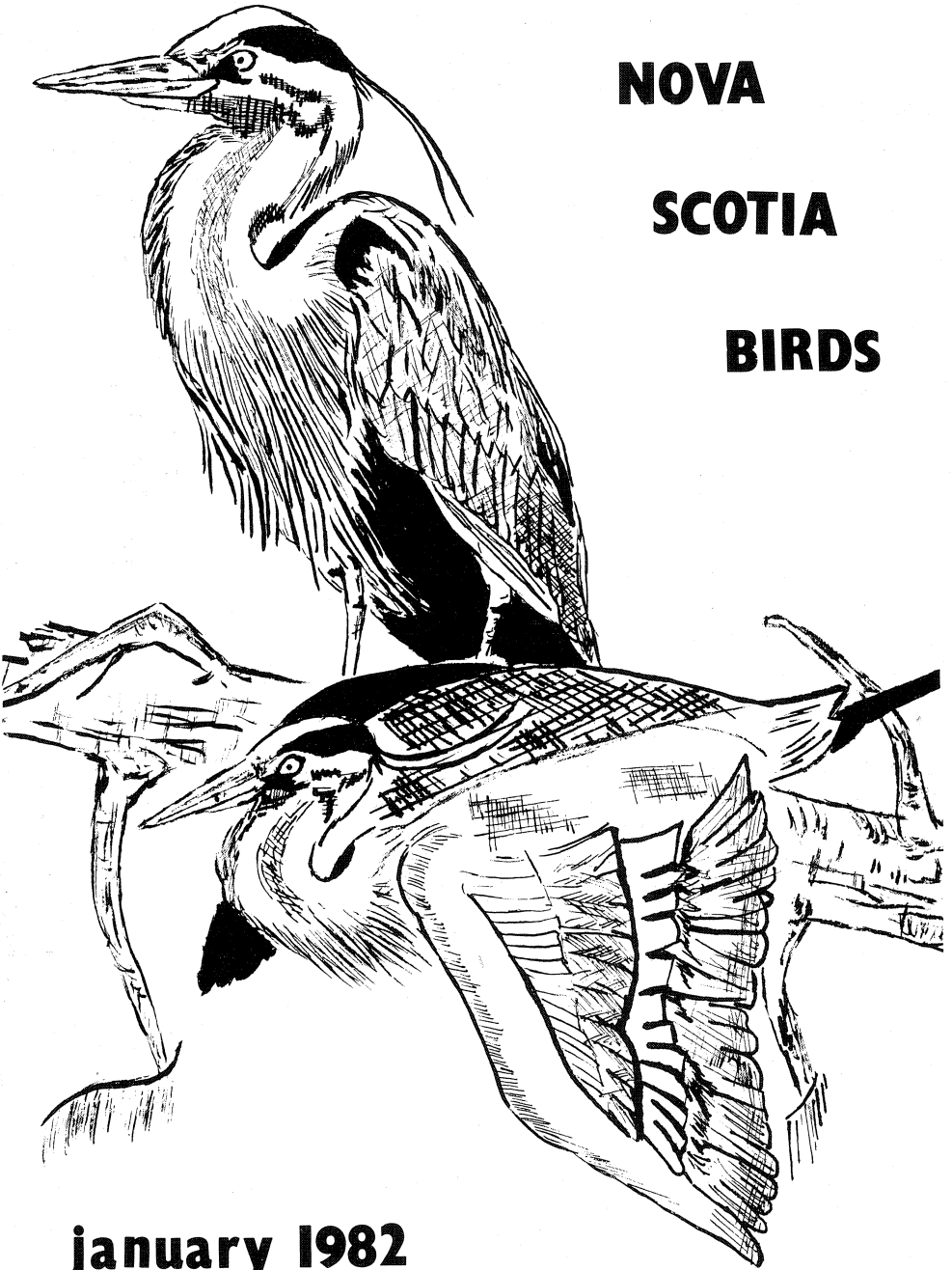


**NOVA**

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**BIRDS**



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a publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In my opinion the purpose of the President's Report is to bring to the membership at large an account of the activities and achievements of the Society during the past year...This I will do!

The custom is, that after this resumé, the President thanks those who have contributed their time and effort during the year... This I will not do! By this I mean that I will not do it as a conclusion--I will do it first! I will do it first because it is of primary importance--there would be no activities or achievements without the co-operation, dedication and sheer hard work of many of our members. So many people have contributed in so many ways that there is not time to name them all, and I hope I will be forgiven for this. Some I shall mention in the body of this report. First, I wish to thank personally the members of the executive. To refresh your memory, these are, in alphabetical order: Bill Caudle, Marg Clark, Evelyn Dobson, Frank Hennessey, Sandra Myers, Don Purchase and Richard Stern. They have made the year for me. They have faithfully attended executive meetings; they have come, full of enthusiasm and ideas; they have done what was asked of them, promptly and efficiently, and above all, they have put up with me! What more could a President ask? I thank them all, most sincerely!

Now...to our year.

I feel our most important achievement this year has been that of interpreting birds to non-birders--showing beginners the basics. This started in a small way last December, when the C.B.C. asked me to do a short talk on winter bird feeding. This I did, managing at the same time to get in a few good words about the N.S.B.S. There were quite a few beginners on our field trips and they were welcomed and made to feel at home. I was struck once again, as I have been for years, by the dedication of some of our more experienced people who, rather than rushing off to see what variety might abound over the rise, took time to encourage and instruct new birders. They are a credit to our Society.

For a second year we had a series of birdwatching articles published in the Mayflower magazine. The credit for this must go to Keith Keddy, who set it all up and then answered all the mail that was generated, and to the members who wrote the articles. It is a time-consuming and difficult task to attempt to interest the non-birding public.

Another interpretive effort was a trip for beginners which we were asked to do by the Museum as part of their summer park program. About nineteen people spent a morning in July at Risser's and Crescent Beaches. Most arrived in the Museum bus from Halifax, but some local people also attended. My thanks go to John Cohrs and Eric Cooke and their telescopes. I think we opened the eyes of the group to shore-birds and proved to them that they did not all look exactly alike.

The culmination of this involvement with neophytes came in September with the Youth Field Trip, about which you have heard from our Secretary (see account of trip on page 40). So much for spreading the word about birds--we also had fun!

Now to the field trips. Don and Joyce Purchase outdid themselves--again--how can they possibly improve? There was something for everyone in every corner of Nova Scotia. My thanks go to both of them and to the trip leaders who gave their time and who worried so hard about producing the birds on cue.

The Museum meetings were fun too. We had interesting speakers and provocative discussions. Thanks are due here to John Cohrs, who was always kept busy grappling with baulky projection equipment, and to Wendy and Karl Fay who provided not only coffee, but imaginative and delicious snacks.

We also worked for birds. Many members of N.S.B.S. contributed in no small way to the science of ornithology. This may seem a high-sounding phrase, but when I was thinking about this, I was surprised at how much is done in a quiet way by our members. Some of these activities include Eagle surveys, nest record schemes, shorebird surveys, Christmas counts and observing and sending in reports to Nova Scotia Birds, to enable the publication to continue its scientific contribution. All of these take time and dedication as well as, in some cases, a strong constitution and the ability to rise cheerfully well before dawn.

So that was the year...interpretation, fun and good fellowship, work for birds. I might add that these three spheres of activity are not necessarily incompatible. Imagine taking a novice birder to a Christmas Count in sleet and freezing rain, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., pounding up and down exposed beaches, trying to count birds, and then thawing out the frozen hulk at a Christmas Count supper, assisted by a gallon or so of hot punch...encouragement of a beginner  
 ...contribution to science  
 ...a darn good time.

J. Shirley Cohrs



WHEATEAR on Brier Island

(photo by Richard Stern)

## REPORT OF THE BIRDS OF NOVA SCOTIA

Summer and Fall, 1981.

Since June, this year of 1981, we have come through the seasons under easy sail, with no extremes of temperature and a minimum of storm damage. Sunshine alternated with rain at short intervals to produce luxuriant foliage which stayed green well into fall, finally turning into a particularly splendid display of autumn color, at its height the second week of October.

From summer-high temperatures in the 20°'s there has been a gradual descent to 0° on mornings the last few days of November. The gentle rains, which became a deluge in the middle of that month, have shifted through short hailstorms to snow, which lies thinly on the ground this last day, November 30.

Such a summer should have ensured the nesting success of our birds and this appears to be the case. When July turned to August, the lines of little bodies on the telephone wires grew very long. More and larger mixed congregations of immature birds roved the woods and Robins brought their third broods of speckle-breasted young to feed on the lawns.

Insect life remained abundant, and soon wild fruits and seedheads began to ripen. There was plenty to eat for all; in fact, much of it is still left. Rowan berries went fast but the holly bushes still glow like torches in the overgrown pastures among the purple-browns and grays of their leafless shrubberies.

The swallows went first, then the flycatchers and the thrushes. Shorebirds came and went, the warblers began to be hard to find and blackbirds went through in huge assemblies. Big hawks and small were sailing over, and roadside flocks of juncos and sparrows grew in size and frequency until they also disappeared except from the farthest out points of land on the south coast of the province.

The report to follow tells the story, which is never quite the same year by year. For example, this was a waxwing summer, Cedar Waxwings were ubiquitous throughout the season. We had more cuckoos, both Yellow- and Black-billed- than have been reported for years. Nighthawks are still seldom seen in southwest Nova Scotia, but a sizable flock was reported from the Sydney area, another in Cumberland County and a good number around Kentville. Chimney Swifts and Winter Wrens are still way down in number, generally.

Most notable was the number of big waders encountered this year and their variety--the most extraordinary of them being the Scarlet Ibis, which kept re-appearing around the shores of the province from May to September, to the delight and mystification of numerous observers. A full report on this bird and its travels is given in this magazine, to follow. Besides this bird we had two Little Blue Herons and a Louisiana in June, a White Pelican (Big Island, Merigomish) and a Sandhill Crane (Grand Pre dykes) in August; five Cattle Egrets and seven or eight Green Herons were seen by various people around the province--altogether a rewarding season for large-bird watchers. (Be careful where you put that hyphen). Besides these, there was a Snow Goose and a Turkey Vulture, a Skua, there were several Red-shouldered Hawks, and of all things, some Bobwhites--is someone raising them again? They were seen around the Chester area and between Wolfville and Port Williams. We had Red-headed Woodpeckers, Marsh Wrens and five exotic species of warblers. Perhaps the best sighting of all was of a Wheatear, on Brier Island, in September.

They are gone now, along with our own native birds and it seems very quiet and empty around the Countryside. As usual, when we plan for the Christmas Counts, we wonder how we shall be able to fill up our lists. We always manage to do so and no doubt we shall this year too, and find the countryside not so empty after all.



Following is the list of contributors to the above report. Please accept the thanks of the editors and members of the Society for your contributions and remember that reports are of value even if not given individual mention as they go to make up the continuing record of the birds of Nova Scotia, and are always kept for future reference:

Daryl Amirault (DA); D. Algar; C.R.K.Allen (CRKA); Marion Allen (MA); Caroline and Christopher Allworth (C&CA); R. Arsenault (RA); Peter J. Austin-Smith (PJA S); Allan Baillie (AB); Daphne Baudouse (DB); R.D. Chiasson (RDC); Margaret C. Cheesman (MCC); Margaret A. Clark (MAC); J. Shirley, John. L. and Lisè Cohrs (JSC etc.); Eric H. Cooke (EHC); Otis Cossitt (OC); Gayton Cunningham (GC); Bryan Dalzell (BD); Calvin Dawe; Leta DeJaney (LD); Jerome D'Eon (JÙ'E); Ted C.D'Eon (TCD'E); Robbie Denton (RD); Ronnie E. Denton (RED); Albert d'Entremont (RSd'E); Con Desplanque (CD); Ellie Desplanque; R. B. Dickie (RBD); Evelyn D. Dobson (EDD); Phyllis R. Dobson (PRD); Stephen P. Flemming (SPF); Bernard L. Forsythe (BLF); Roberta B. Fraser (RBF); Sylvia J. Fullerton (SJF); D.D. & J.R. Gallagher (C&JRG); John Gardner (JG); J. Gates; Anthony R. Glavin (ARG); June Graves; Edgar and Vernita Hamiltons E&VH; Barbara Hayward (BH); Ralph and Keltie Hebb; Ruth D. Hebb (RDH); C.W. Helleiner (CWH); Frank Hennessey (FH); Hedley E. Hopkins (HEH); Keith N. Keddy (KNK); Gladys Keddy; Felicity Kendall (FK); Roy D. John (RDJ); F.L. Lavender (FLL); Wickerson Lent (WL); B. MacDonald (BM); Clive S. MacDonald (CSM); Pamela MacKay (PM); Larry MacKenzie (LM); Ian A. MacLaren (IAM); Sara MacLean (SM); Edie MacLeod (EM); J. McNicol (JM); Joanne Matsubara; Rainer and Sandra Meyerowitz (R&SM); F. Millette; Jean and Bill Morse (J&BM); M. Murphy; Oscar Nauss; Larry E. Neilly (LEN); Margaret A. and Fred Nickerson (MA&FN); Betty o'Reilly (B)'R); Arthur E. Patton (AEP); Peter and Linda Payzant (P&LP); W. Peach (WP); Roger and Pat Pocklington (R&PP); Annie K. Raymond (AKR); Ed and Shirley Richard (E&SR); Veralyn Rogers (VR); Frank and Kathy Roman (R&KR); Michael Rymer (MR); Robin Rymer (RR); Barry C. Sabeau (BCS); Betty June and Sidney Smith (BJ&SS); Nellie Snyder (NS); Edger P. Spalding (EPS); Francis L. Spalding (FLS) J. Spears (JS); Richard B. Stern (RBS); Bob Stymeist; William Townsend Stuart I. Tingley (SIT); Wayne C. Weber (WCW); W.E. Whitehead (WEW); David and Joan Young (D&JY).

A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL,  
PRD, Records ed.

BIRD REPORTS

## LOONS AND GREBES

COMMON LOONS, usually solitary birds except for family groups, do tend to gather in loose companies, for the most part in late summer and fall. However, a "tight flock" of 6 was observed off Hartlen Point, June 6, by Fulton Lavender, who also saw 15 in the same locality Nov. 7. There were 10 in Bedford Basin, Sept. 26 (RBD); 14, Lr. W. Pubnico, Oct. 27 and 12, nearby in West Pubnico, Nov. 8 (Djd'E). Broods of one or 2 chicks were seen at Rocky Lake, Halifax Co.; Sandy Bottom Lake, Fresh Water Lake (Ingonish) and MacKay's Lake, Shel. Co.; where dates were given these were all seen in July. The last record for fresh water was Nov. 17, at Milford Lake (MCC).

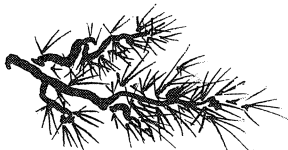
Con Desplanque, not content with reporting most of the rare duck sightings, now comes up with a RED-THROATED LOON, still in winter plumage at APBS, from June 18 to July 26! This recalls the observation by the writer many years ago, of two of this species in full breeding plumage on Newville Lake, also in Cumberland Co., and also in early summer. These birds were swimming in single file close behind a Common Loon, for all the world as if it was a happy family. To return to this season, Larry Neilly also saw a Red-throated Loon in Cumberland Co., on Sept. 29; several others have been observed in October and November, mostly off Hartlen Point (up to 20 there, Oct. 23, FLL) also noted by RBD, and 1, Nov. 11, off Port Hood Causeway (BD).

RED-NECKED GREBES have not appeared on the scene in any numbers yet. Six at Crescent Beach, Oct. 25 (JS, JL&LC), one at Hartlen Point, Nov. 7 (FLL) and 5 close inshore in Barrington Bay, Nov. 18, (BJS) are the only sightings so far.

HORNED GREBES too, are slow in showing up, although there were 10+ at Linden, Cumb. Co., Sept. 29 (LEN). The only reports from St. Margaret's Bay, one of their favorite "hang-outs" in winter are: 4, Oct. 11, off Ingrauport and 3, Nov. 14 at Queensland (KNK); Ruth Hebb saw 9, Oct. 14, in Sand Cove, Mahone Bay and varying numbers there until Oct. 28, with a high of 21 on the 16th.

PIED-BILLED GREBES were seen up to mid- November, latest sightings being single birds at Mason's Beach, Lun. Co., on Nov. 13, and Nov. 14 at APBS (CD). The Amherst Point Sanctuary had as usual, the greatest concentration, up to 60 of these birds being seen on a single visit during the summer, 20 still there in late summer (LEN).

CRKA, ed.



## FULMARS TO CORMORANTS

Stuart Tingley saw 5 NORTHERN FULMARS flying west off Hemeon's Head, Shel. Co., on Sept. 28 and John Cohrs saw a couple on his way back from Seal Island on Oct. 19. The palm goes to Charlie Allen, however,--on Oct. 21 he saw Fulmars "scattered over the water as far as the eye could see", about four hours out from Yarmouth on BLUENOSE. (About ten years ago, as I recall, he told me he'd never seen a definite Fulmar in his life, so this record tells us something about the bird's spread on the western Atlantic--and about Charlie too). Interestingly enough, he saw no GREATER SHEARWATERS there, but they were in 100's a little farther back, about 2 hours out. It struck him that the two species had "divided the territory up" between them. In that same general area, Stuart Tingley saw 90 Greater and 70 SOOTY SHEARWATERS from BLUENOSE on June 22 and W. Townsend saw 51 Greater and 2 Sooties on Aug. 17. Wickerson Lent saw 150+ Greater and 170+ Sooties off North Point, Brier I., on July 1 and Robbie Denton saw small numbers--up to 25 Greater and 8 Sooties a day--20 miles southwest of Yarmouth in the course of August. Raymond d'Entremont saw 25 Greater as late as November 15 on the Lurcher Shoal. My own impression was that shearwaters were very scarce on the southwest Bay Of Fundy in the second week of August; I was whale-watching out of Grand Manan and came nearly across to Nova Scotia without seeing either a Greater or a Sooty. Sooties, as usual, were relatively the commoner of the two at the start of the summer, as these records show. Finally, some late records of both species from Hartlen Point, on the Atlantic side of the province: 7 Greater, on Oct. 8 and 100+ on Nov. 17, and a freshly-dead Sooty on Oct. 23 (FLL & Cs).

Of the more exotic tubenoses, there was the single CORY'S SHEARWATER which Robbie Denton saw on Aug. 1, 25 miles southwest of Yarmouth. There were also a few MANX SHEARWATERS reported: 6 from BLUENOSE on Aug. 17 (W. Townsend) and another 6 from the St. John/Digby ferry on Nov. 12. (Roy John). The St. John/Digby birds looked rather brown for this species; they may have been in moult, or they may have come from one of the Mediterranean populations, which are browner than the northeast Atlantic birds which we usually see over here.

Stuart Tingley's June 22 BLUENOSE crossing was unusually productive in LEACH'S STORM-PETRELS too; fog or no fog, he saw 45 of them. On the same crossing on Aug. 17, W. Townsend thought they were "up in numbers", but gives no figures. However, he counted 134 WILSON'S as well. I saw flocks of Wilson's, totalling perhaps 150 birds, just east of the Grand Manan Banks on the second week of August, but I'm not sure if these were far enough across to be counted as Nova Scotian.

Finally, there was a single Leach's on Cole Hbr. Dykes, on July 1, (RBS), 4 Wilson's at Hartlen Point on Oct. 19 (FLL), a Leach's in D. Matheson's back yard at Glace Bay, on Oct. 28--all probably blown onshore by gales.

Our most unusual "pelican" was just that--a WHITE PELICAN, seen from the causeway leading to Big Island, Merigomish, Pictou Co., on Aug. 21 (Ross Baker, Daphne Baudouse and Mary Brennan). There can be no doubt of the identification, startling though it seems. (I first got the news from a puzzled hydrographer at Bedford Institute, and I had to spend a little time reassuring him of both his sanity and sobriety) If this was a wild bird, not an "escape", it must have come to us from northwest Ontario or beyond. It's a freshwater bird, unlike the Brown Pelicans which occasionally wander up here from Florida after hurricanes.

There are plenty of sightings of NORTHERN GANNETS, and the simplest way to summarise them is by describing their passage through or

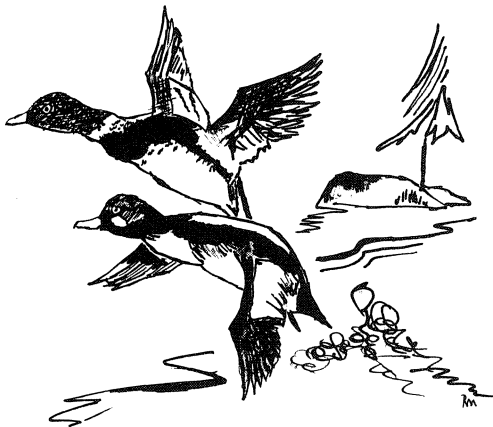


past various areas. Hartlen Point: 40, Sept. 14; 15, Sept. 24; 15, Oct. 8; 3, Oct. 10; 200+, Oct. 19; 50+ Oct. 24; 50+, Nov. 7 (FLL) Green Bay and Cherry Hill: 4 per minute, 50% adult and fishing as they went, on Oct. 3; 10+ (1 of them immature) on Oct. 25, and 12+ (only 1 adult) on Nov. 14 (Cohrs). BLUENOSE: 10 on June 22 (Stuart Tingley) and 58 on Aug. 17 (W. Townsend). Brier Island: 2 immatures June 28; 1, July 28; 3-4, Aug. 8-11; 27, Sept. 9; 125+, Oct. 3, and 14, Nov. 11 (Robbie Denton, Richard Stern, Stephen Flemming & Co).

There are not too many records of GREAT CORMORANTS, but this probably reflects the numbers of observers as much as of birds. There were no obvious changes in numbers seen off Hartlen Point or Oceanview Cove, Dartmouth; 7, Sept. 7; 3, Oct. 1; 5, Oct. 8 (FLL); 6, Sept. 7; 2 Oct. 10 in Halifax Harbour (RBD) the latest report of two birds at Chebogue Point, Yarmouth Co., on Nov. 18 (CRKA).

The DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT is the common one in breeding on mainland Nova Scotia, and there are plenty of sightings of the species. There was a massive southward migration of 1000+ birds going past Hartlen Point on Aug. 20, and there were still 100 there on Oct. 8. After that, numbers fell to 5 on Oct. 12, but rose again to 95 on Oct. 23 (FLL, RBD). The birds became abundant around Eel Brook by Sept 18 (PRD) there were large numbers present at Brier Island, Sept. 26-27, and plenty still there as late as Nov. 11 (RBS). These Brier birds must have been migrants on their way south, but Robbie Denton found that a colony of half a dozen birds has recently been founded on a small island just offshore from there. An inland record is worth mentioning--4 on Lake Ramsay, at New Ross on Oct. 9--"first ever seen in this area" (KNK).

RGBB, ed.



## HERONS AND ALLIES

Summer concentrations of GREAT BLUE HERONS, outside of colonies, included 44 on Cole Harbour on July 1, 40 on Hawk Point, Cape Sable I., on Aug. 3, and 22 at Smith's Cove on Aug. 16. They were moving south in later Aug., for PRD reports "many flying over all day" Aug. 26 in Yar. Co., and RD thought they were becoming common on Brier I., by Aug. 25. Notable late counts were about 20 flying west on Brier I. on Oct. 29, 10+ on Cole Hbr. on Nov. 8, 6 at Cherry Hill on Nov. 4, and 5 at Morien's Bar, C.B., on Nov. 15. Late spring GREEN HERONS were 1 at Queensland on June 16-18 (KNK) and another just west of Liverpool on June 17 (LEN). One in Yar. Co., on July 4 (see FALL FLYER) was between seasons. An adult was at Russel Lake, Dartmouth, on Aug. 24 (FLL), and other individuals were at Barrington on Sept 21 (BJS), on Brier I., in late Sept. to early Oct. (fide IAM), on Seal I. on Oct. 3-4 (EC,SJF) and (the same?) Oct. 11-18 (Cohrs), and again at Russel Lake on Nov. 13 (FLL).

A LITTLE BLUE HERON was at Queensland (with the Green Heron) on June 16-18 (KNK) and an adult was at Lawrencetown Marsh on June 22 (Cohrs) and June 29 (KNK). A flurry of CATTLE EGRETS began with a bird identifiably photographed by Anthony Dobson at Brooklands, Hfx. Co., on Sept. 21; then there was an adult and an immature on Seal I. on Oct. 3-5 (SJF,EC), 1 at Chebogue during the week of Oct. 7 (CRKA et al.), and 1 at Paradise on Oct. 12 (JM et al.) The only GREAT EGRETS were individuals in Yar. Co., on Oct. 5 (CRKA) and at Scott's Bay on Oct. 10 (PJA-S). As usual, SNOWY EGRETS were the most regular of these wanderers from the southeast. There were: 1 at W. Lawrence-town on June 13 (RBD); 1-2 between July 5 and late Aug., at Crescent Beach (Cohrs); 1 at Homeville in early Sept. (A. Ferguson); up to 3 on Sable I. in early Oct. (Zoe Lucas); 1 on Seal I. on Oct. 2-5, and 1 near Mahone Bay on Nov. 12 (fide FLL). A sighting of the much-less-regular LOUISIANA HERON at Matthews L., Shel. Co., was fully reported by Wayne C. Weber, a well-known birder from B.C.

A YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON at Canso on July 13-14 (Nancy Peters) and a closely observed immature bird at Three Fathom Harbour, Hfx. Co. on Aug. 1, (FH) were matched by a probable subadult BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON at John Lusby Marsh on July 18 (CD) and an adult on Cape Sable I. on July 25 (CD&JRG); rather a poor showing of both species. We received reports of some 24 AMERICAN BITTERNS, the latest 1 on Nov. 2 on Bon Portage I.

Easily the most striking visitor to the province this summer was the SCARLET IBIS, which gave pleasure to many people. I am indebted to PRD and ELM for collating much information on the bird. It was first reported on June 15 to JSC by Jim Owen of Dartmouth, but according to local fishermen, had been around Three Fathom Harbour since late May. It was seen periodically in the same vicinity, generally on the flats at low tide, by numbers of birders and fascinated locals until at least the beginning of Aug. It was rather tame, but watchful, sometimes approaching observers within 50m. ELM believed it to be an adult, and described it as having touches of pink on head and neck, and somewhat paler underparts when first seen, but much deepened in color to salmon-red by mid-July. He thought it was probably feeding on amphipods and periwinkles, which may have improved its color. On Aug. 9, a Scarlet Ibis appeared in Shelburne Hbr., where it was reported by Jim Burrell, summer warden of a local nature reserve and independently by a visiting Detroit birder. I have not learned how long it stayed. The next one turned up at Coffinscroft, near Barrington, on Aug. 23-26, where Ben Doane was alerted. He thought it was a vivid day-glow orange in color. Ben's neighbor, Ron Lamrock, was lucky enough to approach it within a few metres, and make the important observation that it was banded (others did not see bands). Finally the Scarlet Ibis showed up on Sept. 5, in a cove at Cranberry Head,

Yar. Co. Paul Tufts, N.S. Lands & Forests, was called in to study it at leisure. To him, it was pinkish orange in color. Alas, it could not be found by local birders next day. Although its color was variously described, it seems very unlikely that more than one bird was involved in this sequence of sightings. The only generally accepted records of "wild" birds in North America are from the U.S. Gulf Coast. That ours was an "escape" at some time, seems certain from its banded status, although its exact provenance remains in doubt. They are kept in captivity by a Montreal dealer in birds, but none seems to have been imported recently via Halifax (Dr. E.D. King, Animal Health Br., Agriculture Canada). Our bird more likely came from the U.S. east coast, where they are found in collections as far north as New York. It appeared in late May, along with a number of other south-eastern vagrants as documented in this issue of NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS. Perhaps it made its way back to more reasonable climates.

IAM, ed.

#### SWANS, GEESE & DUCKS

The status of 2 MUTE SWANS at Lawrencetown Lake, July 25 is anybody's guess: escapees from local parks?--wanderers from southern New England?--take your choice! (These were seen by RBD).

A pair of CANADA GEESE with three young were seen at Lusby Marsh, June 5 (CD). The reported sightings of southbound migrants produce a pattern almost too "pat" to be true: 1, Aug. 21, Glace Bay (EM); 15, Aug. 25, Ingonish (RC); 24, Sept. 3, Morien Bar (HEH); 13, Sept. 7, Eastern Passage (FLL); 3, Sept. 12, Crescent Beach (JSC); 20-22, Sept. 17, Lr. Eel Brook (PRD). By late October the wintering flocks were building up although only three reports have come in: 400, Oct. 30, Martinique Beach (RDJ); 700, Nov. 8, at Cole Harbour (JS&JLC) and 2000±, Nov. 18, at Melbourne Sanctuary (CRKA).

A very tame SNOW GOOSE so journeyed at Petite Riviere for several days, Sept. 26 - Oct. 1, allowing approach to within 10 feet (EDD,JSC)

Reports on MALLARDS give no indication of further encroachment on the Black Duck population: several birds seen at Mavilette, Kingsburg and Marriott's Cove, APBS, and 50± seen daily in the Sydney, Mira, Point Edward region (RDH,CD,HEH).

Numbers of BLACK DUCKS reported seem alarmingly low: a peak of 60 during the summer at APBS where many birds were reared (CD); 350, Oct. 1, at Lingan (CSM); 200, Nov. 8 at Cole Harbour (JL&JSC); 125±, Nov. 15 at Glace Bay Sanctuary (SM); 100± daily in the Sydney-Mira area (HEH) and 1000± Nov. 18 at Melbourne Sanctuary (CRKA), the same number at Martinique Beach, Oct. 30 (RDJ).

Only GADWALL sightings were 1-4 birds at APBS in June and July (CD).

PINTAIL reports too, seem fewer than usual: 2, Oct. 3, at Crescent Beach (JSC) and 2, Sept. 29 at APBS (LEN). There were a few at this latter spot all summer, with a peak of 40, Aug. 27, at nearby John Lusby Marsh (CD).

GREEN-WINGED TEAL were "general" and in good numbers this season. Shirley and Lisè Cohrs found them very numerous in the Cole-Harbor-Lawrencetown area, Sept. 26, in (usually unmixed) flocks of 8-10. "Practically every puddle had its flock of one or the other teal species, very tame, allowing approach to within 30 feet".

BLUE-WINGED TEAL also were well reported and from all regions. Con Desplanque had at least ten breeding pairs at APBS and counted 110 there Aug. 5, 100 on Aug. 27.

There are just three reports of the AMERICAN WIGEON for the period: 1, Sept. 5, at Westport (LEN); 1, Sept. 26, at Three-Fathom Harbour (JS&LC) and it was present as usual throughout the summer at APBS where 30 including young were noted, Aug. 15, a single one only, Nov. 14 (CD).

According to Con Desplanque the WOOD DUCK has become a regular breeder at APBS where up to 20 can be seen on a walk through the Sanctuary. Many broods were hatched this summer. Mike Rymer on the other hand, reports none of the nesting boxes at Beaverdam Meadows (Shel. Co.) used this summer. A little flock of three males and three females in perfect plumage mirrored in the glassy surface of a roadside pond on Seal I., Oct. 18, made a delightful picture for the visiting birders.

Two REDHEADS seen July 4, and possibly the same birds seen July 12, at APBS (CD) are the only sightings of this species.

At least five broods of RING-NECKED DUCKS were raised at APBS this summer (CD) but elsewhere, numbers reported were somewhat lower than usual, being mostly of single birds. Exceptions were 30, July 19, at Mud Lake near Halifax, a long-time hangout for the species; a brood of 7 at Beaver River, Yar. Co., Aug. 20 (CRKA) and two flocks of 20 each at Rocky Lake near Waverley Nov. 9 & 10 (P &LP). A single bird near Freshwater Lake, Cape Breton Highlands National Park (CBHNP) is a first record for the Park.

Two CANVASBACK drakes at Wentworth Creek near Sydney, although outside the period covered by this account are important enough to include. Observers were Hedley Hopkins and Otis Cossitt, who noted that these drakes were present from May 2 to Aug. 8, 1981.

SCAUP reports are few indeed; a GREATER, a female, was seen on Brier I., Oct. 25, and a pair, probably of this species was at Glace Bay, Nov. 7 (EM). Only record of any number was of 200 in the LaHave River, Nov. 10 (EHC). R. Chiasson reports a LESSER at CBHNP July 7, and on Nov. 1 at Hartlen Point, a party of experienced birders (including the two reporters, Richard Stern and John Cohrs) studied an immature bird at leisure and at close range and all agreed it could only be of this species. The Lesser Scaup occurs regularly at APBS although no reports of it have been received so far this year.

It is early for sightings of the COMMON GOLDENEYE in any considerable numbers except along the Northumberland Strait shore where bird reporters are rare stragglers. The only reports are of singles, and several birds from Cape Breton, the Valley and Barrington Bay - where the greatest number seen was 7, by Betty-June Smith.

BUFFLEHEADS began to show up in early November; small flocks of 8-12 were "all over the Annapolis Basin Nov. 8-14" and on the 15th a very long line "extending for about a quarter of a mile and made up of rows of 4-6 birds" was noted there by Annie Raymond. A flock of 10-12 of these birds was at Melbourne Sanctuary, Nov. 18, the first seen in this area (CRKA), for the season.

Sometimes non-breeding birds are in no hurry to reach their summer homes; and of such no doubt, were the four OLDSQUAWS, still in eclipse plumage July 5, at Green Bay, where they were joined by another July 13-14 (JL&JSC). First fall sighting reported is of six off Hartlen Point, Oct. 19; and 20, Oct. 23, at the same spot (FLL). There were about 30 off Pond Cove, Brier I., Nov. 14 (RBS).

Nearly all COMMON EIDER sightings were of small numbers - 50 or less - at points along the Atlantic shore or lower Bay of Fundy. Only reports of larger numbers are of 100-200 birds at Brier I., in late summer (RD&RBS). The great southward migration must have slipped by un-noticed.

One KING EIDER, a female, Oct. 3, at Lr. W. Pubnico, is claimed by the d'Entremonts, Delisle, Jeanne and Raymond, who, after careful study through a spotting scope, concluded the bird could be no other.

SCOTERS were about normal for this period (July-Nov.); the WHITE-WINGED were observed thirteen times for a total of 165 individuals; SURFS on seven trips totalled 94 birds. Usually the least frequently reported of the three, they were able, this time, to top the list because of a flock of 100+ at Green Bay, Oct. 25 (Cohrs).

RUDDY DUCKS were late in arriving at APBS, their only known breeding area in the province, this year. The first bird showed up July 26, but according to Con Desplanque "from then on, it was an explosion". By Aug. 2, there were twelve drakes and a total of 20 birds. When nesting got underway the drakes--unlike other ducks--were guarding the sites "with great ardour and much display". Other records for this species followed the usual pattern of singles or several birds seen during the late summer and fall.

On Nov. 14, at Cherry Hill, one HARLEQUIN DUCK was recorded; this is one of their usual wintering sites (JL&JSC).

HOODED MERGANSERS were seen in eight localities in western N.S., from early September to mid-November, mostly in ones and twos, although there were 11 at Rocky Run, Halifax Co., Oct. 4 (FLL,RA). There was also a concentration at "the Puddle", Queensland, Halifax Co., where up to 13 birds were seen during the period Sept. 13 to Nov. 14, by Vernon Keddy.

Just one report of a COMMON MERGANSER brood has been received--13 young at Smith's Cove, July 13 (AKR). A flock of 50-60 showed up at Eel Lake, Oct. 27, where up to 50 were seen again Nov. 7 (PRD). Only other sighting was of two flocks totalling 27 at East River, Oct. 11 (KNK).

RED-Breasted MERGANSER reports are of 2's and 3's, up to 8 at Brier I., Oct. 28 (RDJ), amazingly small numbers for this species.

C.R.K.A., ed.

## DIURNAL RAPTORS

A TURKEY VULTURE on Digby Neck on Sept. 4, and 1 next day on Brier I. (JSC et al.), and even 1 on Brier on Oct. 1 (RD), could have been N.S. residents. Who's going to find our first nest?

It was a great autumn for hawks, especially on our islands. Before beginning my review, I would like to plead for greater effort to make estimates (even if "guesstimates") of actual numbers during major flights, and also for more details on age, phase and sex, especially of rarer species. There is growing enthusiasm for more formal hawk counts in the Maritimes and, while most of us may be too distracted to become heavily committed, it behooves us to make our "recreational" observations a bit more meaningful. I will give almost all available information from Brier and Seal Islands, from reports of EC, JSC, RD, STF, IAM, PJA, and RBS.

NORTHERN GOSHAWKS on Brier I. on June 29, and at APBS on Aug. 15, may have been resident, but the remaining dozen reports of ca. 24 birds were of migrants. Brier Island produced 5-6 on Sept. 4-5, and 4 on Oct. 3-4. Seal I. had only singles on Oct. 4 and Oct 14-15, and 2 on Oct. 31-Nov. 1. Bon Portage I. also had 2 on the latter weekend. No nestings of SHARP-SHINNED HAWKS were added to the one on Seal I. (see Fall Flyer), and there were only 3 reports of probable residents. Some 35 reports of ca 235 birds (excluding large numbers from Brier I.) were received. On Brier I., Sharpshins were rated as common among 500+ hawks on Sept. 3-4, but evidently peaked on Sept. 26-27, when "hundreds" were in hot pursuit all over the island. There were ca. 80 on Oct. 3-4, up to 20 on Oct. 10, and only 3-4 on Nov. 11. Seal I. produced 4-33 birds on Oct. 15-18, and counts of up to 8 birds were on Seal I. and 6 on Bon Portage I. at month's end. Substantial counts from other localities indicate that some of the above movements were widespread; "several" were seen on the Tuskets field trip on Sept. 26, ca. 12 in 10 min. at M.W. Pubnico on Oct. 10, and 11 there on Oct. 12.

About 20 RED-TAILED HAWKS were reported from the breeding season, and they were not very common in migration: some 16 reports of 45 birds. One on Oct. 3, reached Sable Island, where they are a rarity (Zoe Lucas). On Brier Island there were 2 on Aug. 25, none (!) on Sept. 4-5, 1 on Sept. 7 & 11, up to 8 on Oct. 3-4, and 10-20 on Nov. 17. The late peak matched the only other fall report of more than 1 bird: 3 on Robert's I., Yar. Co., on Nov. 5. Anyone looking for our first nesting RED-SHOULDERED HAWKS may have to scour the length of the province, for this year 1 was seen in CBHNP in mid-June (Bob Stymeist) and 2 were over Yarmouth on June 29 (MWH). Both observers are familiar with the species elsewhere and had good views. Certainly they have become regular, if rare, migrants; an immature was photographed on Brier I. on Aug. 25 (RBS) and another bird was seen over Digby Neck on Sept. 4 (JSC et al.). A series of remarkable late-spring counts of BROAD-WINGED HAWKS from Brier Island (RD) deserve full documentation: 6 on June 1, 3 on June 8, 35 on June 11, 185 (!) on June 12, 40 on June 13, and 15 on June 29. Are these late arrivals, non-breeders, or what? Later breeding-season birds were seen near Villagedale, New Ross, Sheet Harbour, and Shelburne, but no actual nestings were added to those reported from Yar. Co. (Fall Flyer). The fall migration was strong. Broadwings were common among the 500+ hawks at Brier I. on Sept. 4-5. Hundreds and perhaps thousands were seen in large, loose flocks during the field trip to the Tuskets on Sept 26. On Brier I., again, up to 93 were present on Oct. 4, 50 next day, 40 on Oct. 7, 300 on Oct. 10, and 20 on Oct. 12. Only 11 migrants were reported from elsewhere. It was an unusual year for ROUGH-LEGGED HAWKS. Seven were reported from the period June-Sept. in C.B., (HEH), but it is not clear how many were summering birds, like the one at APBS on July 18 (CD). Individuals at Fuller's Bridge, C.B.,

on Aug. 15 (NSBS trip) and at Grand Pré, on Aug. 28 (MR) could have been early migrants. On Brier I. there were unstated numbers on Sept. 3-4, 1 on Oct. 12, and 2-3 on Nov. 14. Seal and Bon Portage I. each had 2-3 birds in late Oct. Elsewhere 6 birds were reported.

At last our scattered observations on BALD EAGLES are largely superseded by news from Cape Breton, where Dave Harris and Don Banks of the Dept. of Lands and Forests, estimated that 65 young eagles were recruited this year, swelling the island total to 600, the largest concentration on the Eastern Seaboard. The NSBS party at Malaga-watch on July 18, was privileged to see one of the C.B. youngsters actually fledge. Three were seen feeding on a week-dead, 2 m long White-sided Dolphin at Port Hood, on Nov. 11. There were only scattered reports from the mainland during the breeding season, including a (newly found?) nest at Grand Lake (R&KH), but more came from migration season. For comparison with other raptors on Brier Island, there were up to 3 in early Sept., 1 on Sept. 19, 4 on Oct. 12, and 3 immature on Nov. 14. At least 2 were at Cyril Coldwell's "feeder" by Nov. 11.

Single NORTHERN HARRIERS through early June on Brier I. became 3 on June 16--probably non-breeders by this date. Only about 6 individuals or pairs were reported from probable breeding areas in summer (this does not include those designated as immature). The sequence on Brier I. was: 1 on July 3-4, 5-6 on Aug. 8-11, "all over the Place" on Aug. 24-26, common (no count) on Sept. 3-4, 2 on Sept. 27, 6 on Oct. 3-4, and 1 on Oct. 26. There were some 38 individuals from other scattered localities during migration, with no counts exceeding 4 individuals.

Doubtless Erick Greene's report on OSPREY will give us a standard to work from in Halifax Co. Outside that county there were reports of nests on Secombe I. in Mahone Bay, and on Hogg and Blackberry I., and Fish Point in Shelburne Co., in addition to those reported in the Fall Flyer. Brier I. had one on Aug. 29 - Sept. 1, 6 on Sept. 19, 2 on Oct. 3, and 1 on Oct. 24. Otherwise there were only 18 reports of 28 individuals after Sept. 1, including an impressive 8 on Sable Island on Oct. 3 (Zoe Lucas) and 2 late ones at Mason's Beach, Lun. Co., on Nov. 11 (fide FLL).

An early GYRFALCON was watched "playing (possibly fighting)" with a Northern Raven for 5+ min. on Sept. 1, near Tusket (CRKA). Another "beautiful bird, very light grey phase" was seen on Seal I. on Oct. 4 (EC,SJF). (Another was reported just over the N.B. border this fall). PEREGRINE FALCONS still deserve to be reported in full; let's hope we can be more casual some day. They were: 1 near Argyle on Sept. 30 (CRKA), an immature and an adult female on Brier I., on Oct. 3-4, up to 6 (5 immature) on Seal I. on the same weekend, an adult female at Hartlen Point, near Dartmouth, on Oct. 8-12 (FLL), up to 4 on Seal I. on Oct. 10-12 (2 there on Oct. 15 and 1 on Oct. 18 may have been "repeats"), and an adult on Nov. 21, near Economy (FH). I have heard that MERLINS again nested in Point Pleasant Park, Halifax, but the only other breeding season reports were of 2 near Sydney and 1 at Shubenacadie. They were on the move in Aug., beginning with 1 at Hartlen Point on Aug. 20. Thereafter, 27 individuals were reported plus up to 4 on Seal I. on Oct. 15-18, and the following sequence on Brier I.: 1 on Sept. 4-6, 1 on Sept. 19 and 27, up to 25 on Oct. 3-4, 1 on Oct. 7, up to 5 by the 10th, and 1 on Oct. 13 and 23. Zoe Lucas reports one chasing terns on Sable Island on several occasions in Sept., and making at least one kill! AMERICAN KESTRELS were sparsely reported as pairs or families (at Wolfville, Amherst and Ingonish), but were legion in migration. Excluding those on Brier I., about 70 individuals were reported, including 14 at Baccaro Point and 8 on Sunday Point and Cranberry Head, Yar. Co., on Sept. 6. On Brier I. there were 7-8 on Aug. 8-11, ca. 50 on Aug. 24-26, they were the most

common among the 500+ raptors on Sept. 3-4, were in "hundreds" on Sept. 26=27, there were up to 30 on Oct. 3-4, but they had diminished to singles on Oct. 26 and Nov. 14.

