 17, was seen and photographed at Matthews Lake by George Perry and Robert Turner. They write: "Brownish head and back; throat very buffy. A striking white rump, wings and tail dark. Feeding on caterpillars when not perched on driftwood".

Charlie Allen saw the only EASTERN BLUEBIRD (a male) at Chebogue Point on the late date of October 8.

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLETS were well reported in the fall to be back in their wintering areas in better-than-usual numbers. Perhaps people noticed them more this year because of the dearth of RUBY-CROWNED KINGLETS during the summer. Sadly depleted in number most reports are of one or two (or none); Marion Hilton in Yarmouth writes of the only "wave" if it could be so termed: five together October 5-7.

PIPITS THROUGH STARLINGS

The fall movement of WATER PIPITS was well marked. Two flocks went through Cape Breton in mid September: on 16th at Louisbourg and 24th at Cheticamp (HH). The main body of pipits, however were passing through Yarmouth Co. during most of October and well into November. On October 4th there were 25+ at Cooke's Beach and on 9th 50+ were on Cape Sable (CRKA,SS). Another wave of 50 hit Cape Sable on October 23 and by 29th there were 90, the crest of the wave occurring on November 6 when there were over 100 (SS).

Perhaps this is going to be a BOHEMIAN WAXWING winter. Several small flocks have appeared already (early December). One bird was seen at Glace Bay November 6, five at Antigonish November 8-10, three in Halifax city November 21 and 10-12 at Brookside November 22nd.

The more common CEDAR WAXWINGS were seen frequently from mid August until late in September. Largest flock was 150+ at Crousetown September 18 (JLC). Latest seen (none reported in October) were four at Lower West Pubnico November 3 (DJd'E).

Thirteen reports of the NORTHERN SHRIKE came in, all in the S.W. except for one in Kings Co. and two in Halifax Co. (PH,EHC). The immature that appeared at Keji October 25 was a first park record. A young adult stayed an hour in the trees behind the Dobson feeder at Eel Brook on November 25. While there it made an odd hissing noise which did not seem to upset the chickadees, juncos and jays who continued to crowd the feeder, although they did seem to be somewhat curious. Was this perhaps an attempt to "swish" them up?

A single LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE was at Round Hill July 27 (WEW).

The ever present STARLING was very widely reported. PRD writes from Eel Brook, "Starlings formed their huge (100's) flocks in mid October and could be seen like smoke on the horizon as they went through their precision drills on through November". Comments such as "electrical wires coated with these birds" and "clouds of them seen throughout the county" were legion. The dubious honour of having the largest flock reported goes to Cape Breton where there were 3000+ at Glace Bay in late October (GC).

SC Ed.

VIREOS AND WARBLERS

The WHITE-EYED VIREO was seen again this fall, one, October 7 on Seal I. by Bruce D. Mactavish and Stuart I. Tingley; one, November 15 on Sable I. "adequately photographed" by Ian A. McLaren. The SOLITARY VIREO was last seen September 30 at Keji Park by Peter Hope, and there were small numbers daily October 1-10 on Seal I. with a maximum of 6 on October 5. The RED-EYED VIREO (like the Solitary, present in normal numbers throughout the summer) was last noted at Sydney Forks, 1 immature September 7 (RBl); at Antigonish "a few spread around the woodlot" September 1 (RC); at Cape Sable, 14 on September 19 (S&BJS) and on Wolfville Ridge, 1, October 6 (BLF). One PHILADELPHIA VIREO was identified September 15 on Sable I. by IAM et al.; and 2 (singing) were noted August 16 at Clydon Brook, 1, August 27 at Cheticamp, by R. Burrows. WARBLING VIREOS were noted this summer and fall: 1, July 6 at Glace Bay (Sara MacLean), and definite migrants, 2, September 19 at Cape Sable; one, October 7 "watched for several minutes in alders by Brig Pond" at Seal I., and one very late bird November 12 on Sable I. (IAM could not get a photo of this one due to the drizzly weather).

The WOOD WARBLER population was apparently normal during spring and summer 1977, and migrants were in evidence late August and early September, but few large mixed flocks were noted later, except for Yellow-rumped Warblers with one or two individuals of other species among them, for example, a few Black-throated Greens, Blackpolls or Yellowthroats. This was noted by Ruth Hebb in the Chester area and the same situation described in Yarmouth County by C.R.K.Allen. One big "wave" occurred September 17-19, when 100 kinds of many species of bird were killed at Cape Sable Light, numbers of warblers among them. This wave was very noticeable at Yarmouth on September 18, and included Flickers, Chickadees, Purple Finches, Juncos, Chipping Sparrows as well as Baybreasts, Parulas, Yellowthroats and "Myrtles". The countryside was hopping with small birds, particularly in the early morning (PRD et al., CRKA said their constant zig-zagging across the roads made it quite alarming to drive!).

All of our native warbler species have been reported this fall, and 8 exotic varieties. These latter are the PROTHONOTARY, September 14-16, up to 3 on Sable I., one photographed by A.A.Richard; the ORANGE-CROWNED, 1, August 30, MacKenzie Mountain (R.T.Burrows), 2, September 3, at Brier I. (J.L.Cohrs) and 1, October 23 at Seal I. (Sylvia Fullerton, Eric Cooke, Willett Mills); CERULEAN, 2 weeks in early September at Sydney, carefully "researched" by Roy and Ethel Blakeburn; YELLOW-THROATED, 2, September 20-25 at Sable I. by Alban Richard, 1, October 4 on Seal I., identified by Stuart Tingley and Bruce Mactavish; PINE, 1 bright male, October 5, at Seal I. "well seen" by SIT and BDM; also PRAIRIE, 1 immature seen October 1 at the Light, Seal I. by the same two observers, and 1, September 2, by CRKAllen, 2, September 4 by Eric Mills at Brier I., one again at Seal, perhaps the same one, October 8 and October 10 by ELM,SIT,BDM and IAM - there was also another earlier Prairie Warbler on Sable I. September 1 (IAM et al.); KENTUCKY, 1, female or immature well seen and heard by BDM October 2 at Seal I. on the road to the Lighthouse; lastly a minimum of 9 YELLOW-BREASTED CHATS, seen September 13 to November 2 on Sable I., Seal I. (3 in one day there), Lockeport (RJ Crosby) and Yarmouth (DB Kirk).

There are no October dates for the BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER, and the September dates fit neatly between September 1 and September 19. On the first of these dates there "must have been close to a dozen" at the Ted D'Eon place in West Pubnico - an unusual concentration there - and on September 19 one was included in the big kill

at Cape Sable Light (Smiths). We did not pick up our usual waves of warblers on Brier Island this fall - perhaps they did not occur - at any rate our first TENNESSEE migrants mentioned are the "many" seen at Mooseland August 28 (Sandra Myers) and the latest date comes from Cape Breton - a few noted September 16 by HH and RTB. Two reports of the NASHVILLE are from the Valley: 17 seen August 27 at Round Hill (WEW), a "small flock" September 4 at Greenwich (CE); there was one September 25 from Ethel Crathorne at Cole Harbour, and a very late one was seen December 3 in Halifax "in the window box 3 feet from the livingroom" by Lise Cohrs. The NORTHERN PARULA, well reported throughout the summer, was flocking by August 11 in Yarmouth County, but received no mention at migration time, except for two singles, members of mixed warbler flocks September 30 and October 8 in Yarmouth County.

The YELLOW WARBLERS were flocking up in August, 6 noted August 11 at Bel Brook (2, the normal number), and 5, August 22 at Surette's I. by Eric and Barbara Ruff. A hail storm in July "seems to have cut down the number of Yellow Warblers terribly at Antigonish" according to Roland Chaisson, who said they had arrived in large numbers which had decreased greatly after the storm. His last sighting was August 31. Yellows were among the warblers at Cape Sable September 19, and notably a part of the "fair-sized flocks September 30 and great 'wave' October 8 in Yarmouth County" (CRKA et al.). The MAGNOLIA, as abundant a breeding species in the woods as the Yellow is in town gardens, was well reported all summer, but only a few noted in the fall, September 6-25 - in residential areas, so presumably on the move. CAPE MAY WARBLERS, first an adult male November 16 appeared in the garden at the Ted D'Eon's at West Pubnico, to be joined there by a female (or imm.) November 21, and the male bird was still there November 30 - may still be present. These birds were also observed by Delisle d'Entremont and the Edgar Hamiltons. Late BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLERS were 1 (adult male) September 19 at Cape Sable, and 1, October 12-15 at Pubnico (E&VH).

As usual our most reported warbler was the YELLOW-RUMPED (Myrtle). After an obviously good breeding season the birds moved out in September and October, leaving only a rare few behind, this year. In Cape Breton, "many" were seen September 15 at Boularderie (RBF), 2 October 10 at Glace Bay (SM); in Wine Harbour there were "small on-and-off migrations of immatures scattered through September and October" (O&GM); in King's Co. large flocks were noted at Greenwich September 18 and October 7 (CE); at Round Hill, Annapolis Co., 18 on October 10 (WEW); at Green Bay October 7 "dozens all up and down the beach, groups of 20's, 40's, one of 70+. Swishing created panic with bodies zapping in all directions, crashing into each other and filling the bushes" (JSC); at Truro "a real little wave the morning of September 13, one or two in every bush and tree - the first white frost of the season" (EER); began appearing in the Chester regions early September, large numbers October 19 (RDH); a few on Cape Sable September 28, October 5 and 16; very abundant October 6 at West Pubnico, still so November 2, 1 only November 18 (TD'E); "waves" through central Yarmouth County August 11, August 30, September 24, October 2, October 7, October 8 ("huge") (MWH, CRKA, PRD); "still lots on Sable I. mid November (IAM et al.); and some seen September 28-October 7 over Georges Bank (RSd'E). There seems to be no pattern here, except that a large movement was province-wide October 6-10, from northern Cape Breton out to Georges Bank, the top of the peak October 7-8.

Last dates for the BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER were September 11 at Louisbourg (RTB), September 25 at Cole Harbour (EAC) and October 19 at Keji (PH). For the BLACKBURNIAN, an early migrant hitched a ride on a ship at Georges Bank August 1; 2 (an adult and

an imm.) were killed at Cape Sable September 19, and a last sighting was of 1, November 26 at Green Bay (JL&JSC). Two late CHESTNUT-SIDEDS were at 23 Baker St., Yarmouth October 12; an all-day flight of BAY-BREASTEDS went over the Elson camp at Greenwich September 5, and there was a late male November 12 on Sable I.; BLACKPOLLS accompanied most of the flights of Yellow-rumped Warblers throughout the fall (noted by RDH and others), a good-sized flock (50+) appeared October 7 at Green Bay - with Yellowrumps - and a few were seen at Tusket October 8, a last one at Chester October 15, and up to 3 as late as November 15 on Sable. The PALM WARBLER was well reported; 44 at Louisbourg September 16, a big flock near Antigonish September 18, none seen at Chester until October 6, then several times; a few seen in Yarmouth Co. October 15-16 (perhaps set back by hurricane Evelyn) and late ones in mid November at West Pubnico, Petite Riviere and on Sable I. These last (2) seemed to be "Western Palms" according to Ian McLaren, who thinks this is probably routine in Nova Scotia in autumn. OVERBIRD late reports were all in September, notably 5, recuperating at Cape Sable from their rough trip, September 19, except for 1, October 22 at Sydney - but this bird was injured and caged, so can scarcely be counted - and one late individual photographed November 11 on Sable by IAM.

The NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH in fall sticks strictly to the south shore: 1 seen August 13 at Lockeport, 2, September 3 at West Pubnico, 10-12, September 19 at Cape Sable, 2 September 22 at W. Pubnico and 1 there until October 26 "in some bushes in the backyard over wet swamp ground" at the Ted D'Eon's. The only reports of the MOURNING WARBLER are of 1, August 26 at Sydney Forks (RB1) and a tiny "wave" at Brier I.: 5, September 3, 4, September 4 (ELM) who also saw one on Seal I. October 8. The COMMON YELLOWTHROAT was seen in migration August 21 at St. Esprit, Round Hill and Yarmouth (Sandra Meyerowitz, MEW, MWH), in September at Louisbourg, Pictou, Antigonish and on Cape Sable, (RTB, EH, RC, S&BJS), in October at Beach Meadow, Shelburne Co. (TW) and Glenwood, Yarmouth Co. (CRKA), in November on Wolfville Ridge, (BLF). Next to the "Myrtle" this was our most reported warbler. The WILSON'S was apparently last seen August 30 at W. Pubnico by Ted D'Eon. The CANADA last seen September 5 at Greenwich "hiding in the raspberry bushes near our camp", by Christopher Elson. The AMERICAN REDSTART became noticeable August 6 and 18 at Round Hill, August 7 and 13 at Pictou, August 14 at Arisaig (this is near Antigonish but RC thinks the place missed the hailstorm), August 20 and 28 in the Mira area (HH) and August 30 at 23 Baker St., Yarmouth (MWH). There were "many" on the Great Pubnico Lake road and in W. Pubnico September 4, and 2 on Cape Sable September 19, one last one there (female or imm.) on October 4. A number of these reports called the Redstarts "numerous", "very numerous" or "abundant", which would suggest a good breeding season.

HOUSE SPARROW

The HOUSE SPARROW population remains constant, according to most observers in Nova Scotia. We are glad to report that the small flock on Seal I. has not increased but possibly diminished, only two seen there October 8 (ELM et al.).

ICTERIDS

The BOBOLINK left us between the dates September 10 and October 4, when the last one noted - an immature - reached Cape Sable. The EASTERN MEADOWLARK was seen in Cape Breton (4) in July but not mentioned elsewhere during the summer. Fall reports were all for October and November and the birds were all seen along the south shore: 2 at Seal I. on October 5 (SIT, BDM), 2 at Argyle Head October 30 & 31 (CRKA), one at Cape Sable November 2 & 3 (SS) and one at Broad Cove November 19 (BH&SJJF). Ian McLaren and his group on Sable I. report a young male YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD there August 16, and at least two September 14-28.

A pair of REDWINGED BLACKBIRDS in the Mira area July 16 were observed fiercely attacking a heron (no doubt completely innocent) that strayed too near their nest, and struck it several times (AS). At Mooseland Road, the Tays noted that resident Redwings were gone by August 27. At Antigonish, blackbirds began to gather August 15 and by September flocks numbered up to 300, at least 80% Redwings (RC). Back at Mooseland a flock of around 40 arrived at a feeder - most of them immature males - and stayed around all of November (Wendie Tay and Sandra Myers). At Glace Bay a flock of over thirty adult male Redwings arrived in mid-October, immatures noted October 23 (SM). Thelma Hawkins wrote that in the Valley "flocks of blackbirds became very evident in late August; the grain and corn fields seem to be attracting more and more of them as the acreage expands". A flock of 25-30 was seen near Wolfville November 2, reported by R.W. Tufts; and one of 25, November 21 at Pubnico (E&VH) - at this time a few came to town feeders in Yarmouth, mostly young males, according to Van Killam.

