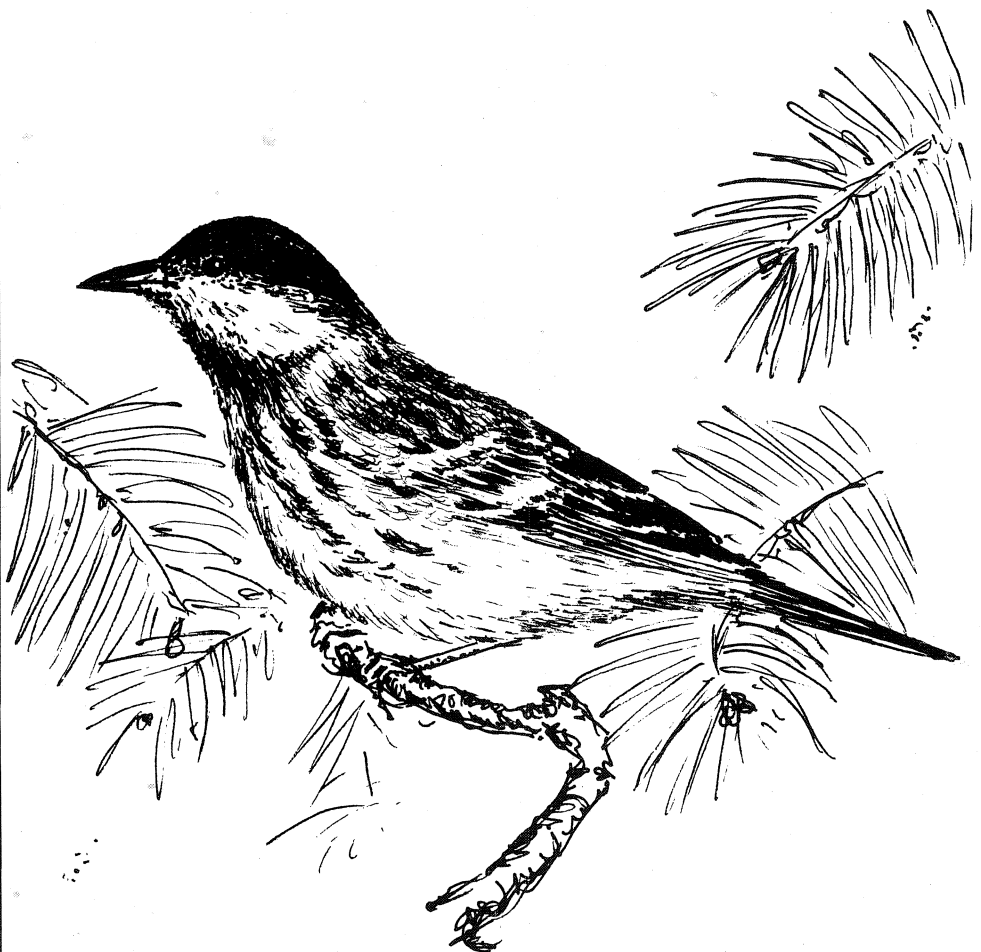


# NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS

July 1985



NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS  
a publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society

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Volume 27 Number 3

July 1985

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Table of Contents

Spring Bird Reports	2
A Nova Scotia Christmas Count	
A pictorial essay      Joyce Purchase & Shirley Cohrs	26
Field Trip Reports	34
Up-coming Field Trips	39
Birding in Central Nova Scotia	
Ross Baker & Harry Brennan	42
Letters to the Editor	52
The Rivendell Eagles VI      R.G.S. Bidwell	57
Survey of 19th Century Ornithology in Nova Scotia	
Ian McLaren      (cont'd)	65

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Cost of the publication of this periodical is partially borne by  
the Nova Scotia Museum.

ISSN 0383-9567

Second Class Mail

Reg. No. 4628

## SPRING MIGRATION 1984

### Introduction

Weather affects birds in a variety of ways. Migration routes appear to be related somewhat to the patterns of the winds aloft, so that birds can utilize these winds to conserve energy during their long trip.

Some migrants that depend on the winds may follow unusual wind patterns to places where they wouldn't usually go, thus affording birders an opportunity to see species not normally found in their area.

This spring there weren't any spectacular or abnormally severe storms but, rather, a series of smaller disturbances moving up out of the south-west with the result our migrants arrived in clusters; some one week, some the next, and so on.

It was a late spring but a good one. 115 birders sent in 1980 reports on 259 bird species. The most commonly reported bird was the NORTHERN FLICKER followed closely by TREE SWALLOW, ROBIN, COMMON MERGANSER, HARRIER and OSPREY.

The precipitation in March and April was below normal for those months, near normal for May but somewhat above normal for June. Rain can delay insect hatch or keep the insects on the ground thus making it difficult or impossible for parent birds, which rely on flying insects, to gather food for their young or themselves.

Lets hope for drier weather.

Bob Dickie,  
(Records Editor)

A special thanks to the following contributors of bird reports.

C.R.K.Allen, Daryl Amirault, Peter J.Austin-Smith, Dan Banks, Joyce Barcherdt, Norman Bay, Pearl Bay, R.G.S.Bidwell, S.M.R.Bidwell, Bob Caldwell, Pat Caldwell, Margaret Churchill, John Cohrs, Shirley Cohrs, Otis Cossett, Dorothy Critchlow, Nick Critchlow, Russell J.Crosby, G.Crowell, Dave Currie, C.Daine, Brian Dalzell, Daniel D'Entremont, Delisle D'Entremont, Milton D'Entremont, Raymond D'Entremont, Roger D'Entremont, Jerome D'Eon, Reginald D'Eon, Ted D'Eon, Bob Dickie, Helen Dickie, Phyllis R.Dobson, Dave Eddy, Mark Elderkin, Tom Elwood, A.Ferguson, M.Ferguson, Bernard Forsythe, Roger Foxhall, R.B.Fraser, Sylvia Fullerton, J. Gates, Helen Hall, Hubert Hall, Jennifer Hall, Sharon Hawboldt, Phyllis Hayes, C.W.Helleiner, Phyllis Hemeon, Ward Hemeon, Barbara Hinds, J.V.J., June Jarvis, Sam Jarvis, Carol Joquard, Gerald Joquard, Keith N.Keddy, Fulton L. Lavender, Lance A. Laviolette, Mac Lovett, Viola Lovett, Bob MacDonald, Clive S.MacDonald, W.MacDonald, D.MacDonald, John MacInnes, E.MacLeod, Jack MacNeil, Carol MacNeill, Don MacNeill, E.MacRury, Steve Manuel, Diane Matteau, Rene Matteau, W.McCormick, Ian McLaren, James McLaren, J.McNicol, Eric L. Mills, John Mills, Lynne Mills, Bernice Moores, Sandra Myers, Maggie Nickerson, Mike Parmeteer, Fred Payne, Linda Payzant, Peter Payzant, W.Peach, Nancy Peters, Warren Peters, Arthur Porter, Mary Pratt, Lloyd Prosser, Don Purchase, Joyce Purchase, Barbara Ruff, Eric Ruff, Bary C.Sabean, Nellie Snyder, Edgar Spalding, Francis Spalding, A Spencer, Richard B.Stern, Karl Tay, Wendy Tay, Bernice Taylor, Jim Taylor, Stuart Tingley, Judy Tufts, Linda Tufts, Philip Volkeart, H.W.Wilson.

## BIRD REPORTS

Spring 1985

LOONS AND GREBES

There were ten spring sightings of RED-THROATED LOONS for a total of 18 birds: 9, in the Bay of Fundy, 3, South Shore, 2 Eastern Shore and 1, at Tidnish on the North Shore. Dates ranged from April 3 at Economy (FLS) to May 19, Cape Sable, a bird in nearly summer plumage. Another in breeding plumage was at Cow Bay, May 11 (FLL et al.). FLS adds to his sighting of Apr. 3, one May 18 "present during the period, maximum with 10", which if rightly interpreted, would up the total number of birds to about 26. An ARCTIC LOON, May 1, Seal Is., was observed at 100-200 meters in good light. It had the body plumage of an adult and the head in winter plumage. The bird was photographed, and further details will be provided on request. Arctic and Pacific Loons have recently been given separate specific status but the observers believe this to be the former (IAM,ELM,WHW). There was no scarcity of COMMON LOONS--39 sightings for a total 'bag' of over 550 individuals. There were 200+ along a 20-mile stretch east of Halifax (no date given); 143 in the W. Lawrencetown-Rocky Run stretch of shore, March 10 (Cohrs and Purchases), and approximately 50 at Cow Bay, March 9. Other apparent concentrations or movements were 30+ at Rocky Run, Apr. 8 (FLL,BC) and 23 at Cook's Beach, Apr. 14. First report of arrival on fresh water was of one at Tusket Falls, March 29 (CJ,PH), others in all were from mid-April to May 11. With the exception of one bird seen near Amherst Apr. 21 (JS&JLC), all PIED-BILLED GREBES were reported by a number of birders from the APBS and the single reported above was probably on its way there! All these sightings were between Apr. 8 and May 15, numbers ranging from 2 to a maximum of 6, (seen on the last date). There were possible concentrations of HORNED GREBES at Mahone Bay (20), Conrad's Beach (20 plus), Cherry Hill (30+) and Gold River (37) on Apr. 6, 19, 27 and May 5 respectively. All reports except for two at Clementsport, May 13 and 17 (SH) were from along the Atlantic coast from Martinique west; number of sightings, 14; number of individuals, 140, plus 'numerous', reported at Lawrencetown, Apr. 13 (RBD). Numbers of RED-NECKED GREBES have increased enormously since last report--or did more clement weather bring out more birders? There are 20 reports for a total of 645 birds, plus Bob Dickie's 'numerous' at Lawrencetown Head, Apr. 14. On this date there were also 150 at Cherry Hill (JS&JLC) and 100+ along a five-mile stretch east of Conrad's Beach, Apr. 20 (JP). Once again FLL & Co. win the prize for numbers: 200+ at Conrad's Beach, Apr. 19.

CRKA, ed.



SHEARWATERS TO CORMORANTS

Raymond S. D'Entremont saw his first SOOTY SHEARWATER of the year on Georges' Bank on April 24, and several more after that date. His first and only GREATER SHEARWATER was on April 29; as he says, 'their normal arrival date is around the middle of May'. He saw a WILSON'S STORM-PETREL on the same day, and a dozen more on May 1. LEACH'S STORM -PETRELS were calling on Seal Island on the night of April 28-29, (ELM), but the first record is from April 4; a bird which came in to Louisbourg on a dragger, caught in the gear and released unharmed afterwards (CD).

There were 100-200 NORTHERN GANNETS on March 26, off Chebucto Head, plunging among the pod of 40 odd finback whales which came inshore after the herring (Paul F. Brodie). Only half-a-dozen whales were left by March 31, but there was a long stream of adult gannets heading north (RGBB). The 100+ going past Martinique Beach on April 8 (FLL,Bill Caudle) must have been part of the same movement. Adults were going past Brier Island all day on April 6, and there were impressive movements off Brier on May 10-11, and Cape Sable on May 19 (ELM,IAM, et al.). The first Gannets, however, were the three birds which Don and Carol MacNeill saw off Chebucto Head on March. The oddest one was the injured bird which John Loring picked up at Economy Harbour, at the head of Fundy, on April 10.

GREAT CORMORANTS have been with us on and off all winter. The Cohrs saw 33 of them at Bayport, Lun. Co., on March 12, "all in a row on the edge of the ice, breeding patches showing." DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS have been here at least since March 29, when a bird was seen at Boot Island, near Wolfville (JC&GW Tufts). They had reached Tusket, Yar. Co., by April 5 (CRKA), and Myra, C.B., by April 22 (Clive S. MacDonald). There was a substantial movement off Dartmouth on April 10 (J. Purchase), and 130++ were flying up the Tusket River on May 10 (CRKA).

--RGBB

HERONS AND RELATIVES

The first AMERICAN BITTERN was on Seal Is., from April 29 to May 1, and it was followed by 4 scattered individuals May 5-19.

One to 3 GREAT BLUE HERONS were around Pubnico, Feb. 23 to Mar. 28, but 1 at Argyle on Mar. 27, and others at Overton on Mar. 28 and at Glace Bay Sanctuary on Mar. 30, were first spring arrivals. They were widely reported in the first days of April. Again this year we have a bird answering the description of a "GREAT WHITE HERON", the tropical form of our Great Blue Heron, unprecedented in these parts. The bird was around Three Fathom Hbr., Hfx. Co., May 20-23. The bird was reported by Dottie Willis who, with Cliff Willis, observed the dull yellow legs, large yellow beak, very large size, and crest like a Great Glue Heron's, all good field marks. It was roosting around their freshwater pond and feeding on mudflats. Unfortunately, they assumed that such a bird was no more unusual than our "routine" white herons, and did not spread the word. They are familiar with this form and with the other southern herons, from sojourns in the southern United States. I don't know if albinism in a Great Blue Heron is an alternative explanation; would it have yellow legs?

A GREEN-BACKED HERON was on Seal Is., on May 2, and another (?) there on May 22-29. Up to 15 BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERONS were on Bon Portage Is., on May 9-12, in the same location where they have nested in recent years. One nest contained 3 small young and an unhatched egg on May 11 (EPS,SIT). There were also 4 adults on Cape Sable on May 26, and another on Seal Is., May 22-29. There were up to 8

GLOSSY IBISES at Hemeon Head, Shel. Co., on Apr. 19-May 11 (RJC et al.) and 2 on Brier Is., between May 5-19 (var. obs.).

--IAM, ed.

GEESE AND DUCKS

Two reports of SNOW GOOSE (blue race) came from John Lusby Marsh: one March 15, and one (same bird?) March 17 (CD). A late report of a "white race" individual, possibly wounded but able to fly is reported (June 8) at Villagedale, Shel. Co., where it is associating with a flock of domestics. (Peter MacGrath per IAM.). All but one of the BRANT records for this period were in April or May and all with one exception were from the North Shore or Brier Is., 7 from the former, 6 from the latter. The exception was five seen near the outer Tusket Islands, March 27--an exception both in locality and date! Richard Stern reports on Brant at Brier Is., as follows: Feb. 7, nil; April 5-8, 600; May 4-6, 200; May 19, 200. There is a splinter migration of this species along the Atlantic coast in spring at least, but this year the only sign of it was the five birds off the Tusket Islands. CANADA GEESE were present in huge numbers at their usual spots from late February through April. Figures are approximate: 4000, Feb. 23, Petpeswick--probably winterers (FLL); "thousands" Pinkney's Point, March 9 (PRD); 4000 Cole Harbour, March 17 (JS&JLC); 6000 along the Eastern Shore and 9850 in the Martinique-Lawrencetown region, March 31 (Cohrs and Purchases); 6000 Morien Bay, April 27 (OC). The Tufts described a thrilling sight of 3000 coming in to feed on the Grand Pré meadow, March 19, and saw the great flock dwindle to 450 by March 29. Bob Dickie reports a pair of apparent breeders at Elderbank, Hfx. Co., May 18. Pairs have been seen in that area at least since the mid-60's but so far no goslings have been observed. How about it, Bob?

The first WOOD DUCKS reported were single females at Crousetown, Apr. 9 and 14 (NS) and 5, at Tusket Falls, Apr. 12 (CJ). There was a single at Amherst, Apr. 13 (FLL, IAM et al.): two males and a female at Debert, Apr. 19 (BD), another such triangle at Seal, Apr. 29-May 1 (ELM et al.), and a pair at Brier, May 19 (EPS, SIT). A EURASIAN GREEN-WINGED TEAL, adult male of course, at Rocky Run, May 11, is claimed by FLL, PM, LT and MP. Nothing special to report about GREEN WINGED TEAL: 26 sightings of a total of 150 birds plus two reports of "many". Nearly all were from the Valley, the Conrad's Beach-Lawrencetown area, APBS neighborhood and Yarmouth-Shelburne. The only report from the North Shore was of 3, at Antigonish, May 12 (D&DC). How can we get more reports from that neck of the woods? As with Green-winged Teal, there is little to say about BLACK DUCKS, except that the numbers reported are for the most part few. There were 100+ at Salmon River, Guys. Co., Feb. 23 (W&NP) and the Cohrs saw "hundreds" all paired at Lawrencetown, Apr. 7. The Cape Breton NSBS Field Trip at Morien tallied about 300. Only one brood was reported: at Lawrencetown, May 13 (B&JT). The localities at which MALLARDS were seen during this period--APBS, Pugwash, Drain Lake, Elderbank, Mira, Brier and Seal--make it seem unlikely that any were semi-domestic birds. There were ten reports for a total of 41 individuals, largest number being 20, at APBS, April 14 (CD). The Amherst area was the place to see NORTHERN PINTAILS this spring. IAM et al. saw "hundreds" in the border region, Apr. 13: 250 at Lusby on the same date (CD); "abundant" at APBS, Apr. 21 (NSBS Field Party), and 150 from Pugwash to Amherst, Apr. 20. All told, there were 24 reported sightings, all others of 20 birds or less. Besides the above regions, they were seen in the Kentville-Wolfville area, Matthews Lake-Hemeon Head, Sullivan's Pond, Lawrencetown, Pubnico and Morien Bay--quite evenly distributed.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL did not show up in numbers at all comparable to those of what used to be considered their green-winged cousins;

number of reports were nearly the same (24) but the number of individuals was just 95. The first report of the season was that of a pair at Crousetown, Apr. 3 (FLL et al.). A curious, perhaps meaningless, feature is that most of the reporters spoke of the birds as being in pairs and even when they didn't, the numbers reported were mostly even; of the 24 sightings only 5 were of singles or of 3 birds. In the seventeen sightings (71 birds) of NORTHERN SHOVELER there is probably much repetition as, with one exception--2, at Hemeon Head, Apr. 19 (RJC)--all the others were seen in just three areas: Brier Is., Canard Pond and environs, and APBS. Dates were from April 11 to May 21. Often several separate parties saw similar numbers of birds in the same location at the same or closely-approximating dates. The real number of birds at any one of these favored spots is anyone's guess. A pair of GADWALLS showed up at Overton, Yar. Co., Apr. 4 (H&HH), to make the first record for this spring. There were 3, at Hemeon Head, May 11 (RJC) and a pair in Pond Cove (Brier Is.), May 19 (SIT, EPS). As for APBS, five groups of observers saw a total of 27 birds there between Apr. 8 and Apr. 21; largest number in any one day being 8, on Apr. 13 (IAM, FLL et al.), so there was at least that number of individuals.

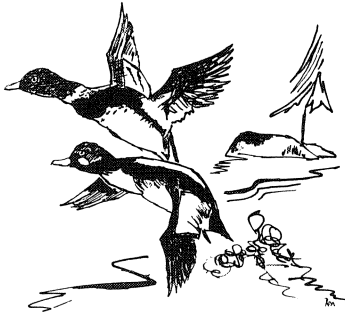
A EURASIAN WIGEON was seen at Lusby Marsh, Apr. 13-21, by a number of observers. AMERICAN WIGEON descended in their hundreds on the Amherst area about Apr. 13, when on that date, FLL reported 150, IAM noted "scores" in APBS, and CD saw 300 in Lusby Marsh. A week later the Cohrs estimated 200+ in the same general area, say that every puddle was populated, up to 60 in one. Elsewhere, they appeared in their usual ones and twos, generally distributed. RING-NECKED DUCKS showed up early at Rocky Lake, Hfx. Co., when three males were reported by L&PP. There were 25 there by Apr. 4. From then on they trickled in, in 3's and 4's, only large numbers reported being at APBS, where up to 100 were seen Apr. 13 (CD), and there were 40, at Debert, Apr. 19 (BD). First GREATER SCAUP report for this period is of 13, at Musquodoboit Harbour, March 2 (FLL et al.). There were fair-sized flocks--120 to 150-- in the lower Annapolis River, March 15 (JT et al.), Salt Bay, March 23 (CRKA, PRD) and Lingan Bay, Apr. 22, and as late as May 12 (CSM). Ian McLaren et al., picked up eighty sightings between Tidnish and Pictou, Apr. 13, and the Cohrs walked off with the honors with 1100+ at Bayport, Lun. Co., March 12. They give an interesting run-down on this spot which is apparently a spring assembly point for the species: numbers there have fluctuated wildly since 1977, when there were 1500; in '78 there were 3500; '79 produced only 300 but the numbers rose again to 1200 in 1980. In '81 and '84, none appeared and in the intervening years 500 and 160 respectively. It is of course possible that in 'low' years the big flocks sneaked in and out between visits by the observers, but these birds usually move slowly and remain in a feeding area for some time. Only LESSER SCAUP record is of one at APBS, Apr. 8 (SIT). COMMON EIDER reports were surprisingly few--just 6, of which one was in mid-March and the other 5 all in April; none at all were reported in May, although in our area (Yar. Co.) they are common along shore in small groups of 2-4 birds. The Matteaus estimated over 200 at Hartlen Pt., March 17, and the Cohrs saw about 450 in flocks of 60-80 during a walk around the point from Green Bay to Broad Cove, Lun. Co.. The only other number of consequence was 24, at Halls Harbour, Apr. 20 (the Tufts and Mary Pratt). Russell Crosby apparently encountered a major OLDSQUAW movement when he estimated over 500 in Jordan Bay, Apr. 28, where, on May 1, he counted just 2. Sharon Hawboldt saw over 50 near Digby on March 17, but all other reports are of 8 birds or less. Most of the Jordan Bay birds were in summer plumage.

Three reports only have come in on BLACK SCOTERS: 3, March 1, at Lr. W. Pubnico (RSd'E), 2, March 17, Hartlen Pt. (R&DM) and 20+, May 18, at Caribou Harbour (FLL et al.). SURF SCOTER reports are similar to those above--sightings of single birds at Hartlen Pt. and Cow Bay

May 11, and Victoria Beach, May 13 (FLL,SH) and 40+ at Tidnish, May 18 (FLL et al.); WH from Little Bass River reports eight males Apr. 27, 2 males, Apr. 28 and 3 males May 20. Equally sparse are reports of WHITE-WINGED SCOTERS: 2, at Cole Harbour, Apr. 21 (R&DM); 20, Three Fathom Harbour, May 19 (RBD), and 20+, May 16, at Laurie Park, far inland in Hfx. Co., where a flock circled overhead, possibly lost and far off track (FLL et al.). In mixed scoter flocks however, the three species do a little better: there was a large flock containing all three species numbering over 400 off Broad Cove, March 13 (Cohrs), and 30 Surfs, 6 White-winged and a pair of Black at Economy, May 18 (FLS). COMMON GOLDENEYES were all over the place in good numbers from March 9, through April, none in May. The largest numbers were at Lawrencetown, up to 250 Apr. 5-13 (Cohrs et al.); Port Royal "many", March 13 (SH), 500, Bayport, March 12, and 400 to 500 at Crescent Beach on March 13 (Cohrs). They were well distributed, every region reporting a few. The Cohrs suggest that the big Lawrence-town gathering on Apr. 7, is rather late for such a number. There are three reports of BARROW'S GOLDENEYE: one male, back in Feb. (16th), Head of St. Margaret's Bay (RSM); four males and three females in Pugwash Harbour, March 8 (BD) and five males and four females in Pictou Hbr., Apr. 13 (IAM et al.). The last sighting for BUFFLEHEADS was a pair at Parrsboro, May 17 (FLS). They were seen in small numbers from 2 or 3 up to 25 in their usual wintering spots at Lawrence-town, Three Fathom Hbr. and Melbourne Sanctuary, but their main winter headquarters was always Annapolis Basin, where large flocks were seen throughout the winter: a flock all wintered at Clementsport; "dozens", at Digby, March 17; and over 100 at Annapolis Royal, Apr. 30 (SH&Cohrs).