#### GROUSE AND ALLIES

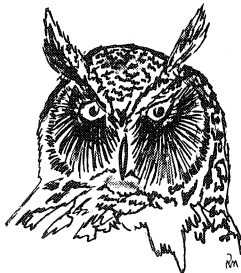
We have only 5 reports of SPRUCE GROUSE-1 each at Barrington, Clyde River, Chester Grant and Economy, and 6 young with mother at Barrington on July 8 (BJS). RUFFED GROUSE seemed scarce in C.B. (per SCM), whence only 8 individuals were reported. About 25 were reported from the mainland, but most of these were in family groups at Sandy Bottom Lake, W. Pubnico, Eel Brook, and New Ross. A single BOBWHITE on July 31 near Wolfville (D&O Ellis) and 25 on Sept. 16, near Sandy Cove (RDH) suggest that introductions are taking hold. RING-NECKED PHEASANTS, of course, have a firm grip on the Valley region, and seem to be increasing around Dartmouth and in Lun. Co., where 27 were counted by FLL at Mason's Beach on Aug. 31. Four were reported from C.B. GRAY PARTRIDGE were seen only at Canning: 5 on Aug. 15 (RBS).

#### CRANE AND RALLIDS

The province's third (possibly 4th) SANDHILL CRANE was at Grand Pre Dyke on Aug. 30-31. Bernard Forsythe, who spotted it and spread the word, supplied good details. It is worth recording that Ed. Turner, Lands and Forests Warden at Sable River, recently told me that one of these birds, which he described convincingly, spent some time last fall on Cape Negro, Shel. Co. Clearly these wonderful big birds are becoming more frequent in the northeast.

There were no reports of VIRGINIA RAILS from the nesting season, but individuals were reported from Brier I., on Sept. 6, L.W. Pubnico on Sept. 27 (road kill), and Seal I. on Oct. 31. Nesting-season SORAS were frequently heard at APBS and a pair was seen at the marsh on Dorothea Dr., Dartmouth, on July 5 (FLL). The only later migrants or residents, were reported by FLL from Russel Lake, Dartmouth, a total of 15 between Aug. 24 and Nov. 5, 8 of them Sept. 8.

At least 3 broods of COMMON GALLINULES were at APBS this summer (CD), and the report of 1 near Canning (Fall Flyer) and another at Upper Canard on June 12 (BCS) may herald a spread in breeding range. Immature individuals were at Russel Lake on Sept. 26 (Cohrs) and nearby Morris Lake on Sept. 29 (FLL), and road-killed in Yar. Co., on Oct. 15 (CRKA), and an adult was at Russel Lake on Oct. 10 (FLL). "The COOT is now a regular feature of APBS, with many broods reared", according to CD, who made counts of 40-80 in summer, at least 200 on Oct. 25, and still 125+ on Nov. 14. The only coastal spin-off was 1 at Three Fathom Hbr., on Oct. 4.





## SHOREBIRDS

40+ SEMI-PALMATED PLOVERS were at Cape John, July 25 (BJ&SS), but reports of the main migration came in August, with 1000's in Yar. Co. on the 1st, 300+ still there on Aug. 21 (CRKA). In the same period there were reports of 100 or more from Brier (RBS) and Evangeline Beach (LEN). The species remained plentiful through September, e.g. 350 at Hartlen Point on the 14th (FLL). 150-200 at Crescent Beach, Oct. 8 (KNK) is the last large flock reported, with a last 30 still at Eastern Passage, Oct. 23 (FLL). Noteworthy is one with a pink-dyed back at Brier, Aug. 24-26, provenance unknown (RBS). The PIPING PLOVER was, of course, much less in evidence, with reports of one migrant from Liberty Point, Aug. 23 (BJS), five on the 24th at Villagedale (JR&CDG), and one, Sept. 1, at Aspy Bay (fide Ra&RC). In addition, reports of successfully breeding birds were received from Cole Harbour (BO'R), Cherry Hill (SJF,J&SC), and Summerville Beach (LEN).

The KILLDEER is described as "very common" in the Yarmouth area this August (PRD). A flock of 25 was at New Minas, Aug. 7 (BCS) and simply a flock at Sydney airport, Aug. 22 (JG). Aside from a flock of 20 at Grand Pré, Sept. 17 (RDJ) later numbers are small, the latest one at Pubnico on Oct. 13 (Jd'E). The LESSER (American) GOLDEN PLOVER for the most part, trickled through in ones and twos: at Hartlen Point, there was a total of 16 from Aug. 21 to Oct. 24 with a maximum of 7 on Sept. 24 (FLL). Elsewhere a total of 10+ along the Atlantic Shore (late Sug-Sept.) and a flock of 40 at Grand Pre, Sept. 17 (RDJ) preceded a very late laggard at Economy, Nov. 10-11 (FS, SIT). An early BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER was at North Bay Beach, July 30, (fide RA&RC), 20+ were at Yarmouth, Aug. 1 (CRKA). By Aug. 14, there were 120+ at Lawrencetown (FLL). Numbers elsewhere in August were much smaller, and in September not more than 30 were counted province-wide, with the major exception of 400 at Grand Pre on the 17th (RDJ). One suspects not everyone reports normal numbers of the commoner species. At any rate, there were 25 at Cherry Hill, Nov. 14 (J&SC) and still 3 at Lingan, Nov. 22 (CSM).

Hunters are more successful at finding the AMERICAN WOODCOCK in autumn than are birders. Only three observers sent in fall reports: 2 at Wilmot, Aug. 30 (LEN), 2 at Pubnico, Sept. 10 (TCd'E) and 3 at Brook Village, C.B., On Oct. 15 (CSM). Doubtless many more went undetected in the woodland thickets that fewer birders visit in autumn. 25+ COMMON SNIPE at APBS, Sept 27, constitute the only sizable concentration reported; from elsewhere there are only a few reports of migrants.

The far less common, but more noticeable WHIMBREL received more attention. Two July sightings, at Yarmouth (fide MWH) and Brier (RD), were followed by 5, August 7, at Lingan (CSM), with 17 later in the month, including 8 at Baccaro, Aug. 21 (E&VH). The real surprise came Sept. 1 with a report of four flocks of 100+ on the blueberry fields at Lingan (OC,HEH). Together with a possibly overlapping report of "Aug-Sept. flocks in the Sanctuary area, C.B." (fide JM) and 17 on Sept. 6 at Mariette Beach (CRKA), the impression is that the Whimbrel did well this year. Less happily, no UPLAND SANDPIPERS are reported this fall. The SPOTTED SANDPIPER received much comment as a summer resident, less as a migrant. There were a total of 6 in the Halifax area in Oct. (FLL) and one, very late, at Pubnico, Nov. 7 (RSd'E). A baker's dozen of the SOLITARY SANDPIPER range from an early migrant, July 17 at Crescent Beach (J&SC) to one at Mason's Beach, Sept. 1 (FLL). Among the numerous reports of the WILLET, was one of the Western race, July 15 at Crescent Beach (large, paler, longer and more drooping bill, more white in the wing--J&SC). Latest was one at Cole Harbor, Oct. 25 (RBS). There are few places one doesn't find the GREATER YELLOWLEGS in late summer and fall: by Aug. 1

ten were in Yar. Co. (CRKA), thereafter wide-spread in moderate numbers, still 20 or so at Eel Brook (PRD) and Crescent Beach (JSC) Nov. 7-8 and one left at Morien Bar, Nov. 15 (SM). The LESSER YELLOW-LEGS is apt to arrive earlier: "twice as many as the Greater" at Yarmouth, Aug 1 (CRKA, 200 at Three Fathom Harbour, Aut. 14 (FLL). It also leaves earlier, the last three at Crescent Beach, Oct. 2 (JSC) dwindling to one, Oct. 8 (KNK).

RUDDY TURNSTONES began to arrive in late July, one at Crescent Beach on the 24th (J&SC), 5 on the 25th, at Brier (RD), with 50 there by Aug. 11 (RBS). Sept. 7 saw 100+ in the Halifax area (FLL). By Nov. 22 one was left at Lingan (CSM). Three RED KNOTS were at Lingan, Aug. 7, two in breeding plumage (CSM). There was a discernible peak Aug. 22-24, with 38 at Liberty Point (BJS) and 26 at Villagedale (JR&CDG). A flock of 23 was at Lingan, Oct. 19 (CSM) and on Nov. 8, still 8 at Cole Hbr. (J&SC). A dozen PECTORAL SANDPIPERS were noticed this fall, from one, Aug. 14 at Lawrence town (FLL) to 3 at Crescent Beach, Oct. 25 (JLC). Few observers reported the WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER--from 6, Aug. 21, at Hartlen Point (FLL) and 20 at Brier, Aug. 25 (RD) to a maximum of 100+ at Hartlen Point, Sept. 7 (FLL). There were still 4 in the Halifax area, Nov. 7-8 (FLL, J&SC). Most reports of the BAIRD'S SANDPIPER come, as usual, from Brier: 3, July 12 (RD), one, Aug. 25 (RBS), 3, Aug. 27 (LEN). Also 2-3 were at Cherry Hill, Aug. 27-30 (SJF, JSC).

The LEAST SANDPIPER appeared in large numbers (300) at Lawrence town, Aug. 5, and Cherry Hill (70+), Sept. 12 (FLL). The last report is of two, Oct. 7, at Pubnico (DJD'E). The first Dunlins were noted Aug. 23, at Liberty Point (BJS). One suspects, from the paucity of Sept-Oct. records, that observers focus on "last seen" dates, of which 2, Nov. 22, at Lingan (CSM) is the ultimate. a LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER was seen and heard Oct. 25, at Crescent Beach (JLC). SHORT BILLED DOWITCHERS have a habit of appearing in early July, but this year did so in much reduced numbers (JSC). The south-bound migration was marked by "dozens", Aug. 1, at Yarmouth (CRKA), 150 at Three Fathom Hbr., Aug. 14, and 70 at Pubnico, Aug. 17 (DJD'E). Last were 20 at Crescent Beach, Sept. 8 (RDH). A STILT SANDPIPER was at its favoured West Lawrence town pond, Aug. 5 (FLL); in the Yarmouth area one was at Pinkney Point, Aug. 21, and at Sand Beach, Aug. 26, and Oct. 1 (CRKA). The only other was at Cook's Beach, Sept 20 (MWH). The SEMI-PALMATED SANDPIPER was present in numbers, 1800 at Cape Sable by July 25 (S&BJS). "1000's" were at Yarmouth by Aug. 1 (CRKA), 15,000 at Evangeline Beach, Aug. 12 (LEN, including one banded bird). By Oct. 25, one was left at Crescent Beach (J&LC). An interesting note of "semis", following a highway for at least a mile as though it were a river, comes from SM. Three yellow-dyed birds were at Economy in early September (EPS). Six WESTERN SANDPIPERS are reported from Hartlen Point, Sept. 7, with details, one still there Sept. 14 (FLL), and one from APBS in late August (EPS). A BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER was at Brier, Aug. 27- Sept. 6 (LEN), 5 at Hartlen Point, Sept. 7 and two at Cherry Hill, Sept. 12 (FLL). Only one HUDSONIAN GODWIT was reported, from Crescent Beach on Sept. 11 (J&SC); one suspects their more regular stopping places at Wallace and Matthew's Lake lacked adequate coverage. There was no shortage of SANDERLINGS in the Aug.-Oct. period, with 26 still at Hartlen Point., Nov. 7 (FLL).

Small numbers of RED PHALAROPES were off Brier, July 25-Aug. 5 (RD), one dead and one wounded on it, Aug. 8 (RBS). Adult females were at Lawrence town and Hartlen Point, Aug. 21, and Sept. 7 (FLL). Both Red and NORTHERN were seen ("down in numbers") from the Bluenose Off Yarmouth, Aug 17 (WT).

## JAEGERS TO AUKS

Wickerson Lent saw a SKUA off North Point, Brier Island, on July 1. Stuart Tingley saw an unidentified Jaeger from BLUENOSE on June 22, and Bill Townsend saw two POMARINE and a PARASITIC JAEGER on the same route on Aug. 17, halfway between Bar Harbour and Yarmouth. There was an immature Parasitic off Hartlen Point on Oct. 8, and a Pomarine on the way to Seal I. on Oct. 15 (NSBS party).

I think we can take the HERRING and GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULLS for granted: "common everywhere", "as usual" and "daily in all areas", say Phyllis Dobson, Hedley Hopkins and Richard Stern. I hear informally that our LESSER BLACKBACK is back at the Volvo pier in Halifax (ca, Dec. 1), but the only written record is the third year bird seen in June in Cape Breton Highlands National Park by Bob Stymeist of the Eastern Massachusetts "Bird Observer". The only GLAUCOUS GULL sighting is also a spring one--from Glace Bay on May 28 (SM). Our ICELAND GULL records, on the other hand, are all from the fall. The first sighting at Glace Bay was on Oct. 11 (SM). On the mainland, there was a 1st Year immature at Mill Cove on Oct. 18 and an adult Kumlien's-lace at Dartmouth on Nov. 11 (FLL), as well as the bird on Russel Lake, Dartmouth, on Nov. 1 (RBS). The first winter bird was seen the same day at Bon Portage (SIT).

There were 35 RING-BILLED GULLS at APBS on June 26--almost all 2nd summer birds, and 80 on the new-mown lawns at Fort Lawrence, not too far away, on Aug. 18 (SIT). Larry Neilly saw 100+ at Londen, Cumb. Co., on Sept. 29. The build-up around Eel Brook, Yar. Co., is interesting: c. 10, Oct 5; 175, Oct 10--actively fishing; 100-200, Oct. 15; c. 20, Oct. 27; c. 30, Oct. 28; ca. 25, on the first week in Nov.; ca. 200, Nov. 13; 50-60, Nov. 17; ca. 100, Nov. 26 (PRD,E&VM). We've had reports of this Eel Brook flock for several winters now and I've wondered what the attraction was. Charlie Allen did the obvious experiment and took a net out and caught some of the fish. They are 9-spine sticklebacks, about 20-30 mm (=1") long.

The Cohrs provide our only LAUGHING GULLS--single birds at Crescent Beach on July 5 and 15. They are emphatic that these were two birds. The first was in immaculate breeding plumage and the second, an immature--perhaps second-summer. It stayed at least until Aug. 15.

The most interesting of the other "hooded" gulls was the SABINE'S GULL which Robbie Denton, Wick Lent & Co., saw June 4-7, on Brier I. From their description it was a nearly adult bird, perhaps in its second summer, with most of the classic adult characteristics except for the grey head. June 4-7 sounds about the right timing for a sub-adult bird to be coming up late to the arctic, and finding its way around when it gets there, ready to mate next year.

Our North American BLACK-HEADED GULLS still haven't got to Nova Scotia yet, but Sara MacLean saw a bird at Glace Bay on Aug. 9--"earliest date I've ever seen them. Brilliant plumage". Also, a bird in winter plumage on Sept 10, and 15 on Oct. 28. Birds with plumage as "brilliant" as that have to be breeding on some forgotten lake inside Cape Breton--I refuse to believe they are birds from Newfoundland, let alone Iceland--the nearest "official" breeding places. The other reports show birds straggling south in the fall in small numbers: an adult and an immature on Sullivan's Pond, Dartmouth, on Oct. 10; 2 adults and an immature at Tufts Cove, on Oct. 15; 2 adults and an immature again at the Dartmouth "Piggery", both on Nov. 4 (FLL).

BONAPARTE'S GULLS--named for Napoleon's nephew, believe it or not, who collected birds when he wasn't collecting Philadelphia girls--are not supposed to breed anywhere closer than northwest Ontario. As soon

as they finish breeding, they come half way across the continent to feed up on the tide rips on the New Brunswick side of the Bay of Fundy before moving south towards Florida. But some, obviously, spend the summer here--presumably adolescent birds. The couple which Robbie Denton & Co. saw on Brier I., on June 8 for example, and the fifth record for APBS on July 7 (SIT). However, Stuart Tingley's other early Bonaparte's, at Tantramar River Dam, just across the New Brunswick border, on July 22, was an adult in full breeding plumage. I can't help wondering if they breed farther east than the books say. As usual, the greatest numbers were on the western side of the province, with the biggest count being of 130+ at Linden, Cumb. Co., on Sept 29 (LEN).

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKES are the most offshore of our regular Atlantic gulls and, as usual, we have only a scattering of records. However, there were three reports of massive flights of birds seen from shore, probably blown in by autumnal gales. There were 300+ off Hartlen Point on Oct. 23 (FLL) and 5000+ off North Point, Brier I., on Oct. 25 (RD,WL)--perhaps part of the same movement? Stuart Tingley saw 2000+, mostly juveniles, flying past Bon Portage I., Nov. 1.

We have plenty of reports of both COMMON and ARCTIC TERNS. The Galleghers report 4 adults and 3 young Arctics at East Baccaro on July 3, but the colony here is on a sharp decline: 90 birds in 1978, 40 in 1979, 20 in 1980, and this year only 7. On the other hand, Robbie Denton says that the Brier I. Arctics and Commons on Peter I. in Grand Passage, are doing quite well--20 birds a day, on average, with a high of 500 Arctics and 1000 Commons on June 11. They were last seen there on Aug. 17. There were c. 180 Commons at Liberty Point, Barrington, on Aug. 23. (Smiths). Some other last sightings: Aug. 26 (both species) at Morien Bar (HEH); Aug. 28 (Common) at Sandy Cove, Mahone Bay (RDH); an adult Common at Cherry Hill Beach on Sept. 12 (FLL); 40+--species not stated-- at Linden, Cumb. Co., on Sept. 29 (LEN).

There were two sightings of CASPIAN TERNS--an adult at Hartlen Point on June 17 (FLL) and a bird at North Bay Beach on Aug. 29 (RBC, FM). I'm taking both of these on faith, incidentally, because Caspians are hard to mistake for anything else, and the reporters are reputable. However, as a general rule, would people please remember to send in confirming details and not just a bare record of rarities like this? I may not be so charitable next time.

BLACK TERNS, according to Con Desplanque, are "now well established in APBS", in summer. His high counts were 20 on July 10, and 30 on Aug. 2. Apart from these, Robbie Denton saw a bird on Peter I., off Brier I., on July 10, Fulton Lavender saw an immature in Three Fathom Harbour on Aug. 14, and Stuart Tingley saw another immature at Lusby Marsh on Aug. 18.

Hedley Hopkins saw 27 RAZORBILLS and 26 COMMON MURRES around the Bird Islands, C.B., on June 20; Stuart Tingley saw a Razorbill from BLUENOSE on June 22, and so did Roy John, from the Saint John/Digby ferry on Nov. 12. There was either a very late or a very early THICK-BILLED MURRE, oiled, in inner Barrington Bay on Aug. 20 (BJ&SS). DOVEKIES appeared in a rush--and several gales--from mid-October onwards: 2 at Hartlen Point on Oct. 19 and 52 on Nov. 7 (FLL); 1, about 1 km inland, near M. W. Pubnico on Nov. 18 (TCD'E), and there were two separate birds stranded in the Bedford area on Nov. 21 (Cohrs).

BLACK GUILLEMOTS are reported around the coasts; the highest total was 50+ at the Bird Islands on June 20 (HEH). Numbers kept fairly steady, if low, around Brier I., with something of the order of 5 birds reported on various days from June 4 to Nov. 14 (RBS,RED).

There were 50+ PUFFINS ("less each year") in June on the Bird Islands (HEH) and a single bird seen from BLUENOSE--but on the Maine side--on Aug. 17 (WT). The other sightings are from Brier Island in the tide rips, just northwest of the island: up to 12 on July 25, 6 on Aug. 20 and 3 on Aug. 31 (RED, FH, SIT). At around this time I found them rather common--at least 200 birds--in the tide rips just off southeast Grand Manan, in the second week of August.

RGBB, ed.

#### DOVES, CUCKOOS

ROCK DOVES are seldom reported, but should be noted in outlying places; 1 on Brier I. on Sept. 6, may have been migrating. Much more glamorous was the province's third WHITE-WINGED DOVE, not "ticked" by any birders. The bird appeared in mid-Sept. at the house of Mr. Geo. Patrick, on the road to Crystal Crescent Beach, near Sambro. There it came to feed daily on cracked grain and sunflower seed, alongside Blue Jays, and roosted in nearby trees. Deciding that it was going to stay the winter, Mr. Patrick phoned Lands and Forests on Oct. 1, to ask about the desirability and legality of making a shelter for it. At this, the birding community was alerted, but the bird failed to turn up subsequently. I visited Mr. Patrick and am completely convinced by his account of the bird. In addition to the 2 nesting MOURNING DOVES noted in the Fall Flyer, breeding-season birds were at Round Hill, Wolfville, Halifax (nest reported to MCC), Upper Granville (an apparent juv. on July 3 by JM), Sandy Cove, Barrington, Brier I., and Sydney. These do not include an interesting sequence from TCD'E) who reported numbers at M.W. Pubnico ( e.g., 9 on June 6, 12 on June 21, up to 15 in mid- Aug.) that could have been non-breeders. After mid-Aug., there were reports of over 200 birds; presumably counts of 19-28 at M.W. Pubnico regularly were some of the summer bunch. There were 10 on Sable Island on Oct. 3, and Seal I. had 50+ on Oct. 15-19 and 30 at month's end, at which time there were also 25 on Bon Portage I. Curiously, they were relatively scarce on Brier I. (max. of 8 on Oct. 3). There must be a pattern in all this.

Thirteen YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOOS were reported: 1 on Aug. 19, at Brier I., 1 at Round Bay on Sept. 14, and the rest at scattered localities during Oct. Seven BLACK-BILLED CUCKOOS were reported between May 29 and July 22, and 4 between Sept. 5 and Oct. 18.

#### OWLS

There were 3 summer sightings of GREAT HORNED OWLS, including 4 young seen at APBS on July 2, by CD, who also reports that 3 birds were caught there in muskrat traps, and released. Belated reports of SNOWY OWLS came from C.B.: 1 at Ingonish on March 6 and 2 at Coxheath-Mira on April 28 (HEH). Fourteen BARRED OWLS were seen or heard in summer, including an adult and 2 young in Keji; 3 were sighted in fall. A SHORT-EARED OWL was startled out to sea at Brier I. on Nov. 14 (RBS). Peter Smith and his group of bird-banders from Acadia University, showed once again, that we do not see most of our owls-of passage. This year, as in the last few years (though not hitherto reported on these pages), they mist-netted owls at night on Bon Portage I. During the first and last weekends of Oct., respectively, they caught an astonishing 6 and 2 LONG-EARED OWLS and 41 and 31 SAW-WHET OWLS! This is a good match for other recently discovered migration routes for these owls, such as Pt. Edwards, Ont. No other Long-eared Owls were reported, and the only other Saw-whet Owls were 8, reported to HEH by his C.B. informants.