Fifteen reports account for at least 23 Northern Orioles this fall, from late July to early December. These conspicuous birds were seen 1 at Louisbourg (RTB), 1 in the Valley (WEW), 3 in Halifax Co. (EAC, Sandra Myers, Rita Backman) and the remaining 18 in Shelburne and Yarmouth Counties. The last 5 heard of are in Yarmouth town at the Van Killam feeder (3) and 2 at the Fred Nickerson feeder, where they have been for several weeks (MAN).

Like the Redwinged, the RUSTY BLACKBIRD had left its nesting areas by late August, a few to travel to the Dartmouth Piggery (one of its favorite stopping places) by September 11, to Cape Sable by September 20-21, to Antigonish and West Pubnico September 24, to Tusket September 30, to Glace Bay 25, seen October 9, to West Pubnico 4, October 20, to Lower West Pubnico, 5, October 20, to Cape Sable, 7, October 23-24 and a big Valley flock, 150-200, gathered November 2 at Round Hill. Rustys appear to be well distributed about the province.

August flocks of the COMMON GRACKLE are larger than those of either Redwinged or Rusty: 37, August 8 at Liverpool, 60, August at Pictou, 75, August 30 at Tusket. In September they tend to join forces, big mixed flocks seen frequently, noted this year in Cape Breton, at Antigonish, the Valley and in Halifax (although Lise Cohrs reports 35 Grackles (only) in her Halifax garden September 17). Large flocks remain in the Valley, for example the 300-400 noted by WEW October 27 at Centrelea: and some will overwinter, as will individuals at feeders in SW Nova Scotia. One Grackle left Cape Sable October 29, but no others were reported from our offshore islands. Most of these leave via the Isthmus, where a mixed flock 10,000 strong of Grackles, Redwings and Rustys had congregated at Amherst Head by October 23 (RTB).

The BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD has attracted little notice this fall, the only report of a large number coming (expectably) from the Valley, 150-200, October 13 at Centrelea (WEW). Roger Burrows counted 40, September 18 in the Baddeck area, and Terry Wentzell had a flock of 21 in his garden in Dartmouth October 10; but there were only two sightings of Cowbirds at Antigonish, the last of one bird only November 2 (RC), and the "first one for the fall" at Yarmouth was on November 16 at Van Killam's feeder, the last sighting there 2 (only) on November 28.

TANAGERS

In addition to the five sightings of SCARLET TANAGERS listed in our September News Bulletin, fourteen more can be added, ten of them in various localities in Cape Breton, seven of them seen by Roger Burrows, one by George Brown (at Glace Bay) and 2 (a pair) at Boularderie by Roberta Fraser. The other 4 were fall sightings of 3 on Seal I. October 1-10, noted by the Cohrs, Chris Helleiner, Stuart Tingley, Bruce Mactavish, and 1, October 23, also on Seal I. (EHC, SJF, WJM).

GROSBEAKS AND FINCHES

The ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK was well reported this year, and fall migrants were noted at Sable I., 3 birds, September 12-13, also at Pubnico, a female October 12, (E&VH). At West Pubnico Ted D'Eon was having difficulties with two birds, one seen September 3, and the other October 15-17, and both very suggestive of the female BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK. The October bird's breast was almost the same color as a young robin's. On August 10 at Amherst Con Desplanque saw a bird which he described carefully (on the Rare Bird Form) which certainly sounds like a female Black-headed Grosbeak. Since these two (the Rose-breasted and the Black-headed) hybridize, it is surprising that they have not met the fate of so many of our birds lately and been re-classified as one species, two races. This would give us fewer worries about identification, but would also take a lot of fun out of life - for the bird-watcher. Meanwhile this editor is quite willing to report two good sight records of the Black-headed Grosbeak in Nova Scotia in 1977, one seen August 10 at Amherst by Con Desplanque, another seen October 15 at West Pubnico by Ted D'Eon. (Details by request).

Two other exotics seen this fall were the INDIGO BUNTING and the DICKCISSEL, a male Indigo Bunting October 8 at Tusket (CRKA), 1-3 daily October 1-10 on Seal I. (SIT, BDM) and 1 (female) October 19 at Port L'Hebert (Robert Turner). Three Dickcissels were seen on Brier I. September 1 by the Cohrs family, who report one bird a male in fading plumage, two others with bright yellow on the breast. Three others have been visiting Van Killam's feeder in Yarmouth to date, 1, November 8, joined by another November 17, and these by a third November 22.

Seventeen of our reporters mention seeing and/or hearing small flocks of EVENING GROSBEAKS since last September. By October they were noted very generally, but still unsettled through that month and November. On November 26 a dozen settled at the Desplanque feeder at Amherst, and a flock of 20 at the Clark feeder at St. Croix. Only three pairs (a male and a female) were observed this last summer, all in Cape Breton (Sara MacLean).

The story on the PURPLE FINCH is consistent throughout the province: good numbers present spring and summer, and evidence of nesting in suitable habitat; most of the birds disappearing the last of August during or following their moult - (which took place around August 11 where young were out of the nest July 12 - PRD). Possible fall migrations were 1 (female) October 4, and a pair (male and female) October 8 seen at Cape Sable (SS). This was definitely a PINE GROSBEAK year. We have 22 reports, covering the province and representing at least 150 birds. Early in September we began hearing them, single birds calling from treetops, sometimes all afternoon. Then in October small flocks appeared, usually 4-8 birds, but some of 20 or more, stopping to feed briefly, then flying on, several at once calling. This went on, according to reports, from St. Esprit to Robert's Island, from Amherst to Sable I., where their presence caused Ian McLaren to speculate "may reflect wider movement, rare out here". (The truth is, there was no more room on the mainland).

The COMMON REDPOLL has put in an early appearance, as usual starting in Cape Breton, seen September 25 in the Sydney area by Hedley Hopkins. Roger Burrows reports 3 from Amherst Point October 21 and Stuart Tingley a flock of 20 there (APBS) October 30. It is good news that the PINE SISKIN seems to be on the increase again. Very large numbers are reported from Cape Breton: during the summer months "largest flocks totalled over 100 in the Grand Anse valley (RTB), 100+ August 27 at Sydney Forks (RBI), numbers seen also at Highlands Park, Homeville, Cheticamp and Louisbourg. At Lower Economy Frank Hennessey calls them "common from October 9, flock of 200 October 15". There were 10 at APBS October 22 (CD), "very common by late summer" at Antigonish (RC), 60+ September 30 at Pictou (EH), 50-60 at Wolfville July 7-30 (in R.W. Tufts' garden), "very noticeable in small numbers in July" at Wine Harbour (O&GM), 50+ feeding in a birch tree October 7 at Port Joli (JUA), 10+ and roaming smaller flocks in June at Green Bay, 5 there November 26 "very tame" (JL&JSC), 1, July 13 in Halifax "catching moths on the pavement near the Tupper Building - unusual behavior" (CWH), 15+ October 22 at APBS Field Trip, 6, October 24 at West Pubnico (TD'E), a few seen at times in summer in Yarmouth County, but a flock of over 80 seen on October 19 at Bas de L'Isle (Surette's I.) by CRKA.

The AMERICAN GOLDFINCH was abundantly present through spring and summer and early fall, but was gone by the end of October. At Wine Harbour "they became more common the second week of June - both they and the Siskins loved the rhubarb seed" according to Gordon MacLeod. Reports of "common here all summer" were general throughout the province: Holdway at Pictou found "more than usual", Chaisson at Antigonish noted that although there were as many Goldfinches present as last year they left earlier. An interesting "peak" was noticeable from September 20 to 25: at Round Hill, 20-30 on September 20, 100+ September 27 and down to 18 October 9 (WEW), on September 24 flocks of Goldfinches became very noticeable and on the 25th there was a big movement of them through Yarmouth Co. (CRKA), on that same day there were at least 100 on Cape Sable (down to 15, October 5, SS). A later movement in Yarmouth occurred on October 10, when many flocks of Goldfinches were found congregated at Wedge Point, a notable "taking-off" place (CRKA). Goldfinches have not been reported since October 30 (PRD).

The RED CROSSBILL was plentiful in the Chester region in late spring of '77 (RDH, SIT) and was seen in fair numbers at Wine Harbour this season (Munroe and GM), Roger Burrows saw 4 at Louisbourg November 4, but none has been reported elsewhere. CRKAllen wrote that both species of Crossbill were lacking in Yarmouth Co. this summer and fall. However the WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL has been

seen in several places, a few in early spring, more from June on: 5, June 11 at Lr. Economy, 20 there November 19 (FH); "seen" (no numbers given) in fall at Baddeck by HH; 10, October 26 at Wolfville Ridge "first I have seen this near Wolfville in years" (BLF), and 3, July 7, 2 November 1-4 and 1, November 14 at Sable I. (IAM).

SPARROWS AND BUNTINGS

This was a season of rarities among the Sparrows and Buntings; in this group we have 21 among a possible 27 species to report. Although none was reported in Nova Scotia during the summer, two RUFIOUS-SIDED TOWHEES were among the migrants leaving this fall, one male October 16 at Cape Sable (BJS) and 1, October 26 at Middle West Pubnico (Ted. & Bertin F. D'Eon). Another greater rarity, a LARK BUNTING was thoroughly inspected and photographed October 1-3 on Seal I. - an immature male (still showing some black on the sides), seen by all members of two parties present on the island: Bruce Mactavish, Stuart Tingley, Eric Mills, Chris Helleiner, Sylvia Fullerton, John and Shirley Cohrs.

Breeding Bird Surveys (BBS) may give us the answers to our suspicions of bird shortages following last winter's disastrous weather in the wintering grounds of some of them. Our reports, or lack of them, concerning the SAVANNAH SPARROW suggest that we may have a reduced population of them this year. Cape Breton is exceptional, reporting Savannahs as usual, but we have only eight other reports and migrating numbers were small (when seen), the largest being the 20+ found on Cape Sable September 17, on the NSBS Field Trip. The last reports, also from Cape Sable are of 2-3, October 31, and 1, November 7 there (SS). The Sable I. race, our "Ipswich" was also seen, only 1, September 17 on Cape Sable, still there, or another September 27 (BJS). The Cohrs observed 1, October 22, near Lunenburg, another, October 23, at Petite Riviere. Ian McLaren said the Ipswich population "took a beating" last winter, but should recover rapidly. His students, H. Ross and Sue MacCormack were on the island until the end of August. Alban Richard, resident there, supplied extensive autumn notes. Ian himself was there September 12-16 and November 12-15. One special occurrence for the season was the successful mating of a male Savannah with a female Ipswich - they brought off a brood, but the female then defected to another mate, an Ipswich male. Many people have difficulties with these sparrows, in fact with identification of all our sparrows, in their various changing plumages. For those of us who do Ian has written: Young sparrows seem to give many people problems, as the bird guides don't depict them well, and they have some puzzling features. Young Savannahs are often very yellowish and coarsely streaked, and I have received two "puzzling" photos from birders wanting an identification of these. Another puzzler is the late-born, streaked juvenal Chipping Sparrow; these sometimes are seen well into the fall. These may have quite fine, dark breast streaks. One must learn to identify such birds by shape, size and comportment. Don't look for isolated "field marks" without getting an overall impression of the bird as well.

The GRASSHOPPER SPARROW has become a regular rarity, especially in the fall on Seal I., where one was seen on October 23 by SJP, EHC, WJM.

The SHARP-TAILED SPARROW unlike the Savannah, was plentiful this year, in the marshes when it finally arrived, and by late August the strange little whispered song was to be heard in all directions - if you stood in the middle of a marsh - a month later, all was quiet there. The VESPER SPARROW departure time was October 8-9, one noted on the 8th at Petite Riviere - singing! - by JSC; 10, October 9 at Antigonish (RC). A LARK SPARROW was a find for H. Ross on Sable, seen August 29, 1 also, October 22 at the south end of Bras d'Or Lake, Inverness Co. (ELM), possibly a second sighting for Cape Breton, a first being on the list given by Earl Godfrey, as additional Cape Breton sightings, in the Canadian Field Naturalist, Vol.78, No. 2, 1964.

The DARK-EYED JUNCO was reported "as usual" and in a few cases, more than usual this season. Flocks began appearing along the roadsides of Rte. 3 in Yarmouth Co. August 20, seen off and on there during the next two months, observed also September 24 in Halifax Co. by Sandra Myers, in the Valley September 26-29 (WEW, TPH); seen at departure points in October and November (only a few left via Cape Sable - last seen November 26) - at Beach Meadows November 5 (TW), West Pubnico November 19 (TD'E) and had become established at many feeders by mid October.

This may be a good winter for TREE SPARROWS, ten reports already, mostly of singles, but a few good flocks. The first seen was on the Clydon Valley Golf Course, Cape Breton by RTB, the next one oddly enough on Seal I. October 8, by ELM et al. Sylvia Fullerton and her October 22 group found 5 Tree Sparrows on Seal, and the next day 2 appeared at Cape Sable (SS). Still contrary to expectation 7 were at Round Hill October 29 (WEW) and 11 there November 3; 5, November 19 at Lr. Economy (FH) and 3, November 23 on Wolfville Ridge (BLF). In Yarmouth Co. fair numbers have been seen from October 29 to date (December 1) by the Hamiltons, Ted D'Eon and CRK Allen.

Fifteen reports of the CHIPPING SPARROW is about normal. David Christie, discussing the BBS thought there was a slight decrease in comparative numbers of Chipping Sparrows this year and last. It well may be so, roadside flocks in the fall seemed to be as large as usual, but were fewer, came later and stayed around a very short time - September 24-October 11 in Yarmouth Co. (CRKA, PRD). E. Holdway in Pictou on the other hand found Chippies more than usual in number this year. Other factors may have influenced both these situations. Our reports indicate good breeding success; we can hope any decrease in the Chippie population will soon be righted again.

Three CLAY-COLORED SPARROWS were "well seen at various locations on Seal I. October 5 (none on subsequent days)" by Stuart Tingley and Bruce Mactavish. This newcomer is becoming a regular stray - or were we missing it before? Our regular "regular stray", the FIELD SPARROW was also seen on Seal I. (and nowhere else in Nova Scotia), 1-3 daily October 4-9 by SIT and BDM; then later on Seal, 4+, October 22, by SJF et al., and 1, the same day, (October 22) at Petite Riviere by JLC.

A summer sighting of a WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW was of 1, July 22 at Wine Harbour (O&GM). The fall migration started with two birds seen September 25, an immature at Cap Rouge, an adult in the Grand Anse valley (RTB). Next seen were 3 immatures October 7-8 at Cape Sable (S&BJS), then 1-2 of the western race gambelli seen almost daily on Seal I. October 3-9 (SIT, BDM); 1 juvenile October 12 at Paradise (Jean Morse); 3, November 3 at Round Hill (WEW) and the last ones reported 2, up to the 8th of November on Sable I.