Though very thinly spread, the HOODED MERGANSERS covered all regions, eight sightings of 9 birds. The only pair was at Drain Lake, Hfx. Co. (RBD). One of Bernard Forsythe's nest boxes on the Forks River near Black River, Kings Co., was taken over by one of this species and on May 20, it contained an incomplete clutch of seven eggs. COMMON MERGANSERS began to appear on lakes as soon as the ice went out, although some were in the rivers even earlier. There were 24 reports from all areas, mostly of from one to a dozen birds, except for Eel Lake, where numbers ran from 34, March 12, to a peak of 120, March 23 (JD'E), and tapered off through April to 2, April 24. Similarly the RED-BREASTED MERGANSERS began to gather in their favoured spots in late winter, preferring salt water inlets and estuaries to the lakes, as with the Commons. In the Eel Brook run-out, there were over 30 Red-breasted March 13, and numbers rose to well over 70 by March 20, gradually tapering off to the last seen in late April (PRD, CRKA). There were 150 at River Philip, Apr. 21 (D&CM), 100+ at Lawrencetown, Apr. 8 (FLL et al.) and 1000 at Northport--no date given --(IAM et al.).

--CRKA, ed.





DIURNAL RAPTORES

TURKEY VULTURES seem to have returned to Digby Neck in better numbers. There was 1 on Brier Is., on May 6, and at least 3 there or on Long Is., on May 10-12 (var. obs.). More surprising were individuals near New Waterford, C.B., on Apr. 9 (CSM), at Shubenacadie on Apr. 15, (Steve Manuel), and on Bon Portage Is., on May 9 (EPS, SIT).

The earliest OSPREY was on Apr. 6 at Hebbville, Lun. Co. (NS), and next day there were individuals near Digby, Yarmouth, Pubnico, and W. Lawrencetown. One was on her nest near Dartmouth on Apr. 12 (JP). The first Cape Breton report was for Apr. 19, by which time they were widely reported from the mainland.

BALD EAGLES were unsystematically and probably incompletely reported. A belated winter report tells of 18 feeding on chicken-house discards at Port Williams on Jan. 25 (GW&JCT). Otherwise 14 ad. and 3 imm. were reported. Birds were on their nests at Malagawatch on Apr. 6 and at Ship Hbr., on Apr. 13. The Jacquards at Tusket were entertained on Mar. 1 by a bird that plunged into shallow water to catch a fish and had to flounder its way ashore to a nearby reef.

Good numbers of N. HARRIER were seen this spring. Two at Grand Pré on Mar. 11, had doubtless wintered, and males at Conrad's Beach on Mar. 17 and Matthews L., Shel. Co., on Mar. 24, may have done so. However, males near Canso and at Ostrea L., Hfx. Co., on Mar. 31, were closely followed by others. Altogether we have reports of 47 birds (17 m., 11 fe.-type) for the period.

There were only 4 winter SHARP-SHINNED HAWKS to augment the few noted in the last issue. Birds at Dartmouth on Mar. 30, and at Lr. Eel Brook on Mar. 31, seemed to be de novo. Otherwise, only 11 birds were noted this spring--a decided slump in numbers. Eight individual N. GOSHAWKS were noted between Feb. 16 and May 13, and BLF located 3 nests during Apr. and May in Kings Co.

A subadult RED-SHOULDERED HAWK near Tatamagouche on May 18 (FLL, DC, MP, BM), was well documented by FLL. The first BROAD-WINGED HAWK was reported at E. Jordan, Shel. Co., on Apr. 28 (RJC). (No details were submitted on 2, said to have been seen on the NSBS field trip at Glace Bay Sanctuary, Mar. 28). Subsequently there were reports of 12 in 8 localities, including a female carrying nest material at Fisher L., Anna. Co., on Apr. 21 (SH). It is hard to know if and when RED-TAILED HAWKS arrive. Residents get down to business quickly, as indicated by FLF's discovery of a nest with 2 eggs on Mar. 29, near Gaspereau. A bird at Louisburg on Apr. 9, may be our best candidate for a first spring arrival. There were still at least 7 ROUGH-LEGGED HAWKS at Grand Pré on Apr. 10, and 3 near Amherst on Apr. 14, but a bird at Gavelton, Yar. Co., on May 20 (TD'E), was late.

The first AM. KESTREL, after a winter's scarcity, was at Hartlen Pt. on Apr. 8, and was followed by birds at Antigonish on the 9th and Grand Pré on the 10th. Thereafter there were reports of 50+ birds from some 28 localities, many noted as pairs. Again, after a handful of winter records, MERLINS first appeared on Apr. 8, at Lawrencetown, Hfx. Co. About 13 birds were seen subsequently in 8 localities. Two agitated pairs (?) on Seal Is., Apr. 29 - May 1 did not, however, stay there through May. Do these birds mate en route? Individual PEREGRINE FALCONS were at Conrad's Beach, Hfx. Co., on Apr. 14 (JT), at Sydney Forks in late Apr. (R. Blackburn), and at Freeport, Digby Co., on Apr. 28 (C&DM). There may have been a third GYRFALCON at Grand Pré, as JC & GWT report a "dark brown" one there on Feb. 23. They last saw the routine dark-gray bird there on Mar. 9. A pale gray bird was seen at W. Pubnico on Apr. 20 by JD'E.

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

The Grand Pré flock of GRAY PARTRIDGES had dwindled to 13 by late winter (JT). One was at Economy on May 17 (FS). There were no reports of the "Valley" RING-NECKED PHEASANTS, which everyone takes for granted. There were 4 near Mira, C.B., on Apr. 27, and other individuals near Clementsport, Anna, Co., on Brier Is., near Yarmouth, and at Elderbank, Hfx. Co. As usual, the SPRUCE GROUSE was elusive: our only report was of 1 at Canada Hill, Shel. Co., on May 18 (RJC), but I understand that they are being researched by a student at Acadia; those who wish to see the species might investigate this. RUFFED GROUSE, by contrast, were well reported, some 26 birds from 14 localities; CRKA thinks we are heading for a "peak" year. A nest with 9 eggs was reported from Glenwood, Yar. Co. (JD'E, RD'E).

RALLIDS

The COMMON MOORHEN was in residence at APBS on Apr. 30 (SIT), but 1 at Three Fathom Hbr., on May 29 (D. Willis) was doubtless transient. Two AM. COOTS were at APBS on Apr. 8 (SIT) and there were 16 there by Apr. 19 (CD). The SORA was evident at APBS from Apr. 16 onward (CD).

--IAM, ed.

SHOREBIRDS

Despite bad weather during much of the period, this spring was a rewarding one for shorebird watchers. Two BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS overwintered at Cherry Hill (SJF); 6 at Matthew's Lake, March 24, had presumably done so as well (IAM). One at Brier, April 6 (ELM) and 2 at Louisbourg, April 8 (CM) might also be assigned to this category. May migrants in very small numbers were reported by half-a-dozen observers; the only larger concentrations were at Cape Sable, where there were 75+ May 19-20 (many observers) and 300, May 26 (ELM et al.), and at Economy, where 30 on May 15 had risen to 110 by May 26 (FS). An early SEMIPALMATED PLOVER was at Hartlen Pt., April 21 (IAM), but there are only two subsequent reports: two were at Lr. W. Pubnico, May 14 (Jd'E), and there was evidence of a breeding pair (breeding call-SIT, decoying injury display - EPS) at Sand Point, Tatamagouche, May 19-20, where there were still a significant two, May 23 (FLL). The PIPING PLOVER arrived on schedule, the first at Conrad's Beach, April 5 ("light snow, 2°C . It looked pretty lonely out there"-JP); there were 7 at Cherry Hill, April 6 (SJF), one at Brier (ELM). The maximum at Conrad's was perhaps a dozen on April 19 (FLL, JT) and while summer reports will give a better idea of the breeding population the count this spring, about 20, is not encouraging. The KILLDEER was first noted at Crescent Beach, Mar. 16 (SJF, BH), and one had reached the Canso area by the 29th (J&SJ); all told, seven were reported for March, about 30 for April. By May 10, a pair at Lr. W. Pubnico had a nest and one egg (Jd'E), a date one suspects is at the very early end of their breeding season in the province.

The GREATER YELLOWLEGS arrived in small numbers, April 19-21, the first four noted at Ketch Harbour (BD). Largest numbers were 14 at Cape Sable, May 1 (ELM), about 24 at Brier, May 11 (E&BR), and 15 at Economy, May 15 (FS): the dates are a fair indication of the migration's progress northeastward. Latest reported were 5 at Economy, May 18 (FS). Only three LESSER YELLOWLEGS were noted: singles were at Matthew's Lake, April 20, and May 11 (RC), another was at Seal, April 29 (ELM et al.). Four SOLITARY SANDPIPERS is the best spring showing for the species since 1976, when 8-9 appeared; in the intervening eight years there have been only two spring records. Two were at

Brier, May 11 (IAM,JDM), one at Canning, May 13 (EPS,SIT) and one at Seal, May 20-25 (BH,SJF). Surprisingly early for the area, 2 WILLETS were at the Glace Bay Sanctuary, April 17 (JY,EMcL). Still early, were arrivals at Lr. W. Pubnico, April 21 (DJd'E) and Argyle Head, April 23 (PRD,CRKA). By May 5, there were 20+ at Conrad's Beach (FLL), by May 8, a mated pair were at Economy (FS). There were few reports of the SPOTTED SANDPIPER: the first noted was at Russell Lake, May 1 (JT), then about a dozen reported for mid-May, the most, 3 at Eel Lake May 18 (J&Rd'E).

A WHIMBREL was at Sand Point, Tatamagouche in late May, seen by many from May 20-26. At the same place, at the same time, was a MARbled GODWIT. First found on May 17 (DMacD), it was subsequently seen by many members of the Society and was still present at the end of the reporting period, May 26. This is only the second spring sighting for the province, the other being from Sable Is. (1979). The only indication of overwintering RUDDY TURNSTONES comes from Matthew's Lake, where there were two, March 24 (IAM). As a spring migrant, it was less uncommon than usual: 2 at Economy, May 19 (FS), 6-7 at Tatamagouche, May 20-21 (DMacD,ELM,EPS et al.), 20 at Cape Sable (ELM et al.) and 5 at Cherry Hill (SJF), all on May 26.

The RED KNOT was also unusually numerous. Ten were on Cape Sable May 20 (FLL et al.), 20 there May 26 (FLM et al.), one at Tatamagouche May 20 (many observers), and 8 at Cherry Hill, May 26 (SJF). Two SANDERLINGS at Martinique Beach, March 31 (NSBS) and April 14 (RBD), had presumably overwintered, while 6 at Cape Sable, May 26 (ELM), were in company of other migrants. Two SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPERS were at Cherry Hill, May 13 (SJF), 3 at Economy, May 16-18 (FS), 8 on Seal, May 20-25, and 5 at Tatamagouche, May 23 (FLL). The LEAST SANDPIPER was scarcely more numerous: 5 were at Hartlen Pt., May 11 (FLL), 4 at Grand Desert next day (DM), and 7 at Lr. W. Pubnico, May 14 (Dd'E). There, 30-35 were at Economy most days from May 16-26 (FS), and a few were at Tatamagouche, May 20 (SIT,FS).

No fewer than four PECTORAL SANDPIPERS appeared this spring. Two at Cherry Hill on March 31 (SIT,BH) are the earliest ever; the others, more seasonal, were at Cape Sable, April 28, and on Seal, April 30 (ELM,IAM,WW). Forty PURPLE SANDPIPERS were still at Hartlen Pt., April 13 (IAM), 55 at Crescent Beach, April 13-14 (JSC), and a last 27 on Brier, May 11 (JDM). Accounts of overwintering DUNLIN have been increasing in recent years, with 2-3 until April 28 at Cherry Hill (SJF), 6 at Matthew's Lake, March 24 (IAM), of which 5 were still there April 20 (RC) and 4, May 20 (FLL)--one can't, of course, be certain the same birds remained throughout. At Cook's Beach, there were 5, March 31 (PRD,CRKA), and from the same place on April 8, comes a report of 24 (D&Rd'E), an unprecedented gathering for late winter-early spring. Pairs in breeding plumage were at Economy, May 15-16 (FS) and at Cape Sable, May 19 (ELM,IAM).

Single SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHERS were at Seal, May 2 (ELM et al.) and at Brier, May 11 (IAM,JDM); there were 4 at Cape Sable, May 26 (ELM et al.). COMMON SNIBE were well reported, though not until April 11, at Grand Pré (JCT,MP). There were a dozen on the North Shore (Wallace & Antigonish) by month's end (N&DC,LC,RGSB), one's and two's elsewhere. March arrivals of the AMERICAN WOODCOCK went unreported, but by April 7, one had reached a lawn in New Waterford, C.B. (CM).

PHALAROPES TO AUKS

There was a RED-NECKED PHALAROPE off Hartlen's Point on Apr. 8, (Don MacNeill), and single RED PHALAROPES on the crossing to Seal Is., on May 20, and off Seal on May 22 (SJF,BH).

Raymond S. d'Entremont had a good view of a light-phase POMARINE JAEGER on Georges Bank on Apr. 24: "it was particularly bold and hovered overhead long enough to let me get a good look". Ian and Jamie McLaren saw a light-phase PARASITIC JAEGER, close inshore off Brier Is., on May 11.

HERRING and GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULLS will receive their usual short shrift, though the 1000+ Great Blackbacks feeding on Lawrencetown Lake on Apr. 20, was an unusually large flock (J. Purchase). There was a LESSER BLACK-BACK, in full adult plumage, among Herring Gulls on a ploughed field at Centrelea, Anna. Co., on Apr. 7 (ELM), and another at the sewage outfall at Herring Cove on Apr. 13 (W. H. Wilson). ICELAND GULLS were seen in Yarmouth Harbour on Mar. 25 (E. Ruff), at Wolfville Sewage Pond on Apr. 21 (EPS: 1 adult, 1 sub-adults). GLAUCOUS CULLS had a comparable spread: single birds at Wolfville Sewage Pond on Apr. 21 (EPS), Clark's Hbr., on Apr. 28 (ELM, IAM,WHW), a couple in Canso Hbr., on May 5 (Nancy Peters, June Lewis), and a subadult near Canning on May 7 (RBS). RING-BILLED GULLS were the dominant gulls--at least 250 of them--along the Northumberland Shore from Tidnish to Wallace on Apr. 22 (Cohrs), and there were 500+--99% adults--at Lusby Marsh, Pictou Co., on Apr. 13 (FLL,IAM&Co.). There were others in small numbers on the Atlantic Coast as well, from 4 at Crescent Beach and Petite Riviere on Apr. 14 (Cohrs), to one at Martinique Beach on May 19 (RBD). The usual flock of "25+ birds", ranging to 55+ and gorging on sticklebacks, was at Eel Brook, Yar. Co., on Mar. 16, the last sighting there was of 6 immatures on May 17 (PRD,CRKA).

The most interesting small gull was the MEW/COMMON GULL which Ian McLaren, Roger Foxall and half the NSBS saw at Eastern Passage, Hfx Co., between May 5-17. Apart from that, Hubert Hall saw a LAUGHING GULL on Brier Is., on May 11. BONAPARTE'S GULLS were reported from Economy (a bird in breeding plumage on Apr. 6-FS), to Lr. W. Pubnico (Apr. 17-Ted C. d'Eon), to the Chezzetcook marsh area (3 birds in winter plumage, on May 5-R.S. McDonald), to the bird at Canning on May 20 (Lance A. Laviolette). BLACK-HEADED GULLS were the commoner species, as usual, and our records all come from the Atlantic Shore: they were common from February to May in Halifax Hbr. (R.S. McDonald), and there are reports of birds from Eel Brook, Yar. Co., (CRKA, Mar. 17), to Glace Bay (Sara MacLean, Mar. 30). The C.B. birds, along with some or all of those at Lawrencetown Lake (Cohrs and Purchases- March 31, Apr. 5), and Matthew's Lake, Shel. Co. (Russel J. Crosby- Apr. 20), were showing dark heads. Ian McLaren thought that there were 2 pairs of adults among the 6 Black-headed Gulls on the islets in Matthew's Lake and, as he suggests, it "bears watching!". Indeed it does; it won't be long before we can prove that the birds are native-born citizens of Nova Scotia!

The most interesting tern of the spring was the adult GULL-BILLED TERN, well seen from Cape Sable Is. causeway on May 20, by FLL, Bill Caudle, Jim Taylor, Bernice Moores and Margaret Churchill. The first COMMON/ARCTIC TERNS were seen at Lobster Bay, West Pubnico, Yar. Co., and Seal Is., on May 1 (Steven Swim, Ted C. d'Eon, ELM). There were flocks of both species, and ROSEATES as well, moving offshore past W. Pubnico on Mar. 6-10 (Ted C. d'Eon), and hundreds of Arctic prospecting the colony site on Peter Is., Brier Is., on May 11 (IAM). The first sighting of "Comics" in the Halifax area was of a couple of birds in Bedford Basin on May 9 (RGBB). There were two Roseates at

Wedge Is., St. Margaret's Bay, on May 25 (FLL). Meanwhile, on the other side of the province, BLACK TERNS had returned to North Amherst Marsh by May 18 (FLL, Dave Currie, Bob Macdonald, Mike Parminter.).

There were at least 50 THICK-BILLED and 3 COMMON MURRES off Chebucto Head on Mar 26 (FLL & Co.), and records of single Thick-bills off Rocky Run, Hfx. Co., on Mar. 10 (Cohrs and Purchases), Louisbourg on Apr. 4 (C. Dawe), and Cow Bay on Apr. 27 (Rene & Diane Matteau). On May 3, Captain Neil Barnes, of the research trawler "Lady Hammond", saw unusually large numbers of murrelets on Middle Bank, and a few as far west as Western Bank, east and north of Sable Island. He thinks it is unusual to see so many on the Scotian Shelf, so late in the spring. FLL and Bill Caudle saw an adult RAZORBILL, in breeding plumage, off Martinique Beach on Apr. 8; Clive Macdonald also reports a bird off Port Morien, Cape Breton, on Apr. 22. Our only ATLANTIC PUFFIN was the bird which Daniel d'Entremont saw on Georges Bank on May 6; and finally, our BLACK GUILLEMOT records come only from Cape Breton (birds at Louisbourg on Apr. 4 and 22: D. Dawe, Clive Macdonald) and Brier Is. (May 11- E&B Ruff). I suspect the gap reflects an absence of observers, rather than birds.

--RGBB, ed.

#### DOVES, CUCKOOS, OWLS

Evidently there are several "wild" ROCK DOVES in the Hazel Hill area (W&NP). Several at Musquodoboit Hbr. on May 26, were said by locals to be of recent occurrence there (RBD): an aspect of Eastern Shore developmental progress, no doubt. MOURNING DOVES were reported from most of the areas referred to in the last issue; 3 at Homeville, C.B. Co., on Mar. 2, are worth adding. On Mar. 26-28, individuals appeared in four new localities, suggesting that an intraprovincial scattering or arrival had occurred. A nest on top of last year's grackle nest in a white spruce in Wolfville, held 2 eggs in mid-Apr. and fledged young on May 8. On May 17, a new clutch had been started (BLF, PE).

No cuckoos had evidently arrived by our reporting deadline. Please be sure to report any latecomers for the Fall Flyer or next issue.

We have reports of 7 individuals (or pairs) of GREAT HORNED OWL. BLF managed to get 2 to accept his nesting platforms in Kings Co.; 1 had a young and another 2 young by mid-May. There were also 2 young on a nest at Brier Lake, Digby Co., on May 16 (C. Jacquard) and another nest was probably occupied at Overton, Yar. Co., on May 12 (J. Hall). Lightkeepers at Cape Sable reported that two SNOWY OWLS spent some time there during early May. Five scattered reports of individuals or pairs of BARRED OWLS are outclassed by BLF (with ME): 11 pairs took up his nest boxes this year. These nesting, along with others found by BLF in natural cavities, make it "by far our most common nesting raptor". A belated report of the uncommon LONG-EARED OWL in Yarmouth on Feb. 10 (see photo) is of interest. A nest of a SHORT-EARED OWL on Grand Pré dykes had fledged 6 young by mid-May (BLD).

Our first BOREAL OWL in some years was brought to light in an odd way. Bernice and Jim Taylor came across a portrait of the bird in a Hants County shop. On enquiry, they found that the artist, Dinamarca King, had based her work on a sketch-portrait of a bird in the wild near her home at the mouth of the Subenacadie River in mid-Feb. of this year! Apparently the bird sat obligingly for sketches, and the portrait was then completed by reference to museum material. Jim is now the proud owner of their find. When we get our Atlassing underway, we'll have a better picture distribution and abundance of SAW-WHET OWLS.

Stuart Tingley heard them calling at 5 or 6 random stops on the Lynn Mt. Road, between Five Islands, Col.Co., and Mapleton, Cumb. Co., on May 20. Near Wolfville, BLF found them between mid-Mar. and early Apr. at 4 localities, but they seemed to disappear thereafter. Harry Brennan exhibited a bird in one of his nest boxes at Hopewell, Pictou Co., to Society field trippers on May 19. Another box at Glengarry, Inv. Co., was being used for prey storage, but not nesting, in early May (JM).

#### GOATSUCKERS, SWIFT, HUMMINGBIRD, KINGFISHER

The first COMMON NIGHTHAWKS were at Sandy Bottom Lake, Anna. Co., on May 21 (MCN) and at other localities in the next few days. The first CHIMNEY SWIFTS were individuals at Lr. W. Pubnico (DJd'E) and Canard (EPS) on May 4, and next day there were 20-30 on the Acadia campus. There were subsequent reports of small numbers at 5 localities.

The first RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD was at Dartmouth on May 10 (FLL,PM) and there was a rush of 6 reports in the next 4 days. At least 12 others were reported before deadline--more than usual.

Two BELTED KINGFISHERS evidently made it through the worst of winter--1 at Annapolis Royal on Mar. 10 (SH) and another at Crescent Beach on Mar. 12 (JS&JLC). The first evident migrant was at Cranberry Head, Yar. Co., on Apr. 12, and between Apr. 19 and 21, there were 5 sightings. One reached New Waterford by Apr. 23.

#### WOODPECKERS

R.S. d'Entremont passes along a sighting of a RED-HEADED WOODPECKER aboard a fishing vessel on Georges Bank (surely in Canadian waters) on May 1. Another adult was discovered by Irene Cooke and the Fisher family near Bass River, Col. Co., on May 25, and shown to the Hemeons later in the day. The first YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER was seen by RJC On the almost record early date of Apr. 3, at E. Jordan, Shel.Co. The next was on Apr. 10, and there were 6 subsequent sightings. For March-April, a minimum of 30 DOWNY WOODPECKERS were reported from 16 localities, and at least 23 HAIKY WOODPECKERS from 13 localities. A male of the latter was excavating in Dartmouth on Apr. 25, and a pair was at a nest hole at Gavelton, Yar. Co., on May 18. Our only winter BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER was a belatedly reported female at Big Pond, C.B. Co., on Feb. 10. Between Apr. 30 (a fe. on Seal Is.) and May 19, there were 4 others in scattered places. N. FLICKERS evidently wintered near Wolfville and a bird calling near Clementsport on Mar. 17 had probably done so. Individuals at Tusket Falls on Mar. 30 and at Lr. W. Pubnico next day were probable migrants, but only 5 more were reported before mid-month and they reached Cape Breton only by Apr. 22. There were 75 on Seal Is., on May 1, but only 1 there on May 21. We received reports of 14 PILEATED WOODPECKERS from 11 localities.

--IAM, ed.