## CAPRIMULGIDS, SWIFT, HUMMINGBIRD AND KINGFISHER

WHIP-POOR-WILLS were calling at Spectacle Lake, Dartmouth, on June 2 (FLL), and near Beach Meadows on June 17 (LEN). More exciting, was a CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW, trapped in a shore net on Bon Portage I., shortly after dark on Nov. 1 (account from SIT). Full measurements and photos were taken before the bird was banded and released. This is evidently our 6th record, but no lucky birder has properly "ticked" a live, free-ranging bird in the province. This bird had been seen hunting over a road at dusk by some of the Acadia party, but was not recognized. Obviously, us island enthusiasts will have to do less wining and dining at close of day! COMMON NIGHTHAWKS are often on the move after mid-July, so I have only been able to classify about 20 reported individuals, from Yar. Co., to Ingonish, as probable breeders. Yet, after mid-July, numbers were impressive. About 130 birds were reported as individuals or small groups, and there were flocks of 100+ near the Halifax Airport on Aug. 3 (MA) and over the Sydney Highway on Aug. 11 (A. Spencer). Where do they all come from? The latest was a bird on Seal I., on Oct. 19 (Cohrs). It is worth noting belatedly, that MA has seen flocks in May of "hundreds swooping over a lake on Hwy. 101 near Upper Sackville, this and last". We really do need a proper survey of our breeding population to see if such large movements are of displaced migrants.

Scattered reports of some 20+ CHIMNEY SWIFTS in summer (see other reports in Fall Flyer) from Glenwood, Hammonds Plains, Kentville, Orangedale, Paradise, Pictou Co., and Sydney, do not suggest a very secure population as yet. The latest were 2 on Sept. 29, and 1 on Oct. 1, near Dartmouth (FLL). A total of 35-odd RUBY-THROATED HUMMING BIRDS, some clearly recurrent residents, were reported. The latest was on Brier I. on Oct. 3 (Acadia U. party).

BELTED KINGFISHERS are certainly under-reported during nesting season. A set of 5-6 new fledglings were seen on the NSBS field trip to Orangedale on 20 June. Major movements were of 30 crossing Barrington Bay on Sept. 26 (BJS) and of perhaps a dozen near Lr. Eel Brook, on Oct. 9-10, with another "wave" there on Oct. 14 (PRD).

COMMON FLICKERS were thought by some to be indeed common this summer, although only about 50 were actually enumerated. More migration counts were submitted, totalling some 60 birds, excluding those from Brier I. On Brier I., there were an estimated 30 on Sept. 19, "hundreds" on Sept. 26-27 (RBS, smaller estimate from RD), up to 50 on Oct. 3, 40 on Oct. 4, and 20 on Oct. 10. Also, Oct. 1, 3, 10 and 11 were thought to be "flicker days" near Tusket (CRKA, PRD). We have a dozen reports of some 17 PILEATED WOODPECKERS from summer, and 8 birds from fall, widely scattered as usual. Single RED-HEADED WOODPECKERS were seen at Rocco Pt., Yar. Co., on Sept. 25 (CRKA), at Lr. W. Pubnico, on Sept. 28 (J&TD'E, DJd'E), and at Seal I., on Oct. 4 (SFJ, EC). Some 20 YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKERS were reported from the breeding season, most from C.B. (HEH). The only reported nest was at Paradise (JM). Only about 15 migrants, allowing for "repeats", were reported, the latest at W. Pubnico on Oct. 7 (DJd'E). About 10 HAIRY WOODPECKERS and 6 DOWNY WOODPECKERS were reported from the breeding season, although the latter were "daily in most areas" of C.B., according to informants of HEH. As usual, there were more autumn reports: about 25 individuals of each species. BLACK-BACKED THREE-TOED WOODPECKERS were seen near Orangedale, on May 28 (J.Gardner), on French Mt., on June 14 (R. Arsenault, R. Chiasson), near Sydney in early Aug. (OC), near Upper Clyde on Sept. 10 (JR&CDG), near White Rock, Kings Co., on Sept. 18 (RBS, BLF), near Wycocomagh on Nov. 4 (OC) and near East Bay, C.B., on Nov. 11 (CSM).

## FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS

We rely on the late summer movements of the EASTERN KINGBIRDS to remind us that autumn is on its way. They were as reliable as ever this year with activity starting in mid-August and reaching a peak around the beginning of September. Sept. 1 was indeed the big migration day in Yar. Co., with various correspondents counting up to 17 individuals that day. (PRD,CKRA, DKd'E) The latest kingbird seen was at Lr. W. Pubnico, Oct. 9. (DK d'E)

WESTERN KINGBIRDS, rare but regular strays were very scarce, only two being noted: one hung about in Jollimore, Hfx. Co., for three weeks in Sept.-Oct. (L. Verpoorte fide JSC) and the other was at Sandy Cove, Oct 11 (BLF).

The two reports of a GREAT-CRESTED FLYCATCHER were both from Kentville, on July 16 and 26 (BCS, J. Matsubara)

Ruth Hebb writes of two pairs of successfully nesting PHOEBES. The Morses saw them daily in Paradise up to Oct. 7, and a Phoebe stayed on Seal from Oct 3-10. FLL saw an immature bird on Nov. 12 in Dartmouth. These are all normal dates for fall birds.

The EMPIDONAX group of flycatchers seemed "as usual" to most reporters with no special concentrations seen on their way south. A late ALDER was singing at Waverley on Oct. 11 and an even later LEAST lingered in Sara MacLean's garden in Glace Bay, Oct. 20. Eric Mills and JSC separately checked the locale of last year's WILLOW FLYCATCHER several times, but were not rewarded.

Phyllis Dobson wrote that the EASTERN WOOD PEWEES were late in arriving, but that once here they appeared to be in usual numbers. It is usually mid-October before all the Pewees have departed but this year they may have gone a little early. On Oct. 1, one was singing at Green Bay, and there was one on Seal I., Oct. 4-5. The last two on the mainland were at Russel Lake, Oct. 4. (JSC,SJF,FLL)

Jean Morse in Paradise (who reported one individual) and the Gallaghers in Shel. Co. (with five) both felt that the numbers of OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHERS were down, and the paucity of reports substantiates this: KNK had 3 or 4 in the New Ross area; there were two sighted at Ingonish Beach, two in central Yar. Co., and one in Sydney. A late Olive-sided was on Brier, Nov. 11.

As the summer birds left, the HORNED LARKS were seen again. On Sept. 27, the first Brier birds appeared (9), Oct. 1 saw the first along the South Shore (3 at Cherry Hill), Oct. 12, they were at Hartlen Point and by Oct. 15-18 they were seen on Seal. The only note of any great number is of those flocks of 15-20 each on Nov. 4 at Pinkney's Point.

TREE SWALLOWS began their migration as early as Aug. 1, when "hundreds", together with good numbers of Bank, Barn and Cliff Swallows were seen on the Yar. Co. Field Trip. Ones and twos were reported widely throughout Sept. and early Oct., but migratorily significant flocks were as follows: 14 at Lr. W. Pubnico, Sept. 8, 20+ at Paradise, Sept 27. On Oct. 13 the Smiths counted 30 in a flock on the south side of Cape Sable Is. and on the same day there were 20+ on The Hawk. A few always linger to qualify as late sightings--there were 2 on Seal, Oct. 17, one, Oct. 24, at Cherry Hill and one Nov. 25 at Lr. W. Pubnico (Cohrs, SJF, DJd'E)

News of BANK SWALLOW colonies is both bad and good. From New Ross, comes the word that only 6-8 birds remained in what was once

a thriving colony. However, a new colony of 6-7 nest holes was started at Cherry Hill Beach (JSC) Bank Swallows departed almost unnoticed, being mentioned only in ones and twos as part of various mixed flocks of Trees and Barns.

Nor were there any large flocks of BARN SWALLOWS seen. They did stay on in ones and twos, however, and there were several sightings in late October and four in Nov. These latter were: 2 on Nov. 8 at Cherry Hill, one, Nov. 11 near Cheticamp and one on Nov. 17 in Hfx. Co. The " BIO Birders" (Dobson, Elliott, Pocklington and Longhurst) observed 3 swallows flying about the main building of the Institute on Nov. 10. Two were definitely young Barns, the third, was most likely the same, but not closely seen.

Two flocks of CLIFF SWALLOWS were seen, one of 13 at Green Bay, Oct. 3 and one of 5, Oct 15, at The Hawk.

The PURPLE MARTIN picture is encouraging. Thirteen were reported from Sydney, Aug. 4, by Hedley Hopkins. Con Desplanque writes as follows: "In Amos colony about 36 nests. In Rose Colony most of the 16 boxes occupied. At the N. S. Land & Forest office in Oxford, about 100 young raised. In Collingwood, a new colony with approximately 50 birds raised".

#### CORVIDS THROUGH WRENS

GRAY JAYS are not often evident in July and August but this year four family groups were reported. Mike Rymer had 1-3 birds in July at Pleasant Lake, the Morses had 2 adults and 2 young in June and July at Paradise, and JS and JLC found two families of 7 and 5 on Bush and Bell Islands (Lun. Co.) Aug. 9. In October, the usual reports began as they came out of the deeper woods in ones and twos.

The BLUE JAY trend continues. Since the fall of 1979, they have been increasing rapidly and 1981 is no exception. They are "on the increase", "coming to the feeder earlier" and "always about grabbing the feed". Flashily endearing, we may see them become a nuisance, should the trend continue.

An unusually pigmented COMMON RAVEN was seen by E.W. Helleiner in Inverness Co., in July. The bird was of a uniform pale brownish grey, except for some white about the back of the head. It was in company with 2 normal Ravens, soaring along the cliffs. Ravens became predictably more evident as fall progressed with much noisy activity and "clowning about" observed.

A possible movement of the COMMON CROW was noticed by JSC, Nov. 13-15 in the Crousetown-Petite Riviere area where 100 or so crows were seen in noisy crabbing flocks of 12+. PRD reports that they are as abundant as usual in her area--"the only inland bird present in numbers in this last week of Nov."

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEES were heavily reported, mostly as dependable feeder birds. In the wild they were seen in small numbers in mixed flocks of migrating warblers. A small wave went through Green Bay, Nov. 13-14.

BOREAL CHICKADEES, being, as their name suggests, birds of the deeper woods, are harder to find than the Black-caps and are not usually well reported. This year, however, there were sixteen reports. More Boreals or more birders? They were common in the wooded areas of Yar. Co., though the Gallaghers in Shel. Co., felt that they were scarcer there than in some years. 4-5 were seen in the Tusket Island Trip (as against a single black-cap) Boreals on Seal, Oct. 15-18 were 20+, 10, 20,20.



Twenty-four WHITEBREASTED NUTHATCHES were reported from Aug. to Nov. and from Cape Breton to Yar. Co. The Payzants in Waverley had their's all summer and up to press time. Three were on Seal I., Oct. 18. RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES were in their usual habitats, summer and fall, mostly in ones and twos. A large concentration passed through Brier Aug. 26- --"they were everywhere" (RBS).

Ten BROWN-CREEPERS were seen, mostly in Sept. and Oct. 6 were at Risser's Beach, Sept. 12, and 4 at Russel Lake, Oct. 4. A group of 4 were around Crichton Park in Dartmouth, Nov. 12 (FLL)

#### WRENS THROUGH KINGLETS

There are three reports of four HOUSE WRENS: One on Seal, Oct.4 and two there, Oct 10-11 (SJF,LAC), one at Russel Lake, Nov 4. (FLL)

The WINTER WREN situation is still discouraging. Keith Keddy writes of hearing 2-3, June 15, and only one July 30 at New Ross, but that three areas there, where wrens were heard/seen in 1980, were non-productive in 1981. There was one reported from Pleasant Lake, one from Middle Ohio and one from McKay's Lake (Shel. Co.). Other reports, all of singles were: Sept. 17, near Halifax, Oct. Sandford, Yar.Co., (the only one from Yar. Co. this year, PRD) Oct 4 and Oct. 18, Seal I.

The only LONG-BILLED MARSH WRENS were on Seal I. Lisè Cohrs reported 8+ Oct 10-11, one remained for the next party to view Oct. 18.

Seal I. yielded the only SEDGE WREN seen (Short-billed Marsh Wren). This was on Oct. 10 (JLC).

Although CRKA saw waves of ROBINS heading south as early as late July, the main migration took place between Oct11-28. From Oct11-13, there were flocks of 15-75-20 at Round Hill and "flocks" flying high over Pubnico, heading for Argyle Bay. On Oct 17 there were 20+ at Ste Croix and Oct 25, 50+ were at Petite Riviere. In Cape Breton many flocks were seen in mid-Oct. On Oct. 26 there were 20 at New Ross and 20 at Round Hill on Oct 28. (WEW, E&VH, MAC,JSC,KNK) Several Robins have been seen here and there up to press time, but in no great number. Perhaps we will have a few to count at Christmas.

A WOOD THRUSH, the first reported for some years, was at Paradise, June 11-18 and again (same one?) July 19 (Morses).

HERMIT THRUSHES were not heavily reported, but were in this editor's opinion at least, as usual in numbers. Of those reports received, most were of late sightings. One sang at Hammond's Plains as late as Sept. 15. A few were seen on Oct. 5 at Wolfville, West Pubnico--2 on Oct. 11, and on Brier on Oct. 24. (EPS,DJd'E,RD).

There were 12+ SWAINSON'S THRUSHES heard July 7 in inland Yar.Co. Others were seen or heard at Round Hill, Porter's Lake, Economy Point, Mira, Shubenacadie and New Ross. Late birds were on Seal (1) Oct.18, And Eel Brook, Oct 30.

The single GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH was reported from Warren Lake, Cape Breton, Aug. 18 (RDC). The often-heard, but rarely seen VEERY sang "as usual" in the right places (WEW,KNK,PRD,JSC).

EASTERN BLUEBIRD Three reports tell of four individuals: one female on May 26, at Black River, Kings Co. (AEP), one female, June 1 on Brier (RD) and 2 male at Fenwood, Yar. Co. (JD'E). Four bluebirds is a good number for the province these days, but consider TWELVE more! On Sept 26, Frank Hennessey was driving from Five Islands to Springhill, when he saw 4 birds on the wires. When he stopped to

check them out, he saw at least twelve Bluebirds feeding in a blueberry barren by the road. He "saw 12 at one time but they were flitting about and it was difficult to be exact. About half were male and half female".

Another exciting sighting was the WHEATEAR which appeared on Brier, Sept 25-27. Robbie Denton and Tony Glavin were able to point it out to Richard Stern who is of the opinion that it was of the Greenland, rather than the Asiatic sub-species, being large and pale. Richard was able to get several photographs, one of which may be seen in the photo section of this issue. Another is now in the NSBS slide collection.

There may have been two BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHERS at Green Bay. Who knows whether the female spotted by Lisé Cohrs and viewed by all the Cohrs on Sept 13 hung about without being seen again until Oct. 29, when one was seen about 150 yards from the same spot by Ed and Shirley Richard.

Not many people know where to find GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLETS in the nesting season but they become more evident in the fall and are some of the most welcome of our winter birds. Perhaps some of our winter Golden-crowns are from elsewhere, adding to our native population. A flock of 100+ appeared Nov. 4 in Whycogomagh and 20+ at Cheticamp, Nov. 11. They seemed very tame, flying about at low levels allowing a full appreciation of their head pattern and wing markings.

Several correspondents felt that RUBY-CROWNED KINGLETS were fewer than usual, (JR&CDG,RDH,JSC) and reports were few in number. There was no mention of any concentrations and while a few birds were seen in Oct. and Nov. this is not unusual, as they are often here until January.

There were no reports of the usual large flocks of WATER PIPITS. In fact, the largest flock was of 50 at Hartlen Point, Oct. 12. Earliest Pipits (10) were at Lr. W. Pubnico, Sept 20. By Oct. 13, there were a few (16) at Barrington and 30 at the Dartmouth Piggery, Oct. 23. The last report is of 3 on Brier, Oct. 26. A disappointing season for Pipits.

#### WAXWINGS THROUGH STARLINGS

CEDAR WAXWINGS on the other hand were plentiful. The Gallaghers in Shel. Co., found them more numerous than ever in their area and PRD agrees in regard to the Yar. area. In spite of the large number of waxwings around, they did not concentrate in their usual huge flocks of a hundred or more. They seemed this year to be about in groups of 25-40.

Four NORTHERN SHRIKES do not make a winter, but it is a beginning. These were: 1, Oct. 12, off Lurcher Shoal, 1, Oct 25, Brier I., 1, Oct. 9, Cheticamp I., and 1 at Lr. Economy (no date) (RSd'E,RD,BD, FH).

W. E. Whitehead at Round Hill came up with the only LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE for the third year in a row. This was seen July 7, and again July 28. The date in 1979 was July 19, and in 1980, was July 11.

Two broods of STARLINGS were fledged from a cavity in each of two Hydro poles on Wolfville Ridge, July 21 and 26. BLF, who reported these, feels that starlings do not often have successful nesting attempts as late as July. Everywhere else they were as usual. On Seal they came and went Oct.15-18, 25,2,11,25 respectively those days.

JSC, ed.

## VIREOS

We had 4 species of Vireo with us this year : the SOLITARY and the RED-EYED both well and widely reported, the Red-eyed last seen at Green Bay in October, the Solitary, at Crichton Park in Dartmouth, Nov. 3 (JSC,FLL). Nests of both of these vireos were found in the mixed woods at the Hebbs', Chester Basin; Ruth Hebb wrote: "I was puzzled by this loud alarm call last year in the same location, thought it was some kind of flycatcher, because of similar coloring... got a marvelous binocular look," a Solitary Vireo. The other two were the PHILADELPHIA and the WARBLING VIREOS, 3 of the first seen, 1 each in August (Broad Cove, CBHNP,RDC), Sept. (Eel Brook, CRKA) and Oct. (Brier I., RB); 2 of the Warbling, 1 in May, banded on Brier I (LEN, witness) and 1, Aug. 30 at Glace Bay (SM). As noted here, both of these rarer vireos were seen in Cape Breton (as were the first 2) and we also have records from Cape Breton of many of the warblers, thanks largely to Pamela MacKay at CBHNP, with her team of observers, and to Hedley Hopkins and Otis Cossitt, from their daily peregrinations in the Sydney area throughout the season.

## WOOD WARBLERS

Twenty-seven warbler species were identified in Nova Scotia this summer and fall, which is five more than are native here. The five were: A BLUE-WINGED WARBLER travelling with a small flock of mixed warblers at Petite Riviere, Sept. 20, seen by John, Shirley and Lisë Cohrs; and ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER, an adult, at Eastern Passage, Oct. 12, seen by FLL, who reports two other sightings in the general region, possibly not the same individual; a bright male PINE WARBLER at Broad Cove, Lun. Co., Nov. 13, seen by Sylvia Fullerton, 1, Oct. 18 at Seal I. (Cohrs et al.) and 1, Aug. 21 at Clyburn Brook, CBHNP, seen by R. Arsenault and Roland Chiasson; a PRAIRIE WARBLER on Seal I., Oct. 15, seen by the Cohrs et al.--this bird is said to be extending its range, we should watch for it; and the YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT, 2 seen on Seal I. Oct. 18 by Shirley Cohrs; 1, an adult at Glenwood Ave., Dartmouth, Oct. 17 (FLL) who again reports other sightings in November, one of which must have been of a different bird, an immature, seen at Maynard's Lake, Nov. 13; and 1, Oct 25 at Wolfville, not seen during subsequent visits to the area (EPS).

Nineteen species of warbler were reported from Cape Breton, 18 natives and the Pine; the missing ones were the Nashville, Cape May, Black-throated Blue and Palm. This probably has no particular significance, may have been the luck of the draw, but it would be interesting to know if these warblers are scarce--across the Causeway! The Morses in Paradise made some interesting observations, August through November this year, starting with Aug. 18, species were noted as follows: on that day were present Black-and-Whites, Parula, Cape May, Yellow-rumped, Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat and American Redstart. By Sept. 1, these were all still present except the Chestnut-sided, Cape May, Parula and Ovenbird, at least they had dropped out of the chorus, to which, however, had been added the Nashville, Black-throated Blue, Wilson's and Canada. By Sept. 27, the only warbler left was one adult Black-throated Blue; then up to Oct. 1, a few Black-throated Greens and Yellow-rumped were added. (It is interesting that at this same time, or slightly earlier, Sept. 18, at Kentville, the same two species--only--were noted by Richard Stern). On Nov. 17, the Morses report only one warbler present, a Black-and-White, which incidentally was the last one to this species seen.

In the Chester Basin area, besides the nests of the two vireos mentioned above, evidence of nesting or actual nests were found, by Ruth Hebb, of the Nashville, Yellow, Magnolia, Cape May, Black-throated Green, Chestnut-sided Warblers, and the American Redstart.

On the Labor Day trip to Brier Island, the Cohrs, Purchases and R.B. Stern saw altogether 18 species of warbler (19 including the Prairie) and among those not seen were the Chestnut-sided and the Palm. Both may have left before this time and there is some evidence of this for the Palm, from the Gallaghers' report for the Clyde River area in Shel. County. All summer they had had a "scattering of sightings along the Clyde River Road, of single birds or two or three together until late August"; then on Aug. 20, they saw 64 of these birds, in groups of 6-10--surely on their way out, along the same road (JR&CDG). There have been some November sightings of the Palm Warbler but since they often winter here in small numbers, these are probably not departures.

Our commonest and most generally distributed warblers are as usual in order of greatest number of reports: the Common Yellowthroat, the Yellow-rumped, or Myrtle Warbler, the Yellow, American Redstart and Magnolia. Of these now, the last of November, only the Yellow-rumped are left--in Yarmouth County in quite good numbers, which has puzzled some of us, as this is an off year for bayberries. The little warblers tag along in ill-assorted groups of juncos, Evening Grosbeaks and chickadees, investigating whatever the other birds appear to be eating, which at the present time is largely holly berries, old apples, seedheads of goldenrod and birdseed at feeders. These all seem unlikely food for warblers, but since this species is so abundant and often does winter here, it must be both hardy and adaptable. At any rate, we sincerely hope so.

#### HOUSE SPARROW

The HOUSE SPARROW is variously reported as "very common", "always with us", "100's with us daily in most places" (this last from Hedley Hopkins, in Sydney); and on Brier I. "10-15 seen a day" (RD), which is expectable. Keith Keddy wrote "City dwellers will envy my small flock of only a dozen maximum, and then only semi-regular"; but at nearby Ross Farm Museum on Sept. 6, KNK found 30+. One ominous note comes from Edie MacLeod in Glace Bay: "about 20-25 English Sparrows all fall, learning to open sunflower seed and scattering them high, wide and handsome in the process".