At Chester the WHITE-THROATED SPARROW was reported "plentiful through the nesting season"(RDH); sizable flocks were noted in September at Sydney (EB1) and at Wilmot (TPH); but the big movement came in October, noted on the 8th at Wilmot, October 2-9 at Round Hill, October 5-9 "all over the place" at Cape Sable, October 10 at Mooseland Road in Halifax Co. (Tays) and also in Yarmouth Co. (Gwen Trask "lawn covered"), and that day also at Wedge Point, a concentration of Whitethroats (CRKA). Another "wave" was noticeable at West Pubnico the first week of November, when they were called "very numerous" up to the 8th of that month, down to 2-3 after that (TD'E). Judging by spring song and fall sightings of flocks the Whitethroat was here in normal numbers this year.

A few FOX SPARROWS have been seen this fall, most of them in Cape Breton (also seen there during the summer, 1's and 2's in five localities by RTB) - the largest number a flock of 24+, one of which was killed flying into a window October 18 at Glace Bay (AC). There were 3, October 18 at Black River, King's Co. (BLF) but the rest were all 1's and 2's which appeared off and on at feeders in October and November, at Wilmot, Turtle Lake, Lockeport, several in Halifax and quite a few in Yarmouth. No doubt some of these will winter here. The rarer LINCOLN'S SPARROW was present in small numbers in only three localities (as reported): Sydney, by HH (no date given), Wine Harbour "last heard August 2" (O&GM) and on Brier I., September 4, one with a mixed flock of warblers, noted and carefully described by Lise Cohrs. The SWAMP SPARROW, generally observed during the summer, received little attention in the fall, no concentration noted, only a few individuals, latest dates seen, September 25 in Cape Breton (RTB) and October 8 in Yarmouth Co. (CRKA).

An interesting record for the SONG SPARROW (or for Sable I.) was of a nest, the first nesting of the Song Sparrow on Sable, "in the deep dead grass of the fenced yard of a house at the Meteorological Station - brought off four young first brood, with a probable second" - so writes Ian McLaren. Elsewhere the Song Sparrow has been well and generally reported. Concentrations collected at Round Hill September 23, at Wilmot September 29, at Yarmouth September 28, and five migrating Song Sparrows October 16 at Cape Sable were probably about the last to go from here - "scarce after October 8" being a frequent observation. The few lingerers will doubtless attempt to winter here. Good luck to them.

The first LAPLAND LONGSPURS to arrive this fall were 2, September 26 at Morien Bar (RTB), the last two reported were at Lawrencetown, seen by Christopher Elson, 1, November 6 and 2, November 13 by ELM & IAM. Between these dates 130 individuals have been seen, the largest number at Glace Bay Sanctuary, 75, October 8 (RTB), also a flock of 15+, October 15 at Louisbourg, and a flock of 14, October 16 at Cherry Hill Beach (SJF). Others were seen at Seal I., Pinkney's Point, Rockland (EF) and Antigonish.

R. W. Tufts reported SNOW BUNTINGS seen on the Grant Pre meadows in October, and added that the average date of arrival there for a 13-year period is October 25. This year for all of Nova Scotia it works out to October 22. Our earliest sighting is of 20, October 8 at Jones' Harbour (RMT), and of many sightings since then, most were of good-sized flocks (15-40), increasing in November, the largest so far 200+ November 6-13 at Cape Sable. Besides the places mentioned Snow Buntings have been seen this fall at Morien Bar, Louisbourg, Victoria Co., Amherst Pt., Nappan, Northport, Lr. Economy, Cherry Hill, Rockland, Keji, Sable I., Argyle Head, Lr.W.Pubnico and Seal I.

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF REPORTS

Deadline for next issue is March 30, 1978.

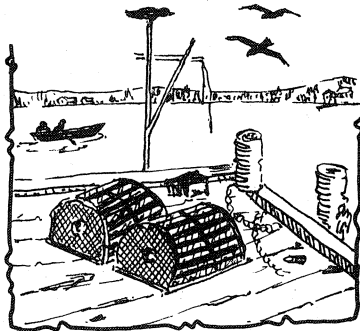
Please send bird reports to the Records Editor,

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

Please send photographs, sketches, articles and letters to the

Editor in Chief, Newsletter,
Nova Scotia Bird Society,
c/o Nova Scotia Museum,
1747 Summer Street,
Halifax, N.S. B3H 3A6

NOTE: Extra Rare Bird Report Forms are available
upon request - free. Please use Museum address.



FIELD TRIP REPORTS

MAY 28 - WARBLER DAY IN CAPE BRETON

Twelve enthusiastic bird watchers met at 8 a.m. on May 28 at the Radar Base parking lot for a trip to Brown's Lake led by Otis Cossitt. We were glad to have 3 boys with keen eyesight and they also knew the songs of many birds. It was cold and windy at Brown's Lake, but warmer as we went in to Grand Lake. We sighted 43 species including Catbirds and the Redstarts gave us a good show. We also saw an American Bittern in flight.

Bertha Hopkins

JUNE 11 - PRE ROUND MARSHES

At nine o'clock on Saturday morning, June 11th, ten people gathered at the church corner in Annapolis Royal, where Highway 8 joins Highway 1. Dr. and Mrs. Roland were there from Truro, Dr. and Mrs. Bill Morse from Paradise, Noel and Marilyn Durling from Annapolis Royal, Frances Thompson, Eric Muntz, Bill Wetmore and Calder Fraser from the same town.

We searched the marshes in the area, found an abundance of Willets but no Short-eared Owls. The most interesting birds were a flock of very young Bluewings on a small pond and a half-grown family of Killdeer.

We ate our lunch at the Frasers' house and during the afternoon we were invited to the home of Bill and Jean Morse where, for contrast, we found a good number of woodland birds on the slope of the South Mountain, including Hummingbirds on dead branches in the woods.

All of us felt it was a worthwhile day.

Calder Fraser

JUNE 25 - AMHERST AREA

On June 25, 1977 fourteen persons and a poodle, named Flip gathered at APBS from such far-off places as New Glasgow, Hopewell, Truro, Halifax, Kejimikujik, as well as from Amherst, to sample what the border area has to dish out in the form of water fowl. Although the weather was greatly improved over what was experienced in previous weeks, the sun was still not out to bring the birds into the open and to highlight them, and strong winds made our scopes somewhat shaky.

But the area came across very well nevertheless. Besides the ordinary fare it usually offers to observant visitors such as Grebes, Blacks, Teals, Pintails, Shovellers, Wigeons, Ring-necks, Wood Ducks and Coots, some extra flavour was added by appearances of a Gadwall, European Teal, Redhead, Ruddy Duck, Sora and Gallinules and a whiff of a crow-molested Great Horned Owl. The feast of the day was ended by a flying display of Purple Martins and a fly-past of Black Terns. The result of the whole exercise was that all visitors could add names to their lifelists.

Peter Hope's appetite was whetted and he suggested and got a dessert in the form of an introduction to Cape Jourimain. Here were observed amongst others Willets, Bonapartes, Eiders, Ospreys, hundreds of Mergansers and a Black-bellied Plover and a peep.

A pair of Shovellers frequented Three Fathom Harbour for several months during the spring and summer. The male shown in the photograph was shot from a blind set up by a small tidal pool. It is not known if this mated pair nested. The male was at all times extremely wary of the blind and kept a watchful eye while the female fed in the muddy margins of the pool.

Catbirds are usually skittish. This one at Sable Island 30 May 1977, remained still long enough for a portrait.

Ian McLaren travelled to West Bay, Inverness County, Cape Breton, 23 October 1977 to acknowledge a rare visit from a White Pelican.

The Great Egret allowed a close approach at Grand Desert, Halifax County, 29 October 1977.

Dorothea Drive Marsh and its fringes is a nesting haven for Green-winged Teal, Black Duck, Red-winged Blackbirds, Warblers, Robins, Barn Swallows and most likely several more species. All of this makes it a distracting place to photograph the Sora Rails that nest there. The female, shown in both photographs, had a buffy tail and less pronounced black face marks than the male. The male's undertail was pure white. The female seemed to carry out most of the nesting duties. Between June 12 and 23 the number of eggs rose from 11 to 14 which makes it highly probable that the peak may well have been 18. On June 30 only 5 eggs remained. On July 3 the nest, located about 6 inches above the water in a tussock of grass, was completely removed. Possibly this was the work of a raccoon, if raccoons will swim in two feet of water. The only time the young were seen was in the nest, immediately after hatching, about the base of the nest tussock and walking about on the thin film of duck weed. The latter, shown in the photograph, with duck weed hiding its face had an orangy-yellow chin tuft, white bill with a red protuberance at the base of the upper mandible, black plumage and very large feet and legs for its $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch diameter body.

Pictou County with its forests of mixed soft and hard wood provides excellent habitat for the Pileated Woodpecker. Harry Brennan located two nest holes to observe and photograph during the past season.

The immature male Broad-winged Hawk is from a nest found in Pictou County by Harry Brennan. The bird remained perching long enough to allow photographing with the aid of flash.

The Black-billed Cuckoo, nesting in Pictou County, is probably at the northernmost extent of its breeding range.

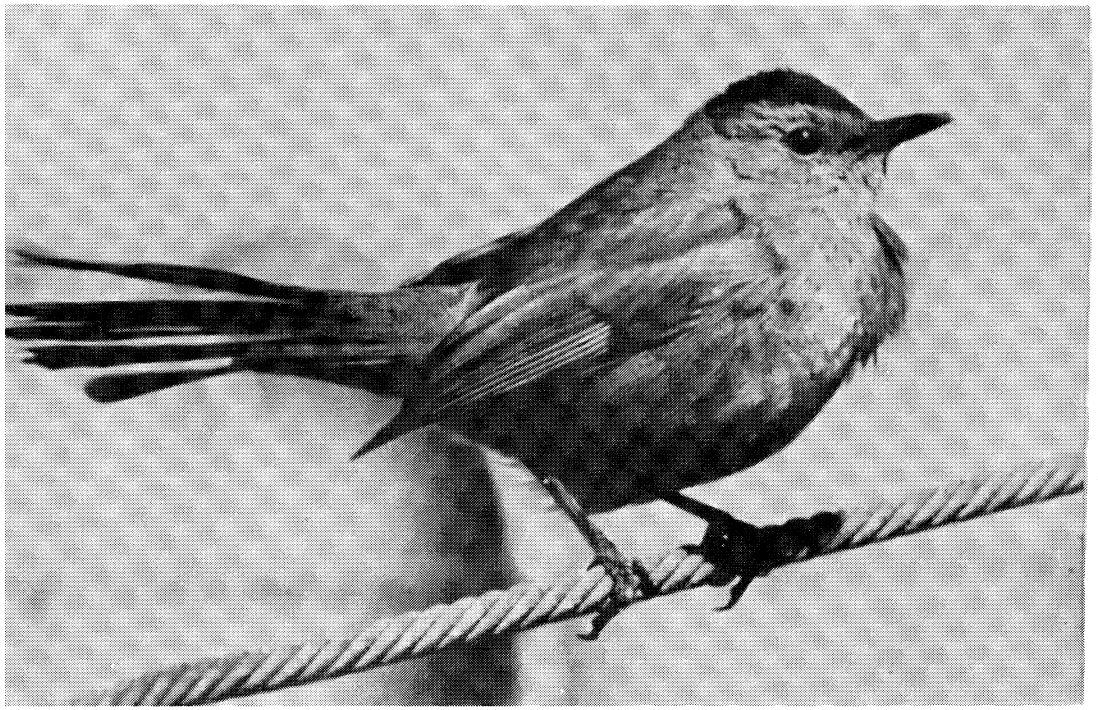
The Greater Shearwater was photographed off Brier Island during the 1977 President's Field Day held on Labour Day weekend.