FLYCATCHERS TO HORNED LARKS

Four OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHERS made it back before our deadline date. These were one each at Reynardton and Stewiacke on May 16 & 18 and two on Seal on the 22nd. (JB&CJ,FLL,BH&SJJ). An early EASTERN WOOD PEWEE sang on Bon Portage Is., May 10, and another was heard at Stewiacke on the 18th. A wave of Pewees went through Seal on May 22 when 25 were around, calling everywhere. These had dwindled to 5 or so by the 25th, on their way to their mainland nesting areas no doubt. A similar wave of mixed Empidonax flycatchers passed through Seal at the same time (May 20-25), about 50-100 daily (SJF,BH). A single YELLOW-BELLIED was at the (now moribund) Dartmouth Piggery site on May 16 (FLL). Early ALDERS were two on Brier Is., May 11. There were five reports of LEASTS from May 2 to 17, all of one to four birds. On the 18th, a wave arrived at Oakfield Park, Halifax Co., where they were everywhere, "chebeking" loud and clear (JS&JLC). EASTERN PHOEBES did much better this spring than they have for the past two years. The average date for arrival is April 10. In 1983, the first one reported was April 24, and after that few others were seen. In 1984, only two were reported before the end of MAY. This year there were eight reports from April 19 to May 11, all of single birds except for 4 on Bon Portage Island, May 9-11. GREAT-CRESTED FLYCATCHERS were also "up" with three reports of six birds. One was in Waverly, May 20, three at Wentworth Valley Park, May 23, and two at Crichton Park, Dartmouth, May 31 (L&PP,JT,FLL). EASTERN KINGBIRDS were around on time and in good numbers. Early birds were two on April 29 and one, May 1, on Seal (ELM et al.). By the 9th, one was at E. Pubnico and a wave of 14 were on Brier, May 11. A large concentration was on Seal, May 20-25 (50-100 per day) where almost every boulder sported a Kingbird (SJF). HORNED LARKS continued to be seen in salt-marsh areas until the end of March. IAM reports that the 28 at Cole Harbour were of the northern sub-species alpestris, while the 11 at Matthew's Lake on March 24 and the 6 at Martinique on March 31, were of the prairie (praticola rare). (Ed. note: The wintering Horned Larks in Nova Scotia are of the alpestris race whereas those that nest here in the summer are the praticola sub-species). Interestingly, the 14 seen at Cherry Hill Beach, April 14 by JSC were alpestris in bright breeding plumage--just about to depart?

SWALLOWS TO CORVIDS

There were four reports of PURPLE MARTINS, all singles, May 1, at Amherst, May 11 at Truro, May 26-27 at Seal, another there on the 29th and one near Mahone Bay (no date) CD,P&BC,ELM et al.,FLL.

The TREE SWALLOWS arrived by way of the S.W. end of the province. The first two were at Tusket Falls, April 3. There were 5 at Beaver River on April 5, and over 100 there by the 11th (CJ,CRKA,PRD). They reached APBS overnight on April 20-21--on the 20th, one was seen and on the 21st, there were hundreds (JSC&CD). There were also hundreds along the highway from Digby to Yarmouth on May 2, and on May 5, 550 were hunting over Drain Lake, Halifax Co. (BR,JS,JLC). They were heavily reported (second only to Robins as harbingers of spring) and seemed to have settled happily into nesting boxes province wide.

A single ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW turned up at Seal, April 29, and on May 6, Barbara Ruff saw one at Overton. On May 7, the Overton bird was joined by two more and on the 8th, numbers were up to 5, seen by Barbara and Eric and by Stuart Tingley and Edgar Spalding.

Early BANK SWALLOWS appeared at Overton May 6--Barbara Ruff writes that there were "several"; she omitted to count them as she was fully

occupied noting the field marks of the Rough-winged at the time, as noted earlier. By May 11 & 12 they were noted at Three Fathom Harbour, Little Bass River, Stewiacke and Drain Lake. On May 25, JS&JLC found a colony of 40+ in a pile of sawdust on the old Annapolis Road, Halifax Co. The first CLIFF SWALLOWS arrived at APBS April 21, and Rhodes Corner, Lun. Co. April 27 (BD,C&DM,FLL). They reached Big Pond, C.B., by May 15 (JM) and on May 19, a group of 11 tended a pond near Stewiacke (Cohrs and Purchases). The sweepstake for the earliest BARN SWALLOW was won by Roger D'Entrement, who saw 4 at Glenwood, Yar. Co., on April 9. The next were seen on the 21st--one at APBS (NSBS trip) and 3 at Hartlen Point (IAM). Thereafter, they came at Argyle Head, Rhodes Corner, Economy, Canning and New Ross and by mid May were well established in most places.

#### CORVIDS

From March to May, there were reports of scattered GRAY JAYS, 12 in all. BLF noted a nest with 4 feathered young, April 25, at Sunken Lake and PRD & CRKA saw an immature bird at Surettes Island on May 21. As long as feeders are left up BLUEJAYS will come to dine and many correspondents report jays still around at the end of May. One definite migration was noted by IAM on Brier, when one was present May 10, and 30 the next day. AMERICAN CROWS and COMMON RAVENS appeared "as usual" and were observed carrying nesting materials in March and carrying food in April. Raven's nests with young were observed at M.S. Pubnico and Subenacadie.

#### CHICKADEES TO THRUSHES

Although few reports were received of the BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE (and all agreed that they had left the feeders for the woods) BOREAL CHICKADEES were heavily reported, which is somewhat unusual. The Matteaus (Eastern Passage) and the Purchases (Cole Harbour) both had boreals at their suet feeders all winter. In May they were "common" in the woods at New Ross and Hammond's Plains and abundant around Halifax city (KNK,RBD). However, in Yar. Co., PRD & CRKA found them scarcer than usual this season.

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES seem to be thriving, coming to feeders as well as being heard in the woods. J.C. Tufts reports a nest constructed on the Wolfville Ridge and hopes for a future family, while FLL reports a nest at "the Piggery" and two more at Settle Lake, Dartmouth (April 25). On May 5, a wave of red-breasts moved through Hants Co., where the Cohrs encountered 50+ in a one mile square area. Six WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCHES attended feeders. Two more were seen "in the wild", which is much more unusual nowadays. These were at Goff, May 5, and Oakfield Park May 15, both by Bob Dickie.

Twelve BROWN CREEPERS spiralled trees on the mainland. The Brier report is more interesting: April 30 - 12, May 1 - 40, May - 12 (ELM,IAM,WHW). Two HOUSE WRENS appeared. First was on Seal, May 1; another, on Cape Sable Is., was very reddish and, according to Ian McLaren, was clearly of the eastern subspecies aedon. He goes on to say, "perhaps some or most of our fall birds are aedon baldwini or parkmanii -- greyer birds from the mid west and west--it bears investigation."

Eight plus "several" (?) WINTER WRENS is about average for this season. First was at Sandy Bottom Lake, April 30. Two were on Brier, May 11, one at Argyle Head Road, May 16 (PRD), three in one mile of country road near Stewiacke, May 19 and one only on Seal, May 20-25. (MCW,IAM,PRD,JSC,SJF). The "several" were "noted singing daily on Bon Portage and Brier Is., in mid-May". (more specifics please, Ed.)



Our resident GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLETS were not widely reported, especially after March. The May reports, presumably from potential nesting areas, are from Eel Brook, Musquodoboit and Green Bay, in which latter place they were singing their quiet little song. (KNK, PRD, JSC). The migratory RUBY-CROWNED KINGLETS arrived in abundance. The Earliest was April 19, at Russell Lake, followed by one each at Hartlen Point and Eel Brook on April 21 (FLL, IAM, PRD). From then until the 28th, eleven people saw their first kinglets of the year in Halifax, Economy, Clementsport, Antigonish--all over the province. After the 28 sightings were of higher numbers until they seemed to call all over the woods by the end of the month. On Seal there was a big migration :vis. April 29, 30, April 30, 200, May 1, 100, May 2, 50. ELM, et al.

Three BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHERS were seen on Seal: May 1 (male), May 2 (female), May 29 (female) (ELM). The only gnatcatcher on the mainland was at Green Bay, May 9 (female, singing) (JSC).

#### THRUSHES

The single EASTERN BLUEBIRD was a male at L.W. Pubnico on May 24 (Jerome D'Eon).

Only four VERRYS made the deadline. These were: May 10, Brier, May 12, Wolfville Ridge, May 25, Sandy Bottom Lake and Seal Is. Sylvia Fullerton notes that between May 20-25, there was only the single Veery on Seal, no Hermit Thrushes and only two SWAINSONS. --very unusual for there. The only other Swainsons were a very early (April 21) bird at Halifax, well described by Tom Ellwood, and single birds on May 1 (Hammonds Plains) May 5 (Hants Co.), May 16 (Oakfield Park) and May 18 (Old Guysborough Rd) KNK, JSC, FLL, RBD.

HERMIT THRUSHES were very lightly reported with no migratory movements noted. Perhaps they were just late in arrival for, although single early individuals were seen, they do not seem to have become well established in their usual spots. Early birds were seen April 1 (Hazel Hill), April 16 (Tusket Falls) and April 19 (Wentworth Valley).

A WOODTHRUSH was singing at Cape Sable on May 11, and another in Laurie Park on May 16. Two were at Brier on May 11, and one was heard there on May 18 ( 2 birds or 3 in toto there?) (DM, W McCormick, IAM, EPS et al.).

A male VARIED THRUSH was photographed on Sable Island by Tony Lock on May 24.

The AMERICAN ROBIN migration began with the usual single early birds. These were March 10 at Bass River, Mar. 16, Harrietsfield, Mar. 17, Fairview and Sandy Bottom Lake, Mar. 19 at Tusket. Than a few more appeared in larger flocks--the first of these arrived in New Waterford on Mar. 20 and in Chebogue areas and Crousetown on Mar. 21. On Mar. 25, 100 were in the apple orchards in Gaspereau and by Mar. 30, there 30 at the Ashburn Golf Course, and on Mar. 31, 31 at Bass River. The first "big day" in Yar. Co., was Apr. 2, when they were "everywhere" and after that date had arrived in plentiful numbers in all areas. Early nesting success was achieved by May 20, when the Purchases noted a pair feeding young in their Colorado blue spruce. A nest containing four eggs was found at L.W. Pubnico in May--they hatched on the 13th. (Too many contributors to name--thank you all for sending the "robin report")

CATBIRD TO STARLING

GREY CATBIRDS were sparse again this year, true to the trend (see NSB, Vol. 26, No. 3, 1984, p. 18) with only four individuals before May 22--May 1, on Seal, May 5, West Pubnico, May 10, Brier and May 21, Economy. The picture brightened on May 22-24, when 100+ daily were passing through Seal. Even so, the picture is not promising. More input from members about the supply of catbirds in their areas this summer would be appreciated. From March 1, until May 25, 16 NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRDS were noted, mostly singles. This is down from last year's 31+. A BROWN THRASHER seen at Ketch Harbour on April 19, may have overwintered (BED). Spring Thrashers (4) were on Seal (always a reliable place for thrashers), May 1 (ELM). Brier produced two, May 10-14 and one was there on May 18 (var.). Jerome D'Eon heard on on May 20--it sat side by side with a catbird and both were singing the same song, but who was mimicing whom? Sylvia Fullerton saw 3 on Seal, May 20-23.

Our spring and fall transient WATER PIPITS appeared in May: one each at Seal and Eastern Passage on the 6th, 5 on Brier on the 10th, with three still there on the 19th. Raymond d'Entremont recorded a Pipit twenty-two times at the same place (end of St. Ann's Point) between Jan. 2 and April 21 and feels safe to say it overwintered. One seen March 31 at Pubnico Pt. by the Ruffs may have been in the same category.

Approximately 155 BOHEMIAN WAXWINGS were seen from Mar. 3 to April 6. These were in four good-sized flocks and a few odd birds here and there. The concentrations were 40+ March 3 at Tusket, 20+, Mar. 6 at Canso, 35, March 9 at Glace Bay, and 45, April 6 in Halifax city. (CRKA, J&SJ, S McL, IAM, JSC). Six CEDAR WAXWINGS were seen in April and May in Ross Rd. (4), Tusket Falls (1) and Middle Musquodoboit (1). The only flocks were 50 near Wolfville, Feb. 23, 22 at Gaspereau Valley, March 11, 13 at Mt. Denson, April 7, 12 at Starr's Pt., April 14, and 10 at Eastern Passage, May 21 (JCT, BCS, JT).

Three NORTHERN SHRIKES were seen (1984-85 was definitely NOT a 'shrike winter'!). On Mar. 2 one was at Greenfield, Kings Co., on the 27th at Economy and on April 15, near Bridgetown (JCT, FS, SH).

EUROPEAN STARLINGS come and go. For Jim Taylor in Dartmouth, they mostly went. He had fewer than in past years although at press time they were nest building aggressively. For the Bidwells at Wallace they came--Roger reports that they had two to three times as many as ever before--hundreds!

--JSC, Ed.

VIREOS AND WARBLERS

Five species of VIREO were reported this season, with a really rare one to start with: a WHITE-EYED VIREO, spotted by Edgar Spalding May 10, a fresh road-kill on the shoulder of the road, Route 101, about 10 km west of Shelburne--seen from a speeding car, according to the driver, Stu Tingley. Congratulations to you both! The SOLITARY was noted from May 1 at Seal Is. (ELM, IAM, WHW) through the month to May 22, 26 birds heard (some seen); others scattered up to Cape Breton (1, May 19, CSM) Three WARBLING VIREOS were well seen and studied: 2, May 11 at Brier Is., IAM and JDM; 1, May 21, at Eastern Passage 'feeding in willow trees for ten minutes', by James Taylor. A

PHILADELPHIA VIREO was seen at Brier Is., on May 18 by MEC, and on May 19, by JW. The RED-EYED VIREO had scarcely arrived for the Report period (is now common), apparently the earliest heard was 1, May 11, at Brier Is. (IAM), next not until May 20, at Black River, 1, by BLF.

We have a list of twenty-six WOOD WARBLERS for this spring, most of which arrived in May, with the usual early one, the YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER, in April; the first reported to us, 1 (male), April 7 at Tusket Falls, seen by Carol Jacquard. By April, 29-30, numbers began to rise, with an influx of 50, April 29; 75, Apr. 30, at Seal Is., where, on May 10, there were 30 Yellowrumps, 150 there May 11, and "very many" had reached Cape Breton by May 20. On this date sixteen species of warbler were counted on Seal Is., 50 Yellowrumps still among them (SJF,BH). However, the first (check-list) warbler seen this spring was a rare one, the GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER, a female, seen May 12 at Laurie Park, Hfx. Co., by John and Shirley Cohrs (and subsequently by other birders summoned by the Rare Bird Alert). Another of the species, a male, was seen by EPS at Brier Is., May 17. The TENNESSEE WARBLER has been noted three times: May 16 at Halifax (JM): May 18, at Brier Is. (MEC,JW); and 3, a "wave", on Seal Is., May 20, 21, 22 (SJF,BH). Another rarity, the ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER was seen Apr. 27 and 28 at Wolfville (well described by EPS), with a flock of Red-breasted Nuthatches and chickadees. An unusual number of NASHVILLE WARBLERS is 50±, seen between May 1 (Seal Is. and near Halifax) and May 20 (generally distributed). Almost as many (40±) NORTHERN PARULA WARBLERS were seen May 1 (FLL at Russell Lake) to May 25, with most observations May 11-12. The YELLOW WARBLER was first recorded May 10 this year, at Brier Is.: 1, seen by IAM, five reports by May 11, followed by scattered observations until FLL counted 100+ at Cape Sable Is., May 20. BLF found a nest May 21, "almost completed", at Wolfville Ridge, and on this date the "first of the year" was noted at Big Pond, C.B., by Jack MacNeil. The CHEST-NUT-SIDED WARBLER came slightly late, seen first this spring: 3, May 11, at Rocky Lake by James Taylor et al., to "numerous, May 25", in the Musquodoboit Valley (RBD), eight reports in all. The MAGNOLIA WARBLER (5, May 10 and 15, May 11 at Brier Is.) soon became numerous and well distributed, with several heard on the Mooseland Road, Hfx. Co., by May 18 (K&WT). The CAPE MAY is noted only twice so far: May 11, 5, at Brier Is., and May 20, 1, a male, on Seal Is., by ELM, IAM,WHW; thereafter, not until May 11; 8 only, in the subsequent reporting period, the last 2, May 20, at Kemp, Yar. Co. (JD'E).

The YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER usually winters here and a considerable number survived this year. For the first new arrival time and further details see the first of this account (of the warblers). The BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER was heard on the May 1 expedition to Seal Is., with 1, noted May 2 at Wolfville Ridge by BLF who wrote: "my earliest date ever for this warbler"; most reports are for May 10-13, about 45 birds heard singing, distributed around SW Nova Scotia and the Valley. The earliest BLACKBURNIAN (seen fly-catching) was a male, May 6, at Sandy Bottom Lake by MCN, who wrote: "Caught this fine male in my sights while tracking down the Black-throated Green. My first sighting for 11 years. He was busy giving a fine aerial display while fly-catching. His coloring compared with the common warbler is like the yolk of a "free-range" hen's egg compared with a "store-boughten" one!" Six only other sightings were of one bird each and only seen, so far, in southwest Nova and the Valley. A PINE WARBLER, possibly an over-wintering bird, was seen March 9, at Woodlawn Road, Dartmouth "only that one day" (also only that one bird), by James Taylor. The PALM WARBLER, our other early arrival (with the Yellow-rumped) was first seen this year, Apr. 17, at M.W. Park by Ted D'Eon; also that same day at Lr. W. Pubnico, by R.S. d'E. The next sighting was at the other end of the province: 1, Apr. 18, at Economy (FLS); after that, from Apr. 21-30, over 50 of these birds

were noted (35 of them at Seal Is.) and 5 the same day, Apr. 30, at Antigonish Landing (N&D); on May 15, more of these birds were reported, well distributed from Yarmouth Co. to Glace Bay, in which last place, one was seen May 18 (J. Gates). Six only reports of the BAY-BREASTED WARBLER probably represents only a small fraction of our population of this elusive bird with the whispering little whistle, but the dates run in the expected time slot, from 5, May 11, at Brier Is. (IAM) to "one male singing" May 26, near Hardwoodlands (JSC). Similarly our two reports of the BLACKPOLL are probably not representative of total numbers present this season--but are typical of distribution, since you either see (or hear) one Blackpoll or find a lot of them together--the two reports reading: "1, adult male at Laurie Park (FLL)", and "20, May '85, the commonest warbler seen on the mid-afternoon walk around the Frog Pond Trail (RSM)". The BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER is here in good numbers, first seen May 1, 3, at Seal Is., and last noted (for the season) May 22, plural but number not given, at Glengarry, Cape Breton, by Jack MacNeil. There were twenty reports altogether, of 40-50 birds, distribution general. Nine reports of the AMERICAN REDSTART are dated May 9 to May 21, and add up to 11 (only) birds, but by now, the first week in June, they have become numerous throughout as usual. An interesting visitor this spring was a WORM-EATING WARBLER described as follows by Edgar Spalding: "May 17, one seen at North Point, Brier Is. Details: a small flock of warblers were working their way through alders and spruces towards me. By remaining motionless I did not disturb them and they passed more or less over me. In the flock was a Canada, Cape Mays, Blackpoll, and finally, the Worm-eating, which came to within 5 m of me and slightly above eye-level. The orangy-buff throat, breast and head was well seen. The dark stripes on the head (one through the eye, one above the eye on each side) left a median stripe of orangy-buff. A very distinctive head pattern. The upper parts were uniform brownish-olive without wingbars. This bird was seen only by myself".

Reports of the OVENBIRD run from May 5 (1, bird singing, W. Pubnico, DJd'E) to May 23 (1, at Seal Is., SJF,BH) and come from Wallace River, Cumb. Co., to Yar. Co.; by now, heard 'everywhere' in usual good numbers. Four reports only, of one bird each have come for the NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH: May 2, in Shel. Co. (RJC); May 10, in Kings Co (BLF); May 19 in Halifax Co. (K&WT) and May 23, Seal Is. (SJF,BH). Two reports of the MOURNING WARBLER (the only ones received) were of one male May 19 at Pubnico Pt. (IAM); and two of these birds, May 26 near Hardwoodlands (JSC). The COMMON YELLOWTHROAT received only seven reports but it is rather a late comer and by now our most-often-heard warbler. The earliest date seen was May 11, on Brier Is. (IAM), and latest reported (as a first sighting) was a singing male, May 19, at Elevenmile Lake, Anna. Co. (CSH). The WILSON'S WARBLER received three reports of sightings: "arrived May 11 (on time), at Wallace Bay, Cumb. Co." (RGSB,SMRB); "1 male, May 21 at APBS" Don and Carol MacNeill), and "1, May 20, at Gaspereau" (Lance A. Laviolette). Four reports (all we received) of the CANADA WARBLER were 1, May 11, at Brier Is. (IAM,JDM); 1, (singing male) May 12 at Elevenmile Lake, Anna. Co (SH); 1, May 17, at North Point, Brier Is., and 1, May 20, at Gaspereau (LAL).

#### TANAGERS TO INDIGO BUNTING

One SUMMER TANAGER only, was seen here this spring, a female in bright plumage (rusty tail and crown) on May 24, at Seal Is. (SJF,BH). SCARLET TANAGERS were noted May 11-28, a possible 2, seen May 11, at Brier Is., in "almost full breeding plumage" (H&HH,S.Prosser), two males at North Point, Brier Is., May 17 (SIT); a bright male, said to have been present 3 days at Westport, May 19, at Brier Is. (maybe

one of the above) (RBS); a male, seen May 14, at Lr. W. Pubnico by Jerome D'Eon and Kenneth Peters, stayed there some days, seen and heard by many others; one male in breeding plumage, seen May 16, at Elderbank (RBD); a male seen May 22, at Glen Tosh, C.B. (Dan Banks); another male May 22, at Seal Is., (SJF,BH), it or another of the same seen at Seal, May 27, by ELM, IAM, EPS, and a male called a different bird by the same observers the next day, May 28; lastly a "brilliant male singing in a swampy hardwood area", May 23-24, at Shady Bottom Lake (MCN) who noted "singing non-stop since 6:30 a.m.; after an hour of it the song gets a wee bit boring".

One only, note on the NORTHERN CARDINAL is as follows: "In case John Loring, a new member, doesn't report, the over-wintering male Cardinal was still there Apr. 9, at Bass River" (FLS).

The ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK has been extensively reported this year, May 8 to 22; in order of appearance, 2, from Hazel Hill, May 8 (N&WP); 6, from Lr. W. Pubnico (JD'E, RSD'E); 20 at Brier Is. (IAM); "sudden influx", at Kentville area (RBS); 3, from Tusket Falls (P Hayes); 1, Pubnico (DJd'E); 1, at Bass River (W&PH); 1, Clementsport (SH); 2, at Cook's Brook, Hfx. Co. (JUJ); 5, at Yarmouth--Ruffs' feeder (E&BR); 1, Eastern Passage (R&DM); 1, adult female at Russell Lake (FLL); , Kings Co. (L&JM); 25+ daily, all over, and singing, May 20-23 at Seal Is. (SJF,BH) and 2, a pair, May 22, at Waverley (L&PP); altogether an arrival of 80+ of these beautiful birds in a two-week period. One BLUE GROSBEAK, a "first spring male" was found May 21 at Seal Is., by SJF and BH. The first INDIGO BUNTING noted this season was at West Pubnico, May 1, observed by Reginald D'Eon. J. D'Eon wrote "one male, May 1; last year we had reported about 25 Indigo Buntings between Apr. 15 and 24, but this year there is only one bunting to report and it is here at the feeder". Another Indigo Bunting was seen on Bon Portage Island, May 12 (SIT, EPS); 1, a female was at Seal Is., May 23 ("only one seen this spring", wrote SJF&BH); and a pair, male and female were seen there May 29 by ISM, ELM, EPS; the only other, killed apparently by flying into a window, was seen May 24, at Little Harbour, Shel. Co., reported by RJC.