#### ICTERIDS

The BOBOLINK has been reported from Cape Breton (SM, JG, RBF, HEH) to Lr. E. Pubnico (DJD'E) and may still be increasing in numbers. The Gallaghers of Shel. Co., wrote that it was more common in their part of the County than in earlier years there. Shirley Cohrs found at least 60 pairs nesting in the tall grass of what she calls "the Bobolink field" at Petite Riviere (about 15 years ago they first appeared at Petite Riviere). Ruth Hebb also found nests of this bird on both sides of Sandy Cove, Mahone Bay. The largest flock reported was one of 200+ individuals at Torbrook Mines, Anna Co., Aug. 18 (LEN), and at New Ross, 50 Bobolinks were counted in a mixed flock of blackbirds, in a grainfield on Sept. 6 (KNK); most of them had probably left by then, but a few were seen on Seal I., by the party there Oct. 15-18.

The EASTERN MEADOWLARK was also seen on Seal I., by members of the NSBS there in mid-October, 5 of them (Meadowlark), said to be "very shy because of the hawks", by Lisè Cohrs. Twelve of these birds were seen altogether, July-November this year, the last one on Nov. 19, at Lower Argyle by Larry MacKenzie. One nest was found, in a hayfield at Upper Granville--the farmer asked the Morses of Paradise to identify the birds (2 adults) and agreed, at their request, to leave the hay standing; juveniles (3) were seen July 19 (J&BM). Other Meadowlark sightings were at Economy (FH); Centrelea (WEW) and Mira area (Calvin Dawe).

According to reports from the south and southwest parts of Nova Scotia, the RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD has become rather uncommon there; the birds still nest in the marshes but few and far between. In the fall, big flocks are seen in migration, and a few stay at feeders all winter. On the other hand, there were 8 reports from Cape Breton and Hedley Hopkins called them "Common all season, 100+ in the area". Migration seems to have started in September and continued through November: at Russel Lake, near Dartmouth, there were 2 Redwings on Aug. 9 (RBD), 70+ there Sept. 8 (FLL); there were 50 on Seal, Oct. 18 (NSBS), 25, Nov. 9, at Pubnico (E&VH) and 15 at Lr. W. Pubnico, Nov. 11 (DJD'E).

There were at least seven sightings of the NORTHERN ORIOLE in Cape Breton (Glance Bay, Orangedale and Sydney) and just twice as many on the mainland, that is, including Brier I., where a high of 8 of these birds was reached on June 10 (Robbie Denton, who noted at the time that one of these was carrying hair in its beak). At least two pairs were in the Pubnico region, May through October, many sightings there in Pubnico, West Pubnico and Lr. W. Pubnico by the Hamiltons and Deslisle d'Entremont, who saw a single male Oriole, May 27, at two of these locations, one of these joined by a female on May 28, and seen there in company, June 3, thereafter just the male again (the female doubtless busy). Deslisle sent in 14 observations of these birds and there must have been at least three involved. The Hamiltons' sightings were in October, of a male one day, a female the next, and were probably birds in migration. A very late sighting was of 4 of these Orioles, Nov. 5, in the Desplanques' garden, one only seen there next day, by Ellie Desplanque, who noticed the group of four in a lilac bush with some sparrows, inspecting the undersides of leaves. The one next day was doing the same in an apple tree. (This is in Amherst).

For the most part, the RUSTY BLACKBIRD has been reported as one bird seen, as Keith Keddy put it "at a remote stillwater" somewhere in the interior, but we have two summer reports of larger numbers: 30+, June to Sept. 28, in the Sydney to South Bar area (HEH) and "about 30 at Bishop's, Kings Co., Aug. 28 (RBS). This latter may be a migratory assemblage of course, but October saw the largest exodus generally noted in that month, both in the Valley and on Seal I. (WEW, Cohrs et al.), flocks numbering 10-40.

A BREWER'S BLACKBIRD is well sponsored, Oct. 17 & 18 on Seal I. (JLC, JSC, SJF, EHC).

The COMMON GRACKLE still deserves its name, found in good numbers Sydney to Yarmouth. Fall flocks reached full size by mid-October, with 80+ at Memorial Park, Dartmouth, Oct. 17 (FLL); "several hundred passed through Oct. 5, followed by another, Oct. 17" at Waverley (P&LP); and 700-800, Oct. 22 at Round Hill, Anna Co. (WEW). November sightings are probably of winter lingerers, we have a few: Nov. 17, 6-18 at Yarmouth (MWH), 1, Nov. 21 at Wolfville (SPF) and 1, Nov. 22 at St. Croix (MAC).

The BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD maintains its strength among us, not conspicuous in summer, but always present and busy with its nefarious affairs. Bernard Forsythe found, this year: Cowbird eggs in the nests of the Solitary Vireo, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Junco, Chipping Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow and Song Sparrow, all in the Wolfville area. "Over the years I have found Cowbird eggs in the nests of most of our small songbirds, however, of the many flycatcher nests observed, only once did I find a Cowbird's egg in one--it was an Alder Flycatcher nest". On July 22, RDH of Chester Basin saw a mature Myrtle Warbler with a young Cowbird, and on Aug. 18 KNK saw full-grown young Cowbird in the Crescent Beach area, begging from a Myrtle Warbler.

## TANAGERS

Reports of the SCARLET TANAGER were about as usual, with four from June through August and four in October, as follows: 1 male in breeding plumage, June 15, singing in a Halifax garden (JSC); 1 male, June 30, at Paradise (Jean Morse); 1 male, July 1, and three weeks following at Grand Lake, Halifax Co. (Keltie Hebb); 1 female, Aug. 5, at Glace Bay (SM); then 1 male, Oct. 1 at Green Bay (JSC); 1 in fall plumage or a female, Oct. 1, at Paradise (maybe the same one as earlier?) (J&BM); 4, in one tree!, Oct. 5 at Seal I. (EHC) and 2, Oct. 11 at Chester "one singing quietly" (CWH).

A SUMMER TANAGER was at the Ross Anderson residence in Dartmouth, Sept. 27, observed there as "an unusual-looking bird, pale orange-tan" by Lisè and Shirley Cohrs.

## FRINGILIDS

There have been at least four CARDINALS observed around Yarmouth County this fall, a female or immature seen Oct. 26, at Hebron by June Graves; a female or immature seen Oct. 29, by the Allworths on the Tinpot Road, not far away--quite probably the same bird; one male, which Leta Delaney reported on Nov. 28, as being "around the village for the past few weeks", in Port Maitland. The other two Cardinals were seen in Pubnico, a female, Nov. 6-25; a male and a female Nov. 14-25, at the Hamiltons'--this could, of course, be three birds, (E&VH); the area has been favoured by Cardinals for several years.

The ROSE-BREASTED GROSBREAK was well reported this summer. It is reported to nest near Paradise (the Morses) and at nearby Round Hill (WEW), who noted "small groups of adults and young, feeding on Amelanchier (Wild Pear), between July 17 and 31". Late sightings of birds in migration are from Yar. Co.: 1, Sept. 26, out on Big Tusket Island, all by itself, seen there by the NSBS field party; 1, Oct. 19, at Seal I., seen by the Cohrs et al.; 2 immatures, Oct. 28, at Cedar Lake seen there near her cottage by Leta Delaney.

There were a few fall sightings of the BLUE GROSBREAK: an immature Sept. 17, at the Dartmouth Piggery (FLL); a female or immature Sept. 27, on Brier I., watched for some time and identified by Liz and Richard Stern; 1, Oct. 3-4 on Seal I. (EHC,SJF); the same or another, seen there (on Seal) Oct. 10 by Lisè, John Cohrs, etc.; and a female, Oct. 18, at Mill Cove, St. Margaret's Bay (FLL).

Fall sightings of the INDIGO BUNTING were: Sept. 27 to Oct. 20, 12 in all (individual birds), a minute migration, rightly called "splinter". Except for a few sightings near Dartmouth by FLL, the rest were in the Digby-Yarmouth-Shelburne end of the province.

The DICKCISSEL splinter migration was even smaller, 3 individuals only, 1, Oct. 5, on Seal I. (SJF,EHC); 1, Oct. 21, Lower LaHave (EHC) and 1, Nov. 14 at Lr. West Pubnico (DJd'E).

Nests of the EVENING GROSBREAK continue to be difficult to find but we have two records of adult birds feeding young, at Black River, Kings Co., Bernard Forsythe watched "a male Evening Grosbeak feeding short-tailed young, barely able to fly from tree to tree", on July 3; and in late July in the Mira area Allan Baillie saw a pair of these grosbeaks feeding young ones. Fall flocks appeared mostly in Oct., the story being that 1-2 would come to a feeder and next day a flock would descend, ranging in size from 10 to 100, daily present thereafter. Reports have come in from the province very generally; it looks like a good grosbeak year. One rather different sighting was of a single bird (of this species) seen Oct. 6, on the Lurcher Shoal,

by Raymond d'Entremont, but he did not mention if it was coming or going.

The HOUSE FINCH has been reported twice this season, a pair, July 19, at the Morses in Paradise and two, the last week of November, in Yarmouth town, at 23 Baker St., M. W. Hilton.

A nest of the PURPLE FINCH in a small spruce tree contained 4 young in mid-July, found by Allan Baillie of the Mira area. A bird of this species was seen feeding young, July 18, at Lr. Eel Brook (PRD) and Ruth Hebb has found them nesting in the evergreens at the end of their lane at Chester Basin, seen around until the end of July. Very few Purple Finches seem to have been present through the summer, but starting in August, sizable flocks have begun to appear: "From the last week in August to the middle of July, every tree in Kentville had a flock of Purple Finches" (RBS); "about 20 present at feeder on Sept. 12" (P&LP) at Waverley; 15, Oct. 10, at the Dartmouth Piggery (FLL); these flocks however, have either dispersed or moved on and all subsequent reports are of 1-3 birds only. No doubt the others will return when the snow flies.

Reports of the PINE GROSBEAK are of normal numbers throughout the province, the only large number noted being 15, seen July 11, at Sebin Beach by the Hamiltons (that is, since June, when the Hebbes had a flock of about 20 at Chester Basin.) There are many reports of 1-5 birds of this species from September on, getting more frequent as winter approaches--Pine Grosbeaks may have to feed more in the open in some regions this year, as many of our evergreens are very short of cones.

First report of the COMMON REDPOLL comes from Anna. Co., of a flock of 15 birds which soon increased to 50+, Oct. 4-7 (MCC); all other reports are in November, from Nov. 2 to Nov. 15, 6 from Wolfville (BLF); 60 at Lr. W. Pubnico (RSd'E); 250, Nov. 4, Dartmouth (FLL) 18, on Cheticamp I., Nov. 9; 4, Nov. 11 at Petit Etang (Brian Dalzell) and 6-8, Nov. 15 at Lr. Economy (Frank Hennessey). Redpolls feed on alder cones, so not to worry about this.

The same is true of the PINE SISKIN, present here in such large numbers last winter. It does not look so far, as if this would be the case this year; we have very few reports of this Siskin: 1, only, seen on Brier I., June through Oct. 11 (RD); 5-10 in June, none reported since from CBHNP (RDC); a large flock with juveniles seen and heard July 19, at Paradise (Morses)--(an exception); 12, Aug. 18, near Crescent Beach (KNK) and 4, Oct. 1; 7 Oct. 2, at Round Hill, Anna. Co (WEW). That is all of the reports so far received of the Siskin.

The AMERICAN GOLDFINCH was variously reported this season; in Cape Breton, Hedley Hopkins estimated over a hundred in the Sydney-Mira-Baddeck region, June through October; but in the Halifax-Waverly-Eastern Shore-down-to-Chester Basin(!) area, Goldfinches were scarce all summer (RBD, P&LP, RDH); at Brier I., they were "common with 10-15 seen a day" according to Robbie Denton, but down to 1, only on Sept. 13 (RDJ); for Southwest Nova Scotia, Annie Raymond's statement applied throughout "Very large numbers all summer and late fall" and PRD wrote "still galore on Sept. 23" but shortly after that numbers declined, a possible explanation being the 200 seen Oct. 18 on Seal I.--they were leaving for foreign parts. A good many stayed though, for 300+ were counted Nov. 12, at Mason's Beach-Mahone Bay (fide FLL); and a few are re-appearing in Yarmouth County this last week of Nov.

The RED CROSSBILL is still with us, but in small numbers, only five sightings this season, July 15 through Sept. 12, 10-12 birds

## THE RARE AND THE BEAUTIFUL

The commencement of a day in the field is not always without some phantasy of what could be seen. Such a phantasy was realized by Don and Joyce Purchase in March, 1981. Descending MacDonald's Hill at Lawrencetown Beach, they saw a Snowy Owl in the Marram Grass on the dunes of Lawrencetown Beach. The bird permitted close approach and remained in the area for several weeks.

The second owl is a Saw-whet. The owl was photographed by Anthony Glavin, March, 1981. No other information was submitted.

The next four photographs are copies of colour slides of watercolours created by Don Pentz of Bridgewater. Don is an abstract painter who, two years ago, chose to portray birds in their native habitat as a change in pace from his normal work. A few words on the technique used by Don follows. In addition to field observation, Don makes sketches of the birds, up to fifty in number, before making a final detailed ink drawing. The sketch amendments are modified by consultation with ornithologists and observation of bird skins. The final watercolour is made from the pen and ink drawings and is placed on 20 x 24 inch 300 pound paper. The commencement of the watercolour is with the eye of the bird, part of the head and the bill. If this is successful, the watercolour continues at a three-hour-per-day pace until completion.





**SNOWY OWL      PURCHASE**



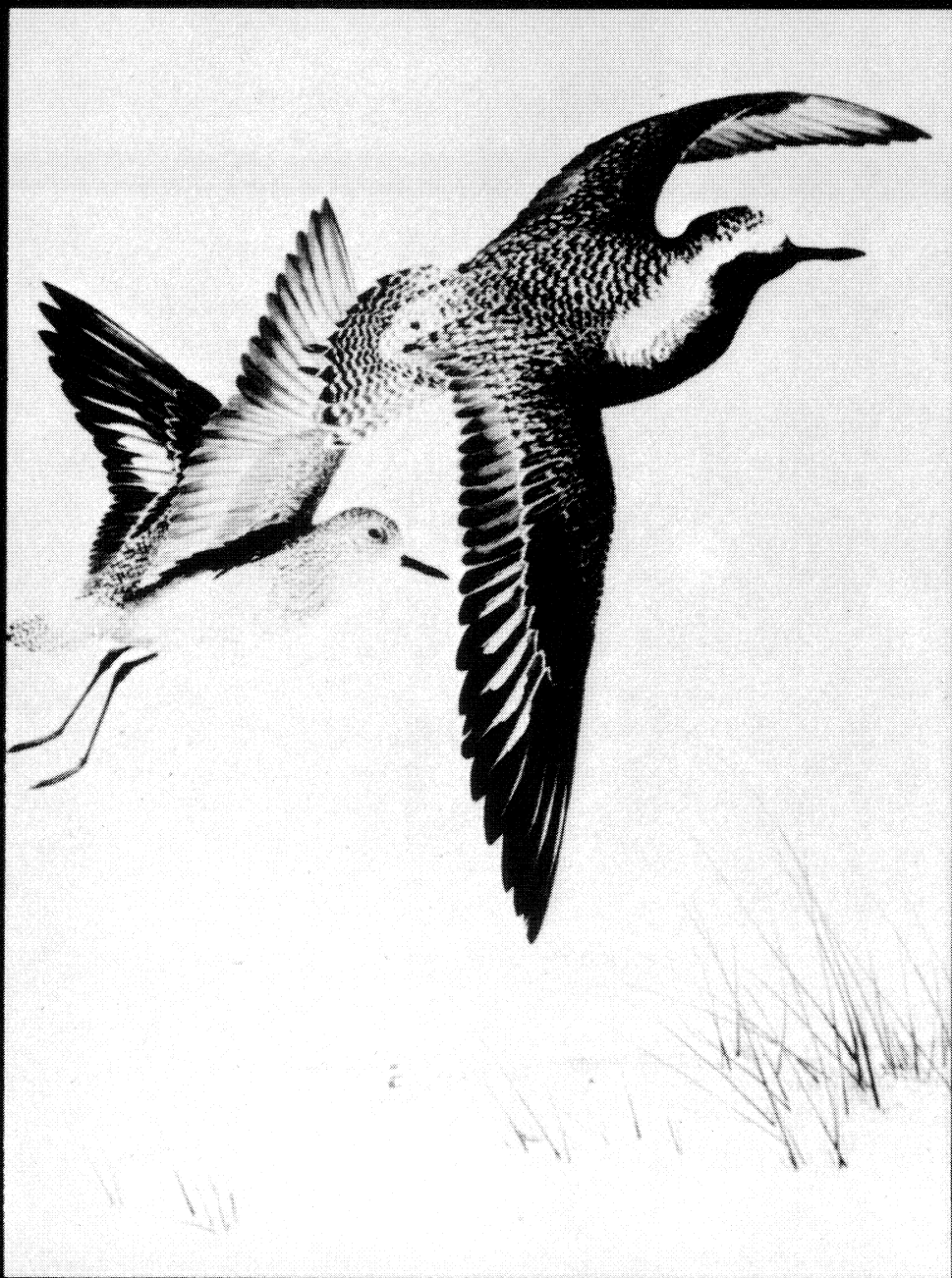
**SAW-WHET OWL**

**GLAVIN**



OSPREY

PENTZ



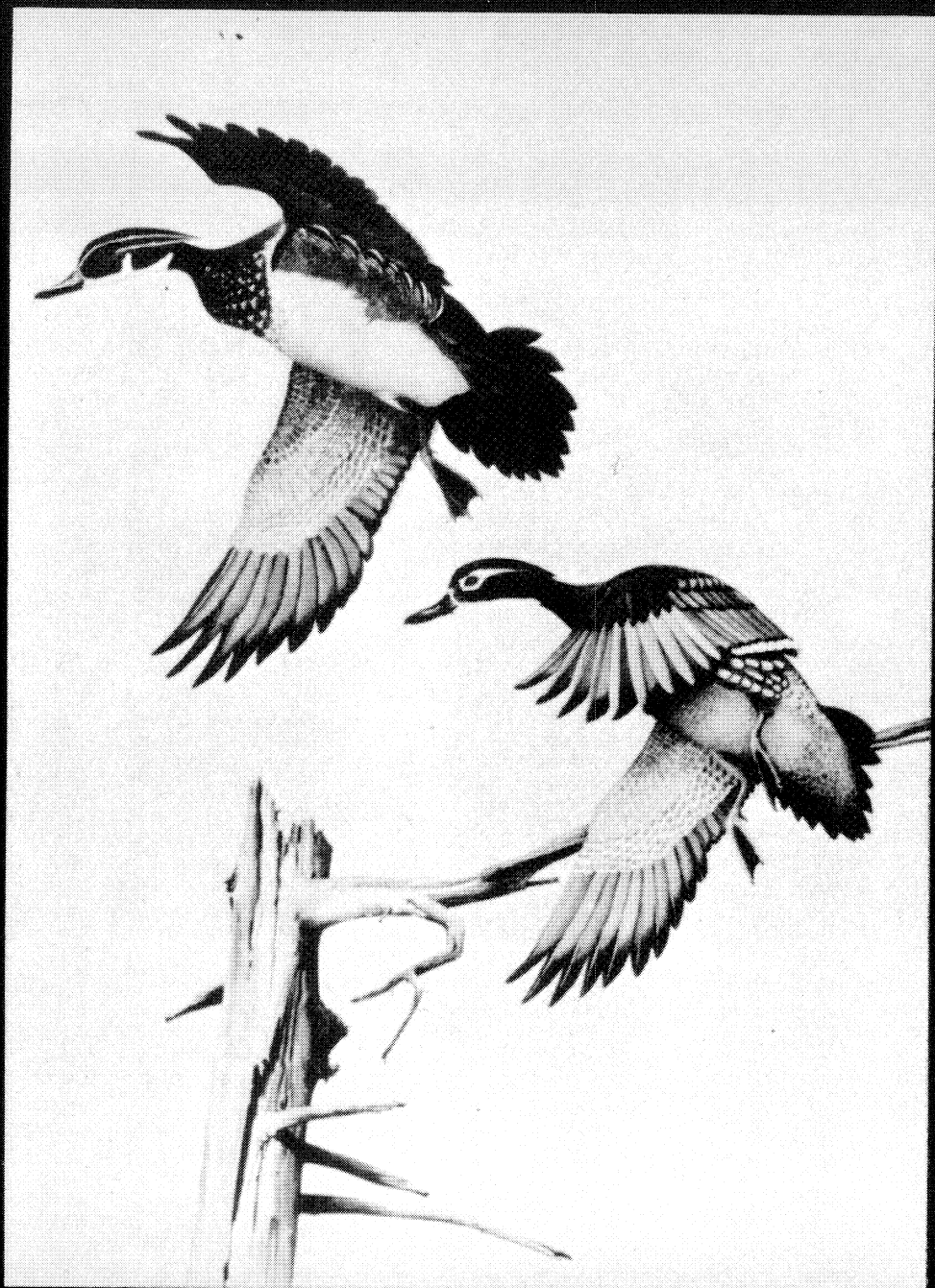
**BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS**

**PENTZ**



KINGFISHER

PENTZ



WOOD DUCKS

PENTZ



**SCARLET IBIS**

**CONNOR**



SCARLET IBIS

CONNOR



Don works part time as a naturalist for the Nova Scotia Department of Lands and Forests and Parks Canada. He did two booklets for the Nova Scotia Department of Lands and Forest (Parks and Recreation Division) on Risser's Beach, Lunenburg County\*. He also did the geology exhibit paintings for the Kejimkujik viewing tower. Don's background includes two years in Forestry at the University of New Brunswick, which he terminated in order to complete studies in Fin Art at Mount Allison University and the University of Saskatchewan, where he received his MFA degree.

The last two photographs are of a Scarlet Ibis. They end the visual display of this issue with consternation over their source. Since the Scarlet Ibis is a South American stray in Florida, its appearance in Nova Scotia is bound to be questioned on the basis of an escapee from Atlantic Coast captive collections of birds.