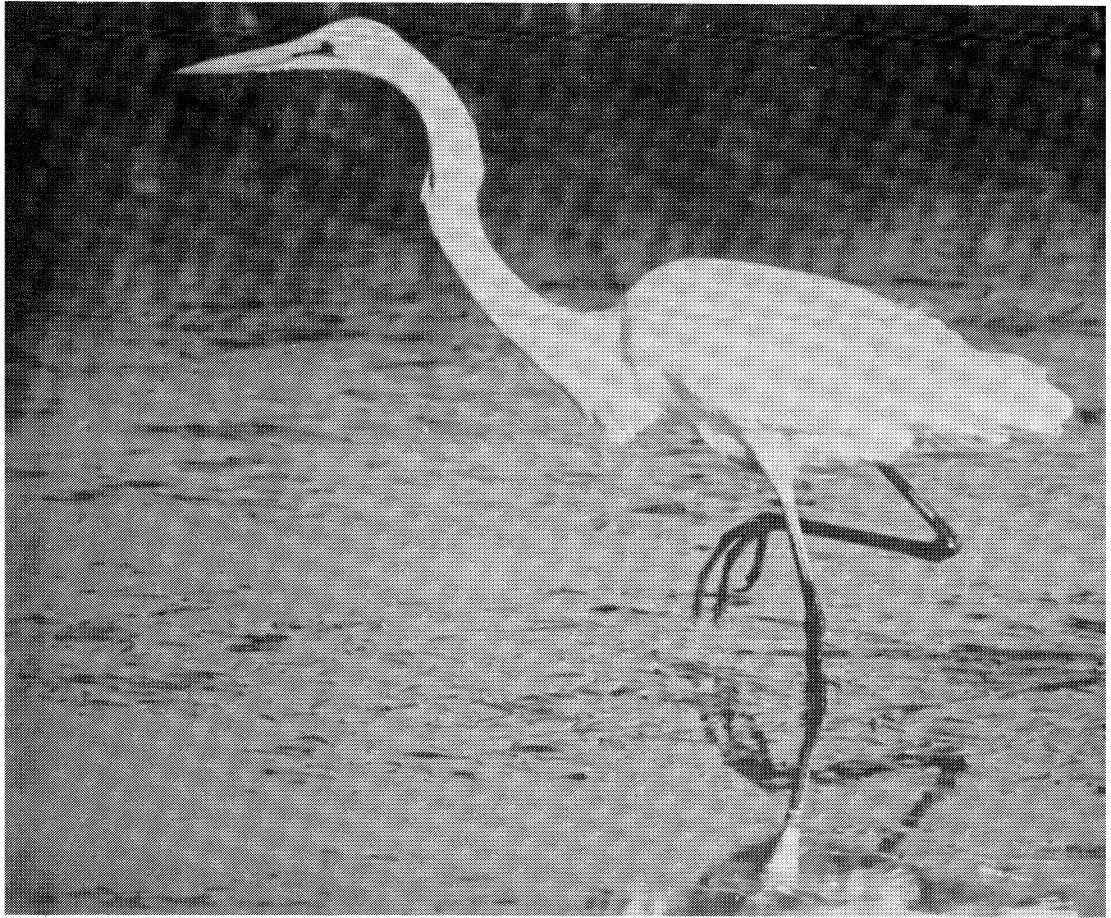
Ralph Connor



male shoveller

connor



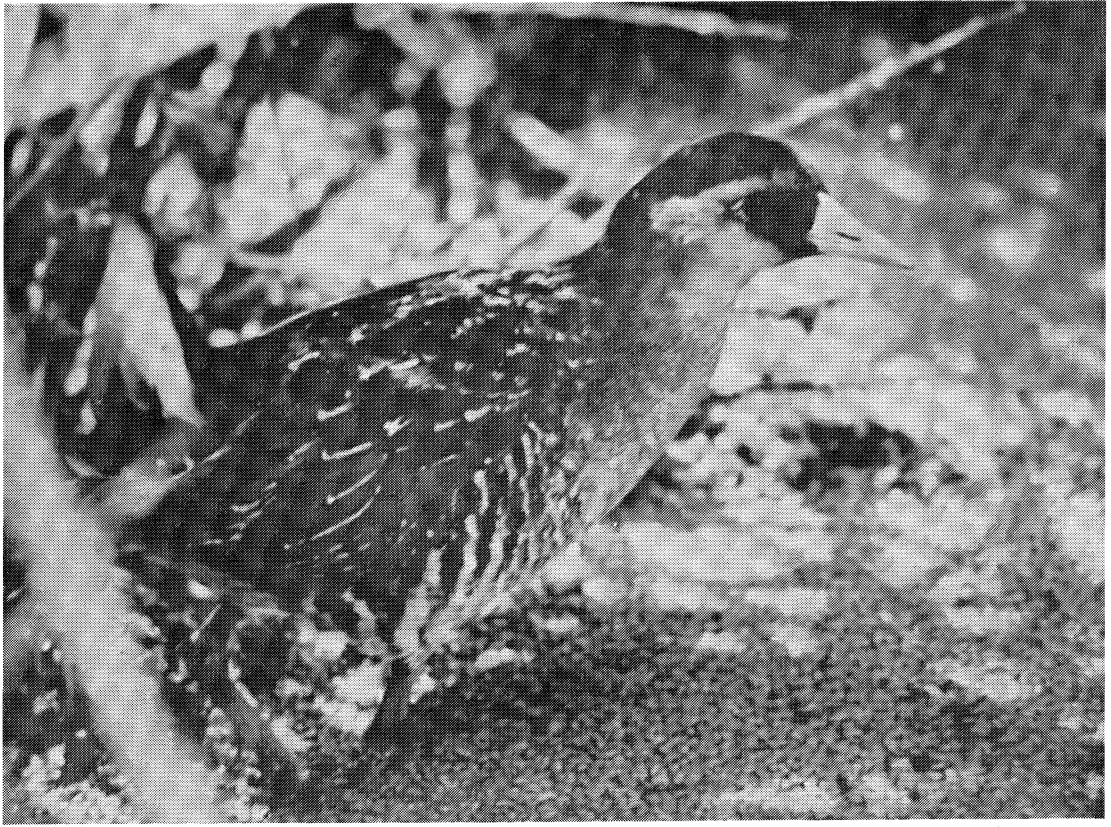


catbird

white pelican

great egret

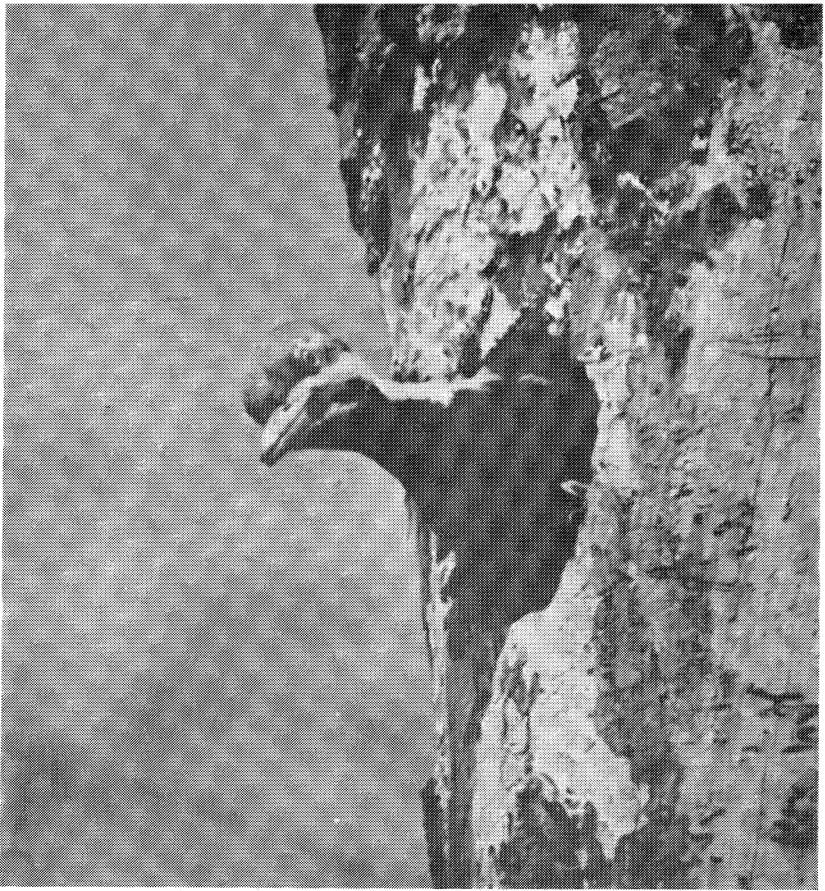
mclaren



sora rail and chick

connor





pileated woodpecker

broad-winged hawk

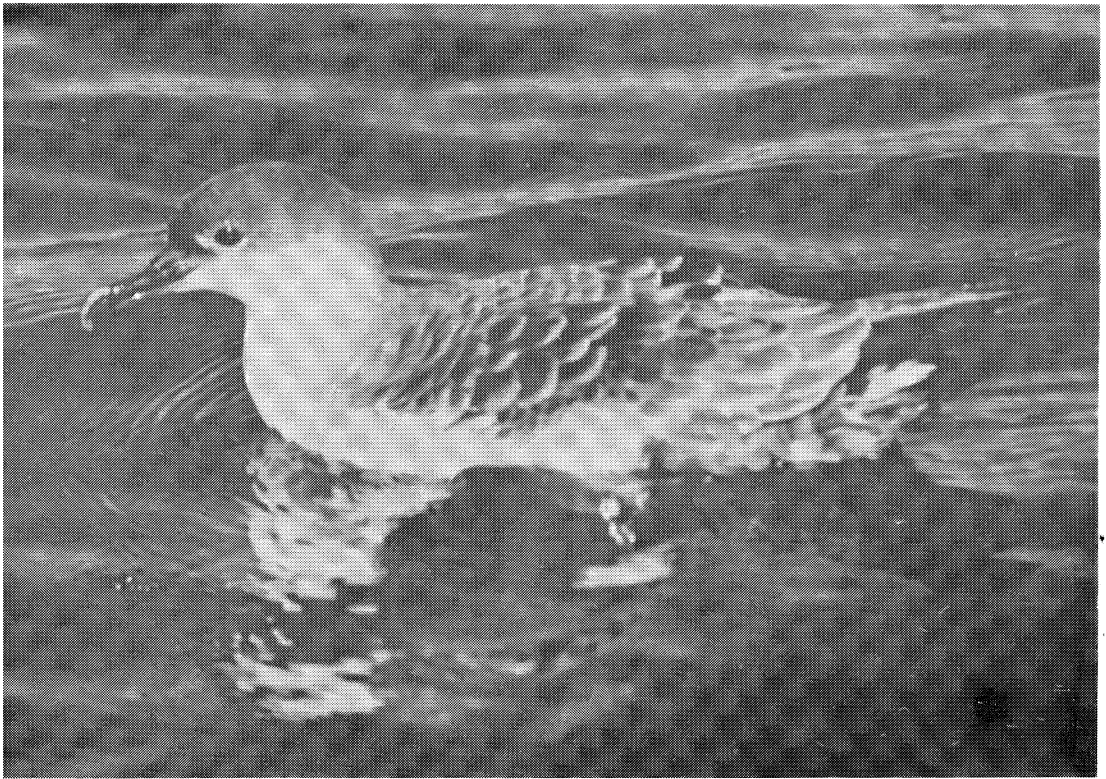
black-billed cuckoo

brennan



greater shearwater

connor



The whole day turned out as a bird watchers' orgy of some sort. For those who missed it a tip. Before you leave Nova Scotia over the Trans Canada Highway, stop for a while after you have crossed the bridge over the CN rail line and let your glasses go over the Ducks Unlimited pond to the right of the road (behind the ESSO sign). There is a great chance that you can savour some interesting leftovers.

The larder is kept well-filled, for we observed hundreds of ducklings and young grebes, as well as a downy Ruffed Grouse.

Con Desplanque

JUNE 25 - BIRD ISLANDS

The weather was cool and windy for the Bird Islands trip as we met at Mountain View Lodge at 9 a.m. on June 25. Twenty-eight birders arrived, but only the morning trip was made as it was too windy. An afternoon Field Trip was made to New Campbellton where 2 pr. of Evening Grosbeaks were seen on the road. Some observers saw Puffins for the first time. We had a time of fellowship at the Lodge and a lovely dinner served by Mrs. Van Schaick and her daughters. From Nova Scotia we had observers from Lockeport, Cheticamp, Louisbourg, Glace Bay, South Bar, Sydney, Irish Vale and Big Pond, one from the Florida Keys, one from Vancouver, and five from Ontario. The leader was Hedley Hopkins.

Bertha Hopkins

JULY 23 - GRAND LAKE

On July 23 we enjoyed a morning field trip to Grand Lake, Glace Bay and Port Morien with Rudy Lasoya, Scott and Keith from Fort Worth, Texas. Rudy is a member of the Audubon Society and has been birding for the past year, he saw 8 firsts. We met up with two ladies from New York on the Morien Sand Bar. They were going to the Mountain View Lodge hoping for a trip to the Bird Islands.

Bertha Hopkins

AUGUST 6 - BADDECK

Saturday, August 6 was a memorable day when we visited the Baddeck area under the leadership of Allister Fraser of the Department of Lands and Forests.

A shower of rain dampened our spirits for a while but after that it was just cloudy with some fog. We were soon on a boat headed for Spectacle Island where we saw hundreds and hundreds of Double-crested Cormorants, and more Black-backed Gulls than Herring Gulls. Some vegetation was growing there but no trees and the trees on the island nearby were stark, black stalks with cormorants roosting in them.

Besides ourselves and Allister our party included Katherine Robertson, Winnie and Eldon Meikle, Frances Hussey and Otis Cossitt.

After lunch we visited the beaver dam near Middle River and then on to Whycomogah where we climbed Salt Mountain. This took a lot of energy and we took frequent rests and were rewarded by the magnificent view from the top. We saw a Junco's nest with 3 eggs in it beside the trail, and sighted various warblers, and a Red-eyed Vireo. We also noted the shrubs and plants.

On the way back to Baddeck we stopped off with Katherine at St. Patrick's Channel and took a walk to the shore.

Allister had a plane ride over the Highlands in store for us but the fog prevented that.

We left for home about 5 p.m. weary but satisfied with our day. We saw 36 species in all.

We highly recommend Allister Fraser as a leader for a Field Trip.

Bertha Hopkins

SEPTEMBER 3-5 - PRESIDENT'S FIELD DAY

The President's Field Day was again held Labour Day on Brier Island. Despite the weatherman's prediction of poor weather, the warm enthusiasm of both birders and islanders was enough to burn off the Saturday morning fog. The resident bird watchers were absent for most of the summer but the birds didn't know this and they were on schedule.

Saturday morning found everyone gathered by the cemetery on Peajack Road. The walking was very wet due to nose level fog and the birds were difficult to dig out. An incredible amount of "swishing" went on as confusing fall sparrows and confusing fall warblers watched confused birdwatchers from the underbrush. Mid morning the fog lifted and noon found everyone gathered to compare lists and discuss highlights.

Three boats left the dock at 3 p.m., and on a calm sea we motored out to the off shore shoals where the tide line of flotsam feeds many sea birds. There we saw flocks of dainty Phalaropes feeding, most were Red but the occasional Northern was obvious with its darker colouration.

Large flocks of Shearwaters were on the water and boats drifted close enough to touch them before they moved. Greater, Sooty and Manx sat together and fed. While photographers clicked incessantly the more scientific watchers discussed and compared bill length, wing width and variation in colour.

Everyone was delighted to see several dozen Puffin, both immature and adult. For some reason they were more abundant than usual and as we were very close to them we were able to see the bright red feet in the water as they paddled along. The adults still sported their brightly coloured bills. Special thanks must go to the 3 boat captains who went out of their way to manouvre their boats to the best areas.

Although no whales were seen on the pelagic trip there were many porpoise in the area. Off St. Peters Island we saw three Parasitic Jaegers chasing terns and catching their dropped food.

Despite no unusual shorebird sightings, the walk along Pond Cove allowed an excellent comparison of Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs. The treat of the walk was one illusive Buff-breasted Sandpiper which stayed at the far end of the beach.

Sunday afternoon the hot blue sky appeared to rain hawks. Six or seven species were observed circling and wheeling back and forth over the western point.

As usual all who attended were enthusiastic and went away satisfied and happy. Labour Day and Brier Island are a marvelous way to end a Nova Scotia summer.

Evelyn Dobson.

SEPTEMBER 24 - CHETICAMP ISLAND, CAPE BRETON

Once again this year members and friends, 14 in all, gathered in Cheticamp. The purpose of the trip was to discover the fall migration of birds in the vicinity of Cheticamp Island. The habitats visited were: a salt-water marsh, a spruce forest, sand bars, sand dunes, the bay of Cheticamp and its coast.

On the way to the Island we observed Black Ducks and Great Blue Herons hidden in thick grass by the salt-water marsh. We met a few Great Cormorants on their way to their favorite fishing ground and Ravens searching the coast for their first meal of the day. While on the road to the lighthouse we saw Charlie, the Bald Eagle, who is well installed in the area for the last three years. And, soaring above, there were Great Black Backs and Herring Gulls, and Kittiwakes. A Kingfisher flew by while a Black-bellied Plover was showing off its winter plumage. Arriving at the sand bar, everything was quiet but suddenly two flocks of Semipalmated Plovers accompanied by a few Least Sandpipers and Dunlins flew in. Later a few more Black-bellied Plovers, a Common Loon, Sanderlings and Green-winged Teals, were there in all their splendor.

After an hour of observation on the bar, the northern breeze was getting cold and we sought shelter by the nearby stand of White Spruce, Alders and Red Oak. While there we saw Redpoll, White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Yellow Warbler, Purple Finch, Juncos, Chickadee and Pine Grosbeak.

We then headed up for the sand dunes and the only fresh water lake on the Island. To our astonishment, the trail was covered with cranberries and our specialist on plants discovered two new plants for the area: Millegrana Radiola (all seed) and Hypericum Virginicum (Virginia St. John's Wort). Pine Siskins treated each other in the Canada Burnet, a rare plant which abounds in Cape Breton. In the vicinity, hundreds of immature Yellow-rumped Warblers searched for the last insects before their long trip south. Arriving at the lake two Black Ducks took off, a Greater Yellowleg landed by and a Red-tailed Hawk changed its route.