#### TOWHEE TO SNOW BUNTING

The first RUFOS-SIDED TOWHEE recorded for this year was 1, a female, Apr. 30, on Seal Is., 2 males there, May 1, one left by May 2 (ELM, IAM, WHW); May 4, 1, a female, was noted at Lr. W. Pubnico by JD'E and RSD'E; up to three were seen daily at Bon Portage Island, May 9-11, by EPS and SIT; 4, on May 10, 1, May 11, was seen at Brier Is. (IAM); one there May 17 (still there?), noted by Edgar Spalding and Stu Tingley. We have a note from Ian McLaren as follows: "Dr. Bill McCormick reports (in lit, to IAM) 5 males of these on Cape Sable on May 11. One male was one of the "spotted" western races. Description leaves no doubt to IAM. Not first in the east, but probably a first for Nova Scotia".

The AMERICAN TREE SPARROW was noted all winter: at Crousetown (NS), Wolfville Ridge (GW& Judy Tufts), Canso (J&SJarvis), Feb. to April, at Lr. W. Pubnico (at the feeder) by DJd'E, Eel Brook and Tusket (CRKA&PRD), 25 March 8, at Tatamagouche, by Brian Dalzell; March 24 and Apr. 12 in Cape Breton (J. Gates), with other late sightings: 2, Apr. 19, at Russell Lake (FLL); 1, Apr. 20, at Wolfville (EPS); 1, Apr. 25, at New Ross (Joyce Purchase, who wrote "2 here all winter"); last one seen Apr. 26, Wolfville Ridge (BLF), and one very late one, May 9, at Lr. W. Pubnico at the Jerome D'Eon feeder. The first CHIPPING SPARROW reported was 1, March 31, at Tusket Falls (R.Hayes) followed by 4 reports in April (from Halifax, Seal Is., and Bass River, followed by 12 reports in May, Yarmouth to Cape Breton, of about 30 of these birds, with a noted influx, May 1, 50 at Seal Is., there the next day. (ELM et al.). The FIELD SPARROW

visited us this spring, first seen Apr. 30, 1, at Seal Is., with 12 there May 1, down to 6, May 2. (IAM, ELM,WHW). There were 2 daily at Bon Portage Is., May 9-12 (EPS,SIT):1, at Brier Is., May 18, (same reporters); on May 16, CRKA and PRD were mystified and startled to hear one of these sparrows singing whole-heartedly, on the back road from Eel Brook to Argyle Head; the first time either had heard this species of sparrow sing its characteristic song in Nova Scotia. The bird was subsequently seen as well as heard--indubitably a Field Sparrow...There were two daily on Bon Portage Is., reported for May 18 (SIT) and on Seal Is., Barbara Hinds and Sylvia Fullerton found one of these birds present May 20-22. A more unusual bird, the LARK BUNTING, a male in breeding plumage, was seen May 17, "along the road to the Northern Light, Brier Is. Seen at a distance of about 20 to 30 m initially, it flew further down the road and lit on the edge. In flight, the huge white wing patches were easily seen and the body was entirely black. The wing patches were very evident when the bird was sitting. The flight was undulatory. Stuart Tingley relocated the bird and was able to study the plumage in detail. He noticed brownish feathers on the flank and mantle (just a few), indicating that the bird had not quite finished molting from winter into breeding plumage." (Edgar Spalding and Stuart Tingley).

An early (possibly wintering?) SAVANNAH SPARROW was heard singing March 26, at Crousetown (NS), noted eating at the feeder there Apr. 2. Another early sighting was of one, Apr. 8, at Seaforth (FLL, Bill Caudle) and by Apr. 13, FLL saw one at Amherst Marsh, and J.C. Tufts saw "a possible 8-10 near Grand Pré Meadows". Others soon appeared in April in these vicinities and also at Amherst, Hartlen Pt., Laurie Park, Annapolis Royal and Antigonish Landing. On Seal Is., May 1, 150 of these birds were counted (WHW), and by May 11-18, Savannahs were as RBD put it, "making out" at Elderbank and also at New Ross, noted there by KNK, and had indeed come ashore. The SAVANNAH (IPSWICH) was seen but not as frequently as the nominate race; 24 individuals were reported March 3, at Martinique Beach, plus one migratory flock of 10+ (IAM). Except for Brier Is., the Ipswich Sparrows were seen only along the Atlantic shore, Pubnico to Guysborough. Three GRASSHOPPER SPARROWS were reported for May: 2, May 1, at Seal Is. (ELM,IAM,WHW) and 1, May 16 & 17, at New Waterford (CSM). A SHARP-TAILED SPARROW, seen May 26, by ELM,IAM & EPS is described as follows: "probably of James Bay race, A.c.altera--sharp back streakings on brown back, face very bright, breast ochre with extensive fuzzy streakings; much like an intermediate between the prairie A.c.nelsoni and maritime A.c.subvirgata as described by Godfrey (Birds of Canada)," photographed by McLaren.

Up to 150 FOX SPARROWS were counted this season, from early March until nearly the end of April, plus the peak numbers at Hazel Hill (which also came in April), "the high count of 55+ diminishing slowly to zero after April 28" (W&NP), and from the large numbers of Fox Sparrows counted among Robins and Song Sparrows in the countryside around Halifax on April 5 (IAM,RF). From March 6 to April 26, we have 60-65 SONG SPARROWS reported, undoubtedly some of them overwintering birds, with a noticeable build-up towards the end of March (29,30,31), when they could be heard singing along the roadsides "everywhere". A probable newcomer flock showed up in Cape Breton at this time, birds very abundant by mid-May according to Sara MacLean at Glace Bay. The LINCOLN'S SPARROW was seen and heard this season as follows: up to 5, May 9-13, Bon Portage Is. (EPS,SIT); 2, going to roost with the legions of Whitethroats evening of May 10, Brier Is. (IAM,JDM); 1, singing on Brier Is., May 18 (SIT,EPS), also 2, Folly Lake, May 18 (FLL,Dave Currie et al.); 1, May 19, at Hopewell (Don MacNeill et al.); 1, singing, May 19, near Stewiacke (JSC&JP); 2, May 20-21 at Seal Is. (BH,SJF): 1, May 26, singing near Hardwoodlands (JSC). Earliest date for the SWAMP SPARROW this season was April 14,

1, seen at Lr. W. Pubnico (DJD'E) and 2, seen at East Quinan, Yar. Co (Rsd'E); on Apr. 19, 1 each was noted at Crescent Beach (BGD) and at Morris Lake (FLL); thereafter, an "arrival" was noted at Seal Is., of 20 of these birds, seen there May 1 and 2 (ELM); distribution on the mainland after this, general (as usual) and rather scanty.

The WHITE-THROATED SPARROW was our most numerous small bird (next to the Junco) seen all winter, throughout most of the province. It was faithful at feeders in SW Nova Scotia and long the roadsides (scraped bare with snow removal). Early in March, these birds began to leave feeders but continued to be encountered regularly in the wild up to the present time. Thirty reports of the White-throat (our provincial bird!) indicate an increase in numbers around the end of April--first of May, when migrants evidently arrived (which was noted at Brier Is.: 150 birds May 10, 50 there May 11, and especially Seal Is., where there were 10 White-throats, Apr. 29, 100 Apr. 30, 1000, May 1 and 250, May 2). An unusually large "splinter migration" of the WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW, passed through Nova Scotia, May 1-25, according to our reports. The first one noted, a striking male, was at Clementsport, May 1 and 2 (SH), followed by five reports of 2 dozen birds (altogether) from the SW regions: Seal Is., Brier Is., Tusket Falls, Lr. Eel Brook, Wr. W. Pubnico and Bon Portage Is., on which last named, one of the White-crowns seen was "clearly the western subspecies, Z.l gambelii" (EPS,SIT); another of this race well studied by James McLaren, May 10-11, on Brier Is. Thereafter, about 20 White-crowns were seen, well distributed over the province, including 2, in Cape Breton (SM,G. Crowell).

The DARK-EYED JUNCO remained through the winter with us, in good numbers--one of the few birds to be encountered in the wild and not only at feeding stations. Numbers however, built up at such stations in March and many of us were feeding within the range of 40-50 Juncos --some higher than that 60-100 for awhile. In April, these birds dispersed (but for a few nesters) and spread about the countryside: 290± a few on April 4, between Annapolis and Sandy Bottom Lake, counted by MCN and the same day 1000-2000 Juncos "in groups of two to fifty scattered along the shoulder of the road from Windsor to Chester and Kentville" (Barry Sabean); on Apr. 3, 400-500 on the sides (bare shoulder) of the roads between Petite Riviere and Crousetown (3 miles); still "numerous", May 18, along the Mooseland Road, Hfx. Co. (NS and SCM). Doubtless some of the May birds were migrants, and although the Juncos sound as if they must be standing shoulder to shoulder, they are seldom seen, out in the open, now in June. The "Oregon Junco" reported in the last issue of N.S. BIRDS, remained at Bass River, March 5 to April 14, but has not been seen since (W&PH).

Three early LAPLAND LONGSPURS were identified at Cole Harbour, March 17 by IAM. Flocks of the SNOW BUNTING were noted in March: 30± on the 6th, at Lr. W. Pubnico; 55, March 7, at Grand Pré Meadows, 350, March 8, near Tatamagouche, 30±, March 9, at Hartlen Pt., 78-80, during March at Homeville, and "still around" April 27, at Glengarry, C.B.; (TOD'E JC and GW Tufts, BED, R&DM, RBA and Jack MacNeil). Other reports were of 1-2 birds of this species seen, generally scattered over the province, in April, the latest seen being a pair, male and female, Apr. 19, at Crescent Beach (BED) and "still around", April 27, at Glengarry, (JM).

#### BOBOLINK TO ORIOLES

The BOBOLINK appeared in Nova Scotia on May 11, simultaneously at Bon Portage and Brier Is.; in Annapolis Co., Economy and Big Pond, C.B.--3 to 8 birds per sighting, seen daily in most places after "first sightings" on May 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, with 5 reports on the 18th, up to May 22, covering the province. There were a dozen reports

of the RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD, the 2 earliest being on March 4, one (a male) seen at Dartmouth (Joyce Purchase), and a male, also at Windsor (Nellie Snyder). By March 12, there were 6, at Lr. W. Pubnico (JD'E) and the first arrivals were noted thereafter on March 15, 5 males at Bass River; March 17, 20 birds at Economy, and the same day 7, at Gaspereau (Hemeons, FLS, D&C MacNeill). With a noticeable increase on March 24-25; thereafter, these birds became generally distributed but in small numbers (2-7) throughout. Three only, EASTERN MEADOWLARKS have been reported this season: 2, May 1, on Seal Is., and 1, May 25, at Annapolis, reported by IAM, ELM et al. The YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD is twice reported: an immature male at Port Williams, March 15 (RBS) and "1, Apr. 5, at Kentville" (Fred J. Payne). The first sightings of the RUSTY BLACKBIRD were all in April, starting with Apr. 3, at Crousetown (in the neighborhood of N. Snyder); 12 seen Apr. 5 at Wentworth (BED), 1, March 29, and 8, Apr. 6 (5 males and 3 females) at Economy (FLS); 2, Apr. 7, Mineville Road, Hfx. Co., "the usual place at the usual time", said by finders, JL & JSC; Apr. 13, "5, on territory" at Debert (FLL, IAM et al.) and half-a-dozen more reports up to Apr. 27, when Keith Keddy found two, a "breeding pair back on territory", at Land of Laziness Lake (Hammonds Plains). The COMMON GRACKLE winters here in small numbers, creating the same difficulty in judging arrival time of migrants; the first report of numbers of this species is the March 17 appearance at Economy of about 30 (FLS), plus the arrival of 12, on the same date at Bass River (Hemeons), 35, there by March 20. The next large increase noted was 30, March 31, at Dartmouth (JP), followed by twenty reports from all over, of good numbers of these birds; for example, "about 150, Apr. 5, at Wentworth" (BED); "Twice more than usual, flocking like starlings, 100 at least in garden and orchard", at Wallace (RGSB, SMRB); and concluding with: "incubating eggs, a colony of perhaps 15 nests, May 21, at Big Pond" (JM). The BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD began to appear at feeders March 17 (first report from Amherst, C.D.), and first seen at the other end of the province, at Tuskett Falls feeders, March 18 (CJ&PH). At Lr. Eel Brook, a female and two males appeared on March 28, the first warm day--"always have a few at this time, the males courting the females--and sometimes vice versa! Up to 6 were present May 10, with one pair only left on the 12th, gone by the end of the month" (PRD). On April 1, DJd'E had 23 Cowbirds at his feeder at Lr. West Pubnico; and the report from Rivendell, Wallace, about this time notes, "many more than we have seen before, 10 to 15 in the garden". On Apr. 22, at Cranberry Head, near Yarmouth, Eric and Barbara Ruff heard a male Cowbird "singing". Most reports were for April; apparently the mating season of this Cowbird conveniently coincides with the arrival of the nest-builders.

One only, report of the ORCHARD ORIOLE has been received, of one female, seen May 12, on Brier Is., by James McLaren. The NORTHERN ORIOLE got off in a hurry perhaps this spring, as two "molting males" were reported, seen at Seal Is., May 2, by the party there. These, or others soon appeared on the mainland, in brilliant plumage, 1, May 8, at Tuskett Falls (PH) and 2, May 8, at Lr. W. Pubnico (these were one male in breeding plumage and one male, first year, DJd'E)--on May 9, Jerome and Raymond D'Eon of Lr. W. Pubnico noted the same two N. Orioles, plus one Rufous-sided Towhee, two White-crowned Sparrows, six Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and one Scarlet Tanager, all at the same feeder, just outside of Lr. W. Pubnico, a newly-established feeder; these birds or some of them were later seen by many others, including PRD. Other May reports of the Northern Oriole continue throughout the month: May 11, 1, at Kentville (RBS) and 1, at Economy, killed by a cat (FLS); May 10 & 11, 2-3 were seen on Bon Portage Is.; on the 10th, 3, at Brier, up to 6 there daily May 17-19 (numerous observers). Three N. Orioles were reported by Peter MacLeod, who saw them at Wilmot, May 15; and on May 16, a female was seen at Big Pond (JM); May 21, a "singing male" at Clementsport (SH); May 25, an adult male at Dartmouth,



(FLL, JWT) and May 31, another sighting in Dartmouth reported by FLL. James Taylor wrote that a pair nested in the area last year, were probably back for another try.

P.S. An extraordinary report of a Northern Oriole "seen feeding on berries of a yew bush, Summit St., Dartmouth on Dec. 28, 1984, comes from G.W. Tufts, G.M. Tufts, J.C. Tufts of above address.

#### GROSBEAKS AND FINCHES TO HOUSE SPARROW

The PINE GROSBEAK was observed "in pairs", March 23, in Cape Breton (SM); Apr. 5, at Tusket Falls (PH&CJ); Apr. 14 at Mira (CSM); Apr. 27, at Little Bass River (W&PH); Apr. 28, at Cole Harbour Dyke (JT), and a small flock of males at Mooseland Road, Hfx. Co., May 18 (SCM). The PURPLE FINCH, a wintering bird (at least the latter part of winter) was scarcely heard or seen until early March, when it began to visit feeders: earliest dates noted were March 16, at Lr. Eel Brook; March 9, at Dartmouth; March 10, at Wolfville Ridge; "first seen", March 12, at Yarmouth; March 16, at Waverley ("now about 30"); March 16, also at Bass River (high of 25, 14 males and 11 females by Apr. 24); 7, March 18, Clementsport; 1 m. and 1 fe., March 27, at Sandy Bottom Lake; 10, March 28, Lr. W. Pubnico; 12, March 29, Hazel Hill; 1, "late March", Homeville (where there were "large numbers at the feeder in May"); 1-6 daily after Apr. 2, at Eastern Passage; 9, from Apr. 6 to May 20, Dartmouth; "many" by May 18, Mooseland Road; was well distributed in March and settled at feeders in moderate numbers throughout April, still present at most, now, in June.

The RED CROSSBILL was seen at least nine times this season. One winter sighting included a pair, Feb. 25, feeding on cones at Eastern Passage (R&DM); the remaining eight sightings were as follows: 1 male, March 22, Clementsport (SH); 11, May 1, Tusket Falls (C. Jacquard); 4, May 7, East Jordan (RJC); 2, May 9, Green Bay (JSC); 1, May 11, at Rocky Lake (FLL et al.); 18, May 13, at Digby (EPS,SIT); 9, Apr. 14, Quinan (RSd'E, who wrote, "I had seen Red Crossbills only once prior to this and they were in the same spot"); 12, May 15, Wilmot (PM per JT); and 10, May 31, Dartmouth (FLL). In almost every case the birds were observed eating at pine cones. Twelve reports of the WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL represented many more individuals than in the above category; most sightings were in March: 200+, Musquodoboit Harbour-Chezsetcook, March 2 (FLL, Peter McLeod et al.); 10, March 9, New Ross (KNK); 12, March 10, at Wolfville Ridge (JCT); 1000+, March 13, LaHave Is.-Green Bay area (JS&JLC); 25, March 24, West Pubnico (DJd'E); 30, Apr. 6, Brier Is. (ELM); 100+, Apr. 8, Martinique Beach-West Lawrencetown area (FLL,Bill Caudle); 12, Apr. 8, Lr. W. Pubnico (RSd'E); 4, Apr. 25, Glenwood, Yar. Co. (CRKA); 6, May 20-25, Seal Is. (SJF,BH) and 30+ there May 26-29 (EPS). Only one sighting of the COMMON RED-POLL, which really belongs to the winter report was of 2, seen Feb. 27-March 7, at Hazel Hill (N&WP). The PINE SISKIN was scarce this year, the few seen being mostly at feeders: "one only all winter", stayed till March 4, at 300 Ross Road, Dartmouth (JP); 4, March 13 (and regular until Apr. 5, 2 staying until Apr. 20 and one only to May 1) were at Wolfville Ridge (JCT); 1, March 8, and up to 6, May 1, average 4 daily through to May 22, at Bass River (W&PH); 1, March 23, Clementsport (SH); 1, Apr. 15, Waverley (L&PP); 2, May 10-11, Brier Is. (IAM); "several, May 4, Middle Stewiacke (RBD); 1, May 16 (and a few days after) Glace Bay (SM); 1, with Goldfinches, May 9, at Hammnds Plains (KNK)--rather thinly spread but all over the province.

The opposite was true of the AMERICAN GOLDFINCH; practically every-one of our reporters noted these birds, both at feeders and in the wild. Numbers at feeders ranged from 6 to over 100, and on March 15,

JL&JS Cohrs wrote, "kept on going through the trees at the back of Risser's Beach for over five minutes--1500+, have never seen anything like it!!". A note from CRKA mentions that the Goldfinches were beginning to change to breeding plumage by March 23. The EVENING GROSBEAK seems to have reached peak numbers in March, up to 30 of these birds at many feeders, more at some, e.g., 70+ mid-March at Wolfville Ridge; 100, March 16, at Eastern Passage; 40 (largest number all season at this feeder), March 18-20, at Lr. Eel Brook; 110, March 26 (with another rise to 125, Apr. 23) at Bass River; around 100, March 1, at Hammond's Plains. Most stayed on into April, when Sara MacLean in Glace Bay and Joyce Purchase in Dartmouth both noticed some of them showing green beaks; and a few lingered into May, last date recorded being May 22, at Bass River.

The HOUSE SPARROW remains with us, still a "backyard bird", it has never taken kindly to the wild. Most people tolerate it until the spring when its propensity to appropriate swallow boxes makes it highly unpopular. Numbers have diminished slowly over the years; reports are of 6-12 as a rule at feeders. One curious report this season was of a House Sparrow in a Dartmouth yard "imitating a robin's call" (Barry Wright per JCD).

--PRD, ed.

A few members are still sending reports to Phyllis Dobson. Please note that she is no longer our Records Editor. We include here some reports received late because of this problem. Please note that reports now go to Bob Dickie at the address listed.

May 14	Rufous-sided Towhee at Brulee Pt. (Sylvia Ross)
May 20	Snowy Egret at Woods Harbour (MEC)
May 20	Gull-billed Tern at Cape Sable (MCC,JG)
May 25	Eastern Meadowlark at Annapolis Royal (Herb Wilson)

*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. (Yar. Co.)	Arcadia, Pinkney's Point, Tusket, Cranberry Head, Eel Brook, Chegoggin, Melbourne, Bartlett's Beach, Overton
Shelburne Co. (Shel. Co.)	Cape Sable Is., Matthews Lake, Lower Ohio, The Hawk
Queen's Co.	Port Joli, Port Hebert, Caledonia, Cadden Bay, Summer-ville Beach
Lunenburg Co. (Lun. Co.)	Cherry Hill, Broad Cove, Petite Riviere, Green Bay, Crousetown, Crescent Beach, Bayport, Lower LaHave, Second Peninsula
Halifax Co. (Hfx. Co.)	Three Fathom Hbr., Conrad's Beach, Lawrencetown, Cole Hbr., Mooseland, Rocky Run, Conrad's Road, Queensland, Waverley, Martinique Beach, Hartlan's Point
Colchester Co. (Col. Co.)	Economy
Annapolis Co. (Anna. Co.)	Wilmot, Round Hill, Paradise, Sandy Bottom Lake, Clementsport
Kings Co.	Wolfville, Greenfield, Melanson, Canard, Lockhartville, Black River Lake, Gaspereau, Grand Pre
Cumberland Co. (Cumb. Co.)	Lusby Marsh
Hants Co.	Shubenacadie
Guysborough Co.	Hazel Hill

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF REPORTS

FOR

THE JANUARY ISSUE

NOVEMBER 25, 1985

Bird reports to the Records Editor--

Mr. Bob Dickie,  
43 Deepwood Crescent,  
Halifax, N.S. B3M 2Y5

Articles, sketches and letters to the Editor--

Mrs. Shirley Cohrs,  
8 Rosemount Ave.,  
Halifax, N.S. B3N 1X8

Photographs to--

Dr. I. A. McLaren,  
1755 Cambridge Street,  
Halifax, N.S. B3H 4A8

## A Nova Scotia Christmas Count

a photographic essay by  
Joyce Purchase and Shirley Cohrs.



Much of the count area consists of coastline where we hope to see ducks, grebes, alcids, gulls and, with luck, lingering shore birds.

Count day minus one. Participants arrive in time for tea.

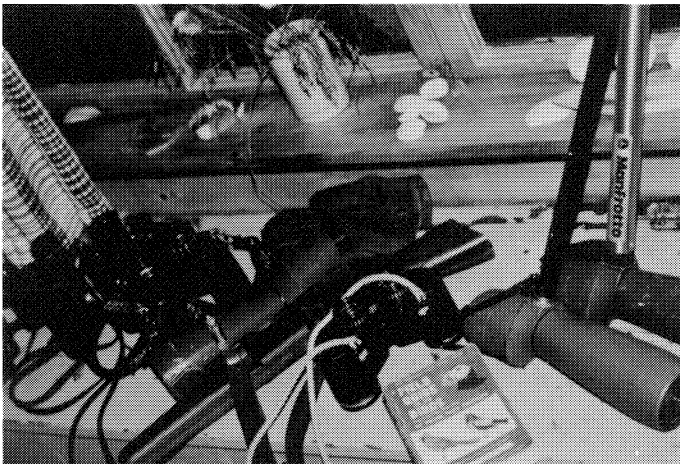
At a summer cottage in December drinking-water, sleeping bags and warm clothing are more necessary than bathing suits





A cheerful  
fire soon  
warms the  
place up.

Supper dishes  
are soon  
whisked away  
by  
"willing  
volunteers."



After a brief  
bout of "owling"  
equipment is  
laid ready  
for an early  
start in the  
morning

Count Day  
6:00 A.M.  
Is it snowing?  
Is it raining?  
Is he going  
to eat his  
breakfast with  
his hat on?



Top-level  
discussion of  
tactics  
over  
breakfast.