Examination of photographs and information from the Massachusetts Audubon Society has not been conclusive. Let us not, in birding, be burdened with inconclusiveness, but rather welcome such encounters with enthusiasm, challenge and, as we started this note, with a phantasy that is possible to realize.

It should be noted that the list of contributors to this section has increased. Apologies and encouragement are sent to those whose photographs have not appeared in this issue. The difficulties encountered in trying to transmit colour slides into black and white prints, suitable for publication, have been covered in past issues. Many thanks to all those who have contributed.

\*"SOME COMMON SHORE AND OCEAN BIRDS"

"SALT MARSH TRAIL"

seen in Shelburne and Yarmouth Counties (JR&CDG,RSd'E).

The WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL continues to be well reported, but almost exclusively in Digby, Yarmouth and Shelburne Counties. Halifax and Dartmouth are the exceptions, where FLL has seen flocks of 7-50 in that vicinity; October flocks have numbered the most birds and range from 25 at Brier I. (RD); 25+ at Pleasant Lake (MR); 50+ at Johnston's Pond, Shel. Co. (LEN) to 65 at Seal I. (Cohrs et al.)--two smaller ones were 14 at W. Pubnico (DJd'E) and 10+ at Green Bay (Lis& Cohrs).

Besides the two reported this spring a RUFOUS-SIDED TOWHEE was seen in May (the 28th) at Chester Basin, and heard singing from the top of a small spruce, by Ruth Hebb. The only other Towhees seen in Nova Scotia were in October: 1, Oct. 10 on Seal I., 4 there on Oct. 18, a male and a female (Cohrs and Bill Caudle); 1, Oct. 14, at West Pubnico by Barbara Hayward and 1, Oct. 31, near Dartmouth (FLL).

The SAVANNAH SPARROW was with us in good numbers throughout the summer, migratory-sized flocks appearing in October, for example, 20-30, Oct. 8, at Round Hill (WEW); 15, Oct. 8, at Hartlen's Point, Hfx. Co. (FLL), tapering off to 1's and 2's in November. A few fall "IPSWICH" Sparrows were spotted: 1, Sept. 20, at Sunday Point, Yarmouth, by Mike Rymmer; 1, Oct. 11 at Cherry Hill by SJF; 1, Oct. 18 at Seal I., by the Cohrs et al. and 3, Oct. 24, at Hartlen Point (FLL).

The SHARP-TAILED SPARROW comes here late and nests in marshes so is not encountered as often as most of our others; all reports this fall are for Lunenburg, Halifax and Yarmouth Counties, but where found, they were present in normal numbers.

One each of the VESPER and LARK SPARROWS was seen, Oct. 16 and 18 on Seal I., by SJF, Cohrs, etc..

The NORTHERN JUNCO (besides being our most-often renamed) was our most-often observed bird of this group throughout the season. An increase was noted in July, when young birds began to appear, reported July 8, from Barrington (BJS), July 10 from Chester Basin (RDH) and Aug. 8, at Lr. Eel Brook, when 4-5 very brown young birds appeared. RSd'E found a nest with four young about ready to fly on Sept. 3, at Lr. W. Pubnico--apparently there is a long breeding season. Juncos winter here, our most faithful small bird, but many must leave in migration; there was a peak number of Juncos in mid-October at Round Hill: 16, Oct. 5; 20-30, Oct. 11 and 50-60, Oct. 12, down to 12, Oct. 14 (WEW); another at Seal I., at the same time (approx.): 6, Oct. 16; 650, Oct. 17 and 75, Oct. 18 (NSBS party). A partial albino Junco was at Waverley, which summered at the Payzants', a bird with normal Junco plumage except for a white eye-ring, white collar, white rump and white spots on the head. A clown indeed!

The earliest TREE SPARROW noted was one at West Pubnico, Oct. 31, (DJd'E). Since then only a few have been seen, all in November: 1, Nov. 5 at Russel Lake, Halifax Co.; 3, Nov. 8 at Round Hill, (WEW); 1 Nov. 11, at Port Hood, noted by Brian Dalzell, a distinguished visitor here who added "may have been feeding on a dolphin carcass"; (!) and 3, Nov. 27, at Lr. Eel Brook (PRD) who wishes to add that the black spots were clearly seen on the breasts, and that this is not always possible, these spots are very far down on the breast and are not visible, if the bird is feeding on the ground, in which case it could well be mistaken for a Chipping Sparrow, if at some distance away. We ask most earnestly that this be kept in mind when identifying either One of these birds.

The CHIPPING SPARROW was present in normal numbers this summer and became quite visible in October, where the migrants gather. In

the Chester Basin area RDH noted that Chippies nested there; extra ones arrived in late September and by Oct. 3, none was left. On this date the numbers on Brier I., had risen to 30 with a peak of 40 next day (RD); also a small wave (15-20) passed through Yarmouth, noted at 23 Baker St. (MWH); on the 5th of Oct. roadside flocks of Chipping Sparrows appeared for the first time along Route 3 in Yarmouth Co., and were noted there until Oct. 16; at Seal I., peak numbers seem to have come by Oct. 18, 30 of these birds counted that day. FLL found good numbers of Chipping Sparrows in some of his favourite spots in and around Dartmouth--the Park, the Piggery, Albro Lake, etc., from 15-40 birds counted at intervals Sept. 17 to Nov. 4.

Forty-eight FIELD SPARROWS is above normal for us; all of them but one seen in October; at Seal I., 1, on Oct. 17 and 40 on Oct. 18; at Lr. W. Pubnico 4 each day, Oct. 20-21; at Chebogue Point, Yar. Co. 1, on Oct. 6; at Brier I. 1; Oct. 25 (RDJ), and the November bird on the 11th at Tufts Cove, Dartmouth, 1, the last bird seen of this species.

We no longer have a clear-cut migration of the WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW since it has been seen here with increasing frequency in both summer and winter. More are still noted in spring and fall, so there is no doubt, a continuing splinter migration; this fall marked by a noticeable increase in October and November: 3, Sept. 10 at Round Hill (WEW); 10, Sept. 27, at Brier I. ( 8 there Oct 11, 2, Oct. 25 (RD)); 3, Oct. 15 at Seal I. and 6, there Oct. 18; and 1 ad., Nov. 9 at Cheticamp Island in Cape Breton, noted by Brian Dalzell.

The WHITE-THROATED SPARROW virtually disappears during the summer, to reappear in September and particularly October and to become one of our regular winter birds. This year, it began to become noticeable in late September, and numbers increased until mid-October very generally. It is now, the last of November, one of the few reliable sightings of small birds to expect along the roads and railway cuttings throughout the province, and will probably remain so for the next few months.

The first FOX SPARROW of the fall was present at the feeder of Edie MacLeod in Glace Bay, Oct. 5; this followed by 8 of these sparrows seen Oct. 14 and 15 at such widely separated places as Sandy Bottom Lake, Anna. Co.; Carleton Dam, Yar. Co., and Albro Lake, Hfx. Co.. Margaret Clark had a couple at Crest Road, Halifax, the week of Oct. 24, and 2, only, were seen later, 1, Nov. 11, at Pubnico (flew into a window but recovered) and 1, Nov. 15, at the Payzants' feeder in Waverley. A minute invasion.

In the Fall Flyer of 1981, it was said that the party on Seal I., May 25, saw 13 LINCOLN'S SPARROWS, "possibly our whole population of this seldom-seen native". This rash statement was made of course, in the interests of emphasis, but should have read "possibly the total number of sightings we can expect of this seldom-seen native", and if so, would have been correct--we had exactly 13 sightings of the Lincoln's Sparrow, May through November, Cape Breton back to Seal I. again. This does not include, unfortunately, the birds of this species found on the Breeding Bird Surveys throughout the province in June, when in Guysborough County alone, (last June) more than this number were seen or heard along one 25-mile stretch of road (CWH) and it is most unlikely that those so seen and heard were all of the Lincoln's Sparrows in Guysborough County, let alone the rest of Nova Scotia. (It could well be that most of them are there; the highest Counts occur there). We all know that the records of sightings of birds which we publish in Nova Scotia Birds do not represent whole populations; nevertheless this editor wishes to apologize for the above-quoted statement about the Lincoln's Sparrows.

The SWAMP SPARROW is another bird which is poorly reported, but in this case not because of locality--it is widely distributed--but because of habitat, which tends to make it inconspicuous; Keith Keddy says it is abundant in bogs this season, and he reports from a wide territory, New Ross to Halifax County. From Oct. 4 on, sightings were more numerous, and all from Halifax Co., and the southwestern shore, flocks from 40 at Russel Lake (FLL) to 15 at Seal I. (NSBS Party), Oct. 17.

The SONG SPARROW had a good season, young being fed Aug. 9 at Lr. Eel Brook--a third nesting? and with the exception of the Junco, the most-reported bird in this group. Flocking started in the Valley in September, 17 noted at Round Hill, Sept. 14 (11, Aug. 13) by WEW. Migrants (probable) were accumulating early in October: the number at the Piggery, Dartmouth had doubled there Oct. 4, from a September count (FLL); 30 (up from 5-10 a day) on Brier I., were counted there by RD; at Seal I. on Oct. 10 there were 10 Song Sparrows counted, 50 on the 17th, none on the 18th. On Nov. 25, a cold bleak day, out at the very end of St. Ann's Point, Pubnico, 6 Song Sparrows were flushed out of the low-growing vegetation back of the pebble ridge, the only birds, large or small to be found there that day (CRKA).

The clearly marked arrival time of the LAPLAND LONGSPUR was the week of Oct. 14-19; first observed (Oct. 14), 2 on the Grand Pre, by Barry Sabean; then 1, Oct. 15; 3, Oct. 16; 9, Oct. 17 and 30, Oct. 18, at Seal I. (Cohrs et al.) and on Oct. 19, 4, at Hartlen Point (FLL). No other reports came in.

Our first SNOW BUNTING appeared, oddly enough, by the roadside at Sandy Bottom Lake in Annapolis County (MCC), one only, seen that day and the next, and one again, Nov. 26. Thereafter, one was seen, Nov. 7, at Eastern Passage Beach, Hfx. Co. (FLL), another at nearby Hartlen Point, Nov. 17, by the same observer. These forerunners were followed by good-sized flocks seen Nov. 9-14, at Rose Bay, Lun. Co. (EHC); Melbourne Sanctuary Road, Yarmouth Co. (MAN); Chebogue Point (CRKA); Crescent Beach (M Murphy, MR); Petite Riviere and Cherry Hill (Cohrs & EDD; flocks in the 30's and 40's for the most part, only one reported since, 1, Nov. 14, at New Ross in a wooded area (KNK).

Due to some confusion between editors these reports, although received on time, were omitted from the text. To keep the record straight, here they are, with apologies to the correspondents,

David and Joan Young:

- 1 Blue Grosbeak (female), at Hemeon Head, Oct. 8 & 9, seen well at 20-30 feet
- 1 Peregrine Falcon (adult), at Hemeon Head, Oct. 9.
- 1 Common Egret (adult), at Little Harbour, Oct. 14.
- 1 Little Blue Heron (immature), at Cadden Beach, Oct. 14.

Francis Spalding:

- 1 Seaside Sparrow, Nov. 15, at Economy (FS,EPS)
- 1 Western Kingbird, Economy, Sept. 17.

Ian McLaren:

Black Terns

1, Sable Island, first week of June (Zoe Lucas) presumably a late migrant

2 at Three Fathom Hbr, Aug. 8 (IAM)

Piping Plover

1, Conrad Beach, Aug. 9 (juvenile)

3, Round Bay, Aug. 27-28 (juvenile)

3-4. (adults) 1-2 (juv.) Cadden Bay, Sept. 5.

*It occurs to me (IAM) that we ought to keep records of juv./adult ratios of this species as a measure of annual success*

Little Gull

Aug. 28 Round Bay, Shel. Co. A year-old bird was first spotted well out on the lake in Round Bay. I (I AM) thought, before raising my glasses, that it was a phalarope, as it was sitting rather delicately on the smooth surface "spinning" about. The delicate bill, "ear" spot, smudgy hind-head, remnants of carpal bar and tail band, and basely darkened underwings, indicated that it was a year-old bird. It was studied from some time by IAM, later by Bernice McLaren and B.K. Doane. Photos are totally diagnostic, making it the second verified record for the province.

Lesser Black-backed Gull

The "Volvo bird" had returned on Oct. 11.

White-winged Dove

1, at Sambro, home of George Patrick, first 3 weeks of Oct. IAM will give details of this 3rd N.S. record

EMPIDONAX flycatcher

Reported by Zoe Lucas, Sable Island, Sept. 11.

*"An EMPIDONAX flycatcher knocked itself out against the inside of the A-frame window and fell into the tub of dirty dishwater...was found floating on its back, wings outstretched, in a scum of old soap suds and bits of noodles...was retrieved, swilled off in a bucket of warm water, and laid out on a sheet of tissue paper to dry...revived and flew away after forty-five minutes."*

Dickcissel

1, photographed by Zoe Lucas on Sable Island, Sept. 28.

"Ipswich" Sparrow

11, Martinique Beach, Oct. 25. (IAM & BM)

Yellow-breasted Chat

1, badly injured bird found on Sable Island by John Parsons, Sept. 28.

Pomarine Jaeger

1, light-phase bird over Seal Island Pond Oct. 31. (IAM)

Wilson's Phalarope

1, Conrad Beach, Sept. 4 (IAM)

Willet

10 (counted) on a sandy beach at Cadden Bay, Sept. 5--appeared to be hesitating to take off against the easterly winds--they were definitely of the local race, although late for such a number (IAM)

Sharp-tailed Sparrow

1, Seal Island, Oct. 30 - Nov. 1

Seaside Sparrow

1 immature bird repeatedly flushed for brief but, in total, adequate views by IAM (and 2 companions, who did not see it well enough to identify it), Seal Island, Oct. 31.

Notes on the Seaside Sparrow:

Having now seen a number in N.S., I feel I can distinguish them from sharp tails on the wing. The brownish wings and tail seem to contrast with the dark grey back. Over all, they don't have the pale, greyish cast of our Acadian Sharptails. I "knew" I had a Seaside before I finally was able to see all field marks--very long bill, yellow spot (not very extensive) before eye, greyish face, white throat above the smoky "necklace" on breast (also whitish chin streak).

Black-capped Chickadee

Up to 15 migrants on Seal Island, Oct. 30-Nov. 1.

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF REPORTSFEBRUARY 25

Bird reports to the Records Editor--

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

Photographs, sketches, articles and letters to the--

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

*Many of the birding areas in Nova Scotia "crop up" regularly in the reports. To prevent repetition of the locations of these areas in the body of the text, we include this list of references:*

Yarmouth Co.	Pinkney's Point, Tusket, Cranberry Head, Eel Brook, Glenwood, Pleasant Lake.
Shelburne Co.	Cape Sable I., Lockeport, Matthews Lake.
Queen's Co.	Port Joli, Port Hebert, Turtle Lake, Caledonia.
Lunenburg Co.	Cherry Hill, Broad Cove, Petite Riviere, Green Bay, Crousetown, Crescent Beach, Bayport.
Halifax Co.	Three Fathom Harbour, Conrad's Beach, Lawrencetown, Cole Harbour, Mooseland.
Digby Co.	Brier I., Smith's Cove.
Colchester Co.	Economy, Brule, Bass River.
Annapolis Co.	Wilmot, Round Hill, Paradise, Sandy Bottom Lake, West Springhill.
King's Co.	Wolfville, Greenfield, Black River Lake.
Cumberland Co.	Lusby Marsh, Upper Nappan.
APBS	Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary
JLNWA	John Lusby National Wildlife Area
CBHNP	Cape Breton Highlands National Park

## WHICH BIRDS TO REPORT AND HOW TO REPORT THEM

In response to a number of requests for a directive as to which birds are reportable and how they should be reported, the editors of Nova Scotia Birds are happy to comply as follows:

We have four seasonal publications a year, three full-length issues of Nova Scotia Birds and one summer Flyer. This last is chiefly devoted to Society news and notices, but is also used to keep a record of the breeding habits and success of our native birds; that is, time and place of observed nests which contain eggs or young, or parent birds feeding fledglings (out of the nest). The species, time place and number of young are the pertinent details here. (Needless to say, observations in the field of nesting birds should be made with extreme caution.)

In the regular numbers of Nova Scotia Birds, we give a full report on the three seasons: spring, fall and winter. We welcome similarly full reports from any member of the Society who is kind enough to send them in. A "full report" does not necessarily mean a mention of every bird seen or even every species. We do welcome however, an occasional mention of usual birds, for example "Robins have been more numerous this year than last", or "we have not seen a chickadee all season; usually we have half a dozen around". In other words, any change in a normal situation is reportable.

Arrival dates in spring and departure dates in fall are useful, but the time of the very first or the very last sighting of a species is not truly significant. The return of a species as a whole, for example, a sudden influx over a few days, or a slow build-up over several weeks is of true significance and of general (rather than local) interest, as it can tie in with the movement of birds over the rest of the continent.

The presence of an unusual species is always of interest, but is not so important as the presence or absence of our native birds. Finding a rare bird is of most interest to the one who first sees it, but word of it should be circulated as soon as possible locally, for the benefit of those near enough to get a look at it (hence the Rare Bird Alert). Yes, by all means send in the report to Nova Scotia Birds, for, besides the general interest in a rarity, there is an important reason for taking note of it: it may eventually become common, due to extension of range or other reasons; It may be the first of a new population in a region and therefore of historical significance. We do ask, most emphatically, that any report of a rarity be accompanied by a detailed description of field marks and conditions of the sighting which could in any way effect the identification.\*

To summarize, the things to report are the general arrival and departure times of our migratory birds; the presence of any rare bird, and the occurrence of any change of behavior, or the unusual presence or absence, of our native birds. In winter, lists of "feeder" birds are useful as feeders serve to concentrate our otherwise scanty and scattered bird population at this season.

As to how to report the birds, if you have more than one or two to mention, we do ask to have each individual documented separately, preferably on a slip of paper of the general dimensions of 10 x 7 cm. of which the following is a sample:

Scarlet Tanager

1

a male in breeding  
plumage

June 15/81

Halifax  
(garden)

JSC

Bird singing-

Further details can be written on the back of this slip. We look forward to hearing from you!

PRD, Records Editor.

\*Rare Bird Report Forms are available from our Museum address--Ed.





## PUFFIN OF THE YEAR AWARD

Shirley Cohrs

One of the happiest tasks of the President is to present the Puffin of the Year award. For our newer members I will quote briefly from Eric Cooke's remarks when he presented the first Puffin to Phyllis Dobson in 1972.

*"The Nova Scotia Bird Society was organized and built up through efforts of its members. A Society such as this depends on the active participation of its members, without which it wouldn't be the success it is now. From the time of its organization by a few enthusiasts in 1955, until today, when its membership is over 600, members have contributed their time, efforts and enthusiasm to build up the Society. Many have contributed by serving on the executive--by leading field trips--by submitting reports and information for the Newsletter--by mailing out notices--by enthusiastic participation in various activities. Some members of the Nova Scotia Bird Society have made special contributions to its success and it seems appropriate to recognize their efforts in a special way"...*

And so the Puffin was born. The recipients to date have been:

Phyllis Dobson -Retiring Editor of the Newsletter  
 Hardy Moffatt -Organizer of the 1972 C.N.F. Conference at Wolfville  
 Willet Mills -Charter member, who contributed in many, many ways over the years  
 Lloyd Macpherson-Charter member who started the Newsletter and collated the Christmas Counts  
 Ethel Crathorne -Charter member who served as Membership Chairman for a long time  
 Bob Kanigsburg -Our Society Solicitor, who has contributed in many other ways as well  
 Charlie Allen -Charter member, Past President, and another of those who worked so hard over the years  
 Ian McLaren -Whose endeavours in conservation matters have been numerous  
 Eric Cooke -Past President, who has served on the executive many times, organized Museum meetings for several years and turned his hand to anything needing to be done.

So this is the tenth Puffin and for the first time in its history the award is to be presented jointly--for how could we split up Joyce and Don Purchase?

Joyce and Purch are, relatively speaking, quite new members of N.S.B.S.--five or six years?--arriving by way of Roger Pocklington's Bird Recognition course. In this short time their joint and separate contribution has been legion.

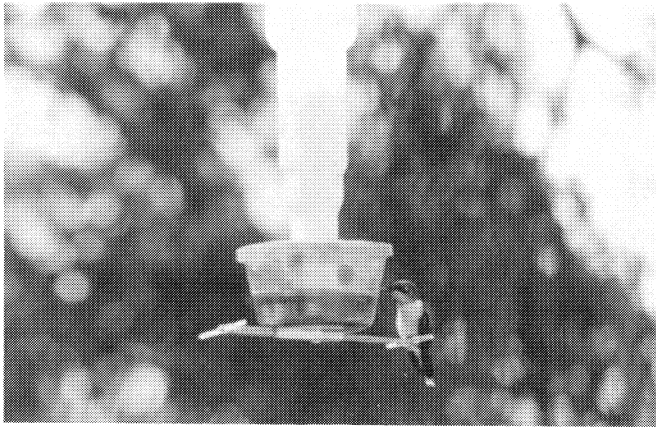
Of course, one thinks immediately of Field Trips, and as I said in my report, they have been spectacular. Before they even get off the ground they require a great deal of what my husband, in naval terms, refers to as "finished staff work"--letters, phone calls, lists, followups, etc., etc.. With Don and Joyce, the trips haven't ended there though--they manage to go on a large percentage of them, where they not only participate, but make sure that newcomers feel at home and meet the crowd and that (most of the time at least) no one gets

lost. They also make sure that the leader writes up the trip for Nova Scotia Birds.

Both of them contribute quietly in many other ways. Joyce gives slide-illustrated lectures to church groups, Guides, Scouts and the like. She types all the minutes of the executive meetings, -- is actually the custodian of the N.S.B.S. typewriter, which position lets her in for many other typing jobs.

Purch has served two terms as Director, bringing to executive meetings much enthusiasm and good sense, often volunteering to do all kinds of things for the Society, from taking youngsters to McNabs Island to storing endless boxes of N.S.B.S. property in his basement. I could go on and on in this vein but, suffice it to say, the presence of either or both at a meeting or outing adds greatly to its enjoyment.

Joyce and Purch, it gives me great pleasure to present you with the 1981 Puffin of the Year Award.