It's now lunch time and everyone is heading back home. During the whole morning, more than 35 species were seen, down from last year but the people were the best. In resume, a beautiful day and a lot of amazing discussions and observations.

Jacques Pleau

OCTOBER 22 - AMHERST POINT BIRD SANCTUARY

Despite the fact that the planned field trip had to be postponed one week, and that the weather during that week had been dismal, thirty persons turned up from the far corners of Nova Scotia for a first or renewed visit to the sanctuary.

Fortunately for all concerned the weather on the day itself was cooperating beautifully, enabling all to get an insight into the variety of terrain the sanctuary offers as well as of the birdlife of the area. Although the peak of the fall migration was past quantities of Coots, Ring-necked Ducks and Pied-billed Grebes were present as well as representatives of other duck species such as Black Ducks, Mallards, Pintails, Teals, Wigeons, Buffleheads and Ruddy Ducks. The woods we passed through were relatively quiet, but Pine and Evening Grosbeaks, Chickadees, Woodpeckers, Kinglets and Siskins were seen and heard. The overflight of a Bittern and a mature Bald Eagle added to the diversity of birdlife observed that morning. At noon hour the weather turned sour again, but the visitors were shown how other interesting birding areas in the border region could be found and entered.

I trust that the objective of the trip was reached, being to introduce those who live in parts of the province remote from the border region, that we are blessed with some interesting birding spots, even worth visiting when the hunting season is in full swing.

Con Desplanque

DECEMBER 4 - Lawrencetown

On a cool overcast Sunday morning, 29 Society members plus a visitor from Washington, D.C., met in Dartmouth for the Annual General Meeting Field Trip to Lawrencetown.

Our first stop was Russell Lake where we were fortunate enough to see a large flock of Red-breasted Mergansers; along the shore were Black Ducks and a later Coot and Great Blue Heron, plus the usual land birds in the woods.

We next checked on Conrad's Beach and Fox Island where the Purple Sandpipers put on a fine display for us. A few late Black-bellied Plovers and Sanderlings along the beach were fine additions for our list. Just before lunch we were lucky enough to see some Longspurs and Snow Buntings.

In the early afternoon we looked over the Three Fathom Harbour area where we spotted three more Coots plus a Pied-billed Grebe. In the Rocky Run area were the usual sea ducks and Greater Scaup.

Our last stop of the day was on the Causeway Road where amongst the Buffleheads, Grebes and Canada Geese we totaled our list of 43 species of birds.

Ross Anderson

CAPE SABLE FIELD DAY

About 35 birders met at The Hawk on the morning of September 17 and were ferried across the channel to Cape Sable by Norman Cunningham and Sid Smith, co-leader of the trip.

The weather was fine and nearly windless, ideal conditions but birds were rather scarce, 48 species being the total for the day.

High spots were seven Buff-breasted Sandpipers which fed unconcernedly on a stretch of short grass back of the dunes in full and close view of the entire party, and a Black-billed Cuckoo which lived up to its name by choosing to roost in a puddle of salt water on the mud flats - also giving everyone (incidentally) a close and leisurely view.

Many members of the party had not been on Cape Sable before and the strange austere beauty of the island more than made up for the scarcity of birds.

C.R.K.Allen -
Co-leader

UP-COMING FIELD TRIPS.

- Saturday Feb. 18 COLE HARBOUR and Lawrencetown circuit to see coastal birds, ducks and geese. Leader: Eric Cooke. Meet opposite Dartmouth Holiday Inn at 8:00 a.m.
- Saturday April 22 AMHERST POINT BIRD SANCTUARY to see spring plumage migrant ducks, grebes, etc. Leader: Con Desplanque. Meet at APBS parking lot at 9:00 a.m.
- Wednesday May 10 SUSIE LAKE early warbler walk led by Fred Dobson. Meet at Armdale Rotary at 6:00 a.m.
- Wednesday May 17 SHUBIE PARK Jaybee Drive, Dartmouth (2 miles/3.2 km. from Micmac Rotary on Route 318). Early warbler walk led by Gillian and Jim Elliott. Meet in the Park parking lot at 6:30 a.m.
- Saturday May 27 PRESIDENT'S FIELD DAY - HANTS COUNTY DAY. Our new President Margaret Clark has chosen the historic annual visit to Hants County as the President's Field Day. Usually see 70-80 species during the day. Leader: Margaret Clark. Meet at the railway crossing in Mount Uniacke at 8:00 a.m.

INTERESTING OBSERVATIONS - 1977.CHETICAMP ISLAND

- The Great Cormorant Colony is expanding.
- A couple of Short-eared Owls nested there.
- After a storm, a Little Blue Heron (White phase) was seen.
- MarshHawks were plentiful this year due to the great number of Hares in the area.
- Great Blue Herons were in great number this year. We foresee a new colony in the area for the following years.

Jacques Pleau

ERRATUM:

Fall Flver - Page 5 - Paragraph 3, line 6 -
1975, rather than 1945.

BOOK REVIEW

The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Birds,
Eastern Region

John Bull and John Farrand, Jr.

(Alfred A Knopf, 1977, \$8.95)

(NSBS members, \$7.95, Talbot's Book Shop, Halifax Shopping Centre)

In a word - 'different'.

Beautiful colour photographs fill the first section. These are grouped according to general bird shape and colour. The latter means that male and female, or summer and winter plumage, are not generally together. This is not to imply that all females and winter plumages are shown; for example, the relatively common, in Nova Scotia, female pheasant does not appear, nor the controversial winter arctic loon. Although the photographs are lovely to look at, they do not necessarily show the key field marks. In some cases the photographs are augmented by tiny black and white drawings that accompany the text; often these show the bird in flight. However such diagrams are missing for the shorebirds, for which the flight pattern can be distinctive. Also missing in the photographs are examples of the colour variations possible within a species. In a few cases the colour reproduction itself results in a few strange colorations. The major 'missing' photographs are of the fall warblers. True - there are a few photographs of female warblers, but that, as any fall bird watchers will know, is not the same thing. It would be a treat to see a future edition with a special group of photographs of CFW's (confusing fall warblers - for the uninitiated); that alone would make the book worth while for a 'serious birder'.

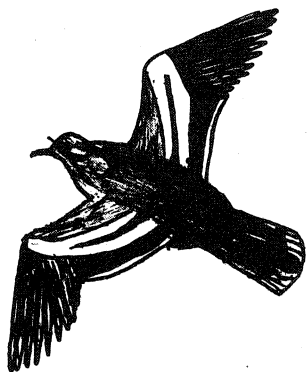
The descriptions are in a separate section, sub-divided by habitat. This necessitates a certain amount of subjectivity on the part of the authors as often birds frequent more than one of the twelve designated habitats. The text itself is well written and informative, and includes a paragraph of 'general interest' at the end of the description of each species.

Unfortunately the 'different' organization of the book is annoying to one who is familiar with the other field guides. The grouping of both sections is a hindrance when birding during the migration periods, which are often our best times here in Nova Scotia. During migration it is more convenient to have all of a family together for quick comparisons. This comment certainly pertains to the grouping of the photographs; for instance, there is a very large category of 'perching birds', which includes everything from warblers to crows, all arranged according to colour. This in certain cases (e.g. warblers) obviously again requires some degree of subjectivity.

The book is narrower than other field guides (about 19 cm by 10 cm) and thus perhaps easier to stuff into a pocket. However the plastic cover does not seem to stand up to such treatment and the binding of the photographic section has not withstood even moderate usage.

I am sorry that I cannot feel more positive about the present edition. It is a valiant attempt at a new approach to a field guide. Hopefully it will be possible to make future editions more complete.

Gillian Elliott

WHITE-WINGED DOVES IN NEW BRUNSWICK

On July 31, 1977, there were two sightings of White-winged Doves along the shore of the Bay of Fundy. The birds are the first reported in the Province of New Brunswick.

1. At Mary's Point, Albert County, during a N.B. Federation of Naturalists' field gathering, Beverley J. Schneider directed the attention of Peter A. Pearce and myself to a dove on the beach. The bird flew but we were able to adequately observe the distinctive wing and tail pattern, the tail shape, and the size somewhat larger than a Mourning Dove. So briefly did the bird remain that a half dozen observers with us were unaware of its presence until afterwards. I had observed this species nesting in a walk-in flight cage at the Sonoran Desert Museum late in February.

2. At East Quoddy Head on Campobello Island, Charlotte County, Mr and Mrs. George Smith identified two White-winged Doves which they later reported to David Noble of Fredericton, indicating to him "you'll find this hard to believe but". The Smiths have seen this species previously in the Southern U.S.A.

A tendency to wander regularly to Florida and the existence of several other records in northeastern North America (including at least Nov. 14, 1929, Water Mill, NY; June 17, 1942, Fort Albany, Ont.; Lincoln, Maine (AOU Checklist); 1961, Nantucket Island, Mass.; July 29, 1965, Chilmark, Mass.; Nov. 23, 1973, Milford Point, Conn.; Dec. 8, 1973, Riis Park, NY; Dec. 18-28, 1973, Lincolnville, Maine; May 25, 1974, Truro, Mass.; July 4, 1974, Wellfleet Bay, Mass; Dec. 14-19, 1975, Belleville, Ont.) suggest that these birds were naturally occurring vagrants. I would appreciate hearing about other sightings or related information (aviary escapes, etc.) in the northeastern U.S.A. and eastern Canada this summer.

David S. Christie
New Brunswick Museum,
Saint John, N.B.

A WHITE PELICAN IN NOVA SCOTIA.

On October 19, 1977, after a southerly gale, a White Pelican appeared on the farm of Ross McLeod, on the southern edge of Bras d'Or Lake, about 3.5 km west of the village of West Bay, Inverness Co. There are unconfirmed reports that another was seen at Troy, Inverness Co., about the same time. Over the next few days the bird at West Bay was watched carefully by Mr. McLeod and Tom and Marina Young as it fished and rested in a shallow Bay. They noted that it was tired at first, then in a day or so fished very actively and thereafter went through a daily routine of resting on shore, fishing, and leisurely swimming northward toward the Crammond Islands until it disappeared on October 31.

I made a trip to West Bay to see the bird on Saturday, October 22, and after some waiting and searching I was able to watch it at leisure and to take some rather distant photographs. Ian McLaren saw it again the next day, was able to get closer and took some much better pictures, visible elsewhere in the Newsletter. The bird we saw appeared to be an adult in excellent condition, showing no signs of feather wear or malnutrition. It was still in definitive alternate breeding plumage with a pale orange-yellow bill, pale orange legs, upper wing coverts slightly buff, and the rest of the feathering pure white (except for black primaries). If it still had normal powers of navigation there is no reason why it should not have been able to head south, to its normal wintering range in Florida or on the Gulf Coast.

It has been nearly thirty years since White Pelicans were last recorded in the province. In late September and October 1948 about 50 appeared near Wolfville after a gale, and according to Robie Tuft's account in The Birds of Nova Scotia the majority probably died. Where these birds of 1948 and 1977 originated is hard to guess. The breeding range of the White Pelican extends from southern Manitoba northwestward into northern Saskatchewan and Alberta. There are also isolated breeding populations in the northern prairie states and in states on either side of the Rocky Mountain chain. The wintering areas extend from central California along the Pacific Coast to Guatemala and from Florida to Yucatan along the Gulf Coast. In the fall large numbers gather on western lakes in September, and birds of the year frequently fly north before heading south to the wintering range. Birds from the Canadian prairie provinces appear to leave in October, and their zone of migration is a broad band throughout the central states, not normally east of Wisconsin, Illinois, western Tennessee and Mississippi. Our birds could have been stragglers from the migration through the prairies.

With the help of Dr. Des O'Neill of Environment Canada I had a look at weather maps of the surface and 750 mb (approximately 10,000') levels for the preceding 2½ weeks. There were no southerly storms that could have greatly influenced such a powerful bird, but throughout early and mid October strong westerly winds dominated the weather across the center of North America. On October 13-14 strong gale-force southwesterly winds blew across the Dakotas and southern Prairie Provinces toward James Bay, where they curved to blow from the northwest across the Maritimes. A bird flying downwind from the northern prairie states (where Canadian White Pelicans should be in mid October) would have ended up on the Atlantic coast of Canada. Tropical storm Evelyn, which passed east of Canso on October 15, ended this pattern. Its easterly winds are unlikely to have been anywhere near migrating White Pelican flocks. Another low, with winds to 80 knots along the U.S. coasts passed across the Maritimes on October 17, giving strong SE winds along the Atlantic coast of Nova Scotia. Just after its passage the bird at West Bay was seen for the first time. It is my educated guess that the two storms merely stopped birds that had been moving eastward, for whatever reason, when they reached the last point of land. The many extra-limital records of White Pelicans along the east coast of North America, in James Bay and along the lower Great Lakes are consistent with the scheme I have described.

Eric L. Mills

SKUAS - TWO, NOT ONE

Sea-going birdwatchers in the Atlantic Provinces are always on the lookout for jaegers or for a Skua, and over the years most of us have had at least glimpses of the commoner Jaegers, Parasitic and Pomarine, on occasion. A luckier few have recorded Skuas during their crossings of Cabot Strait, or on the Bluenose trip between Maine and Nova Scotia. We have always assumed that the birds we saw were the Great Skua of the North Atlantic, a breeder from Iceland eastward that wanders to the fishing banks of the Atlantic Provinces in the fall. Now we know that the story is more complicated, and that the Nova Scotian birder can look for two species of Skua, one from the Northeast Atlantic, and the other from the Antarctic.

The status of the various skuas throughout the world can be rather confusing. In the North Atlantic there is only one breeding species, the Great Skua (Catharacta skua) of Iceland, the Faeroes, Shetlands and Orkneys. However, in the southern hemisphere there are at least five separable groups. According to the most recent work, with which not everyone will agree, the skuas found on Tristan da Cunha (in the South Atlantic), on the Falkland Islands and on the northernmost fringe of Antarctica are all forms of the Great Skua. In addition, there is a separate species, the Chilean Skua, C. chilensis, in southern South America, and the South Polar Skua, Skua maccormicki, which breeds mostly on the mainland of Antarctica.

Our confreres in California first began to suspect that the skuas they were seeing along the west coast in summer and fall were not southern races of the Great Skua but might be South Polar Skuas. This has been confirmed in definitive fashion by Pierre Devillers in The Auk, 1977 (vol. 94:417-429). He finds that all the specimens from the west coast (including British Columbia) and many of the sight records are of the South Polar Skua. No other skua has been recorded there to date.

On the Atlantic coast excitement has been mounting for several years over the possibility of recording the South Polar Skua in our area. Now it has been done. On May 17, 1976, Joe Hurdick found a dying South Polar Skua on the beach near Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. And only a few days later, May 29, Alan Brady got a series of photographs of birds at sea near the Hudson Canyon (south-east of New York City) that were identified as the same species. From our own area, Dick Brown tells me the PIROP observers made notes on skuas seen well at sea off the Atlantic Provinces. Two of these can now be referred to the Antarctic species. There are also rumours that large number of South Polar Skuas were seen on George's Bank during the past summer.