Weather looks  
passable.  
Loons, a grebe,  
some Eider  
and Scoter are  
out front  
waiting to be  
counted.  
All  
Systems  
GO.





The village party finds a feeder. Bluejays, Grosbeaks and Chickadees here, but something else over in that tree....

There are Killdeer here in late fall but now the ponds are frozen and no bird stirs. We do surprise a Ruffed Grouse in the spruce thicket.



In the river estuary sharp eyes pick out an American Wigeon amongst a flock of wild Mallard.

along the beach  
a Mourning Dove  
and a couple  
of Song Sparrows  
are added to  
the list.



Lunch break is  
welcome — some  
of us are not too  
impressed with  
the figures  
to date.

The Lobster pots  
fail to yield any  
warblers, so it's  
back to counting  
Herring and Black-  
backed Gulls. A  
flock of Common  
Mergansers flies  
in.... one more  
for the tally





One of our parties spotted a Forster's Tern near here. — a life-lister. The rest of us hope it will still be around tomorrow.  
(it was)



All parties gather at this charming old farmhouse in the late afternoon. There are many helpers to help cook the supper.

Others cook their lists.





A brew of  
hot punch  
awaits the  
Cold  
and  
hungry.

Here's to  
a  
record  
count.

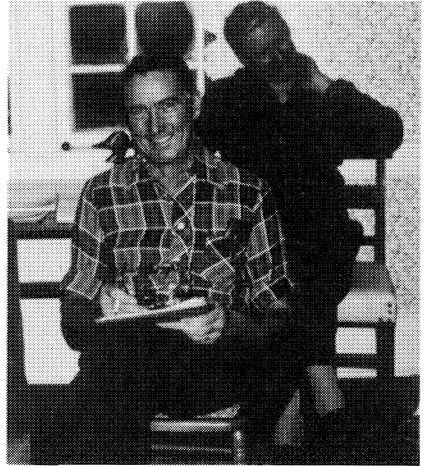


But, first  
things first.  
The lasagna  
is  
delicious.



Heads down  
and  
Counting

Is anyone keeping  
a "goodie" for last?



Now it's back  
to the cottage,  
for a New Year's  
Eve of fun and  
games.

Happy New  
Year, everyone.

(10:20 p.m.)

FIELD TRIP REPORTSMarch 23 - Cape Breton

This was the double-barrelled, two-fisted, continuing field day. March 23 was the first field day for the Cape Breton group. This day is listed as "lingering winter birds"--we're sure to see them, at least. Any new arrivals are gratefully noted, but we don't push our luck by promising ourselves anything.

That Saturday began clear and cold. Five intrepid watchers met at Dearn's Corner. They had an interesting day, continuing around the coast to the mouth of the Mira River. In all, sixteen species were seen, of which three were migrants--the two Broad-winged Hawks, two Common Grackles, and some Canada Geese.

There were three observers left over, simply unable to be there on March 23rd., who decided to have a continuation of the day on March 30. In true Cape Breton fashion, we were treated to white frost, hail, snow, rain, and freezing rain, singly and together. The driving was not what one would call good, in fact it was treacherous in places. We missed the Canada Geese in Morien Bay; it was simply swirling snow at that time and place. They are reported to be there in the thousands now.

On our travels we encountered in two places what I have never observed before--Song Sparrows in flocks. Not big flocks, but one had five birds, and one had seven; just arriving, I should think. Then, as we watched at the Sanctuary, there descended the first heron, dressed and adorned for spring; full of fight too. It barely alighted when it began sparring at some Black-headed Gulls that were flying near it.

Of the eighteen species we saw, the heron and the Song Sparrows were the only obvious newcomers.

The three observers ended up having lunch in Black Brook Cemetery, below the gnarled old trees, among the tombstones, amid the swirling snow. As the steam arose, curling around us, from our thermos jugs, someone made a reference to the three wierd sisters in MacBeth--and when shall we three meet again?

--Sara MacLean

March 24 - Dartmouth-Halifax Co. (Lawrencetown Loop)

March 24 was one of those sunny days of spring which we hoped for when we planned this outing--a fresh breeze near the ocean but quite comfortable for the 18 people, plus two children and a well-mannered dog (of course the children were well-mannered too), who gathered at the appointed place and time.

As usual, the first stop was at Sullivan's Pond and, as usual, it was shore-to-shore ducks and gulls. Among the large number of Blacks and some fewer Mallards, we found a Red-breasted Merganser, Pintails, A. Widgeon and a Ring-necked Duck. At the lower end of the pond, we spotted three Black-headed Gulls and a large white gull which we checked off as a Glaucous, but its size--not appreciably larger than a Herring Gull--left us in some doubt. It is this sort of thing that keeps one humble.

The city has spread over some of the spots which used to support birds in past years so we drove straight through Cole Harbour to stop at the top of Long Hill. Some 2,000 Canada Geese were resting

in the open water of the Harbour along with small flocks of ducks too far away to be identified. An immature Bald Eagle stood on the ice nearby.

We found only Common Loons and a distant flock of Scaup in the bay at the end of West Lawrencetown Road but someone spotted two Robins and a Grey Jay on the way. The stop at the railway track was more productive. The feeders nearby attract Mourning Doves, Blue Jays, Black-capped Chickadees, Red-breasted Nuthatches, A. Goldfinch, Evening Grosbeaks and one Red-winged Blackbird. Song Sparrows sang at nearly every stop.

As we approached Conrad's Beach and paused to examine some ducks (Blacks and Pintails), someone noticed a Northern Harrier being harried by Crows. From here on, the route is much nearer the ocean but we looked for Scoter and Eider in vain. Lawrencetown Lake, thick with birds, produced two Bufflehead and a Black-headed Gull with a nearly-dark head. A party walking the track picked up Tree Sparrows and Golden-crowned Kinglets while the other group saw Horned and Red-necked Grebes off the headland at MacDonald House.

Rocky Run was reached at last and we enjoyed lunch in the lee of the trestle bridge with a fire and expert stone-skipping for entertainment, undistracted by any birds. A walk along the track later enabled us to add Boreal Chickadees to our tally. Common Goldeneye and Bufflehead were in their usual spots at the Causeway. Did we or did we not see a Gannet off Wedge Island? Let's apply the Scottish verdict--not proven.

A final stop at Grand Desert Beach gave us another large concentration of C. Geese (4,000?), five more Pintail Ducks and a lone Great Cormorant. The final total was 41 species; 39 over-wintering types and 2 new migrants.

Those who stopped at our feeder on the way back could add Juncos, Grackles and Cowbirds to the list which, with a Bonaparte's Gull, reported later from Sullivan's Pond, would bring the total to 45, about what we expect in this area at this time. It might be interesting to compare the species seen on this date with those found on March 31 (one week later) in the Martinique area.

--Joyce Purchase

#### April 21 - Amherst Point/John Lusby Marsh

The first swallows arrived on this day and they could be seen everywhere by the hundreds. Since there were hardly any insects around, they had to pick their food from the surface of the ponds. Their timing was correct, for a week before most of the water was still covered with ice, and the pickings would have been slim for them. Before 9:00 a.m., other migrants started to appear in the A.P.B.S. parking lot. I do not know if there is a particular name for a large group of birders, but whatever it is, 28 enthusiasts arrived from all kinds of distant places and directions.

The weather had been variable and on the cold side and, except for the swallows, no insecteaters had arrived. Thus, the birders were forced, like the swallows, to satisfy their appetite with whatever they could find lingering on the water surface. Fortunately most of the waterfowl had returned, but although the sun was out, a chilly wind drove them under cover, especially before lunch. Scopes had to be used to get a glimpse of most of them. In the afternoon however,

the wind died down and the birds came into the open water and could be observed better and with the sun behind them.

For most of the visitors, the sight of an Eurasian Wigeon and four Gadwalls was the highlight of the day. In all, we noticed about 25 species of birds, the majority being of the duck family.

Although the number of species was low for a day's outing in the area, I was convinced by the participants that the trip had been worthwhile and that they had enjoyed themselves, which, after all, was the whole purpose of this undertaking.

--Con Desplanque

#### April 27 - Cape Breton

The Cape Bretoners seem to be fortunate with the April field days. We strike good days and observe plenty of birds. This year was no different from the last several years; April 27 was the nicest day in a most unpleasant season. Seventeen observers thought so, which is a pretty handsome turnout for the time of year. We had a couple of new people and several friends who hadn't attended a field day for a long while. The species ranged between cormorants--both the Great and the Double-crested--at one end of the taxonomic ladder, and Song Sparrows trilling at the other end.

We didn't see a loon, we didn't see Savannah Sparrows, we didn't find a Killdeer nor any Yellowlegs. No doubt these creatures are about somewhere; we just didn't find them.

Robins, yes, clouds of Robins; they looked to me like the ordinary, every-day, North American Robins. The Newfoundland Robins, so much more showy, went by in the previous weeks. We must have seen a couple of hundred, easily. If that is so in the small area that we could observe, think how many thousands must have been moving over the whole island.

Along with them were numbers of Kestrels, also in migration. They are so little, I don't think they prey much on the robins, do they? They wait for a clear day to fly to St. Paul's Island, and thence to Newfoundland. Sometimes they have quite a long wait. I have seen them perched along the shoreline, flying out into the fog over the sea, and repeatedly turning back. The mice and shrews and any small sparrows on the barrens near their take-off places must be pretty well tidied up before the Kestrels get away.

On this field day we saw few waterfowl for the simple reason that much of the water was still frozen over. Even the Mira River was frozen for long stretches. One can believe that times are very hard for the fishing birds when ice is still covering their feeding grounds so late in the year.

However, there were plenty of flies about, and Ethel Blakeburn spied the first bright-painted Yellow-rumped Warbler--a happy sight.

--Sara MacLean.

April 28 - Kings Co., Wolfville Area

Despite a very welcome sunny and fairly warm day, our caravan was down from last year's 21 cars to a more manageable 13. As has become usual, we began at Grand Pré/Boot Island, where we saw a few Brant and Red-throated Loons. Then we stopped in Wolfville to see and hear Willets, followed by visits to a pond at Starr's Point and a look at the Canard River Valley. The Canard Canada Geese were down to only 75, and we saw a pair of Pintails and an early Barn Swallow.

Again this year we had lunch at the Gibson homestead in Canning, where we tried valiantly to make a dent in the gallons of fish chowder, plus thirteen assorted pies!! Then behind the house we were treated to good views of two singing Palm Warblers, in addition to the Gibsons' usual variety of woodpeckers, grosbeaks, Purple Finches, etc.

Upon resuming our pond-to-pond caravan, we found a freshly dumped egg of a Grackle or Blue Jay (?). Visits to a pond in Canning and then Canard Poultry Pond produced a relatively low number of duck species (only 5 for the whole day), plus Greater Yellowlegs, a big flock of at least 150 Tree Swallows, and numerous basking painted turtles.

Finally we visited Cyril Coldwell's farm at Gaspereau, where captive Great Horned Owls (hand-reared, 4 year-olds) were tending a nest; the brooding female sheltered two downy young. We also enjoyed views of Ravens in two's and three's flying acrobatically and seemingly indulging in courtship activities (subadults?). At least two Ravens had sticks in their beaks, and were seen to drop and deftly retrieve them in the air.

The birding was fairly uneventful, but we all enjoyed the sunny day. Thanks once again to Wilma and Merritt Gibson, and also to Brenda Thexton for organizing a kitchen cleanup crew!

--Jim Wolford

May 18 - Annapolis County

The weather hardly looked promising on May 18 - heavy showers being predicted. However, 18 birders gathered in Paradise and set off to explore the South Mountain. Birds were co-operative and fairly easy to spot as the trees were not fully leafed out. A Hermit Thrush greeted us beside the roadway and stayed nearby for several minutes so that he(or she) could be admired. The sighting of a Black-backed Woodpecker was a thrill for many of us. Later a Red-headed Woodpecker was seen by two of the party.

After exploring the mountain and areas around the house, we drove to Annapolis Royal and walked the dykes behind the rose garden. The anticipated Wood Duck sighting did not occur, but we added 16 birds to our list to make a grand total of 73 species. The rain held off all day! This goes to prove that optimism has its rewards. All in all, a happy outing for all the participants.

--Jean and Bill Morse

May 25 - Hants County Field Trip

After three successive years of rain, fog, and generally wet atmosphere, May 25th dawned clear and fine. As the birders gathered at the Mount Uniacke railway crossing for the appointed time of 8:00 a.m., it was evident that the day held promise. Promises of warmth, shedding of outer jackets and sweaters and rubber boots later in the day and a battle with blackflies.

The first two stops at the picnic park and Uniacke grounds proved a bit disappointing but the third stop at the pond on Highway 1 was most productive with Warblers, Kingfishers and the first of many sightings of the handsome male Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Further along a Killdeer and 2 Spotted Sandpipers were seen near the water in a bulldozed area.

With the paving of the old gravelled road and new housing in wooded lots that used to make for good birding spots, we drove on to the Swamp, where we always see a Snipe--but not this time! Why is it we expect to see the same species in the same area every year?

Our lunch stop at Smiley's Park was a most relaxing respite before some birders had to depart for home while the remainder drove on to the Bar-S Campground and the final stop at the dyke which added Willetts, Black-bellied Plover, Blue-winged Teal, the Snipe not seen elsewhere; 2 Red-tailed Hawks and the Harrier.

Combining the efforts of 26 birders whose eyesight and keen sense of hearing identified 83 species--matching the maximum seen on two other Hants County Trips! A very good day!

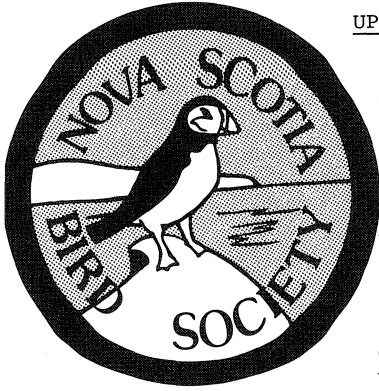
--Marg. Clark.

May 26 - Shubenacadie Trip

This trip took place at 6:00 a.m. on a brisk May morning in Shubenacadie. Too early you say? Some 14 or 15 birders were there for Roslyn McPhee's annual trek through Hardwood Lands. As usual, this trip attracts birders from afar. One British visitor from the embassy in Washington came seeking "a Boreal Chickadee, a Pine Grosbeak and crossbills", and he had all three by 6:45 a.m. Roslyn's usual good planning, good staff work, careful scouting and good weather (I don't know how she manages that!) gave us many of the warblers, most of the woodpeckers, including Pileated and Sapsucker, and many of the flycatchers. Depending on your credulity, between 75 and 83 species were counted by the party before 11:30 a.m. A well prepared and well led field trip--be there next year.

--John Cohrs.



UP-COMING FIELD TRIPS

**Sunday**      MARTINIQUE BEACH mainly shorebirds  
**August 4**      Leader: Bob Dickie (443-0993).  
 Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Porter's  
 Lake shopping centre on Highway 7.  
 Bring a lunch.

**Saturday**      YARMOUTH COUNTY shorebirds.  
**August 10**      C.R.K.A. Allen (1-648-2752) or  
 P.R. Dobson (1-648-2058). Meet  
 at 9:00 a.m. at Yarmouth CPR  
 station.

**Sunday**      EVANGELINE BEACH shorebirds.  
**August 11**      Leader: Jim Wolford (1-542-2201).  
 A joint field trip with the  
 Blomidon Naturalists' Society. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at  
 Grand Pré parking lot. Rubber boots are recommended for  
 the beach.

**Saturday**      FULLER'S BRIDGE Shorebirds. Meet at Marion Bridge at  
**August 17**      8:00 a.m. Leader: Eldon Meikle.

**Saturday**      BRIER ISLAND Labour Day long weekend. Plenty of early  
**August 31**      migrants, and a pelagic trip is being planned. Camping  
 to                      on Brier is primitive; the closest public campsite is near  
**Sept. 2**                      Sandy Cove (34 km and 2 ferries from Brier). The Olde  
 Village Inn in Sandy Cove (1-834-2202) provides more  
 luxurious accommodation. Also there is now a Bed and  
 Breakfast spot on Brier (contact Mrs. Eaton in Westport at  
 (1-839-2879). Anyone interested in the pelagic trip (for  
 which there will be a modest charge) must pre-register  
 with either Richard Stern (1-678-1975) in Kentville or  
 Bob McDonald (443-5051) in Halifax so that arrangements  
 can be made.

We will rendezvous at the cemetery on Peajack Road  
 on Saturday and Sunday morning at 8:00 a.m. to exchange  
 birding information and plan the day's events. Leaders:  
 various.

**Saturday**      SEAL ISLAND the annual NSBS Thanksgiving long weekend  
**October 12**      pilgrimage. Leader: Jamie McLaren (429-7024). Accommod-  
 to                      ation on the island is limited so pre-registration is  
**Monday**                      necessary. Contact Jamie for further information and  
**October 14**      reservations before October 1. A modest charge will be  
 made to cover the boat trip, food and lodging.

**Sunday**      CAPE SPLIT Leaders: Frank and Mary Himsl (453-2588).  
**October 27**      Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the parking lot at the beginning of  
 the hiking trail (at the end of the shore road beyond  
 Scott's Bay). This 12 km hike offers some spectacular  
 scenery.

**Saturday**      EASTERN SHORE Leaders: Don and Joyce Purchase (434-5199)  
**Nov. 30**      Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Bank of Nova Scotia parking lot  
 at the corner of Wyse Road and Nantucket Avenue (opposite  
 the Holiday Inn) in Dartmouth. Our exact route will de-  
 pend on the birds!

**Saturday**      SEWER STROLL I Leader: Bill Caudle (469-7841). By  
**January 18**      popular demand, there will be two of these events in 1986  
 (which also introduces the possibility of a little  
 competition). This trip will begin at Hartlen's Point at

8:30 a.m. and work in a counterclockwise direction, towards Herring Cove. Bring a lunch and lots of hot coffee.

Saturday STEWIACKE; wintering Bald Eagles. Leader: Ross Hall  
January 25 (1-893-9665). Take Exit 11 from the 102 at Stewiacke and meet at the House of Hay (the Chicken Place) at 9:30 a.m. From here we travel up the Shubenacadie River to Riverside where Mr. Herman Berfalo has a Bald Eagle feeder in operation.

Saturday WINTER BIRDING IN HALIFAX COUNTY - various habitats,  
Feb. 15 several location. Leader: Dave Currie (443-0490). Meet at 9:00 a.m. in the parking lot at the Bedford Basin and Hammonds Plains Road (next to Wacky Wheatley's) in Bedford. We will cover the Mill Cove pollution plant next door, possibly other stops on the Basin, Hammonds Plains Road and the Head of St. Margaret's Bay. The trip will end in the early to mid afternoon.

Sunday SEWER STROLL II - Leader: Bill Caudle (469-7841). This  
Feb. 23 trip will begin at Herring Cove and work in a clockwise direction. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the Canadian Tire parking lot in Spryfield.

For further information on any of the above field trips, or for suggestions for future trips, contact the Field Trip Co-ordinators, Bob and Wendy McDonald (443-5051).

#### ACCOMMODATIONS ON BRIER ISLAND

A new tourist home has opened on Brier Island. The BRIER HOUSE is operated by Mr. and Mrs. Donald Eaton, Westport, N.S. BOV 1H0, Telephone 1-839-2879. Mr. and Mrs. Eaton would be happy to cater to birder's needs.

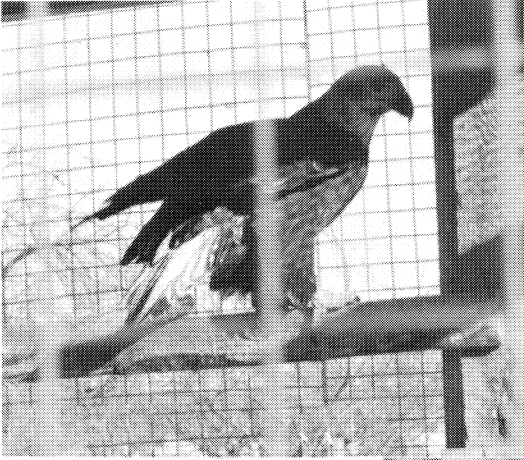


## PLANNING A TRIP?

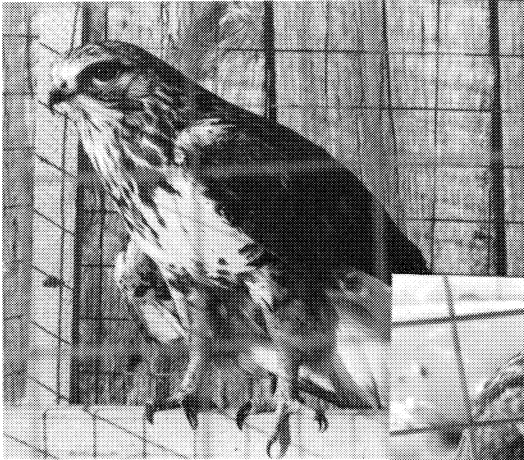
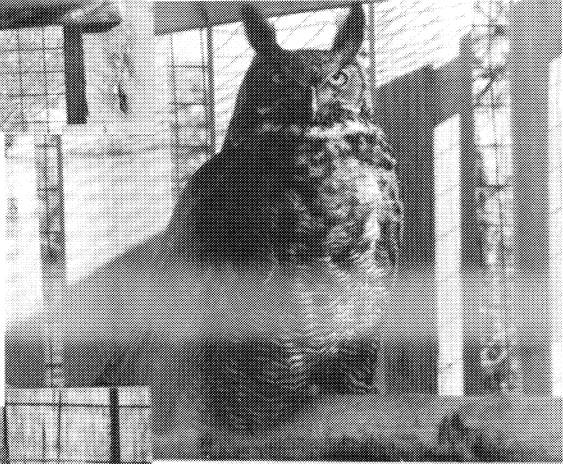
We have a list of bird clubs and societies in every Canadian province and territory, every State in the United States, the Bahamas, Belize, Bermuda, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, St. Pierre and Miquelon, Trinidad and Tobago.

If you plan a trip to any of these areas, let us know and we'll send you the club's name, address, contact persons, best birding areas and any other information we have.

Write to Bob Dickie, 43 Deepwood Cres., Halifax, N.S., B3M 2Y5.



R A P T O R  
R E H A B I L I T A T I O N



The Bald Eagle,  
Great Horned Owl,  
Rough-legged Hawk  
and Barred Owl are  
guests of Cyril  
Coldwell's raptor  
rehabilitation centre  
at Gaspereau.  
Photo-Don Marston

A BRIEF TOUR OF SOME BIRD WATCHING  
AREAS IN CENTRAL NOVA SCOTIA

*Prepared by Ross Baker, Truro,  
in collaboration with Harry Brennan  
of Hopewell, who also supplied the  
photographs.*

The scope of the bird-watching activities mentioned herein are primarily within the rather well-defined geographic limits in central Nova Scotia. Specific boundaries can be mentioned to help to identify the area which is somewhat of a pentagon with sides of unequal length, and they are as follows: North from Truro to Tatamagouche (both in Colchester County); East via the North Shore to Cape George (Antigonish County); South along the shore of St. George's Bay to Crystal Cliffs; the remaining line would be one from Crystal Cliffs, South-west to Trafalgar (near the junction of four mainland Counties--Colchester, Pictou, Guysborough, and Halifax), thence West to Truro.

The area contains various types of habitat wherein bird watchers can discover and observe many different species of well-known birds. A brief summary of the types of habitat to be found would be: salt marshes, tidal flats, and beaches; swamps, bogs, and inland lakes; meadows, intervalles, and upland fields (either under cultivation or used as pastures for livestock); woodlands--with essentially hardwood or softwood trees, or a mixture of both--in various stages of growth, and areas where tree-cutting operations have recently taken place. In addition to the diversified topographical features of the area, there are numerous rivers and streams throughout which provide conditions that are conducive to bird life. Certain places within the region can even be regarded as quite unique; but needless to say, such locations are not always readily accessible and are difficult to reach. However, what are obstacles and frustrations to an ardent bird watcher who anticipates the thrill of being able to inform his or her peers that he or she had made a perilous and tortuous ascent up the face of a cliff to observe the nest of a hawk or eagle, or that he or she had scaled a precipice to look down upon a nesting site of a colony of Great Cormorants?