This female Ruby-throated Hummingbird rests by the feeder at Eva Urban's in Avonport. Mrs. Urban has five such feeders and fills them with a sugar syrup composed of one part sugar to three of water, tinted with red food colouring.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor, Nova Scotia Birds:

It has been my intention to write to you about birding in Italy, our home now for twenty-one months, about our impressions which have progressed from initial shock to "nothing surprises us anymore", to occasional glimmers of hope even, for birds, due to the work of the Italian League for the Protection of Birds. But a recent sighting has reminded us of reality for many of Italy's birds. We find we're not as seasoned as we thought.

We saw an owl (Little Owl: *Athene Noctua*) chained to the top of a pole, a broom-handle-thin pole, ten or twelve feet high. There was not even a perch for the owl to grip and it was frequently dislodged when the pole was bumped by children playing on the sandy driveway beneath. The chain was about a foot in length; whenever the pole was bumped, the owl had time to spread its wings once before the chain yanked it, up-side-down, dishevelled, back to the pole. (It was this movement which caught our eyes when we were next door buying terra cotta items.)

Although this was our first "owl on a stick", we've often heard of the practice, usually from other shocked foreigners. There are many reasons for such a custom and, of course, no reason at all. We spoke a while to the mother of the children, who only answered that it was her husband's hobby. There was nothing we could do; only death will release the owl. No doubt another will take its place, for Italy has neither laws nor sufficient effective public interest to end the practice of an "owl on a stick".

Sheila A. Connell,  
La Spezia, Italy.  
November, 1981.

Editor, Nova Scotia Birds:

After a long weekend on Brier (Sept. 7-8) that was rather disappointing because of the weather and the cancellation of the pelagic trip, we had an experience on the way home that made it all worthwhile. Stopping at the Gilbert's Cove wharf, just to "check it out", we were startled to see several Bonaparte's Gulls and a flock of at least seventy Terns (mainly Common, but possibly with a few Arctic mixed in--we couldn't tell). After looking for quite a while in the late afternoon sun, we went back to Savary Park for supper, choosing a table near the edge of a small bluff overlooking the water. There, we were delighted to see four stately loons, changing to their winter plumage, sail by near the water's edge, observing their observers.

Returning to Gilbert's Cove, we were astonished to find that there were now hundreds of gulls, including about a dozen each of Bonaparte's and Ring-billed, and the aforementioned terns feeding on tiny herring within yards of the beach. A mixed flock of small shore-birds were unconcernedly feeding along the shore right in front of us as we sat quietly watching until the light failed.

Since no terns had been seen on Brier at all, on the Saturday, we were very surprised to see them in such numbers so near. We were able to add a few more species to our own weekend list when the gulls, terns and loons were added in.

Barb. & Eric Ruff.

JUNIOR FIELD TRIP

The Junior Field Trip for 1981, was held on September 29, with a visit to Rissers and Crescent Beaches. 20 students from the Halifax West High School and their teacher, Mr. Robert LeBlanc, attended.

It was a sunny day, with some cloud and a strong, cold, west wind. The Bird Society had rented an 18 seater mini-bus; we left the high school at 10:00 a.m. and arrived at the Rissers Beach parking lot at about 11:15 a.m., where we were met by Eric Cooke and Ed. Richard.

A brief review of the objectives of the trip was given and spare field guides and binoculars were distributed. We then started with a walk on the board walk, returning by the beach to the picnic site. The students had been assigned the task of writing an essay on the day's events, therefore each student made sure they looked at each bird seen and knew the correct spelling of the name. Field guides were in constant use. Before lunch the students could tell the difference between a White-winged Scoter and a Common Scoter!!

For lunch the N.S.B.S. provided each student and leader with a fifteen inch Submarine sandwich--with fruit juice to wash it down, and toward the end we needed the juice. Imagine a fifteen inch Submarine for lunch! It was noted that the students did not have the difficulty experienced by the leaders.

We then drove to Crescent Beach and birded the whole way to the bridge, stopping about every 100 yards--sorry meters!..we have gone metric--to take a close look through one of the telescopes. Birding ceased at about 3:00 p.m., with a total of 29 species having been seen. I noticed that the students in my car were birding on the return trip and had a much greater interest in the countryside than on the way down. The trip ended when we reached the school at 4:30 p.m.

On reviewing the trip, the leaders felt that, should we sponsor such a trip again, a preliminary visit to the class by one of our members would be of great help. The students would see slides of birds that they might expect to see and learn how to use a field guide to greatest advantage.

I would like to express my thanks to both Eric Cooke and Ed Richard for their expert assistance.

W.G. Caudle,  
Junior Field Trip Co-ordinator.

The Bird Society received an enthusiastic letter of thanks from Mr. LeBlanc, which included separate comments from each of the participants. One of these sums up the thoughts expressed by the others: *"I couldn't believe there were so many birds under my nose. After the trip I began noticing other birds that were there all the time in my own back yard. Thanks for opening my eyes to the unseen birds"*.

## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

May 30 - Paradise

On May 30th at 8 a.m., the weather could scarcely be called "promising", but 12 brave souls met at the home of Jean and Bill Morse, Paradise, and began their trek into the woods on the South Mountain. A heavy rainshower made us seek temporary shelter under trees, but the return of the sun encouraged birds and birders to venture forth.

We logged 49 species on the mountain path, and after lunch explored meadows along the Annapolis River. We added 17 species to our list for a total of 66. Nothing too unusual, but a sampling of the resident birds.

Our numbers included people from the local area plus one from Bridgewater, one from New Minas and two from Kingston and Clements-vale. We were pleased because we were competing with the Apple Blossom Festival. All present agreed we had had a good day.

Jean Morse

May 31 - Shubenacadie

On May 31, a few bird-watchers met in Shubenacadie to look at the birds on approximately six miles of uninhabited (by people) woods road. The foggy, dark morning improved until there were a few sunny intervals. The weather was ideal for hearing and viewing birds. By two o'clock in the afternoon, 85 species were perceived with even the Virginia rail co-operating by repeating its distinctive call. One member managed to pay the price of a wet foot for close-ups of wild calla or water-arum lilies (*Calla palustris*). Both flowers and birds showed to great advantage until the last Bay-breasted Warbler. We hope everybody will come back next year.

Roslyn MacPhee

June 3 - Susie Lake - Spring Warbler Walk

Eight sleepy but keen birders made their way to the entrance to the old woods road to Susie Lake on a cloudy, but miraculously not foggy, Wednesday morning. They were hoping to see the full complement of fully-adorned spring warblers, normal for the road, plus whatever surprises came their way. Surprises came, but not ornithological. Within 100 meters, what once was a quiet track, resounding with the spring song of Whitethroats, Purple Finches, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and Black-throated Blues, Black-throated Green, Black and White, Yellow-rumped, and Magnolia Warblers, had turned into a vast moonscape, full of the dust and crash and grind of earthmovers and gravel-crushers. After some casting about, the old road was found on the far side, and beyond were found, as always, the Nashvilles, Redstarts, Chestnut-sided, and Hermit Thrushes. But the Canada was not in his accustomed swamp, nor were the Spotted Sandpipers on the lake.

It was a pleasant morning and all agreed it was good fun, but we'll need to find a more productive area next year. Our marvellous days at Susie Lake are over, as they are for the Black-throated Blues that nested there.

Fred Dobson.

June 6 - Yarmouth Area

Led by Charlie Allen and Phyllis Dobson, fourteen birders from Yarmouth to Barrington gathered on a foggy Saturday morning in June to look for spring birds. Although the light was poor, the Veery, which was our first bird of the day, was kind enough to sit for a long time in an exposed position, so that everyone could have a good look. The overcast sky and/or foggy conditions persisted throughout most of the day, culminating in rain at midafternoon, which finally made us call it quits. However, between 8:30 and 3:00, we covered a number of "hot spots", including Ellenwood Park, where we had picnic lunches, and came up with a total of 55 species. There were no rarities, but we had twelve species of warblers including a Wilson's, one hummingbird that flitted by as the group was gazing intently at an unusually co-operative Chestnut-sided Warbler and a Great Blue Heron incongruously perched in a tree top. Ovenbirds were in fine voice in many areas, while cheeky Redstarts bedevilled those of us who were striving to identify the birds by their songs. Some of the party spotted a Kestrel, several Chimney Swifts, a Catbird, and a Rusty Blackbird at various locations.

Despite the lack of unusual birds and the somewhat dismal weather, it was a pleasant spring field trip, affording us the opportunity to check out some new territories, to learn from more experienced birders, and to fix some of the more common birds more firmly in our minds.

Barbara Ruff

June 14 - Wolfville Area

The seventeen birders who took part, including two from Ontario, had a perfect day for an outing; sunshine and not too hot. We began in my yard on Wolfville Ridge with a look at Tree Swallows in a nest box and using a stepladder, looked at newly hatched Black-capped Chickadees in a nestbox behind the house. Other nests seen on the Ridge were those of a Blue Jay, Junco, with a Cowbird egg, 2 Eastern Pewee nests, as well as several nests under construction. Perhaps the rarest nest of the day was the Mourning Dove with 2 eggs, one of only a handful of Mourning Dove nests found so far in Nova Scotia. Several species of birds were looked at however; everyone's favorites were excellent views of 3 male warblers; Mourning, Blackburnian and Cape May.

At the next stop, Newtonville, we found the eggs just hatching in a Kestrel nest box and saw a Flicker and Hairy Woodpecker nest. As we looked at a Barred Owl nest box the one young jumped to the ground. With the use of a coat from one of the group I managed to get it back into the box and it watched us at the box entrance as we left, while its mother told us off with several hoots.

A pleasant lunch was next at Lumsden Dam, after which we had a look at 2 Redstart nests, one found by a member of the group, and a Cedar Waxwing nest. A lost set of car keys was soon found and we were off again and got a good performance, voice and flycatching ability, from an Olive-sided Flycatcher. When we reached a Pileated Woodpecker cavity, it seemed deserted. However, as I climbed the tree, the female appeared and the nest proved to contain feathered young. The last stop was at White Rock Bridge, where the Eastern Phoebe nesting underneath flew out for all to see. That ended a very friendly field trip with lots of variety birdwise.

Bernard Forsythe

June 20 - Bird Islands, Cape Breton

Our annual Bird Islands Trip on June 20, was a success, both as to weather and the number of observers. We had 37 observers from various places: The U.S., Ottawa, Halifax, etc., members from the Woodsworld Society in Baddeck, led by Lloyd Stone, also those from Glace Bay and Sydney.

Two boat trips were made by Captain Van Schaick during the day. Hedley led a trip to Nass Ferry in the morning and to New Campbellton in the afternoon. At noon many of us enjoyed fish chowder and delicious pie at the Mountain View Coffee Shop, while others brought their own lunch. Species 50.

H. Hopkins

July 12 - Economy Area

The weather was fine for the Economy Field Trip on July 12. A dozen participants saw no rarities, but the regular "specialties" (Bay-breasted and Mourning Warblers, and the Lincoln Sparrow) were there. The warm, sunny day made for slow birding from 11 a.m. on, but, on the other hand, showed this beautiful area at its summer's best.

Francis Spalding

July 23 - Special Trip for Beginners

On Saturday, July 23, three of our members, at the request of the Nova Scotia Museum, led a field trip for beginners at Risser's Beach, Lunenburg County. The weather was glorious and the birds co-operative. Extra binoculars were borrowed and three 'scopes were made available, enabling sixteen "new" birders to view the shorebirds and gulls to best advantage. From Risser's, the party progressed to Crescent Beach, where more shorebirds were observed, together with some rarities--2 Snowy Egrets and an immature Laughing gull--which added spice for the "instructors". The walk was scheduled to last from 8 to 9.30, but it was at noon that the party finally broke up, the participants expressing much enthusiasm for birdwatching in general and shorebirds in particular.

J. Shirley Cohrs

July 26 - Martinique Beach and Area

Where were the shorebirds? A group of 23 birders went to East Chezzettcook and Martinique Beach on Sunday, July 26, and found very few, just Dowitchers, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Semi-palmated Sandpipers and, of course, Willets. There were Osprey enough to satisfy the most worried conservationist and battalions of Great Blue Heron but we saw only about 40 species in all.

After a leisurely morning along the inlets, we stopped for lunch at the "Puffin and Phoenix", Mr. R. Kanigsberg's cottage in Petpeswick, to have a welcome break and a pleasant stroll through the fields to the sea. Mr. Kanigsberg was the recipient of the Puffin of the Year award in 1978 and the cottage was rebuilt after a fire, hence the name.

After lunch, we drove home via the shore route in a vain attempt to see the Scarlet Ibis which was the rare bird of the summer. By this time the tide was high so we were left to enjoy the sea and sunshine.

Joyce Purchase.

August 1 and 2 -- Mary's Point and Shepody Bay Dykes, N.B.

Six members of the N.S.B.S. joined leaders David Christie and Mary Majka at Mary's Point, N.B., along with an interested group from the N.B. Federation of Naturalists, for two days of birding and related activities.

On Saturday, they watched tens of thousands of shorebirds as they gathered above the high tide lines, always finding room for one more on the small area of dry beach. Knots, Ruddy Turnstones, B.B.Plover, Semi-Palmated Plover, Least Sandpipers and spectacular numbers of Semi-Palmated Sandpipers, settled in for a short rest before the tide retreated enough for them to resume their constant feeding. Among them were many colour-marked birds who were not long before in the High Arctic and James Bay area, now taking advantage of the productive mud flats of the Bay of Fundy on their long migration south. An enjoyable afternoon ended with a walk up the beach--for the birders, not the birds.

In the evening, the party gathered to look for owls but darkness arrived before the owls could be identified although many were seen swooping in front of the cars.

Sunday was spent on the Shepody Bay Dykes watching ducks, swallows hawks, etc., the highlight being a Sora Rail. Wildflowers to delight the eye, beautiful weather, a unique experience for those taking part.

(Joyce Purchase, with notes from David Christie, Carin Somers, Shirley Brothers, Fran Cooke and Frank Himsl)

August 8 - Evangeline Beach

On the morning of August 8, a group of twenty people, met at the grounds of the tourist centre at Grand Pre. They met there prior to going to Evangeline Beach to observe the annual migration of shore birds which stop there to feed and rest in preparation for the major portion of their flight to warmer climates. At high tide, the birds, driven off the mud flats, are concentrated in massive flocks on the narrow strip of open beach. They rest there until the receding tide permits them to return to the mud flats to resume their feeding.

The flocks were observed from beach level and also from banks above the beach. Although it was cool and partly cloudy, the weather was not unpleasant and viewing was possible under almost ideal conditions.

The birds comprising the flocks included: Semi-palmated Plovers, Black-bellied Plovers, Spotted Sandpipers, Knots, Least Sandpipers, as well as smaller numbers of Ruddy Turnstones and White-rumped Sandpipers. Apart from the spectacular sight of the great masses of birds, the concentration provided an excellent opportunity to observe individual species in the transitional stages of their plumage. The Black-bellied Plover could be seen in the extremes of plumage; some carried their black plumage, while others had completed the change to winter dress with no black visible on the underside of their bodies. The flocks also made it possible to compare similar species with the individual members close to one another and to note the differences between them, making future identification, when the birds are in isolation, a more positive matter.

After observing the flocks on the beach the group walked along the dykes in the vicinity and added some land birds to the list of the day's sightings. At noon, the group returned to the tourist centre for a pleasant lunch and social hour. Following the lunch, an afternoon walk was conducted in the vicinity of the tourist bureau and further land birds were added to the list.



August 23 - Matthew's Lake

Matthew's Lake has probably yielded as many species of shorebirds in recent years as any other spot in the province. Last year's Magnificent Frigatebird and the previous year's Wheatear have also added to the growing reputation of this area near Lockeport. With these thoughts in mind, twenty-six members of the Bird Society ranging from the President, Shirley Cohrs, to many keen neophytes, gathered at Sable River on August 23. From here, they were guided to the lake by Robert Turner and Frank Hennessey. The route followed the west side of the Sable River, south for about ten miles until the headland, Hemeon's Head, was reached.

Alas! Among the thirteen species of shorebirds present, there were no rarities. However, the exposed tidal flats of the lake and the ponds in the adjacent marshy meadows provided excellent views of Hudsonian Godwits, Stilt Sandpipers, and Red Knots. There were also a dozen or so Whimbrels in the upland areas. For many on the field trip these were either the best or the first views ever of these particular species. Good, easy (total walking from three to five miles) viewing of a variety of shorebirds is characteristic of the lake, whereas the scattered population of birds makes it difficult for census-takers.

At the end of the visit to the lake, Robert Turner met a request for Buff-breasted Sandpipers by finding several at nearby West Head (Lockeport). The day's first Golden Plovers were also found at this time.

Many birders on this trip commented on the allure of the Sable River estuary along which we had driven to Matthew's Lake. Unfortunately, time permitted no more than an introduction to the many good birding areas around Lockeport. From a birding point of view, the area only lacks birders, a problem especially glaring during the Port Hebert Christmas Count. The count is always the first Sunday in the count period.

At least now everyone no doubt knows someone who can describe the route to Matthew's Lake. Therein lies the real value of this and of many other field trips.

George Perry

September 12 - Petite-Riviere - President's Field Trip

Once again the weather was fine and sunny for the Petite Riviere Field Trip. The shorebirds at Crescent and Cherry Hill Beaches were there, as they always are. Every year they return and every year it seems they are more beautiful, more wild and enchanting than one remembered.

Very little counting was done by the many birders who came, but there was much looking, listening and wondering. After a morning at Crescent, a companionable lunch was enjoyed at Risser's Beach before proceeding to Cherry Hill for the long trek to the top, always worthwhile for the view of the windswept dunes and saltmarsh, as well as for the shorebirds there.

J. Shirley Cohrs.

September 19 - Baddeck Area - Cape Breton

One of the most pleasant of outings was enjoyed by Cape Breton birdwatchers recently when they were guests at Beinn Breagh, "Beautiful Mountain", where Alexander Graham Bell, the famous inventor

and his family spent a great deal of their time and where Dr. and Mrs. Bell are buried on the highest peak overlooking the beautiful Bras d'Or Lakes. Birders met at eight o'clock in Baddeck village with Lloyd Stone as leader of the expedition. The invitation from the Bell family descendants was received with delight and the entourage of cars set off up the mountain. Here they explored the grounds around the picturesque Bell home, visited the high and lovely spot where the famous inventor and his wife are buried, and were invited to visit with his grand daughter, Mrs. Gertrude Gayley and her son, Joe Blair, at their residence.

Mrs. Gayley came with the group in the morning, directing the tour through groves of lupins, now past their blooming prime, through and around the colourful gardens where annuals were still making a colourful display, and through various arbours on the informally landscaped grounds. Birdwatchers carried 'brown-bag' lunches but for the Baddeck trip these were enjoyed in the spacious living room of Mrs. Gayley's summer home, complete with cosy warmth from huge birch logs in the immense fireplace, which proved a great comfort to chilled bones. Mrs. Gayley said that her home was the former boat-house which was built over a canal, with the original building converted into bedrooms and bathrooms, and a new and spacious living room, complete with fireplace, added at right angles but still over the water. The charming hostess provided urns of hot tea and coffee, cinnamon rolls and lemon loaf and other goodies, welcome additions to the bird watcher's lunches. Warm and well fed, they departed after lunch for a further roam in the vicinity accompanied by Joe Blair.

In attendance were Mr. and Mrs. Hedley Hopkins, Mr. and Mrs. Wally MacKinnon, Otis Cossit of Sydney, Rhoda Yates, Rita Conron, Billie Clarke, Edie MacLeod, Graham Fraser from Glace Bay, Nancy More from Beinn Eoinn, Isobel MacFarlane, Burland Murphy, Lloyd and Jessie Stone, and Chris King with his two sons, Finn McCoor and Yggydrasil, all from the Baddeck area. Chirs' sons are named for the Irish giant and Irish mythology, while his small daughter, who was not in attendance, has a North American name, Anneke, from native mythology.

On the way through Bras d'Or in the morning, the observers in one car spotted a Bald Eagle and a pair of Ospreys as well as an American Bittern at the edge of a Baddeck pond, a good start for the day's outing. The list included a Red-tailed Hawk, Blue Heron, Kingfisher, Grackle, Black Ducks, Redwings, Crow, Marsh Hawk, Starling, English and Savannah Sparrows, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Blue Jays, two kinds of chickadees, Black-backed and Herring Gulls, Double-crested Cormorants, Juncos, Whitethroats, Ruby and Golden-crowned Kinglets and Purple Finches. Heavy rain in the afternoon marked the return home, brightened by the purchase of Valley apples in Baddeck.

Edie MacLeod

September 26 - Tusket Islands, Yarmouth County

On September 26, 20 members of the N.S.B.S. set out by boat from Wedgeport for a leisurely trip around the Tusket Islands under sunny skies and 15° C. temperature--no fog, light breeze; a handsome day. We landed on two of the larger islands for a walk around part of their shores and a trip through the wooded interiors. Lunch was eaten in the shelter of some of the fishermen's houses.

The several Bald Islands owned by the Society lie at the outer edge of the group and we were able to see our sign proclaiming the Marie Henry Sanctuary--although there were more sheep in evidence than birds.

However, we managed to amass a list of 43 species, including 5 kinds of hawk. As elsewhere on the islands off the south coast of Nova Scotia this fall, Broad-winged Hawks were gathered in large groups, circling upward until we could no longer follow them with binoculars. As well, there were Sharp-shins, Harriers, Merlins and Kestrels. The rest of the list consisted of fairly common birds but most were well seen.

Particularly for those of us who had not visited the Tuskets and our Island Sanctuaries before, it was an exciting and rewarding experience--not to overlook the opportunity to meet the Yarmouth area members again.

Joyce Purchase.

#### October 4 - Russel Lake

A weekend forecast of heavy showers unfortunately discouraged most of the local birders from turning out, with the rare exception of a few intrepid souls. And so, led by a somewhat disappointed Fulton Lavender, a small party of three set out to explore the "Piggery" and Russel Lake. Highlights included: 2 Mourning Warblers, 2 American Kestrels, 2 Ring-Necked Pheasants, 1 Indigo Bunting, 1 Broad-winged Hawk, 1 American Bittern, 40 Swamp Sparrows.

Later that afternoon, with the observers now reduced to two in number, a brief check of the Eastern Shore was undertaken which produced large flocks of both Green and Blue-winged Teal as well as one American Coot. These were in the three Fathom Harbour Pond area. Lastly a stop at Rocky Run revealed a flock of eleven Hooded Mergansers.

All in all, not a bad day, with special thanks going to Ron Arsenault, for surviving the entire trip with a rather disgruntled leader.

Fulton L. Lavender.