How may the two species be separated? The notes following are based on Devillers' paper in The Auk and on the description and pictures in George Watson's book, Birds of the Antarctic and Sub-Antarctic. There is an excellent photograph of a South Polar Skua in American Birds, October 1976, p.936.

Great Skua (Catharacta skua)

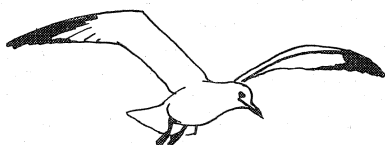
Large, all dark above and below (blackish-brown), except for golden feathers on upper head, nape and upper mantle. At very close range it may be possible to see scattered rufous feathers on back and underparts. The wings, as in all skuas, have large white patches at the base of the primaries. There is little if any contrast between upperparts and underparts.

South Polar Skua (Catharacta maccormicki)

A smaller skua (about the size of a Pomarine Jaeger) with a slender bill. Some birds are very light, head, neck, nape, base of neck and underparts light brown or whitish gray, contrasting with the dark blackish-brown wings, scapulars and tail. The contrast between light and dark area is distinctive. The light area on the nape may continue around the neck as a collar. The nape is overlaid by a golden mane formed by the feather ends in adult birds (which may be quite rare). There is also a dark phase of this species which will be much more difficult to separate from small Great Skuas. It should be separable by the bill dimensions (small, delicate) and some contrast between the lighter underparts and darker wings, rump and tail. Dark phase South Polar Skuas may be very difficult to distinguish from dark, immature Pomarine Jaegers -- and I wonder now what the rather frequent dark Pomarine Jaegers I have seen in August and September off Brier Island really were.

I have written up these notes in the hope that getting good solid records of South Polar Skua can be a worthwhile birding game for rarity hunters next summer. We should look for the southern species between about May and October, while they are on their wintering grounds along our coast, recognizing that non-breeding Great Skuas are possible at the same time and that there is probably a fall dispersal of the North Atlantic species along the east coast of North America from August to November. Good field notes, familiarity with the literature (see especially Devillers' paper and the picture in American Birds, October 1976), and above all good photographs, are essential.

Eric L. Mills



AN APPRECIATION

For twenty years or more Marie Henry kept records of the tern colonies on the Tusket Islands, and it seemed to many of us appropriate to call this group the Marie Henry Sanctuary. In addition to this, we, her friends and relatives, are instituting a fund to assist in furthering her researches.

This is in a way more appropriate, being by nature dynamic rather than static, and no one could have called Marie "static". She had a greater love of life than anyone I have known, and moreover the ability to transmit this vibrancy of spirit, this wholeheartedness, to others. Any day - or hour - which included Marie was a happier day or hour for those of us fortunate enough to know her. I am eternally grateful that I was one of those.

Phyllis Dobson

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor, NSBS Newsletter

During June and July the N.S. Department of Lands and Forests wing-marked thirty-six (36) Black Ducks in the Lawrence-town-Three Fathom Harbour area of Halifax County. Flightless young Black Ducks were captured with the aid of dogs, banded with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service bands, and wing-marked with 1 inch x 3.5 inch coloured nylon tags. Tags were attached by means of a stainless steel pin through the pataguim, one tag per wing.

In the past, band returns from local Halifax County Black Ducks have shown that these ducks are present in the pre hunting season population at Martinique and also through the hunting season until early January.

Wing tags were employed to further examine the composition of the pre season and wintering Black Duck populations of Halifax County. Semi-monthly aerial surveys are presently being conducted within the County to monitor population size, and to locate wing-marked ducks.

We would appreciate receiving reports of sightings of wing-marked Black Ducks from N.S.B.S. members. Reports should include the date and location of the sighting and tag colour, and may be sent to: Andrew R. C. MacInnis, P.O. Box 23, Site 2, R.R. #1, Waverley, Halifax Co., N.S. BON 2S0.

Andrew MacInnis
Wildlife Biologist

Editor, NSBS Newsletter.

When the ground was beginning to freeze early last November (1976), a mockingbird was seen feeding on the ground in the back of a south end property. Before the sighting a noticeable loud "chip" was heard in the trees when all other sounds of birds were gone.

The bird, when finally found, was perched on a small hawthorne tree, his plumage dove grey with bands of silky white through the wings and tail feathers. As the weather became colder I noticed the bird running robinlike under the rose rambler picking up rose hips in the adjoining garden. So I improvised a bird feeder by nailing a narrow wicker basket to the verandah railing in which I put sweet emperor grapes, slices of apple, and boiled raisins, peanut butter and later thin slices of ham and turkey.

Every morning during the winter months around 7:30 a loud commanding "chip" would be heard and he would float down from the telephone wire outside the house and feed frequently during the day.

A convenient pile of brush was left from pruned trees in the backyard, and he would fly into this shelter during the worst of storms.

Early in April everyone heard strong bird song. Perched on a budding maple tree near the window "chip" was singing a lovely but very unusual song. First what sounded like a delicate robin trill, redwing blackbird squeeze sound, tree swallow, flicker sound, blue jay alarm call, and what sounded like bobolink mating spring song. The bird sang for about a half hour every day for two weeks.

One morning he appeared very tame sitting very close to the screen door as if he wanted to fly into the house. This was the last day we saw the mockingbird which was April 18th, 1977. We missed him after he left but only hoped that he had flown away to find a mate and nesting site, or better still to return to his natural habitat.

Theo Robertson

Editor, NSBS Newsletter

I would like to bring to the attention of everyone interested in birds, and leaving Nova Scotia by way of the Trans Canada Highway, that Ducks Unlimited (Canada) has recently constructed an impoundment on the Amherst Marsh, close to the road one mile before one reaches the border. It is at the point where the LaPlanche Street entrance from Amherst merges with the TCH. The best place to stop is on the gravel beside the road in front of the ESSO sign, placed in front of the dyke surrounding the impoundment.

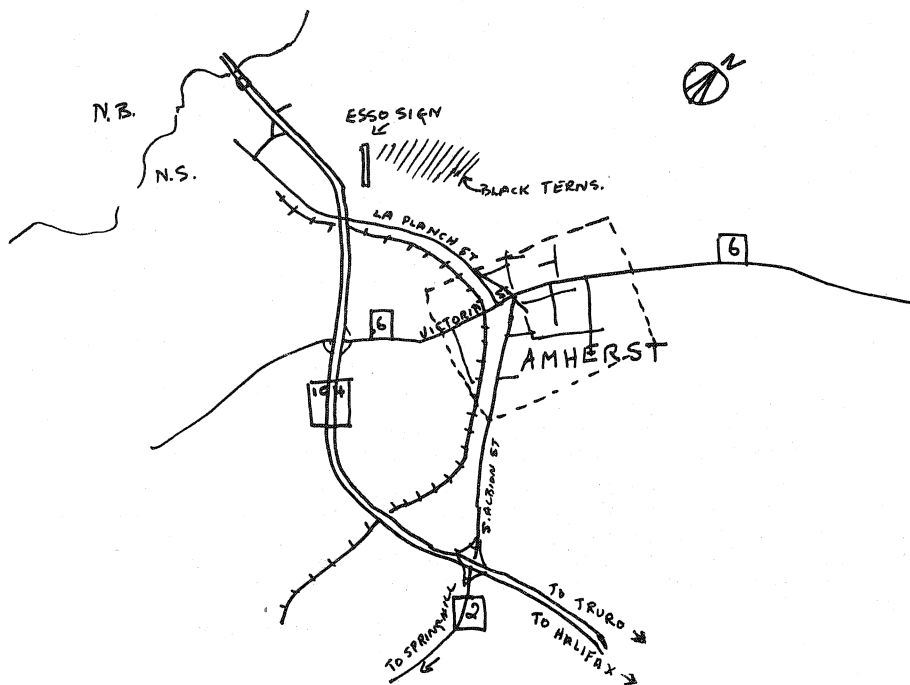
I have seen on the pond and in some pools between the pond and the TCH Black Ducks, Pintails, Blue- and Green-winged Teals, Shovelers, Wigeons, Ring-necks, Wood Ducks, Coots and Grebes every time I have stopped in the past weeks. And Soras, Black Terns, Ruddy Ducks, Mallards and Gadwalls on occasion, all while comfortably seated or leaning against my car. Soras came as close as 20 meters, mingled with Snipe, Killdeers and Teals in the muddy area in front of the sign.

The place is really worthwhile stopping for a moment to let your binoculars or scopes go over the area. There are at this time (June and July) hundreds of adults and young from the downy ducklings upward. I am sure Black Terns nested here for they favour one particular area, where they land frequently.

If one enters the province and one can spare a trip of an extra 2 miles, one has to leave the TCH at the LaPlanche Street (1st exit) and to join the TCH in reverse direction again as soon as one has passed under the underpass under the TCH, by bearing to the left.

To join the TCH again in the direction of Nova Scotia, one can do so at the border or at the LaPlanche Street exit.

Con Desplanque



We apologize to Captain Eric Holdway for a mistake in the Fall Flyer and hope his letter will clarify the matter:

Editor, NSBS Newsletter

This letter is to correct an error in the Fall News Bulletin (Sept), Page 5, concerning my report on Black Guillemot, July 10th, 1977.

My report gave the position of the colony at Cribbean Head, Antigonish County.

I found this small colony in August 1976 and the evidence of nesting was the white streaks of droppings and adults flying in with small fish. Like all crevice and burrowing birds the nest is kept clean. When the fecal sac period is over the young come out to void at the entrance.

This is a dangerous period for burrow nestlings as predators know their habit, particularly the Black-backed Gull and some Owls, but there is no risk at this cliff as there is no place for them to perch.

E. Holdway

We welcome letters from our members who are located far afield. The following was received from Mike Anketell-Jones, Castle Hill, Rochester, Kent:

"Strangely my most interesting birding took place while I was doing trials in a very large crude oil carrier off the coast of Maryland between Delaware Bay and Chesapeake Bay. The ship was built at Sim Shipbuilding at Chester, Pa. (near Philadelphia) and our trials were about 70 miles off the coast and took place between 4-10 October. Although we were seemingly well out of the usual migration route we had an extraordinary list of visitors which I shall enumerate hereunder.

Corys Shearwater (few)	Golden-crowned Kinglet (2)
Great Blue Heron (many)	Ruby-crowned Kinglet (1)
Green-winged Teal (1)	Cedar Waxwing (3)
Kestrel (2)	Parula Warbler (1+)
Wilson's Snipe (1)	Magnolia Warbler (1)
Skua (5)	Black-throated Blue Warbler (2)
Ring-billed Gull	Yellow-rumped (Myrtle)Warbler(many)
Herring Gull	Pine Warbler (1)
Eastern Belted Kingfisher (2)	Mourning Warbler (1)
Yellow-shafted Flicker (1)	Eastern Meadowlark (1)
Sapsucker (1)	Common Grackle (1)
Red-breasted Nuthatch (3)	Evening Grosbeak (overhead)
Brown Creeper (1)	Dark-eyed Junco (5)
House Wren (1)	Chipping Sparrow (2)
Winter Wren (1)	White-crowned Sparrow (3)
Mockingbird (3)	White-throated Sparrow (4)
Catbird (3)	Song Sparrow (1)
Brown Thrasher (1)	

Needless to say these birds (my minimum count) thought the ship was an island it seems and were quite happy to stay on board despite the food shortage. This fact had the effect of making them extremely tame. I and a number of others had birds perching on us or looking for food on our shoes, belts - I saw the brown creeper picking under a man's belt and had a R.B. nuthatch sitting on my shoe whilst a parula warbler went to sleep quite happily in my neighbour's cabin.

Of course, the kestrels had a field day - no shortage of food for them. Most interesting were the herons - at least 3 flights on separate occasions - came to examine the ship - a few perched for a while and then off southwards they went again. The myrtles and magnolia seemed most successful - there were a lot of insects about the ship and these birds were most tenacious in tracking everything down, including incredible dogfights with moths.

The land birds responded quite well to liberal doses of ship's surplus food handed out by various people on board. Least successful I suppose were the kingfishers, who were considerably out of their depth! The GW teal used to swim around the ship looking very out of place.

There had been no bad weather which might have directed these birds out to sea so I can only conclude that they were flying point to point, in this case it might have been Cape Cod to Cape Hatteras or from Nova Scotia even or both. In any case it was an incredibly interesting and exciting situation - each day brought its new lot of visitors.

Luckily I had taken my Peterson thinking that the pelagic activity might have been rewarding. I was able to "instruct" a number of people on bird recognition. Amazingly out of the 160 people on board most of them had not graduated from the canary (warbler) stage and had no idea about the bulk of the visitors.

Otherwise, the fauna consisted of a few ocean sunfish, dolphins, and on the way out there was a continuous stream of those migrating butterflies across Delaware Bay. It all added up to a much more interesting trial trip - sometimes they can be less than exciting."

M. Anketell-Jones

Editor, NSBS Newsletter

Congratulations on your first Golden-crowned Sparrow. It certainly is a fancy addition to the Nova Scotia list.

In perusing the list of sightings of Golden-crowned Sparrow in eastern North America, I noticed there were two Massachusetts records omitted. These are:

An immature in Weymouth from November 1959 to April 1960 and an adult at Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge from 27 April to 7 May 1966.

I thought you might be interested in these sightings.

Richard A. Forster
Natural History Services
Massachusetts Audubon
Society



OPERATION BIRDSEED

Operation Birdseed was a tremendous success this year. Over two tons of sunflower seeds were delivered to the Cohrs' depot where they were picked up by members from all over the province, who had availed themselves of the generous offer made to us by Halifax Seed Ltd.

The traffic disruption on Rosemount Ave. one October evening caused residents much interest and conjecture.



Halfway down the heap. Loading team resting between customers - only a ton or so more to go!

NOSTALGIA

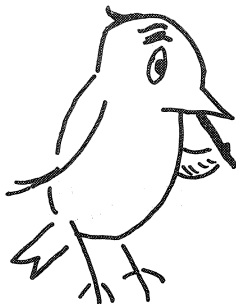
The hazards of editing bird reports are legion. In 1969 when Phyllis Dobson did them all herself she wrote the following piece for the Newsletter. Nowadays there are six of us writing up the bird reports but the dangers remain the same.....

Ed.

WATCH THAT SYNTAX
(with apologies to all concerned)

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

- The Red-faced Editor
PRD



SUMMARY OF EXECUTIVE MEETINGS

The Executive of the Nova Scotia Bird Society held meetings each month from August to November.

During this period the Bird Society assisted the Canadian Wildlife Service in distributing the Snipe Poster. The poster was designed for the purpose of helping to educate the public to recognize the features and habitat of the Snipe; and hopefully lessen the slaughter of shorebirds during hunting season.

The proposed Bay of Fundy Tidal Power Project and its effect on the habitat of shorebirds brought about a press release in late August at the same time as a letter was sent to members of Federal and Provincial Governments.

Of continuing concern to the Executive and a subject that has dominated the discussion of the Executive at every meeting has been how to cope with the increasing costs of the publication of the Newsletter. Postage and printing costs have increased to the point where a Notice of Motion will be presented at the Annual General Meeting to amend the By-Laws so that members more than three months in arrears for dues shall cease to be members.