The point of beginning for the delineation of the designated area was Truro, so it will be the first focal point on this 'tour'. Much could be said about Truro; it is the shire town of Colchester County and because of its geographical location it is often referred to as 'the hub of Nova Scotia;'. Its chief attraction for nature lovers is Victoria Park, a magnificent natural woodland area which has been described in tourist information brochures as "1,000 acres of scenic beauty". This outstanding tourist attraction and recreational facility is situated within the town limits, not more than ten minutes' walk from the downtown business and shopping area. The Park is crisscrossed with a veritable network of roads, paths, and trails so persons travelling there on foot can explore every nook and cranny of it to their hearts' content. There are some particular spots within the Park where many different species of birds can be observed, namely, in the vicinity of the town reservoir and along the well-established paths adjacent to the brook that flows from there through a deep gorge, down a sizeable cataract on which are to be seen the Waddell Falls and the Joe Howe Falls, and on to the Salmon River.

Although there is an abundance of bird life in Victoria Park, there is no assurance that anyone going there for a casual visit will have the thrill of seeing one of a rare or unusual species. There is every reason to expect, however, that by frequenting the Park at regular intervals throughout the year, and especially during the

spring and summer months, one will see, at one time or another, most of the different species of birds that are to be found in the woodlands of the region. After the spring migrants have returned, a tabulation of 45/50 different species of thrushes, grosbeaks, warblers, woodpeckers, flycatchers, etc., can be made without difficulty on a stroll through the Park, during the early hours of almost any day, for as long as the nesting season is in progress.

Another source of delight for bird watchers and other nature lovers who frequent Victoria Park is the vast assortment of interesting wild flowers which are to be found in profusion in the glades and other sequestered places therein. The list contains such names as Mayflower, Bunchberry, Wild Lily-of-the-Valley, Clintonia, Pink and White Lady's Slipper, Painted Trillium, Nodding Trillium, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, Rose Twisted Stalk, One-flowered Wintergreen, Twinflower, and literally scores of others. No sensitive person could fail to be impressed with the beauty of these floral masterpieces, or by the sweet and delicate perfume that permeates the atmosphere where they abound.

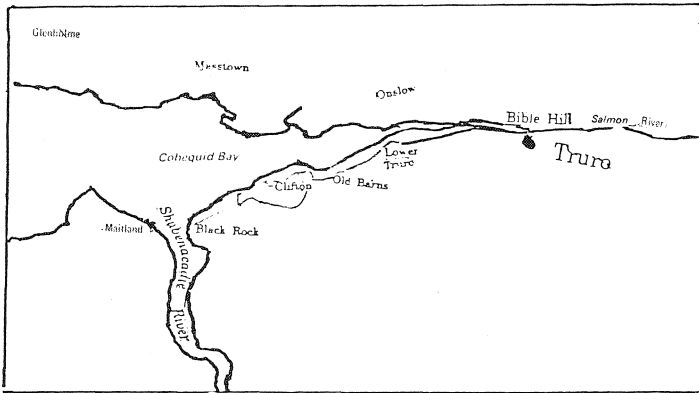
Although Victoria Park is considered to be the prime area for bird watching in Truro, there are other intensely interesting places nearby that should not be overlooked or neglected. One such place is the Clifton-Black Rock area. Travelling almost due west from Truro on the south side of Cobequid Bay, the highway passes through the fertile farming lands of Lower Truro, Old Barns and Clifton--a distance of about five miles. North of the highway the acreage under cultivation, which is several hundred yards in width, extends to a man-made embankment or dike which was erected many years ago (some of it undoubtedly predates the expulsion of the Acadians in 1755) to protect the land from the ravages of the tides. A secondary highway known as the 'Shore Road' passes through Clifton and continues on until it terminates at Black Rock, almost directly across the Bay from Maitland--the home of W.D. Lawrence (now an historic site) who built the famous wooden ship that was named for him.

The wooded areas in Clifton and Black Rock are not unlike those found in Victoria Park--so, the bird life likewise is very much the same. However, an entirely different type of habitat has been created by the reclamation from the tides of the extensive acreage known as dykelands. Also, from Clifton through Black Rock there are large expanses of marshy flats sloping toward the Bay, and these are covered with marsh grasses to the normal high water level (during the periods of high tides, they too are covered with water), the result being the formation of still another type of habitat.

From mid-July to late fall large flocks of various species of shore birds congregate on the marshes to feed in preparation for the continuation of their long and arduous migration journey. The species that can be observed include various sandpipers--Least, Semipalmated, White-rumped and Pectoral, Black-bellied Plovers and Yellowlegs. It is not unusual to see a Great Blue Heron, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal, and Black Ducks; or is it uncommon to see a Northern Harrier (Marsh Hawk) or a Bald Eagle flying past, or to catch sight of a Red-tailed Hawk perched in a tree where the woods are close to the highway.

Robins and sparrows--both Song and Savannah--are very much in evidence throughout the area from spring to fall; and special mention should be made of the Bobolinks that are seen there for it is simply delightful to watch their movements as they fly about over the meadows and hay fields. Most bird watchers can appreciate the thrill of hearing a flock of Bobolinks singing when they first arrive in the spring--their vocal exertions seem to be a challenge to all and sundry to share with them in the joie de vivre.

Sketch of the Clifton/Black Rock area a few miles west of Truro



At one place the highway in Black Rock passes within fifty feet of an old, dilapidated barn in an isolated spot with no other buildings nearby. Several windows are missing from the building, so each year at least a dozen pairs of Barn Swallows make use of it for nesting purposes. It is a fascinating sight to see the movements of those swift and graceful swallows as they dart through the air in pursuit of food for themselves and their young ones. In a nearby cattail swamp an even greater number of Red-winged Blackbirds can be seen and heard during the nesting season.

Having spent some time describing a couple of bird-watching locations in and near the town of Truro, mention will now be made of other places of equal or superior merit within the predesignated area, and certainly some of the best places to concentrate on are to be found in and around the village of Hopewell in Pictou County.

A bird watching expedition in the Hopewell area might well begin at St. Columba Church which is located about two miles south of the more thickly settled part of the village, and a very short distance from the river that flows through that part of the countryside. There is a public park adjacent to the church property and bordering on the river, a situation that is ideal for a great many species of warblers and other small songsters. Common Mergansers and Black Ducks are two species of waterbirds commonly seen in the river; Spotted Sandpipers are often seen flying low over the water, or maybe they are heard giving their vocal signals by which their positions can be determined--usually on stones along the beach where they stand and teeter as they call. Woodpeckers, Nuthatches, and Creepers can be located without difficulty as they move from place to place on the trunks of the numerous large elm trees within the park; Vireos, Catbirds, and Veeries are some of the other species of birds that help to swell the avian serenade in that enchanted spot.

Another extremely interesting spot in Hopewell is a large marsh--approximately two miles long and several hundred feet wide--which is located about two miles from St. Columba Church, at the end of a road leading to a farmyard that is about half a mile from the marsh. The distance that has to be covered on foot is facilitated by walking the railway track that runs along one side of it.

As one approaches the marsh a feeling of expectancy is aroused by the sound of Snipes 'winnowing' high overhead. The sight and sound of various small birds, including Swamp Sparrows and flycatchers, add to the excitement, as does the presence of great numbers of swallows of the four common species: Barn, Bank, Cliff and Tree, as they dash hither and yon, at low altitudes, in quest of the flying insects that are an important part of their diet.

Even before the full extent of the marsh becomes visible, the sounds of Red-winged Blackbirds intensify and soon occupy the viewer's attention as those colorful birds flit about displaying their gorgeous red epaulettes which are especially noticeable during the breeding season. A fine male Northern Harrier (Marsh Hawk), identified by its slate-blue body and black wing tips, appears in view overhead, and shortly thereafter its mate which is somewhat larger in size and of a brownish color when seen at a distance, also appears. (Incidentally, both the male and the female of the species have a white rump patch by which they can be readily identified as Northern Harriers.) It is not unlikely that the female has a nest in the dense growth of cattails in the marsh.



Young Northern Harriers

From the seclusion of the cattails a distinct thumping sound announces the presence of a Bittern not too far away; it is quite a challenge to locate the bird in such a situation.

Other sounds from the cattails are recognizable as the vocal performances of Sora and Virginia Rails. The various calls emanating from the marsh seem as solo voices amid the continual chorus of frogs and other amphibians that are vying for the attention of others of their kind during the mating season.

A bonus feature of a visit to the marsh at Hopewell at one specific season is to see the flowers known as Buck Beans which grow in profusion in a wet, swampy piece of ground at one end of it.

About three miles from St. Columba Church on the outskirts of Hopewell, the highway divides: one way leads to Lorne and the other to Trafalgar (pronounced Traf-al-gar, with the accent on the first syllable). The territory through which either road passes is excellent for bird watching.

The road through Lorne continues on past Dryden Lake where Wood Ducks, Ring-necked Ducks and other water birds are often seen. For the entire distance the highway passes through woodlands of deciduous and coniferous trees and as the traffic is minimal, one can stop at frequent intervals to observe the various species of birds that are to be seen in such a location.

Until about ten years ago the Trafalgar area was an excellent place to go in the fall to look for Spruce Grouse. Since that time vast areas of the woods have been removed by 'clear-cutting' of the trees for pulpwood, and by a forest fire in the summer of 1976, which destroyed thousands of acres of woods before it was brought under control and finally extinguished. Despite the devastation that has taken place in the erstwhile "Spruce Grouse country", there is a substantial amount of new growth in evidence and there is a sufficient amount of bird life to be seen to justify an occasional trip into the territory. One special inducement to go there now in the summer season is to observe the Ospreys which use the crossbars of the electric power poles for nesting sites. For the past few years one or two of the nests have been on poles close enough to the highway that, with the use of binoculars, an observer can see the adult birds returning from their hunting expeditions with fish dangling from their talons; one can also witness the conclusion of the tableau as one of the parent birds proceeds to tear the fish into pieces to feed the nestlings.

Another of the many delightful places to go bird watching in Hopewell is the Mill Road, which is due east of St. Columba Church and within a very short distance of it. The road which winds through the woods for a distance of approximately two miles, forms a connecting link between Hopewell and Centredale; it is narrow and below the standard of secondary roads generally, but there is very little traffic on it and it is always passable so it is very suitable for bird watching purposes. Warblers and a wide variety of woodland birds can be seen there in great numbers in the proper season.

At the eastern end of Mill Road and adjacent to it is Grant's Lake which affords an excellent opportunity to see Grebes, Loons, and other water birds. At one particular spot a Waterthrush can frequently be heard and seen; often Spotted Sandpipers fly along the road beside the lake or flutter over the water within a short distance from the shore.

One particular place in Pictou County that has a special attraction for bird watchers in wintertime, is at Trenton. It so happens that a considerable expanse of water below the electric power generating plant there is kept from freezing--except in extremely cold weather--by the heat from the water that passes through the turbines. Large flocks of various species of water birds are to be found in the relatively warm water and they can be observed to good advantage from the elevation of the highway bridge that crosses the East River at that point. Some of the species that have been seen there from time to time are: Common, Red-breasted and Hooded Merganser; Goldeneye--Common and Barrow's; Scaup; Bufflehead; Black Duck; Mallard; Wigeon American and Eurasian; Canada Goose; Herring Gull; Great Black-backed Gull; Glaucous Gull; and Iceland Gull. Even on a cold day in mid-winter it is a thrill to see the huge rafts of birds that frequent the location, or possibly to hear the intriguing whistle of the wings of a flock of Goldeneyes as they pass overhead.





Goldeneyes at Trenton in mid-winter

Bird watchers in and around Hopewell who are familiar with the habits of the Woodcock take special note of their arrival in the spring and then try to locate the specific sites where, intermittently or for several successive nights (depending on certain factors such as weather conditions), commencing at twilight, some of their numbers will be engaged in a truly fantastic courtship display. The performances do not necessarily take place at the same location each year; nor is it possible to predict with any degree of accuracy the number of consecutive nightly performances that will be enacted in a particular season. Anyone planning a single trip to Hopewell for the express purpose of seeing Woodcocks engaging in their courtship activities should realize that there is only a remote possibility of being at one of the displaying sites at the proper time; fulfillment of a desire to witness the act generally involves much patience and perseverance.

Anyone who has ever attended one of the Field Day trips in the Hopewell area under the leadership of Harry Brennan will undoubtedly recall being escorted to nests of Owls--Great Horned, Barred, and Saw-whet--as well as those of Goshawks, Pileated Woodpeckers, and various other species of birds. The discovery of the nests of the larger birds by Harry is not something that happens by luck. In the winter season he roams the woods to try to find where Goshawks and Pileated Woodpeckers and Owls nested in previous years so he can re-check those trees periodically to determine if subsequent occupancy takes place. The nesting facilities used by a number of owls in the area are boxes and platforms constructed and placed in position by him.

The North Shore of Nova Scotia from Tatamagouche to Merigomish (Big) Island, a distance approximately 75 miles, is simply a marvelous place to go in the fall to observe the various species of shore birds that pass through Nova Scotia on their annual migration journeys



PILEATED WOODPECKER



SAW-WHET OWL

from their breeding grounds in the Arctic to their winter quarters, somewhere in South America.

Some of the places where the birds congregate in large numbers are: Sand Point, the access to which is by a road that joins the Sunrise Trail at the east end of Tatamagouche; Brule Point, where the North Shore Golf Club and Fraser's Camp Grounds are located--sign-boards for these recreational facilities appear on the Sunrise Trail, about five miles east from Tatamagouche; Marshville, about ten miles east of Tatamagouche on the Sunrise Trail, where there is a public beach; River John and Cape John, which need no specific identification; Caribou Island, which is described on the sign boards as "Blue Heron Country", and there too, is a large public beach area; Merigomish (Big) Island, where, for about three miles the road is flanked on one side by a sandy beach, and on the other by extensive salt marshes. Incidentally, at Brule Point and at Caribou Island certain areas are posted with 'Game Sanctuary' signs, which eliminates the risks incurred in exploring beaches and marshes therein during the hunting season in the fall.

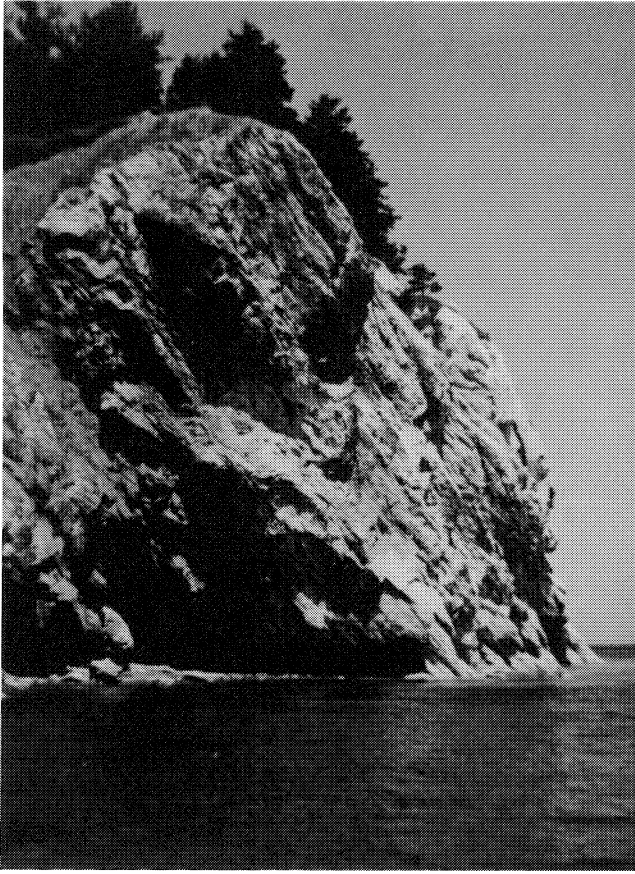
Typical observations at Caribou Island during a fall season would be: (in the late summer and early fall) Great Blue Herons, Bonaparte's Gulls, Ring-billed Gulls, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal, Black Ducks, Northern Harriers, Marsh Hawks, Ospreys, Bald Eagles, Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers, Black-bellied Plover, Dowitchers, Pectoral Sandpipers, Yellowlegs--Least and Greater, Willets, Ruddy Turnstones, Spotted Sandpipers, Knots and Killdeers; (in late fall, at the extreme outer end of the Island, near the lighthouse) White-rumped Sandpipers, Purple Sandpipers, Eiders, Gannets, and several species of Ducks, as well as Rough-legged Hawks and Snow Buntings.

As a result of visits to Merigomish (Big) Island over a period of years, further additions could be made to the previous list: Kestrels, Merlins, Sanderlings, Hudsonian Godwits, Golden Plovers, Scoters, Canada Geese, Snow Geese, Double-crested Cormorants, Glossy Ibis, Great or Common Egret, Caspian Terns, a Snowy Owl, and a White Pelican.

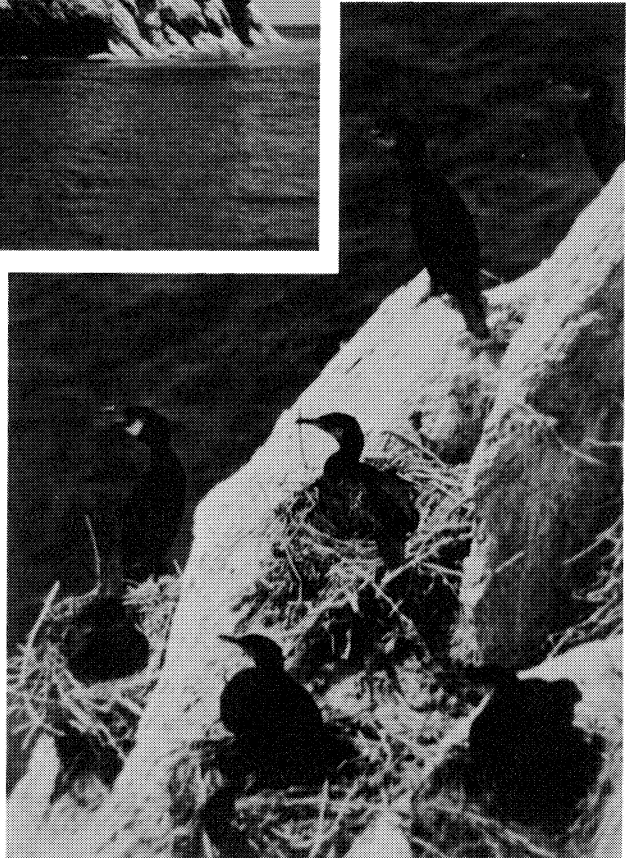
Quite a number of species of birds have a tendency to be gregarious under certain circumstances. For example, Starlings travel in flocks as they forage over fields in search of food, as do Evening Grosbeaks as they move from one feeding station to another in urban communities. With many birds this characteristic is not in evidence at the breeding season of the year. Black Ducks pair off and the flocks disperse when the mating season arrives; their nests are located separately in isolated spots and they are not in close proximity to those of others of the species.

There are, however, various species of birds in which gregariousness is in evidence even on the breeding grounds and nesting sites. Puffins, Gannets and Cliff Swallows are a few examples.

The nesting site of a colony of Great Cormorants on the face of a cliff at Crystal Cliffs, near Antigonish, affords a rare and somewhat unique opportunity to bird watchers in central Nova Scotia who are aware of its existence.



Crystal Cliffs



Great Cormorants nesting -- Crystal Cliffs



Great Cormorants - Crystal Cliffs

The nesting site has to be approached by an obscure and almost indistinguishable trail for nearly half a mile, over rough and uneven ground; pot-holes in the gypsum formation of which the cliffs are comprised, have to be circumvented and great care must be exercised, especially near the top of the precipice, lest a piece of loose rock should become dislodged and fall upon the climber. However, the sight of the nests which the viewer sees by looking over the parapet-like ridge at the summit of the cliffs is well worth the risks and hazards involved in making the ascent. To see and hear, for the first time, those large water birds standing or sitting on their nests with their snake-like necks pointed skyward, and to be able to distinguish at very close range the details of their long, hooked beaks, and even to be able to note the greenish color of their eyes, is bound to make an indelible impression upon the mind and memory of the viewer.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor, NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS:

A Belted Kingfisher in search of a meal became an unwilling victim last summer in New Ross. Barry Hiltz, an employee of Ross Farm Museum, found the bird struggling among the lily pads near the shore of Lake Lawson. The kingfisher was "bobbing up and down" in the water and obviously in distress. Wading out to the bird, he lifted it from the water. On its lower mandible, a "clam" (freshwater mussel) had attached itself--the burden was obviously too much for the kingfisher to handle. Mr. Hiltz carried it back to the Museum where pictures were taken and the mussel was removed...the kingfisher then flapped off "into the sunset". A happy ending, thanks to the people at Ross Farm; but one has to wonder just how and why the bird and the mollusk got together.

--Keith Keddy



Editor, NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS:

One day, during the first week of April, Mrs. Marion Warnholtz, who lives on Shore Road in the village of Baddeck noted a strange bird, about the size of a crow, feeding along the shore below her house.

Having a keen interest in birds, especially the shore birds which she can observe from her windows, Mrs. Warnholtz quickly realized that this was something different from the other shorebirds seen regularly each year. A quick check in her Peterson Bird Guide convinced her that what she was looking at was an American Oystercatcher.

Peterson's description of the American Oystercatcher is the most concise. It reads:

"A very noisy, thick-set, black headed shorebird with a dark back, white belly, large white wing and tail patches."

The Audubon Encyclopedia adds:

"The most distinguishing feature is the long, sturdy red bill, more than twice as long as the bird's head, laterally compressed, shaped almost like the double-edged knife of lobstermen, with a chisel-like tip."

It is difficult to be precise about the northern limits of the American Oystercatcher's range. It is on record that when Audubon, one of the pioneer birders of North America, visited this part of the continent around 1840, he found them breeding as far north as Labrador. Today, the northern limit seems to be in the New Jersey area. This may be another example of wasteful killing. Today these birds are legally protected and it may be that they will again, some day, reclaim their lost territories along our shores.

While researching on Oystercatchers, I came across a story related by Walter Hoxie in 1887. Mr. Hoxie was an egg collector, a practice now outlawed, and was watching a pair of Oystercatchers, hoping to get the eggs. He wrote:

"Both birds were standing near the nest when one flew off to a distance of about 100 yards. After looking carefully about for a few minutes he gave a call, and his mate rose from her nest and joined him.

They seemed to be making a lot of fuss, kicking up the sand, squatting down, and cackling like mad. In a few minutes they seemed to get over their excitement, and one bird came flying back and settled on the eggs.

Now she began to act strangely, wiggling round and squatting down again, and I began to think she was going to lay another egg, when off she went and joined her mate who welcomed her with the most extravagant cries and gestures. But she sat down, quite still and demure.

I was about to rise when I saw her coming back. Again she went through the same performance and her second welcome was, if possible, more exuberant than the first.

Then, all was quiet. One bird sat on the sand and the other stood silently by her, and though I waited some time they showed no sign of returning to their eggs, and I could only conclude that they had seen me watching them and would not come back until I went away. So, I rose from my uncomfortable position and went to pick up the eggs, when to my surprise the little hollow in the sand was empty.

While I was watching the curious antics of the female she had lifted the eggs between her legs and carried them off."

It would be interesting to hear from anyone living around the lakes or coast line who may catch another sighting of this interesting stranger.