#### October 10-12 -Seal Island

On a brisk October morning seven steadfast and determined birders arrived at six, on the dock at Clark's Harbour. Once aboard the "Blue Flame" and after an awkward departure, each looked forward to an exciting journey.

After a rather exhilarating boat ride, we all were landed in good spirits. Despite the persistently high winds, the birds were numerous and active. Species included: White-crowned Sparrows, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Rufous-sided Towhee, Marsh Wrens, and innumerable Mourning Doves.

Since a number of the Society's members were setting foot on Seal for the first time, we spent the afternoon inspecting the island "Hot Spots". Both the road to the lighthouse and the Jones' garden were extremely productive, yielding Mockingbirds, tanagers, Northern Orioles, Indigo Buntings, a Blue Grosbeak, and a Field Sparrow. All of the members at one point or another took a jaunt around the island, viewing a variety of birds, buildings, seals, and of course, SHEEP.

A sight which grasped almost everyone's attention was that of the many Peregrines gliding upon the currents in search of lucrative dinner targets. Evidence of their eminent success was the large amount of Flicker remains scattered about the island.

The return trip was ideal. To top off the weekend, several Gannets were seen from the bow of Jackie Kenny's Cape Islander. With a little hard work on the part of the birders and co-operation on the part of the birds, the final count was a splendid 113 species.

A TRULY WORTHWHILE TRIP!

Lisë Cohrs

November 13 - 22, 1981 - An Oceanographic Cruise on C S S Dawson to  
the edge of the continental shelf off  
Yarmouth

Our cruise was to do some physical oceanography. We were measuring currents, water density variations, and waves on the sea surface and on the interface between cold, fresh northern waters and the warm, salty Gulf Stream waters beneath. But within the breasts of a few of us, notably Jim Elliott and myself, beat birders' hearts, and we kept what lists we could.

Our weather started calm and fine, and the Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls wheeling elegantly in our wake were soon joined by Greater Shearwaters, Fulmars, and Black-legged Kittiwakes. Our complement for the trip remained quite constant: about 100 gulls (about 60% Herring and the remainder, Black-backs), about 20 Kittiwakes (80% adult and the rest, juvenile), about 150 Greater Shearwaters, and about 20 Fulmars (95% light phase and the remainder dark phase). We did notice occasional increases in the number of shearwaters during the passage of weather fronts, of which we had lots: one every day or two. The winds rose after the first day to 20 knots, then to 30 knots by the fourth day, and there it stayed, with occasional excursions to 40 or 20 knots, for the remainder of the trip, except for the last day which was calm again. Other pelagics included a Parasitic Jaeger, a Skua, and two Gannets, one adult and one young.

Land birds made their appearances at various times throughout the cruise. Snow Buntings, two at least, accompanied us throughout. On the day before the strong frontal passage which gave Halifax (and us) such violent thundershowers, a Great Blue Heron flew by, looking as nonchalant as if he were over Lawrencetown Beach. Several warblers came on board on the day and night preceding the same frontal passage. They stayed with us for three or four days--two Yellow-rumped and a Palm--but then disappeared during some rough weather. I later found the remains of one, plastered soggly to the engineroom air intake grid on the funnel. The most spectacular sight was watching the gulls at night in the lights of the ship as we worked, doggedly keeping pace with us in the wind and flying spray, brilliant white in the darkness, occasionally dipping for surface-fish ("needlefish", was what the crew called them); and every few minutes a Snow Bunting flew through their midst, a white mote in the blackness, dodging the crests of the seas, heading for a somehow better shipfall on our stern or bow, depending on some incalculable whim.

Fred Dobson.

November 28 - Eastern Shore

An impromptu field trip from Sullivan's Pond to Chezzettcook was enjoyed by 6 birders who ignored the poor early morning weather to see what late November has to offer in this area.

Except for the Canada Geese, the birds were not in large numbers but we managed to identify 57 species, among them a late Great Blue Heron and two wrens. Unfortunately, we were unable to get to Conrad's Beach, the tide being exceptionally high and the water over the boot-tops.

We saw a nice group of Ring-billed Gulls, 9 species of ducks, a Red-throated Loon, only one warbler (a C. Yellow-throat); the Snow Buntings are back--a typical November outing.

Joyce Purchase

## A SNACK ALONG THE WAY

Many birders of my acquaintance take along a little sustenance on long outings. By this I don't mean proper meals, but those extras to keep up the energy between the sandwiches and coffee (or beer!) which make up lunch and the longed for hot supper awaiting at dusk. An apple or a chocolate bar are all very well, but one of the most interesting, variable and portable "stay-pieces" is a little bag of GORP. This is defined in the Sierra Club handbook as a "mixture of seeds and dried fruit", but I prefer the term used by one family I know. They call it "Nuts and Berries"..



All kinds of mixtures are possible: Gorp can be, like any other food, pedestrian or exciting. Peanuts and raisins must be the most basic combination, but dried apples and apricots, almonds and pecans are more interesting (also more expensive). When a good mixture (about 2 lbs. or so) is achieved, it can be divided into many small plastic bags, securely tied and then the little packets packed into a large glass jars with a tight lid. This will keep indefinitely on the shelf. Here is one of my favourite combinations. In November (1981) the cost was \$3.31 and it makes 6 cups. Half a cup makes an ample portion, at a little over 50¢.

- 1 oz. dried banana
- 1½ oz. coconut chips
- 2 oz. currants
- 4 oz. pumpkin seeds
- 3½ oz. sunflower seeds (kernels-not the ones for the feeder)
- 4 oz. almonds, unblanched
- 4 oz. dried apricots-cut smaller with scissors.

Good munching!  
JSC

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

Sunday February 28 Halifax-Dartmouth area. Sewer stroll. Leader: Bill Caudle. Time: 0930 hrs. Meet at the Hartlen Point Golf Club entrance at Eastern Passage.

Sunday March 21 Eastern Passage-Cow Bay-Cole Harbour. Leaders: Don and Joyce Purchase. Time: 0800 hrs. Meet at the entrance road to the main jetty at Eastern Passage.

Saturday April 10 Eastern Shore, Hfx. Co. Late winter birds. Leader: Ian McLaren. Time: 0800 hrs. Meet

in the Bank of Nova Scotia parking lot, Bridge Plaza, Dartmouth.

Saturday April 17 Cadden Bay, Queens Co. Early Spring on the South Shore. Meet at 0830 at Schnare's Grocery Store, Port Joli, on Highway 103. Be prepared for a reasonable walk. Leader: George Perry.

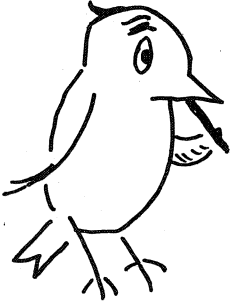
Saturday May 22 Mooseland - Hfx. Co. Spring arrivals. Leaders: Karl and Wendy Tay. Time: 0800 hrs. Meet at the Tay's cottage "Swallow Hollow"--exactly 10 miles up the Mooseland Road which is 60 miles east of Dartmouth on Hwy. #7. Cottage is at the first lake just past the dam. Bring fly dope and a lunch.

Sunday May 30 Shubenacadie Area, Hants Co. Back country walk for warblers and many other species. Leader: Roslyn MacPhee. Time: 0800 hrs. Meet in front of Scott's Restaurant, Shubenacadie. Bring lunch.

Saturday June 5 Hopewell Area, Pictou Co. An interesting variety of species. Leader: Harry Brennan. Time: 0800 hrs. Meet at St. Columba Church, 1½ miles south of railway crossing in Hopewell. (Leave Trans Canada Hwy. at Heather Motor Hotel, New Glasgow; turn left for Foord St., straight through Stellarton to Hopewell, about 6 miles)

Check the April edition of Nova Scotia Birds for additions. If you have any queries, call Don or Joyce Purchase at 434-5199.





QUIZ

The answers are all names of birds.

1. Rural picnic in the Maritimes?
2. Singing Nun?
3. Happy victim of a con man?
4. Sad old fisherman?
5. Jail bird?
6. A fool with cold feet?
7. A well digger that charges too much?
8. Around the corner of the chimney?
9. Short work hours?
10. Warm underwear that preys on others?

ANSWERS ON PAGE 57

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BIRDING LITERATURE

There are several recent publications of the Canadian Wildlife Service which may be of interest to N.S.B.S. members. These are:

Natural History Notes on the following areas:

- Machias Seal Island Migratory Bird Sanctuary
- Cape Jourimain National Wildlife Area
- Amherst Point Migratory Bird Sanctuary

Bird Checklists for:

- Chignecto National Wildlife Area (this includes APBS and the John Lusby marsh)
- Tintamarre National Wildlife Area
- Cape Jourimain National Wildlife Area

Occasional Paper No. 8, Birds of the Nova Scotia-New Brunswick border region (47 pages) now with a new 20 page 1981 addendum by Stuart Tingley

These are all free and are available from:

Canadian Wildlife Service,  
P.O. Box 1590,  
Sackville, N.B.  
E0A 3C0

# A Garden for the Birds

by Evelyn Dobson



Birds, like people, are attracted to a garden which provides them with food and shelter. During every season of the year birds travel through an area, looking for food and nesting territories. With suitable garden plantings, many birds may be induced to visit, feed and nest.

A garden must provide shelter before small birds will feel safe. Because of possible aerial attack from larger birds and ground attack from cats, plantings which give quick shelter are needed throughout the garden. These may be provided in a variety of ways.

A favourite with the birds are hedges which also provide food. Multiflora rose grows quickly into a tangle of almost impenetrable thickness. It provides a bride's bouquet of bloom in June and a winter time berry feast for over-wintering Robins, waxwings and sparrows. With all hedges, deciduous or coniferous, the plants should be placed at suitable intervals so that at maturity they provide a close enough grouping to block the wind. To overcome the problem of slow-growth evergreens, I have double planted in my garden, with evergreens along property lines, to break the wind; and on the leeward side, a second line of faster growing shrubs--hydrangea, Mock Orange, weigela and rugosa. Privet and forsythia are also quick-growing hedge plants easy to plant and nurture.

Group planting provides an excellent place to locate a feeder. I have planted, within a four meter square, a white birch, a pine, a hawthorn; and bunched together at ground level, a Scotch broom, two hardy roses, and several wild lupine. With the exception of the hawthorn and roses, all were dug from the side of Nova Scotia highways, are easy to transplant and very hardy. We placed a tray feeder beside this planting and it is popular with the very wild birds. The larger birds like to land in the trees and after selecting seeds, return to the trees to eat them. The small birds wait in the tangle of shrubs underneath for their turn, and quickly return to shelter when a hawk visits the feeder. If you can locate a feeder where your plantings will shelter it from winter winds, it is easier on the birds and cuts down on seed scatter due to wind.

It is possible to entice even the shyest bird close to your house if you create easy access to shelter with ground plantings against the house. Low juniper and cedar give open ground areas even during heavy snows, where sparrows and juncos can scratch. If the shrubs are close to where you plant a vine on a trellis, you provide another excellent combination area for a feeder. During heavy snows I found a hanging fat ball and a coconut filled with seed can provide food which doesn't cover up with snow like that on an open feeder. These can be hung on or near a vine-covered trellis where the birds may also find shelter.



There are specific trees, shrubs and plants which attract birds because of their flowers, berries or seeds. I will mention them here and you may have fun using them in borders, hedges or groups as you find them suitable in your own garden.

If you are lucky enough to have old trees in your garden, you will find that many birds feed on the insects which nestle in or under the heavy bark. Woodpeckers, nuthatches and creepers will circle the trunk and dig out grubs, larvae and insects. An old apple tree is marvelous for attracting birds especially if you don't pick the apples. Baltimore Orioles visit our garden only in the late fall, and are never seen by us except in an old apple tree. If for no other reason, that apple tree, gnarled and broken, is beautiful. Flickers and Robins will eat the fallen, cidery apples in the spring and thoroughly enjoy the high it provides them.

The dog berry or mountain ash, hawthorn, Canadian holly, euonymus and honeysuckle all have berries which, although inedible to us, are luscious treats for the birds. Birds also greatly enjoy the berries which we plant for our own use--raspberry, blackberry and strawberry. In fact, Robins can pose a real problem to the berry grower. Any nut tree, including the native oaks, supplies the Blue Jays with a ready crop to hide during harvest time in October.

Purple Finches are very fond of the flower buds of forsythia and if allowed, will strip the branches, depriving you of that early blaze of colour in your garden. If you plant sunflowers and leave the heads nodding when they are heavy with seed, the birds will raid the heads until all the seeds are gone. Only an early harvest and hanging to dry in the garage will save any seeds for you.

A special treat in any garden is the hummingbird. They arrive late in the spring and leave before summer is finished. They are nectar eaters and are attracted by sweet smelling and bright red and blue flowers. If you can provide them with a succession of blooms throughout the summer, they won't be able to resist the temptation to linger near your garden. Plant honeysuckle, weigela, bee balm, delphinium and nasturtium and wait to see them bringing their babies for a late summer feed.

I have always found that birds prefer wild food to feeder food, even in the heavy winter. An untidy garden, where seed heads struggle and wild grasses grow is one which the birds favour. Dandelion heads are really lovely with a Summer Goldfinch astride, eating the seeds. The Snow Buntings and Juncos prefer weed seeds from the snow-clad garden to seeds on the feeder.

As your plantings begin to age and become denser, birds will find them suitable for nesting. If you can make yourself inconspicuous in your garden and the local cats don't interfere, Robins, sparrows and Juncos do not need much encouragement to nest.



## BOOK REVIEW

So many of the current books about birds, especially those of the "birdwatching for all" or "all you'll ever need to know about birds" variety are so ghastly that it was with great trepidation that I picked up my review copy of The Country Journal Book of Birding and Bird Attraction by Alan Pistorius (W.W. Norton & Co., New York and London, 1981.) \$15.95. I need not have worried. I couldn't put it down and read it cover to cover in a day. It is a delightful book in every way. Clearly printed on good quality paper (I like a physically pleasing book) it is exactly what it sets out to be--"a home and away book for bird enthusiasts--a sensible, intelligent and witty guide to the basics of bird attraction and the major field birding events of the year".

Because of the duality of interest the book will appeal to both the feeder and garden birders and to the active field trippers and listers. There are chapters dealing in great detail with winter feeding (how to, what to and when) and in planting and arranging the garden to attract birds in both winter and summer. The advantages of providing watering places for birds and methods of construction of houses suitable for various species are both dealt with at length.

The "away" chapters are amusing as well as instructive. There is one which explains methods of "mapping" birds (Breeding Bird Surveys, Breeding Bird Census and Bird Atlas). Another attempts to explain, in so far as is possible, the enigma of migration. The pages devoted to descriptions of the Christmas Count and the "Big Day" are alone, in my opinion, worth the price of the book. I'm tempted to quote from those chapters, but I don't want to spoil it for you.

The illustrations by Don Almquist are worthy of note. They range from detailed botanical sketches to bird house and feeder designs to attractive and sometimes whimsical bird studies. Something for everyone?--indeed there is!

Shirley Cohrs.

THE BIRDS OF SABLE ISLAND, NOVA SCOTIA

by Ian A. McLaren

is now available from The Nova Scotian Institute of Science:  
Macdonald Science Library,  
Dalhousie University,  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3H 4J3

PRICE \$7.50

The book covers all aspects of bird life on the island, past and present, from the history of the earliest records to recent ornithological research. Nesting species and regional migrants are described as well as Bird Finding and Bird Habitats. There are details given of all 325 species that have been reported from the island. Included are black and white photographs of some of the rarities that have occurred, most of them taken by the author.

## THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE RIVENDELL EAGLES

## IV Friends and Enemies

R. G. S. Bidwell

The relationship of Bald Eagles to other birds is, by and large, stiff and stand-offish. But their attitudes to other eagles are complex and depend very much on the circumstances and where they happen to be. They can be quite tolerant, and the sight of twenty or even thirty or more Bald Eagles of various ages and states of maturity together in a field, all complacently feeding off the same pile of offal, suggests that love, peace eternal and friendly co-operation is the rule for eagle social behavior. Indeed, the strongly expressed and very evident love that permeates every aspect of eagle family life, even parental admonition of wayward youth, reinforces the belief that eagles are friendly and affectionate birds, if rather remote in their behavior towards lesser beings.

On the other hand, eagles are very territorial. They return year after year to the same nest site, and protect it vigorously (and vociferously) from newlyweds or other such eagly househunters. A strange pair visited Rivendell last February, at a time when the resident pair were actively repairing, rebuilding, and generally sprucing up their nest. The strangers ventured so far as to sit in the nest tree while its owners were away. One of the resident eagles returned, and a vigorous discussion ensued. (Eagles always talk at the top of their not inconsiderable voices, and can be heard half a mile away. That is why we are so often on hand to watch their antics—we can always hear, even from inside the house, when something is up). Eventually the three eagles flew into the air, and after much bellicose display on the part of the Rivendell eagle, the others left, presumably intimidated. There was no physical violence. The conversation that followed the return of the other member of the Rivendell pair sounded like an operatic duet, but to be honest, we could not distinguish it in sound or content from the angry trio that preceded it.

Territorial behavior does not extend to sexually immature members of the same family. In fact, the extended interest that the adults take in their adolescent offspring is one of the happier aspects of eagle family life. The current year's young spend their first summer very close to home and stay in the company of one or both of their parents until the family leaves for its winter quarters. Next year, the young eagle (Bald eagles take four years to reach maturity and acquire their white head and tail) takes up residence nearby, usually within 10 miles of home, and visits frequently. The year-old juvenile does not approach the nest tree, where a new family is being raised, but often sits on the perch-tree, across the river and about a quarter of a mile from the nest. It usually announces its presence loudly, and one of the adults will often go and join it. Strangely, while a mated pair or an adult and its current year's offspring will sometimes sit side-by-side on the same branch, the second-year or older juvenile always sits on a branch below the adult -- very proper. Sometimes a third-year juvenile comes by, recognizable by its body colour. Its presence may be tolerated, but we have seen the adults chase one away. Perhaps that was a stranger. By and large, the parents seem very happy to have their offspring visit, provided they keep out of the nursery.

However, let strangers beware! Late one summer we were working in the garden when we heard a great deal of screaming and shouting from the eagle tree across the river, followed by a flurry of crashing, violent agitation, and flying feathers in the undergrowth on the

cliffside across the river. The adult eagles were circling close to the cliff in evident distress or concern, and the juvenile, only aeronautic for the past week or so, was nowhere to be seen.

We naturally concluded that the youngster had made a hard landing and had fallen off its perch into the undergrowth. Arming ourselves with a large sack and some rope in case it was damaged and needed help, we crossed the river and plunged into the thicket. In the heat of the moment we did not consider how exactly we were to get a bird (even if damaged) with oversized bill, talons, and a six-foot wing spread into a sack! Violent alarms and excursions led us down the dense and brambly cliffside, when suddenly an adult eagle, evidently a stranger, burst out of the bushes below and flopped onto the rocky shore of the river. The two other eagles, which had been circling closely overhead and encouraging us with loud noise, immediately pounced on the flustered stranger who promptly fell into the river. The attackers pulled up and the stranger clambered out on a rock, looking very droopy and bedraggled.

There was a brief interlude while the attacking forces regrouped and the stranger shook himself. He then took off and flew down the river. Unfortunately, his course took him dangerously close to the nest, and the angry owners took strong exception to this. They took off in hot pursuit, and one swooped down on the intruder, talons extended. The latter turned over on his back as his attacker pounced, his claws at the ready. The two met and locked talons in mid air, and plunged, cartwheeling to the river. Just as they were about to hit the water, the attacker disengaged and pulled up, but the stranger hit the water with a colossal splash. He eventually pulled himself out on a gravel bar and flapped wearily off, pursued by jeers and cat-calls from the victorious pair. When it was quite clear that the intruder had been driven away, the youngster appeared out of his place of concealment to join in the celebration of victory. Needless to say, the lone stranger did not return.

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#### BALD EAGLES

The Wildlife Division of the Nova Scotia Department of Lands and Forests is continuing a program of monitoring seasonal movements of Bald Eagles. Eagles captured in winter as well as fledgling birds have been tagged and banded to permit identification at a distance.

It would be appreciated if anyone sighting an eagle would check for any tags and if a marked bird is observed, the following information should be recorded: date, place of observation, location of tag on bird, colour of tag, any code on tag, general description of plumage, observer's name and address.

Reports of sightings may be sent to: P. J. Austin-Smith, Wildlife Division, P. O. Box 516, Kentville, N. S., B4N 3X3, or contact any of the Lands and Forests subdivisions offices which are listed below:

- Antigonish, Antigonish County ( Bob Bancroft, Regional Biologist).
- Baddeck, Victoria County (Dan Banks, Regional Biologist).
- Truro, Co. Co., (Ross Hall, Regional Biologist).
- Sydney, Cape Breton Co., (Dave Harris, Regional Biologist).
- Waverley, Halifax Co., (Andy MacInnis, Regional Biologist).
- Yarmouth, Yar. Co., (Paul Tufts, Regional Biologist).

WINTER AND SPRING MEETINGS  
OF THE NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY  
AT THE NOVA SCOTIA MUSEUM

Please note that meetings are on the FOURTH Thursday of each month, NOT necessarily the last Thursday

JANUARY 28

Members Slide Night

All nature topics are eligible--not just birds. "People pictures" taken on field trips, Christmas Counts, etc., are also most welcome.

FEBRUARY 25

Sea Birds of the North Atlantic

Slide illustrated lecture by Roy John

MARCH 25

A Walk to Cape Split

Slide illustrated lecture on the natural history of that area by Tim Randall

APRIL 22

Adventure with Ospreys

Slide illustrated lecture by Erik Greene

\* \* \* \* \*

All meetings are followed by coffee, snacks and talk...

This photograph, taken by Shiela Connell, is of Ospreys at Indian Path, Lun. Co., nesting on a man-made platform. These platforms were constructed jointly by the N.S. Power Corporation and the N.S. Department of Lands and Forests to lure the birds away from power poles (seen in the background) where their activities at times interfered with power supplies.





QUIZ ANSWERS

- |                            |                          |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Eastern Meadowlark      | 6. Blue footed Booby     |
| 2. Black and White Warbler | 7. Long-billed Dowitcher |
| 3. Laughing Gull           | 8. Sooty Tern            |
| 4. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher   | 9. Little Stint          |
| 5. Barred Owl              | 10. Parasitic Jaeger     |

NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY,  
c/o Nova Scotia Museum,  
1747 Summer Street,  
Halifax, N.S. B3H 3A6

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