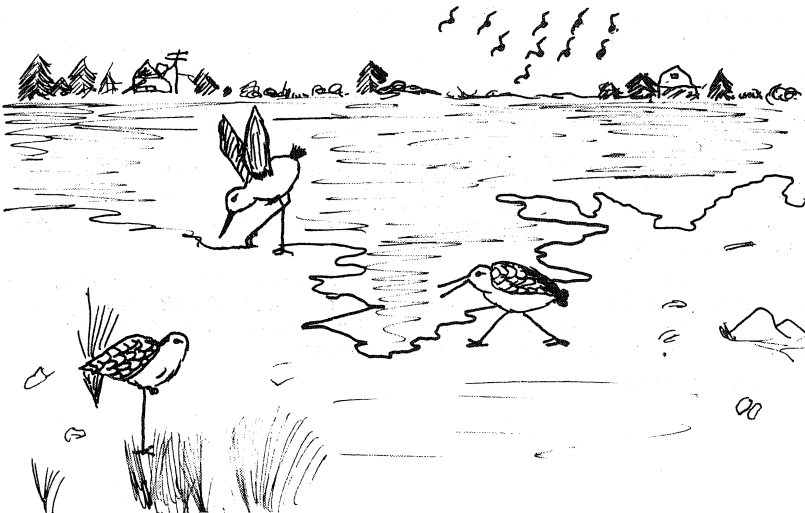
A proposal to increase membership dues will also be presented at the Annual General Meeting.

Membership as of November totals 551, with approximately \$1200.00 on hand.

Eric Cooke has been appointed to replace Ian McLaren as Representative Director of the N.S.B.S. on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Nature Federation.

The Annual General Meeting will be held at 2:30 p.m. on December 3rd in the auditorium of the N. S. Museum.

Respectfully submitted,
Margaret Clark
Secretary.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Nova Scotia Bird Society was held in the Nova Scotia Museum, Saturday December 3, 1977 at 2:30 PM. The President, Fred Dobson, presided with approximately 55 in attendance.

It was moved by the Secretary, Margaret Clark, seconded by Ethel Crathorne, that the Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting be accepted as circulated. Motion carried.

Since any old business from the minutes were to be given in the various reports, the President called upon the Report from the Cape Breton Branch. Mr. Hedley Hopkins, who was attending in the place of Sara MacLean, the Cape Breton representative, gave a report of their year and a Financial Statement. Hedley Hopkins moved, Ross Anderson seconded the adoption of these reports. The motion carried.

Mr. Hopkins did express a wish to be able to obtain literature pertaining to birds and the society for schools in the Sydney area especially.

Ross Anderson then gave a report on a year of successful Field Trips. He expressed his thanks to Peter Hope for acting as Field Trip Organizer when he was absent. Christmas Counts for 1977 are as follows:

Halifax East - December 17	Ian McLaren
Yarmouth - December 18	Marion Hilton
Kejimikujik - December 18	Peter Hope
New Glasgow - December 18	Fred Kenney
Brier Island - December 19	Eric Mills
Halifax West - December 26	Shirley Cohrs
Broad Cove - December 31	Sylvia Fullerton

Don and Joyce Purchase have agreed to take on the organization of Field Trips for 1978.

The Membership Secretary, Shirley Brothers, presented the following report:

Single	421	(51 in Cape Breton)
Family	131	(16 " " ")
Student	45	(5 " " ")
Total	597	

There are 100 members on the mailing list who have not paid their 1977 dues, and of the 597 members, 70 are new members.

It was moved by Shirley Brothers, seconded by Molly Clayden that this report be accepted. Motion carried.

At this time the Notice of Motion to amend By-Law 16 was brought forward, which presently reads:

"Fees shall be due on the first of January each year. Members more than one year in arrears for fees shall lose all rights as members until all arrears are made up. Members more than two years in arrears for fees shall cease to be members, except in any case in which the Society orders otherwise".

It was moved by Shirley Brothers, seconded by Fred Lane that this By-Law 16 now read:

"Fees shall be due on the first of January of each year. Members more than three months in arrears for fees shall cease to be members, but may be reinstated by the Executive Committee if agreeable terms are reached with the Treasurer".

Motion carried.

During the discussion of this motion, the Membership Secretary explained that a renewal notice, probably on coloured paper, would be included in the first issue of the Newsletter.

Overdue notices would be sent to members in arrears between the first and second Newsletters of the year. Those who had not renewed by then would not receive the second Newsletter.

In the absence of Mr. Willett Mills, Eric Cooke presented a report on the background of the N.S.B.S. Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund.

The Financial Statement of the Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund was then presented. It was moved by Eric Cooke, seconded by Sylvia Fullerton that this report be adopted. Motion carried.

Sandra Myers, the Treasurer, then presented the Financial Statement. It was moved by Sandra Myers, seconded by Ethel Crathorne that this report be accepted. Motion carried.

It was then moved by Sandra Myers, seconded by Chris Cohrs, that the proposal to increase fees sent to members, be as follows:

Student	\$5.00
Single	8.00
Family	10.00

During the discussion on this motion, Eric Cooke gave an elaborate breakdown of expenses as of 1977 with a projection as to what would happen to the financial situation of the Society if the Membership Fees remained the same; if the fees were increased to \$4-\$6-\$8, and if the fees were increased by the proposal. As a result of the questions and answers of this discussion, Eric Cooke moved, Don Purchase seconded that the motion be amended to read Student Fees \$4.00, Single \$6.00, and Family \$8.00.

The amendment passed with some abstentions.

It was moved by Shirley Cohrs, seconded by Eric Mills that the Nova Scotia Bird Society offer Life Membership for \$150.00.

As a result of the discussion on this motion, it was moved by Chris Cohrs, seconded by Tony Erskine that the motion be amended to read Life Membership will be offered at a standard multiple of 30 times the single rate. The amendment passed. Thus it will now be possible to purchase a Life Membership in the Nova Scotia Bird Society.

The President's report dealt mainly with issues of conservation. He explained the present Spruce Budworm concern and that a meeting was being held in Baddeck that coincided with this meeting preventing him from attending.

He spoke about the Snipe Poster and the hope of following this with more such programmes to educate the public.

A general meeting was held in Yarmouth in June and he was hopeful that a branch of the N.S.B.S. would be set up in the Pubnico area.

The President stated that he was prepared to head up the Conservation Committee to include experts in various areas. As Chairman he will report to the Executive on the work being done in any area of conservation. Ian McLaren and Roger Pocklington have agreed to work with him.

In closing, the President thanked the members of the Executive, especially Shirley Cohrs and her work with the Newsletter; Ross Anderson and Peter Hope for arranging the Field Trips; and Eric Cooke for running the General Meetings held in the Museum each month.

He then called upon the Nominating Committee to present their report. Ethel Crathorne moved, Chris Cohrs seconded the motion. As there were no nominations from the floor, the report of the Nominating Committee was accepted:

President	Margaret Clark
Past President	Fred Dobson
Vice President	Eric Cooke
Secretary	Mary Anderson
Treasurer	Sandra Myers
Newsletter Editor	Shirley Cohrs
Membership	Shirley Brothers

Nominations from the floor were then called for two Executive Members. The names of Ralph Connor and Ian McLaren were nominated. It was moved by Don Purchase, seconded by Barbara Hinds that the nomination cease. Motion carried.

Fred Dobson then called upon the in-coming President and Secretary to take over the meeting.

Our new President, Margaret Clark, thanked the Past President, Fred Dobson, for his introduction and expressed pleasure in representing the Society in this new capacity.

She mentioned that further studies and input would be needed in areas of conservation, especially Spruce Budworm spraying, to complement that which had already been done by the Past President and others.

Under new business, the President requested Dr. Ian McLaren to advise his replacement as Representative Director to the Canadian Nature Federation. Dr. McLaren has stepped down from this position, and has appointed Eric Cooke to replace him.

Eric Cooke noted that the 1978 Canadian Nature Federation meeting will be held in Charlottetown, P.E.I., in late August.

The President announced a replacement for the Society's Honorary Auditor, Mr. Willett Mills. Mr. Mills, one of the Society's founding members, is retiring after 10 years of faithful service. Jim Morrow was appointed to replace him.

This year, the Puffin of the Year Award was presented by the Past President to our Honorary Solicitor, Mr. R. Kanigsberg. Mr. Kanigsberg has done so much to purchase land for the Society, and to procure sanctuaries in the province. Through his dedication, the N.S.B.S. is proud owner of Outer Bald Island, (one of the Tusket Island Group) through the Nature Conservancy.

The past President then introduced the speaker for the meeting, Tony Erskine. Mr. Erskine, who is Regional Director for the Canadian Wildlife Service in Sackville, New Brunswick, spoke on the value of Breeding Bird Surveys across Canada since their inception 12 years ago.

The Surveys give a standard index year by year, whereby changes in bird populations can be measured. Mr. Erskine stated that Breeding Bird Surveys should be done in June each year, preferably with the same persons doing it, and under the same favourable weather conditions. At best 2/3 of the reports are actually comparable.

He pointed out that 1967 and 1974 were the wettest, coldest seasons on record and there were decreases in bird populations noted.

Through the Breeding Bird Surveys, Mr. Erskine explained, the effects of the Spruce Budworm can be monitored.

He said, too, that 5 to 7 consecutive years of surveys are required in order to show a trend, and by mapping the data gleaned from these reports areas of relative abundance can be shown. For example, there are at least 16 million breeding pairs of starlings in Canada, 1/4 of which are in Ontario.

Mr. Erskine stated, in conclusion, that for the last 3 years, approximately 250 surveys are done across Canada, but now the high cost of gas is a factor in the falling off of the surveys. Also, people who have done reports for many years, tend to find the novelty wearing off and give up their survey.

On behalf of the Society, Eric Cooke thanked Tony Erskine for his enlightening talk, and expressed hope that through better understanding, Nova Scotia might be able to provide more observers for Breeding Bird Surveys.

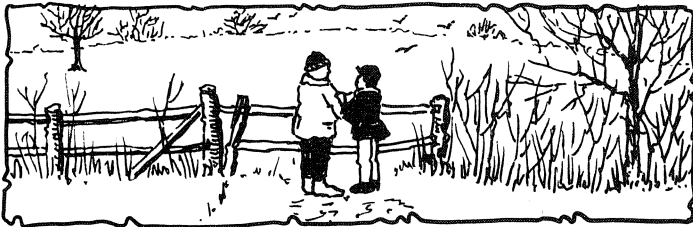
It was noted there would be a Field Trip along the Eastern Shore, Sunday, Dec. 4th, to be led by Ross Anderson.

The Annual General Meeting adjourned at approximately 5:45 PM for refreshments.

Coffee and cookies were supplied by Molly Clayden and Lise Cohrs.

Mary Anderson
Secretary

NOTE: At an Executive Meeting December 12, it was decided that Student Memberships would be available to those eighteen years of age or younger only.



Found

In time — but only just.
 Apologies to our readers and to Bob Lamberton
 who edits these reports
 Disapprobation to Canada Post!

JSC.

(ANHINGA ?!)

On Sept. 17, the Rev. Calder Fraser and Jeff McCormick were birding along the Annapolis River and observed a cormorant-like bird overhead which showed a tendency to soar. It made four circles and moved off westward. The bird's behavior seemed strange, unlike that of a cormorant, and both observers noted that "the tail was longer than that of a cormorant, and square at the end." Neither birder is adding Anhinga to his Nova Scotia list, but both were left asking "What else?" Anhingas are remarkably sedentary birds, living in the great wooded swamps of the southeastern US and little inclined to wander. There are no Canadian records aside from a few old ones in southern Ontario, few, if any, for New England, and none in John Bull's new Birds of New York State. A long shot. But then, Newfoundland had two flamingoes this fall.

HERONS, EGRETS, BITTERN

Twenty-four observers reported on GREAT BLUE HERONS in the province, reflecting the familiar late summer and fall concentrations, dropping off in September and reduced to stragglers by November. Con Desplanque's careful reports for the John Lusby Marsh near Amherst reflect a typical pattern for an area with rich feeding potential but no nearby colony: numbers built gradually in July with peaks of 20-25 individuals between July 15 and Aug. 20. On Sept. 10, 11 individuals remained and on Oct. 22 there was a single bird. Con also had a late straggler at Amherst Point, Nov. 19. There are several reports of large numbers seen on drives through coastal areas: 151 between Musquodoboit Harbor and Conrad's Beach, July 22 (BM); 60+ between Halifax and Petite Riviere, Oct. 7 (JSC); 25 between Yarmouth and the Hawk, Oct. 16 (MWH). There are several local "last" sightings in early November. Four individuals were still at Glace Bay, Nov. 9 (R Burrows), 7 at Pubnico on the 11th (TCD'E) and the Smiths observed 11 individuals at Cape Sable, Nov. 13 "in a loose flock, contemplating flight south." Emmerson Fiske reports a straggler at Allandale, Nov. 30. It will be interesting to see how many herons survive the early December storms.

Two GREEN HERON reports are unusual: a single bird at Seal Is., Oct. 5 (BM, ST) and 2 at Cole Harbor, Oct. 30 (RE). Ten separate reports of LITTLE BLUE HERONS, representing at least 6 or 7 individuals, were among the highlights of this fall's exceptional flight of waders. The first report comes from West Green Harbor, Shelb. Co., Aug. 1 (GP, R Turner), followed by a bird at Conrad's Beach, Aug 15 (IAM) and a dark plumage bird at Crescent Beach, Aug. 21 (JSC, LC). At the end of the month, a white immature appeared at Antigonish Harbor, where Roland Chaisson observed it Aug. 30 and 31. An adult and an immature were at Three Fathom Harbor, Sept. 4 (IAM) and the immature was seen there on the 8th (AMacI) and the 11th (ELM). An immature was at Cherry Hill, Lun. Co., seen repeatedly from Oct. 23 to Nov. 20 (JLC, JSC, SF, PRH) and an immature occurred on Sable Is., Nov. 12-15 (IAM). Four CATTLE EGRET reports involve 7 individuals: one July 7 at Sable Is. (HR et al.), one Oct. 16 and 17 at Port Le Hebert (JA), 3 at Broad Cove, Oct. 23 (JSC) and 2 individuals that came aboard the vessel Cathy B just off Sable Is., Nov. 16 (per ST).

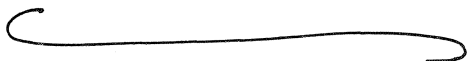
A scattering of GREAT EGRET sightings extends through the summer and fall, from 2 individuals at Homeville CB, May 20-25 (Byron Peach), one at Lawrencetown, June 5 (EHC), and one at Sable Is., June 30 - July 4 (HR et al.) to late birds at Grand Desert (Oct. 29, IAM) and Glace Bay (Oct. 24-31, S MacLean et al.) and in Yarmouth Co. (Nov. 12, Chebogue, the Randy Kennys; Nov. 27 and several weeks preceding at Glenwood and Roberts' Is., per PRD). Another report is from Clam Bay, Sept. 2 (GD). The southwest corner of the province and the offshore islands had all seven SNOWY EGRET sightings: one on Sable Is., Sept. 22 (A Richard); one at Seal Is., Oct. 11 (ST); two at Centreville, Cape Sable, Oct. 21 (E & V Hamilton); two at Lockeport, Oct. 21-30 (GP, R Turner), and another on Seal Is., Oct. 22-23 (SJF, EHC, WJM).