--Frank Robertson

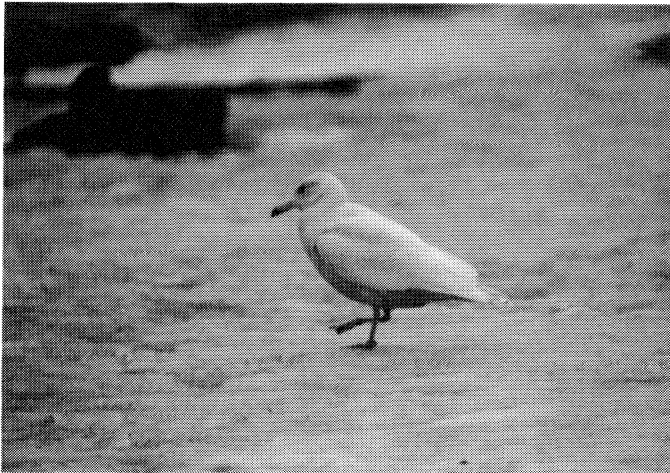
Editor, NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS:

Since mid January of this year, a most disturbing scenario has commenced at Sullivan's Pond in Dartmouth. The local waterfowl and gulls have been exposed to a new and deadly threat. Apparently some person, as yet unknown, consumed with a burning desire for mink and muskrat pelts, has begun setting steel-toothed, leg-hold traps, the result being a mixture of dead birds ranging from gulls to ducks. This unlawful act was first brought to my attention by Clarence Stevens II of Dartmouth, on February 4. I telephoned fellow birder Jim Taylor, also of Dartmouth, and informed him of the problem. Jim's first move was to phone Alderman Condo Sarto, who in turn phoned me, promising immediate action.

The following day, Alderman Sarto notified the Dartmouth Police Department and their stepped-up surveillance of the pond area resulted in the culprit going underground. However, no one as yet has been either charged or arrested. Therefore, all concerned parties are advised to note and report any suspicious activity in the Sullivan's Pond area from now on.

A beautiful over-wintering Wood Duck first noted at Sullivan's in January, had his legs cut off and died only days after this writer saw him there January 19. Let's do all within our power to prevent this from ever happening again!

--Fulton L. Lavender



Because it was only Herring Gull size, this first-year Glaucous Gull puzzled some observers at Sullivan's Pond this winter.  
Photo by Bill Caudle



A WINTER BIRD COUNT  
by  
Shirley Cohrs

On a mid-March visit to our cottage on the South Shore, it occurred to me that a bird-count conducted at that time of year would give a much more accurate picture of the winter population than that done at Christmas time.

Many of the Christmas Count birds do not over-winter. A glance at the Christmas list will quickly show that some species are lingering birds of our summer population whose urge to go south has somehow not materialized. No one seems to know why; whether they are old or sick individuals or whether something else has gone awry with their normal instincts. It is gratifying to count a Solitary Vireo or a Wilson's Warbler on December 31, but with the thrill of adding to the list is a feeling of sadness that the bird is undoubtedly doomed. In my opinion, few of these birds do "get the lead out and GO." I feel they eke out an existence for as long as possible before the cold and lack of food finish them off. Incidentally, it seems to me that some species are more prone to this behavior than others. Birds like Northern Orioles, Winter Wrens, Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Palm Warblers, for example, are often still about in December, but not in February or March.

As well as tardy summer species, we encounter a good number of strays on the Christmas Counts, mostly from the west. Birds like Western Kingbird, Orange-crowned Warbler, Eastern Meadowlark, White-crowned Sparrow. Their fate seems to be the same as the "native" lingerers. Having in mind all the above, two of us conducted a survey of truly overwintering birds. We used the area of the Broad Cove Christmas Count and although we did not do it all in one day from 7:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., we covered the area very carefully over a three day period ( March 12, 13, 14) from 9:30-12:00 and 1:00-3:30 each day.

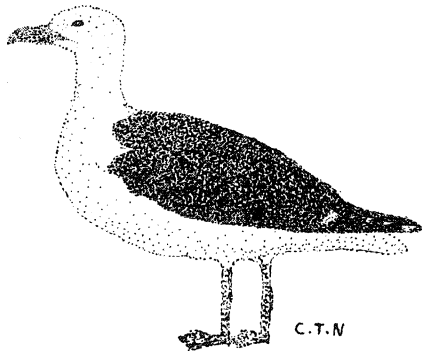
No spring migrants were seen, with the possible exception of Canada Geese, which flew overhead going North in lovely honking skeins. However, as the cottage is situated about 35 miles from Port Joli, I think that these birds were from the large number that overwinter there each year. So, we counted them.

We came up with 38 species; on December 29, last, 83 species were counted. We did miss a few usually around in winter: Red-breasted Nuthatches and Brown Creepers. There were no woodpeckers and few hawks, but that is normal for the area where they are always few and far between.

Perhaps we should consider moving the Christmas Counts to mid-February to get a truer picture of winter birds. On second thought-- who would go! Here is our list:

Common Loon	41
Horned Grebe	3
Red-necked Grebe	4
Great Cormorant	33
Canada Goose	146
Am. Black Duck	45
Mallard	6
Greater Scaup	1100
Common Eider	100
Oldsquaw	7
Black Scoter	440

Common Goldeneye	<u>1050</u>
Bufflehead	7
Common Merganser	9
Red-breasted Merganser	11
Bald Eagle	2
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1
Red-tailed Hawk	1
Herring Gull	1060
Great Black-backed Gull	210
Belted Kingfisher	1
Horned Lark	1
Blue Jay	1
American Crow	75
Common Raven	5
Black-capped Chickadee	65
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1
European Starling	20
Song Sparrow	15
Dark-eyed Junco	22
Snow Bunting	9
Pine Grosbeak	2
Wh.-winged Crossbill	<u>1300</u>
Pine Siskin	11
American Goldfinch	<u>1720</u>
House Sparrow	<u>10</u>



## THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE RIVENDELL EAGLES

## VI. THE END - AND THE BEGINNING - OF AN ERA

by

R. G. S. Bidwell,  
Wallace, Nova Scotia

RBD.

It is some time since I have reported on the comings and goings of the Bald Eagles of Rivendell. They have been as busy as ever, constantly rebuilding and improving the nest (it is about seven feet across now, and must be four feet thick) and maintaining an almost constant presence on their own private section of the Wallace River. They are seldom away for more than a few days at a stretch, even in the coldest part of winter, and we have not been able to determine if they retreat to the "Florida Keys" of Shubenacadie or the Annapolis Valley where large numbers congregate during the winter. Perhaps the young from the nest do "go south", they are rarely to be seen near the nest in mid-winter. They usually return briefly in early March, but are not encouraged to linger about by the adults. The parent birds do not drive them off as vigorously as they would deal with invading adults, but they are escorted off quite firmly, and are not encouraged to hang around. The resident pair do get bothered by house-hunting pairs from time to time, but the invaders are strongly attacked, often with talon-locking contests, and always end up flying off quickly while the defenders set up a triumphant chorus of shrieking and howling. Nobody ever gets hurt.

The eagle population of the area seems to be increasing slightly even though usually only half the active nests in our area successfully raise young in any year. One lovely nest near Malagash fell down last year. It was built in the crotch of a poplar tree and the main supporting branch broke. Three downy eaglets perished in that calamity; if the parents have rebuilt, we have not yet found their new nest. Our own pair were unsuccessful in 1981 and 1982; in both years they laid eggs which later broke. They are very early birds, for eagles, and usually lay in mid to late March. It seems possible that the eggs did not survive the cold and storms of our harsh late

winter (early spring?). In each case, the adults continued to maintain the nest and stayed in the neighborhood for the summer, even though they had no young.

In 1983, one young was raised. This was an unusual juvenile because it was far larger than the parents (who were large as Bald Eagles go) and seemed to have a learning problem. The parents worked endlessly with it at the business of flying, but it seemed particularly inept and staggered rather than glided through the air, finding the mastery of updrafts almost beyond its comprehension. Eagles seldom flap when flying, unless they are in a hurry, but soar buoyantly on updrafts, travelling even upwind at surprising speeds without any apparent effort. If you watch closely with a powerful telescope you can see the "fingers" of the huge wing primary feathers turning and spreading and adjusting to maintain maximum lift in the constantly varying air currents. Well, the juvenile never seemed to get it right. It was always tipping one way or the other, sometimes falling off altogether and catching itself in a flurry of flying feathers about 50 feet below. Its worst problem was that it seemed to be unable to learn to feed itself. It talked (loudly, as eagles always do) about this problem all summer and right up to its departure time in late fall, mostly sitting on a tree and screaming for help instead of feeding itself. We got to think of it as "the retarded eagle", and wondered if it could survive. However, a very large juvenile has visited from time to time since then, and its characteristic slow flight and habit of sitting on the perch tree across the river and screaming suggest that it came from this nest. So it must have made it!

Last year the Rivendell Eagles raised twins, always a trying business for eagles. As usual, the young hatched early, were larger than their parents, and kept the river in an uproar the whole summer. There seemed to be only one pair of ospreys instead of the usual two, and they rather kept their distance. Ospreys enjoy teasing juvenile eagles, but the twins seemed to have a sense of co-operation, and if one got attacked the other usually appeared on the scene at once. Two eagles are one more than one osprey cares to deal with at one time, so the eaglets were left pretty much alone. There was a certain amount of sibling rivalry, though, and this caused more than the usual amount of trouble with the crows. They love to snatch tidbits of an eagle's dinner from under its beak, and this is much easier to do if the eagle is involved in a hot argument with its twin about which of them should be getting first crack at the lovely bit of ripe sucker that papa has found for their breakfast. However, they seemed to learn well, not like the great oaf from the previous year. We have since seen one juvenile at times during the winter, but never two together, so we cannot say if both survived. One, at least, is still with us.

This spring the Rivendell Eagles got started early, as usual, and worked on their nest throughout February and early March. We missed the annual courting ritual, but it must have taken place because the female started sitting on March 22nd. Her consort faithfully fed her once or twice a day, though he had to work very hard to get food because the river was still deeply frozen. However, he seemed to manage. We had been somewhat concerned about his health because his head was oddly marked and his face feathers looked very spiky and untidy. We speculated that he might have got mixed up in a trap--a large number of raptors get killed every year by being caught in traps set for fur-bearing mammals. However, he seemed to be recovering. Then, on April 2nd., we had a fierce blizzard, and he disappeared. His body was found next day in the snow on the river ice about two miles away, terribly battered. Apparently he flew into a bridge or power line, or else was hit by a vehicle on the road. At first it was thought that he had been shot, but a careful autopsy performed by Department of Lands and Forests biologists showed no sign of gunshot wounds. He was just unlucky.

The female evidently knew that he had gone, for she left the nest next day and spent the day circling about the vicinity, calling and evidently searching. Then she left. We have not been able to find out what happens to the survivor from an established pair of Bald Eagles when one is killed. We are told that they mate for life, and that the survivor is unlikely to mate again. Whether it dies, or continues to live in solitude, we do not know. It was a very sad occasion at Rivendell--that pair of eagles had been with us continuously for nine years, and we were stunned by the loss. Life without the Rivendell Eagles loomed empty indeed.

However, as a neighbor observed, "life goes on!". Scarcely a week after the tragic loss, the neighborhood was awakened by the raucous cries of a pair of eagles, evidently house-hunting, who had discovered the untenanted nest. They lost no time in taking possession, and settled down at once to make urgent changes in the internal decor as well as structural modifications to the main fabric of the nest. The brought in a great mass of new material, and cleaned out much of the previous inner lining. The egg left by the previous owners was unceremoniously tossed out; we found it next day on the ground (broken, of course) together with a very large amount of discarded or second-hand building materials. The ground around an eagle nest site is usually about as tidy as a municipal dump, but the pile of broken branches, dried-up twigs and old hay following this energetic spring-cleaning was quite phenomenal. We also discovered, from the debris, that the previous pair had been feeding on a long-dead racoon and some left-over groundhog, as well as the usual fish. We also found the remains of a sea gull carcass. One suspects that the sea gull died before it was caught by the eagle, not after.

The new pair of eagles are somewhat smaller than the previous pair, and give evidence of being rather new at the business. They appear rather nervous, and do not spend long hours just sitting, or sitting and shouting, as the old pair did. Perhaps that is because of their newness in the territory. They quickly discovered the perch tree, and sometimes use the various other places the previous pair had considered it appropriate to sit in. However, they have developed a number of new perching sites of their own, and some of these appear to be decidedly inappropriate, or at least inconvenient, places for eagles to sit. Clearly, it takes them a little time to learn the ropes.

Eagles seem to be creatures of habit, and one of the most pronounced habits of the old pair was that they got their supply of branches and twigs for nest-building from one specific poplar tree, and their hay for lining the nest from one place on the riverside interval. The new eagles prefer a different poplar tree for their twigs and branches, and a different hay field for the dead grass to line their nest. Collecting grass is an occupation that is particularly hazardous to the dignity of eagles. They drop down into the field, making a lot of circles and false starts because they seem to feel most insecure on the ground except on the river bed; finally they get up their courage and land. Then they grab grass with their talons and jump up and down till they loosen a bunch. Then they pounce on a new clump, doing a crazy jig first on one foot, then the other, with wings flapping and beak wide open with cries of effort, until they have accumulated a great rat's nest of grass in their feet. They fly off, very stiffly from the unaccustomed position of their feet--straight down, instead of out behind--looking like great flapping exclamation points. The nest must be pretty well lined by now. Certainly it has got very much larger than it was; a veritable eagle mansion, with high new bulwarks all round.

The new pair seem rather more public about their private lives than the old pair, but in spite of repeated attempts they have not yet managed to produce an egg. This happened to the previous pair in their first season; perhaps it is a regular occurrence. At any rate, they have had plenty to keep them occupied, and they still spend a few hours each day improving the nest. It looks as though they plan to stay. Another adult came by a couple of times recently (possibly the previous owner?) and they acted as if they were in full possession. Their first encounter was quite uncharacteristic; they both crouched over the nest with wings outspread, as if they were hiding it. Next time, however, one of the new pair, presumably the male, took after the intruder and chased it off smartly. It is now (early May) too late for them to raise a chick this year, but we trust that they will have worked out the details by next spring. In the meantime, life goes on--the Rivendell Eagles are still with us, and a new era has begun.

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#### LONG-EARED OWL



Marcie Rogers of Yarmouth, on Feb. 10, "took pictures, one after the other, slowly advancing towards the owl, and finally got this one as he remained undisturbed."

HALIFAX AREA FALL BIRD COUNT

What is it? It is the same as a Christmas count but the number of species should be at a maximum.

Where is it? It will take place within a 12 mile (20km) radius circle centered somewhere between Lawrencetown and Porters Lake in Halifax county. The lighthouses on McNabs Island and in Musquodobit Harbour are the two extremes of the shore line portion. It includes many trails to the north of highway #7.

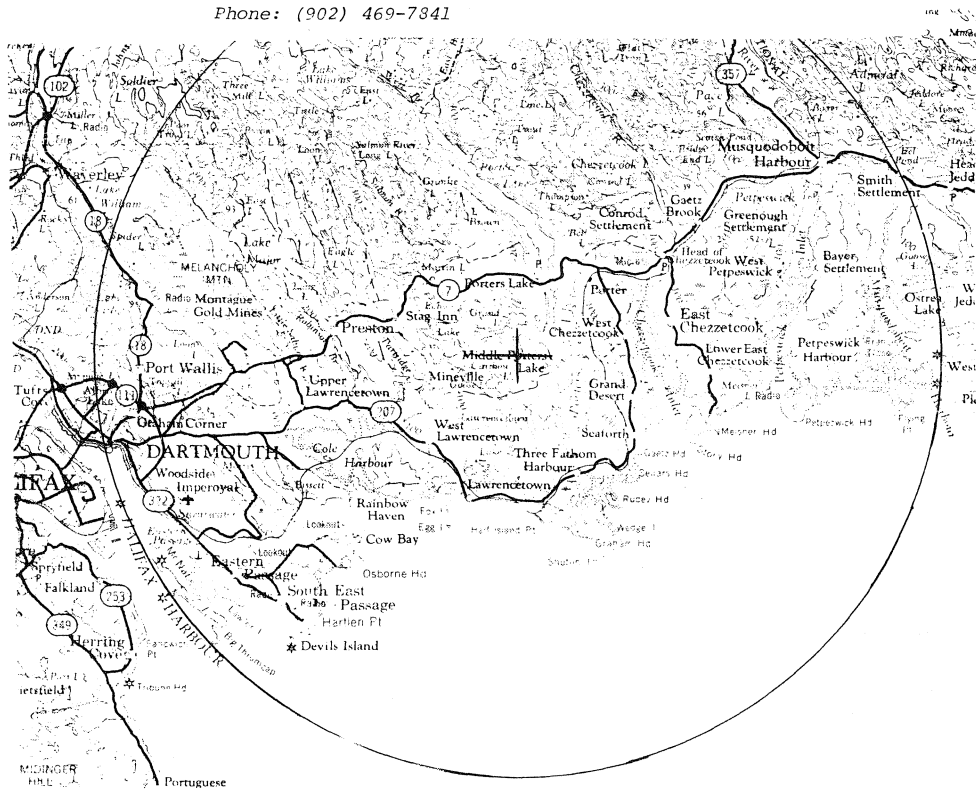
When is it? Sunday, September 8th, 1985.

Who does it? Please let me know which specific area you would like to count, (some are already spoken for) it is first come first served.

Why do it? This is a fun event the results will be tallied at a picnic in Shubie Park, Dartmouth all welcome, bring your barbecue, hot dogs, steaks etc. and have a fun evening.

For details and assignment of specific count areas please contact:

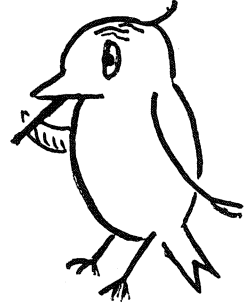
Bill Caudle  
37 Peddars Way  
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia  
B2Y 4E2  
Phone: (902) 469-7341



COLLECTIVE NOUNS

Derek and Glennys Hutton sent the following to add to the collection:

A duvet of	Eider
A carpet of	Shag
An asylum of	Loon
A tank of	Petrel
A shishkebab of	Skua
A string of	Kite
A peristalsis of	Swallow
A bicker of	Flicker
A gasp of	Puffin
A skirl of	Sandpiper
A cord of	Woodpecker
A glut of	Gannet
A bag of	Killdeer
A herd of	Cowbird
A cringe of	Quail
A chain of	Bobolink



Gerry Bennett had some good ones too:

A complaint of	Grouse
A Lilliput of	Pewees
A donkey of	Pintails
A revelry of	Larks
A deceit of	Gulls
A bee of	Thrashers
A clock of	Cuckoos
A demeaning of	Snipe
A fichu of	Ruffs
A college of	Cardinals
A tangle of	Creepers
A road-gang of	Shovelers
A sorrow of	Bluebirds

If one is a baseball fan, a good one is "a sacrifice of buntings".

More please.....

ERRATUM

On Page 11 of NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS, April, 1985, the date for the Bohemian Waxwing record read February 19th; it should have read February 9th.



RARE, OBSCURE, AND PROBLEMATIC

Frank Robertson sent us a snap of this "mystery bird" which attended a New Waterford feeder some years ago. IAM believes it is a partial albino, Black-capped Chickadee, from its shape, wing and tail color (evidently unaffected) and beak shape. Any other guesses?



Did no one get a better picture than this one (by the photo editor) of the Halifax Jackdaw? If you did, send it for a future portrait page.

The strong back stripes of this Sharp-tailed Sparrow mark it as something other than the local 'Acadian' race. From its diffuse breast stripes, ELM, IAM and Herb Wilson concluded that it was of the James Bay race. Cape Sable Island, May, 1985.

Photo-Ian McLaren



## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas is looking for a COORDINATOR to oversee the day-to-day operation of the Atlas project. The ideal candidate will have demonstrated abilities in most or all of the following fields;

- project planning and organization
- birding
- oral and written communication
- working with volunteer groups
- computer programming

The project will last five to six years, and this position will be full time for at least the first 18 months. The location is Halifax. Applications will be accepted until August 31, 1985.

Send your resume to:

The Maritimes Bird Atlas Trust  
c/o Natural History Section  
Nova Scotia Museum  
1747 Summer Street,  
Halifax, N.S. B3H 3A6

Hiring for this position is contingent upon the successful outcome of funding negotiations.

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MARITIMES BREEDING BIRD ATLAS

The Atlas project is alive and well and living all over the Maritime Provinces. If you would like to take part, or to just receive our newsletter, you can reach us by mail at:

The Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas  
c/o Natural History Section, Nova Scotia Museum  
1747 Summer Street, Halifax, N.S. B3H 3A6

or you can call one of the following:

Fredericton: Peter Pearce	(506) 452-3086 (W)
	(506) 455-7042 (H)
Albert: David Christie	(506) 882-2100
Halifax: Peter Payzant	(902) 428-6841 (W)
	(902) 861-1607 (H)
Charlottetown: Rosemary Curley	(902) 651-2585

SURVEY OF  
19TH CENTURY ORNITHOLOGY IN  
NOVA SCOTIA  
IAN McLAREN

PART I (cont.) ANNOTATED LIST OF UNUSUAL RECORDS

PASSENGER PIGEON

Some fragmentary knowledge can be added to the accounts by Tufts (1962, 1973). To Blakiston and Bland (1856) it was still evidently "sometimes very abundant: arrives about end of July." This suggests that it no longer nested extensively in Nova Scotia by mid-century, yet Downs (1865) does not mention it at all. Jones (1879) states that "this bird some thirty or forty years ago was extremely abundant in the fall, but has now apparently forsaken the province." Its abundance in pioneer times in Pictou County is detailed by McKinlay (1885). The remotely possible report of one on Sable Island in 1903 (McLaren 1981) should probably not be taken seriously.

MOURNING DOVE

A pair from Nova Scotia is listed in Gesner's (1842) collection. Blakiston and Bland (1856) and Downs (1865) do not include it, whereas Jones (1879) found it "not uncommon" in autumn. Downs (1888) states that it "appears to be becoming rather common, though "once was rare." Piers (1894) adds a few notes on specimens. Perhaps its recent upsurge (Tufts 1962, 1973) had an earlier counterpart.

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO

Blakiston and Bland (1856) state: "Rare; arrives about 1st June; breeds." They also list Black-billed Cuckoo, on Downs' authority, as "very rare", which suggests possible confusion of the two species. Downs (1865) lists neither cuckoo. Jones (1879) states that it was "very rare." Downs (1888) is more expansive: "Very rare. One of these birds I recently mounted . . . and Mr. Egan obtained the nest in Cunard's grounds. This is the only record of its being taken in Nova Scotia." The latter statement may refer to the specimen or to the dubious nest.

EASTERN SCREECH OWL

Haliburton (1825) includes "Little Screech Owl" on his list, but this could be any small owl. He also includes "Horned Owl", "Whooping Owl", and "Barn Owl", the last obviously unsupported. Gesner (1842) seems more precise in listing a male and female as "Strix Asio. L. Little Screech Owl" in his collection from Nova Scotia. But, as he does not include Saw-whet Owl, nothing short of extant specimens would make his record acceptable. The specimen taken in September 1892 (Tufts 1962, 1973) and recorded by Piers (1894) now stands as the province's only record, with the withdrawal of a 1958 sighting (Tufts 1973).

GREAT HORNED OWL

Gilpin (1881) says that "a specimen shot at Digby, February 1876 . . . was nearly white, washed by pale ferruginous, and barred and spotted with light brown" and that he "thought it might have been of the Arctic variety." It may indeed have been Bubo virginianus subarcticus, from his description.