Two adult BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERONS were at Cape Sable, June 12 (the Smiths). Eight other night heron sightings were of immature birds, and most observers cautiously identified them as "Night Heron, sp.". Here are the sightings, as identified by the observers, with their hesitations indicated by question marks: July 28, Cape Sable, B-C ? (the Smiths); July 30, two, John Lusby Marsh near Amherst, B-C (CD); Aug. 13, Lockeport, ? (E Fiske); Aug. 16-31, Port Joli, Y-C ? (JA); Aug. 27 - Sept. 9, two, Middle West Pubnico, Y-C (TCD'E et al.) and one at the same location Sept. 20-29; Oct. 24, Mahone Bay, Y-C? (RDH).

The exceptional numbers of "southern" waders during the fall seem to have been part of a major flight which extended northeast as far as Newfoundland.

Many AMERICAN BITTERN reports reflect the familiar pattern: the species was widely distributed and frequently heard through July and then observed fairly commonly through October, with only stragglers by the end of that month (Oct. 30, APBS, ST; Nov. 12-15, Sable Is., IAM).

RL Ed.



VULTURE, DIURNAL RAPTORS

There are 3 detailed TURKEY VULTURE reports for the period: June 28, Louisbourg (R Burrows); Aug. 6, Brier Is. (D & R MacKinnon, G Shaw); Oct. 1, Seal Is. (var. obs.).

Fifteen GOSHAWK sightings for the summer and fall are generally distributed, with slightly more reports from Cape Breton and the Keji area than the rest of the province. Two birds on Sable Is., Sept. 25 to Oct. 10 (A Richard), indicate migratory movement at that time. SHARP-SHINNED HAWKS were generally reported as well, with sightings just about twice as frequent as those of Goshawks. Roger Burrows notes apparent migrants at Cape Breton Highlands NP as early as Sept. 2-4, but the only migration peak reported was that observed Oct. 9 on Digby Neck by Barry Sabeau (40 birds, seen with about 50 other migrating hawks, between 12 and 2 pm).

Ten observers report on RED-TAILED HAWK sightings throughout the province. Two of these reports suggest migratory movement: a succession of as many as 7 individuals seen passing over a bog near Pubnico, Sept. 4 (TCD'E), and the wave observed on Digby Neck, Oct. 9, by Barry Sabean (10 birds). Phyllis Dobson reports that there were "many" Red-tails as well as Am. Kestrels, to be seen in the Valley, Oct. 21. Three fall BROAD-WINGED HAWK records come from Tusket Falls (two, Aug. 28, CRKA), Round Hill in the Valley (Sept. 22, WEW), and Digby Neck (15 birds in 2 hours, Oct. 9, B Sabean). The other records, all singles, come from Cape Breton Is. (June 25, July 9, Oct. 14, R Burrows). The earliest fall ROUGH-LEGGED HAWKS in the province appeared on Sable Is. between Sept. 20 and Oct. 12 (up to 2 per day, A Richard), and one or two early birds were on the border marshes in late September as well. Charlie Allen reports 4 sightings at Argyle Head and Chebogue Pt. in October, and the Cohrs report a light bird at Lunenburg, Oct. 22. Rough-legs have been regular on the border marshes since the end of October, though apparently not numerous, and Con Desplanque had a dark bird at Amherst Pt., Nov. 19.

Roger Burrows passes on an unconfirmed report of two GOLDEN EAGLES in the Sydney area in November...he is trying to get more information. Fifty BALD EAGLE reports seem to represent at least 55 individual birds (30 ad., 12 im., and 13 unspecified), four-fifths of them on Cape Breton Is., and the rest generally distributed.

MARSH HAWK records are abundant through September but drop off conspicuously in October. There were 5 Marsh Hawks in the wave of migrants on Digby Neck, Oct. 9 (B Sabean), and after that date I have only 3 reports: Oct. 11, Argyle Hd., Yar. Co. (CRKA); Oct. 21, Morien Bar, CB (R Burrows); Nov. 12-14, Sable Is. (IAM).

There are many OSPREY records for summer, including young in the nest as late as the first week of September (Sept. 4, E. Mid. Pubnico, TCD'E; Sept. 8, Shelburne, E Crathorne). In mid-September many observers report the departure of local nesting pairs, and by the end of the month sightings were rare (Sept. 30, St. Esprit CB, Meyerowitz family; Oct. 1, Liverpool, TW, and Irish Cove CB (obs?)). The latest reported sighting comes from the Smiths at Cape Sable, Oct. 16.

The PEREGRINE FALCON records for the period are very encouraging. An adult and a juvenile seen together, Aug. 16 (location withheld) might even represent the first Nova Scotia nesting in several decades. Roger Burrows had adults chasing shorebirds at Louisbourg, Aug. 18 and Sept. 16, as well as two other Cape Breton sightings in August and September. Most sightings came in October, when Bruce Mactavish and Stuart Tingley had Peregrines daily on Seal Is., between Oct. 1 and Oct. 10, with a maximum of 4 birds in a single day. All but one of these birds were immatures. The Smiths at Cape Sable had Peregrines Oct. 11, 16 and 21. Eric Cooke had one at Cole Harbor, Oct. 19, and there was still a single bird at Seal Is., Oct. 22-23 (SJF, EHC, WJM). More than 15 MERLIN reports for September (most in Cape Breton) indicate a migratory movement. The five later records are probably stragglers, some of which will undoubtedly winter: Oct. 8, Pictou (E Holdway); Oct. 12-23, Tuttle Lake (NB, TB); Oct. 24, Lower W. Pubnico (RSd'E); Nov. 9, Cape Sable (SS); Nov. 20, Dartmouth (E Crathorne).

Barry Sabean counted 25 AMERICAN KESTRELS among the migrating raptors he observed on Digby Neck, Oct. 9. This was the only migratory movement reported, though 9 other September records doubtless include migrants. There are 4 October reports, from Cape Breton to Cape Sable, and 5 November sightings, which were confined to the southwest corner of the province, with the exception of a single Halifax observation, Nov. 28 (M Clark).

GROUSE, PHEASANT, PARTRIDGE

Roger Burrows reports repeated sightings of SPRUCE GROUSE, including "several broods", in Cape Breton Highlands NP, and another report for the same area comes from R Blakeburn. The only mainland reports come from Lower Economy, where Frank Hennessey observed a brood, Aug. 1. We have a series of very interesting RUFFED GROUSE reports, indicating uneven population levels. Like other gallinaceous birds, these species both undergo periodic peaks and crashes, but this period's reports are a reminder that the peaks may be quite local. In Yarmouth Co., Charlie Allen and Phyllis Dobson report Ruffed Grouse "abundant"; at Wolfville, Bernard Forsythe reports "numbers down"; and Hardy Moffatt notes they were "hard to find" in Hants and Halifax Counties, attributing their scarcity to the "total failure" of the wild apple crop and the "off year" for hawthorn berries. On Cape Breton Island, several observers report frequent sightings, and Roger Burrows notes that the species is "reaching a peak" in Cape Breton Highlands NP.

RING-NECKED PHEASANTS seem abundant in their usual haunts, but GRAY PARTRIDGE are reported only from St. Croix, Hants Co. (M Clark).

MARSH BIRDS

VIRGINIA RAILS were heard, though uncommonly, in summer in the border region (CD et al.) and there are several records of late fall birds: Oct. 8, 1 dead, Seal Is. (ELM); Oct. 19, Port L'Hebert (R Turner); Nov. 14, another dead bird, at Cape Sable (L Smith); Nov. 19, Lawrencetown (EHC). SORAS were regular in the border region as well, though Con Desplanque reports "not as many as other years", and there are, rather surprisingly, no other reports of the species. The elusive YELLOW RAIL again appeared on Seal Is., where Eric Cooke observed a single bird, Oct. 22 (in the same location where Tingley and Mactavish observed one, Oct. 23, 1966). The COMMON GALLINULES of Amherst Point were "regularly heard" and seen, with young birds observed repeatedly after July 16 (CD). The only other record is a single bird on Sable Is., Nov. 3-5 (IAM).

AMERICAN COOTS were present at Amherst Point all summer and showed the familiar late fall peak. Con Desplanque had the following numbers:

Sept. 4...	100
10...	120
Oct. 22...	200
30...	150
Nov. 12....	40
19....	20

Stuart Tingley and Peter Hicklin reported 40 still present at Amherst Point, Nov. 22. An exceptionally warm fall and late freezeup has influenced these numbers. A smaller concentration was observed in late October and November at Three Fathom Harbor (6, Nov. 5, EHC; 7, Nov. 6, JSC, JLC). Singles occurred at Sullivan's Pond and Russell Lake, Dartmouth, in Nov. (var.obs.), and at Cow Bay, Hfx. Co., Nov. 21 (M & B Dodge). An unusual midsummer record comes from Sable Is., July 23 - Aug. 7 (IAM) along with "more routine" fall sightings (3, Nov. 12-15, HR).

DOVES, CUCKOOS

The MOURNING DOVE situation in Nova Scotia becomes more and more interesting. There is, it seems, a migratory movement affecting our growing population. R. S. d'Entremont saw 2 Mourning Doves over George's Bank between Sept. 28 and Oct. 7, and 25 birds per day were present on Seal Is., Oct. 22-24 (SJF et al.) There seems to be a distinct possibility that the birds on the move during the fall in the southern and western extremities of the province are moving in rather than out. No substantial breeding population has ever been observed, and July and August records are relatively few. For 3 individuals reported for July and 3 for August, there are about 20 in September and over 55 in October. November saw a gradual decline:

a typical report comes from the Randy Henrys at Chebogue. Their flock of 20+ from early November had disappeared on Nov. 22. If important wintering concentrations occur this season as they have in the past few years, we may well want to ask whether Nova Scotia is coming to be a wintering ground for a nonresident population. The situation might be similar to that observed in recent decades with regard to Evening Grosbeaks.

Ten YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOOS are somewhat more numerous than might be expected, and the extreme dates, Aug. 15 (Westphal, E Crathorne) and Nov. 15 (Sable Is., A Richard), represent a rather broad period of occurrence. Most birds were seen between Oct 21 and Oct. 30, and during that period both the Meyerowitz family at St. Esprit, CB, and Ethel Desborough at Chester reported exhausted and battered individuals. Summer BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO reports come from the Annapolis Valley where the species is fairly common, and from Sable Is. (July 8, HR). There were fall migrants seen on Sable Is. (16-20 Sept. and 12-14 Nov., A Richard), at Cape Sable (Sept. 17, NSBS) and at Lawrencetown (Oct. 22, CE). At Seal Is., Tingley and Mactavish had a total of 6 between Oct. 1 and Oct. 10

OWLS

GREAT HORNED OWLS are reported from 6 locations, with young observed at Amherst Point in June. By October they were hooting at a number of familiar locations. The commoner BARRED OWLS were reported from 11 locations throughout the province. Particularly interesting is the Cohrs' report of a single bird observed on Brier Is., Sept. 1, 2, and 3, which appeared "each evening at dusk over the clearing, made two circuits and left and immediately returned to go around once more. Exactly same behavior each time!"

The only LONG-EARED OWL report apparently represents a roost of 12(!) birds, in Kings Co, observed Nov. 2 (GRB). Con Desplanque reports that SHORT-EARED OWLS were regular on the John Lusby Marsh near Amherst in July. Three observers reported SAW-WHET OWLS: July 1 at Point Edward (HH); Sept. 1, at Brier Is. (Cohrs); Oct. 29 at Tuttle Lake (NB, TB).

NIGHTHAWK, SWIFT, HUMMINGBIRD, KINGFISHER

Many observers again note the low numbers of summering COMMON NIGHTHAWKS, but this fall saw a massive migratory movement during the last 10 days of August. Local concentrations occurred from early August (e.g. 12-15 over a Sullivan's Pond, Dartmouth, band concert, Aug. 3, E Crathorne), but the first large concentration was seen Aug. 21 at Lockeport (E Fiske, RJC). On the 23rd, Roland Chaisson reports a "large flock" at Antigonish and migrants were moving on the 26th at Green Bay (JSC, LAC) and on the 28th at Wilmot in the Valley (T Hawkins). The big flight, though, was observed at Halifax on the evening of the 29th, when Lisa and Shirley Cohrs watched an estimated 500-600 birds pass overhead between 7 and 8 pm. After that, only scattered stragglers remained, and the last sighting was at Greenwich, Kings Co., Sept. 4 (CE).

Most of the CHIMNEY SWIFTS disappeared in August as well, and there is not a single record for September, but no less than 7 sightings in a 6-day period in October, involving up to 8 individuals, suggest that a group of migrants or strays arrived in southwestern Nova Scotia Oct. 18 (6, Lockeport, E Fiske; 1, Sable River, R Turner) and was generally observed at Yarmouth, Cape Sable and Seal Is. until Oct. 23 (var. obs.).

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRDS appear to have been numerous during the summer and particularly conspicuous in August. Numbers dropped off in September, and October produced only 2 stragglers: one at Seal Is., Oct 10 (ELM) and one at nearby Cape Sable, Oct. 23 (SS).

By the end of Spetember, BELTED KINGFISHERS had departed from their summering grounds, but the species remained "very common" in Yarmouth Co. in the early part of October (CRKA). There is one November report from the Valley (Wilmot, Nov. 9, T Hawkins), along with several from Yarmouth and Shelburne Counties (var. obs.). The late freezeup undoubtedly encouraged many kingfishers to attempt to winter...we'll see how they come through the real test.

WOODPECKERS

There were conspicuous movements of COMMON FLICKERS in September and early October, and birds present after the middle of that month are stragglers. The Most spectacular "flicker day" was a peak of 100 birds on Seal Is., Oct. 5 (ST,BM). There are a few scattered reports after that date, with the latest sighting at Mt. Denson, Hants Co., Nov. 27 (B Sabean). PILEATED WOODPECKERS are sparsely reported: Sept. 24 at Paradise, Anna. Co. (Jean and Bill Morse) and Oct. 25 at Argyle Head, Yar. Co. (AAd'E). YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKERS are sparsely reported as well, and in migration only at Seal Is. (15+, Oct. 1, ELM et al.; 10, Oct. 5, BM,ST). It is rather surprising that HAIRY WOODPECKER reports seem to slightly outnumber reports of the smaller and generally commoner DOWNY WOODPECKER. Several observers report "good numbers" or "unusual numbers" of the former species, and a Hairy Woodpecker on Sable Is., Sept. 15-25, is one of few island records (A Richard). There are five reports of BLACK-BACKED THREE-TOED WOODPECKERS, three of them from Cape Breton Island.

RL Ed.



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