NORTHERN HAWK OWL

Tufts (1962, 1973) does not refer to its 19th century status, mentioning only two specimens taken in 1898 (also reported in H. F. Tufts 1899). However, there are indications that it was more common in early times and that it may have resided in the province year round. Blakiston and Bland (1856) state: "Common: breeds mostly north." Downs (1865) says that it is "in some years very abundant in winter", but that it "breeds in Newfoundland." Jones (1879) has it "not uncommon throughout the year" and describes a daytime sighting (season?). Gilpin (1881) describes it as a "a winter visitor . . . some years ago . . . then not seen for years, and of late returning singly." Downs (1888) and Piers (1892a) both state "now . . . very rare" and the latter gives several specimen records (Piers 1892a, 1894, 1898). As it has not been so frequent in this century, is it possible that this diurnal owl did not fare well after human settlement, either as a resident or as a winter visitor?

## LONG-EARED OWL

Blakiston and Bland (1856), Downs (1865), Gilpin (1881), Jones (1885), and Downs (1888) all designated it as "rare" or "not common", so it is of interest that H. F. Tufts (1899) has it as "common except in winter" in Kings County. Evidently it has not changed in its centre of distribution since.

## GREAT GRAY OWL

Tufts (1962) refers to Piers' notes for the only 19th century record as "before 1882." The source is Gilpin (1881), who says: "Taken some years ago in Pictou County, and a specimen was in the collection of the late Dr. McCulloch of Pictou town."

## BOREAL OWL

Blakiston and Bland (1856) list it (as "Tengmalm's Owl") as "rare: resident inland." This is surprising and may represent confusion with the Northern Saw-whet Owl (given as "Acadian Owl"), which they rate as "common", and with an unknown "Sparrow Owl, (*N. passerina*)", which was "found inland: very rare." Downs (1865) says: "Not common here, but abundant in Newfoundland." Jones (1879) has it as "rare", and Downs (1888) as "becoming very rare", both reiterating that it breeds in Newfoundland, and thus implying a non-resident status.

## CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW

Haliburton's (1825) list surprisingly includes "Great Bat, or Chuck-will's Widow, or Goatsucker", along with "whip poor Will" and "Night Hawk". This may well be simply confusion. Tufts (1962, 1973) reports the first concrete record as "late in October, about 1890." Piers' (1894) original comment was "three years ago, towards the end of October"; hence the ambiguity of date. This was indeed, as Piers stressed, a first for Canada (Ontario's first in 1906).

## RED-HEADED WOODPECKER

The species is not in Blakiston and Bland (1856) or Jones (1879). Downs (1865) includes no woodpeckers, but later (Downs 1888) gives the Red-headed Woodpecker as: "Very rare: only a mere straggler." Piers (1894) records one in Egan's collection "in full plumage" collected "at Ketch harbour, about ten years ago." This may be the concrete basis for Downs' (1888) annotation.

## THREE-TOED WOODPECKER

Tufts (1962, 1973) mentions no 19th century occurrences. A possible sighting appears to be that of Morrell (1899), who spent the period 1 December 1897 to 4 April 1898 in Cumberland County, and who reported (under "Picoides americanus, Am. Three-toed Woodpecker") seeing two males and a female at a logging camp near River Hebert. Other records given by him are routine and plausible. The Black-backed Woodpecker was regularly reported, beginning with Blakiston and Bland (1856).

## ACADIAN FLYCATCHER

The Empidonax species were confused in the 19th century, as they still are. Haliburton (1825) lists the unidentifiable "Lesser Pewit, or Brown and Greenish Fly Catcher." Blakiston and Bland (1856) gives only the "Green-crested Flycatcher, (*M. Acadica*)" of the (modern) genus, which was "not uncommon." Downs (1865) says that this same species "frequents the woods." Jones (1879) calls it "Empidonax acadicus (*Gm.*), Bd., Green-crested Fly-catcher" and says it is "rather rare", but also gives "E. minimus, Bd., Least Fly-catcher" as "very rare." It is noteworthy that Bryant (1857) had earlier convincingly described the habitat and voice of the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (as Tyrannus flaviventris) in the Yarmouth area in the summer of 1856, and listed no other Empidonax species. Downs (1888) correctly gives all three currently recognized Empidonax species as "common" or "rather common." It is surprising that Hickman (1896) was still able to report (surely wrongly) only the "Little Green-crested Flycatcher" as: "breeds, common."

## PURPLE MARTIN

Tufts (1962) wonders "at what period it became established in the province." Haliburton (1825) includes "Martin" with "white bellied" and Barn Swallow" in his list. Blakiston and Bland include Purple Martin as "occasional", on Downs' authority. Downs (1865) gives first-hand observations of it in Windsor in 1863. Jones (1879) says: "Not common. Frequents the interior of the province, but is very rarely seen on the sea coast." Downs (1888) seems to echo his earlier remarks in having

it as "more common about Windsor." Hickman (1896) listed it as "common" around Pictou by 8 June 1896. Altogether, these observations suggest that it was well established during the 19th century in much the same areas where it was found at the beginning of the present century (per Tufts 1962, 1973).

#### FISH CROW

Blakiston and Bland (1856) thought it to be "resident: rare", on the authority of Downs. Downs (1888) in a footnote states that he thinks ("from their small size") that he had shot some, but withholds listing the species because of "differences of opinion held by naturalists as to its occurrence here." Its occurrence is of course implausible.

#### BROWN-HEADED NUTHATCH

Blakiston and Bland (1856) list White-breasted Nuthatch as "not common" and the Red-breasted species as "common", but also give "Brown-headed Nuthatch, (*S. pusilla*)" as "very rare". It was included on the authority of Downs, who did not list any nuthatches a decade later (Downs 1865, 1866). Jones (1879) also includes the Brown-headed as "very rare", but a query by the editor of Forest and Stream, in the third part of Jones' series on Nova Scotian birds, evoked a statement from Jones that it had been taken from the list of Blakiston and Bland. Downs (1888) includes only the two expected species, but his list also excludes a number of records that had been well established earlier, possibly because of vetting by Harry Piers. There is only a very remote possibility that this sedentary species could have occurred as a stray.

#### GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH

There appear to be no 19th century reports of this still seldom-seen species. It was considered to be a race of the Swainson's Thrush in some general works of the day, so may have been included under that species by some Nova Scotian observers.

#### WOOD THRUSH

The name first appears in Jones (1879), who states that it is "rather rare on the coast, but met with occasionally in the interior, especially in the Wild Forest. At Stewiacke, Colchester Co., Mr. William Winters has procured some eggs." However, Jones otherwise lists only Hermit and Swainson's Thrush, and his "Wood Thrush" might be the Veery. This is suggested by the annotation for the Veery by Downs (1888), who writes: Not very common, (only inland). Breeds at Stewiacke."

#### EASTERN BLUEBIRD

It was not listed by Blakiston and Bland (1856), Downs says it "is only occasionally seen", and Jones (1879) has it as "rare." Downs (1888) says: "uncommon. I have seen it breeding in an apple tree at Kentville. It appears to be getting a footing in Nova Scotia." Evidently the bird was scarce here even in pre-starring days.

#### NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD

Tufts (1962), quoting Dwight (1896), gives a first provincial record for 1 July 1889. McLennan (1889) and Downs (1894) earlier reported that this bird had been taken alive on 30 June 1889 at Truro. The next was a specimen taken on Sable Island in the fall of 1894 (McLaren 1981).

#### BOHEMIAN WAXWING

Tufts (1962, 1973) quotes Piers on the first provincial record, dated evidently wrongly as during "the winter of 1863-64." This record of "a flock of twelve . . . near Three-mile House, eleven of which were shot as specimens . . ." is noted by Jones (1879) without date. Downs (1865, 1888) gives some details and include the date as "winter of 1864-65." This date is repeated by Piers (1894), who gives the only other 19th century report, of a male shot at Porter's Lake on 16 November 1893.

#### LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE

Blakiston and Bland (1856), Downs (1865) and Jones (1879) all mention Northern Shrike as a winter visitor, but Jones (1879) also includes Loggerhead Shrike as "very rare", without amplification. Downs (1888) does not mention it. Hickman (1896) reports one plausibly for 27 June 1895 as a "rare, s. migrant."

## WARBLING VIREO

Tufts (1963) states that "Willis's (1859) statement that it is 'not common', and Down's [sic] (1888) assertion that it is a 'common summer resident', are doubtless due to confusion with another species", and also that "Hickman's (1896) reference to its occurrence is vague." However, the 19th century references to vireos deserve some review. Blakiston and Bland (1856) give "Warbling Vireo, (*Vireo gilvus*) - Rare", while Solitary and Red-eyed Vireos are "not common" and "very common" respectively, very much as today. Downs (1865) has Solitary Vireo as "rare" and Warbling Vireo as "common", stating that the latter "nests about the village, generally on the slopes of the hills among the birch groves." Significantly, he leaves out Red-eyed Vireo, so that surely his comments on "Warbling Vireo" are suspect. Jones (1879) lists Red-eyed Vireo as "common", Solitary Vireo as "rare", and Warbling Vireo as "not uncommon", but his grasp is questionably extended to include White-eyed Vireo as "not uncommon." Downs (1888) correctly retrieves the Red-eyed Vireo as "common" in "hard-wood groves", but is less sure about the Solitary Vireo, which "probably occurs", and still insists that the Warbling Vireo is a "common summer resident". Only Hickman's (1896) report of one at Pictou on 20 June 1895, remarked on as "rare", has some air of plausibility.

## WOOD WARBLERS

It is instructive to consider the Wood Warblers on the 19th century provincial lists. Rather surprisingly, Haliburton (1825) includes only "Summer Yellow Bird", an old name for Yellow Warbler, which he distinguishes from "Goldfinch or Yellow Bird." Blakiston and Bland (1856) list all species, except the Tennessee Warbler, that are known to nest here today. The same species with some nomenclatural changes appear in Jones (1879). Downs (1865) curiously misses the Canada Warbler. However, he does note the Tennessee Warbler, finding it "rather common inland." The three substantial lists also contain some puzzlers. Blakiston and Bland (1856) state that the "Hemlock Warbler, (*S. parus*)" is "resident in autumn: departs in November." Downs (1865) includes Hemlock Warbler - (*S. parus*) as "only one specimen." *Sylvia parus*, as figured by Wilson and Audubon, is generally recognized as representing immature Blackburnian Warbler. However, the reference to autumn occurrence by Blakiston and Bland (1856) suggests that they might have confused it with the superficially similar immature Blackpoll Warbler. Downs' (1865) bird is unplaceable. Blakiston and Bland (1856) give "Yellow-pole Warbler, (*S. vestiva*)", the Latin species name probably a misprint for aestiva, as "common: arrives about 5th May", which is a plausible statement for the Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica aestiva*). However, Downs (1865) says of the Yellow-poll Warbler - (*S. aestiva*) "that he had "shot a few . . . but [knew] little of its habits." In addition, he lists the "Blue-eyed Yellow Warbler", without Latin name, stating that "this familiar little warbler breeds in the vicinity of dwellings, generally in a gooseberry or lilac bush." This is clearly the Yellow Warbler (the name was used in other 19th century works), but leaves unanswered what Downs meant by "Yellow-poll Warbler - (*S. aestiva*)"; it is not the Yellow-rumped Warbler, which he does include. The statements about abundance of the various species probably reflect increasing knowledge, rather than changes in status. Blakiston and Bland (1856) give Northern Parula, Nashville, Cape May, Black-throated Blue, Blackpoll, and Mourning Warblers, as well as Northern Waterthrush, as "rare" or "very rare", all but the Nashville Warbler and Northern Waterthrush being included on Downs' authority. Of these, only the Northern Parula and Cape May Warbler remained as "rare" on Downs' (1888) list, although the former had previously been thought by Jones (1879) to be "often heard" inland. So, only the Cape May Warbler in Nova Scotia, as evidently elsewhere in North America, may have in fact been an uncommon bird in the 19th century. I consider three other species mentioned on these lists, as they are mere vagrants today.

## WORM-EATING WARBLER

Hickman (1896), who lists 8 species of warblers for sensible times for spring in Pictou, also includes a Worm-eating Warbler on 20 June 1895, with the dubious note: "breeds rare".

## CERULEAN WARBLER

This is listed as "Blue-green Warbler, (*S. Coerulea*) - Very rare" in Blakiston and Bland (1856). The English name is from Wilson's description and Audubon's plate of what has been recognized as the Cerulean Warbler, and the Latin name is that accepted for the same species. Downs (1865) says of his "Blue-Green Warbler" (no Latin name given) merely that "this species is very rare." Jones (1879) also includes it

and comments thus: "D. Coerulea (Wils.), Bd., Caerulean Warbler. — Coues gives N.S. as a habitat of this species, but I have never heard of its capture in the province." Coues was apparently referring to the account by Blakiston and Bland (1856) via Willis's (1859) version. Evidently Jones did not match the name "Blue-green" in the list by Blakiston and Bland (which he used otherwise) with the Cerulean Warbler. I suggest that the Tennessee Warbler, which eluded 19th century observers until Downs (1888) listed it (see previous page), might be the basis for these records of Cerulean alias "Blue-green" Warbler, which it superficially resembles except for the latter's wingbars.

#### LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH

Jones (1879, p. 66) lists, along with the Northern Waterthrush, "S. ludovicianus (V.), Bp., Large-billed Waterthrush" as: "Common. More frequently seen at the close of summer when on its migration South." However, a later note by the editor (in Jones 1879, p. 203) states that "Sieurus motacilla (Sieurus ludovicianus), should not have been included on the list, its appearance there being due to a mistake." Hickman (1896) lists, with like unreliability, the species for Pictou on 12 and 20 June 1895, with the remark: "breeds, not common."

#### SCARLET TANAGER

Tufts (1962) gives the impression that all records have been since 1915. Haliburton (1825) includes "Summer Red Bird", an old name for this species. Blakiston and Bland (1856) rate it as "accidental" on Downs' authority, but Downs (1865, 1888) does not mention it. Jones (1879) claimed that "Mr. Egan has received both male and female for preservation." McKinlay (1885) wrote that in Pictou County "some twenty years ago, considerable numbers of Scarlet Tanagers were found here about the 10th of May . . . none since." Piers (1894) reported the same event as occurring "about 1873", and noted that some were emaciated and others found dead. Downs (1888) may have been referring to McKinlay's report when he stated that "a few occur in spring but generally die." Chamberlin (1881) documented another such arrival, on Brier Island on 15 April 1881. Evidently this species was "overshooting" to Nova Scotia a century ago, as it does today.

#### SUMMER TANAGER

Tufts (1962) states, on Piers' authority, that this species was first recorded in 1898. However, Chamberlin (1887a) notes that "one has been sent to Mr. Boardman from Halifax and two from Grand Manan." Further, Downs (1888) refers to "one or two instances — spring." The record quoted by Tufts (1962) from Piers' notes was for 25 April 1898, characteristically early in the season.

#### NORTHERN CARDINAL

Tufts (1962, 1973) gives 1957 as the earliest provincial record. However, Jones (1879) reports that a female, in the company of a male, was shot in the present Point Pleasant Park, Halifax, on 31 January 1871. "The specimen was in perfect plumage, and nothing in its appearance denoted the probability of its having escaped from confinement." This record was noted also by Gilpin (1882b), but not by Downs (1888).

#### BLUE GROSBEAK

Gilpin (1882b) mentions "a Blue Grosbeak mounted by Mr. Downs", and Downs (1888) states that it was "shot at Four-mile House, Bedford Basin, in the spring", but gives no year. Tufts (1962, 1973) states from Piers' notes that it was collected in about 1880 by Robert Allen.

#### INDIGO BUNTING

Tufts (1962, 1973) does not give 19th century records, perhaps because Downs (1888) did not do so. Blakiston and Bland (1856), Downs (1866), and Jones (1879), all give it as "accidental" or "very rare", without details. Chamberlin (1881) obtained specimens from a "remarkable flight of birds to Brier Island on 15 April 1881, an event much like recent ones.

#### RUFOUS-SIDED TOWHEE

Haliburton (1825) includes "towhee" or "chewink" on his list of Nova Scotia birds, but of course without details. I have found no other 19th century reports.

## FIELD SPARROW

Haliburton (1825) included an unidentifiable "Little Field Sparrow" on his list. Blakiston and Bland (1856) and Downs (1866) reported only Chipping and Tree Sparrows of the genus *Spizella*. Jones (1879) added Field Sparrow as "common", while Downs (1888) thought it was "not very common", adding: A few observed about Mr. Winton's place. Breeds here. Summer resident." Hickman asserts that in the Pictou area it was first seen in 1895 on 13 April, became common by 27 April, and that it "breeds" and is "very common." It seems odd that all three observers could have been so mistaken, and it is hard to think of what species might have been misidentified, as all report on the present-day breeding sparrows of the province. McLaren (1981) thought that a sight record (equally doubtful?) of "several" on Sable Island on 4 October 1902 was a provincial first, but this may not be so.

## "IPSWICH SPARROW"

As this subspecies was only described in 1872, it was not noted in Nova Scotia prior to the recognition of Sable Island as its nesting place (Ridgway 1884, Merriam 1884). However, it was certainly collected earlier by Jones (1879), who described the bird clearly under the mistaken impression that they were Seaside Sparrows, "arriving . . . about the end of March, and frequenting the lowland contiguous to the shore." When his identification of Seaside Sparrow was queried by the editor of *Forest and Stream*, Jones (1879, p. 205) spoke of a single specimen shot about the middle of April 1877 on the "Lawrencetown sandhills" and stated "I shall send it to Washington for identification." Later, Jones (1886) reported that a bird eating seeds near shore at the end of March 1878 (therefore a different bird from the above) was collected and sent to Chamberlin in Saint John, where it was correctly pronounced to be an "Ipswich Sparrow."

## SHARP-TAILED SPARROW

Jones (1879) thought that his misidentified 1877 specimen of "Ipswich Sparrow" was "maritimus rather than caudacutus" (i.e., A Seaside rather than a Sharp-tailed Sparrow). Smith (1884) states that the Sharp-tailed (but not the Seaside) Sparrow was found at least as far as the Tantramar Marshes. Downs (1888) was able to state of the recently described subspecies subvirgatus: I think this bird occurs in the province." H. F. Tufts (1898) found it "common" in Kings County. There had been an evolution of perception over twenty years.

## FOX SPARROW

Tufts (1962, 1973) reported no breeding records, although much circumstantial evidence. Kempton (1891) described the purported nest and eggs of this species in an unstated part of Nova Scotia, but his address (Wolfville) and the sketchy site description ("partially cleared hemlock grove on high ground") raise some doubts.

## LINCOLN'S SPARROW

Recognition of this species may be some measure of the depth of avifaunal knowledge. The bird is not included by Blakiston and Bland (1856) or Downs (1866). Jones (1879) lists it in an addendum, stating that "Mr. Downs informs me that [it] was identified for him by Mr. Lawrence of New York, a few years ago." Brewster (1883), who had first thought it did not breed closer than Labrador, was informed that it was "numerous and apparently breeding within 30 miles of Halifax, N.S., during August, 1883." Downs (1888) finally recognizes it as "not uncommon inland."

## WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW

It is perhaps not too surprising that the bird was first recorded from Sable Island by Dwight, who secured a specimen on 1 June 1894. It is still most often seen on our islands in migration. The specimen is in the American Museum of Natural History, but I am uncertain of how Tufts (1962, 1973) became aware of it, as the record was evidently not published.

## RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD

As noted by Tufts (1962, 1973), this species was rare to uncommon in earlier times. He mentions only two 19th century records, both for 1899: one in Allen (1916) and one by H. F. Tufts, who had noted it as "rare" in his list of Kings County birds (H. F. Tufts 1899), but who gives no specimen records. Blakiston and Bland (1856) listed it as "occasional inland" on Downs' authority, although Downs (1866) did not include it. Jones (1879) noted it as "rare", and a small flock was reported by Gilpin (1882). Downs (1888) probably has it accurately as: "Very rare. Summer



resident. A few occur in the western part of the province."

#### EASTERN MEADOWLARK

Blakiston and Bland (1856) list it as "very rare; inland: one instance", on Downs' authority, but Downs (1866) and Jones (1879) do not include it. Downs (1888) reports it as: "Very rare. Only a mere straggler. One was shot at Stewiacke." This bird must have antedated that reported by Anonymous (1889b), who states per A. Downs that a female was collected on 16 February 1889. Piers gives the only other concrete 19th century record: one collected on 24 October 1895.

#### BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE

One of the more intriguing 19th century reports is the mention by Blakiston and Bland (1856) of "Great-Crow Blackbird, (*Quiscalus major.*) — Very rare." They include this bird on their own authority, and also include *Quiscalus versicolor*. Willis (1858), in his virtual facsimile of their list, adds one of his own few comments, stating: "Boat-tailed Grackle!! (*Quiscalus* [sic] *major*). Rare; only specimen I have seen was shot by A. Downs, esq., last summer, and is now in the case of birds belonging to Sir Gaspard LeMarchant. — J. R. Willis." Downs (1866) does not include any grackles, and Jones (1879) says of the Boat-tailed Grackle that "this species is mentioned on Col. Bland's list . . . and is introduced here for that reason." There is no subsequent mention of this possible record, although Common Grackle (see below) is recognized. It may be noted that Wintle (1882) supposed he had seen Boat-tailed Grackle in Quebec, but several correspondents attributed this to misidentification of Common Grackle (Can. Sportsman and Naturalist 2, p. 207-208).

#### COMMON GRACKLE

This species was listed as "Purple Grackle, (*Q. versicolor.*) — Rare" by Blakiston and Bland (1856) and, under the same name, as "rare; only a few having been observed", by Jones (1879). Downs (1888) lists it correctly as *Quiscalus quiscula* . . . "Bronzed Grackle", and mentions only three undated specimens. Piers (1894) mentions seven more specimens and disputes Chamberlin's (1887a) rating of it as abundant in the Maritime Provinces. Later (Piers 1897) he stated that "about Pictou, I understand the species is more common." It is indeed listed as "breeds very common" in Hickman's (1896) list of Pictou birds in 1895. Yet the first one observed near Wolfville was in 1896 (H. F. Tufts 1899).

#### BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD

Tufts (1962, 1973) gives no 19th century records and it seems to be a recent invader. However, Blakiston and Bland (1856) reported it as "occasional", on Downs' authority. Downs (1866) does not mention it. Jones' (1879) inclusion of it as "rare" may simply echo the earlier account by Blakiston and Bland (1856). There seem to be no subsequent 19th century references.

#### ORCHARD ORIOLE

Blakiston and Bland (1856), Downs (1866), Jones (1879), and Downs (1888) report no orioles, and Piers' (1894) female Orchard Oriole, collected near Three-fathom Harbour on 6 September 1890, is the first mention of this species.

#### NORTHERN ORIOLE

There seem to be no 19th century reports other than Chamberlin's (1887c) record of one collected near Halifax in September 1886. He states: "I cannot find any previous record . . . although it breeds . . . on the St. John River."

#### EVENING GROSBEAK

Tufts (1962, 1973) dates its appearance in Nova Scotia from 1913, but it is interesting to note in the pages of Forest and Stream for 1890 that the first major invasion to eastern Canada and New England took place in the winter of 1889-1890.

In the next issue of Nova Scotia Birds there will be an annotated bibliography of 19th century ornithology in the province, including all the references to Part I as well as many others.



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NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS

a publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society

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Volume 27 Number 3

July 1985

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Table of Contents

Spring Bird Reports	2
A Nova Scotia Christmas Count	
A pictorial essay Joyce Purchase & Shirley Cohrs	26
Field Trip Reports	34
Up-coming Field Trips	39
Birding in Central Nova Scotia	
Ross Baker & Harry Brennan	42
Letters to the Editor	52
The Rivendell Eagles VI R.G.S. Bidwell	57
Survey of 19th Century Ornithology in Nova Scotia	
Ian McLaren (cont'd)	65

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Cost of the publication of this periodical is partially borne by  
the Nova Scotia Museum.

ISSN 0383-9567

Second Class Mail

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