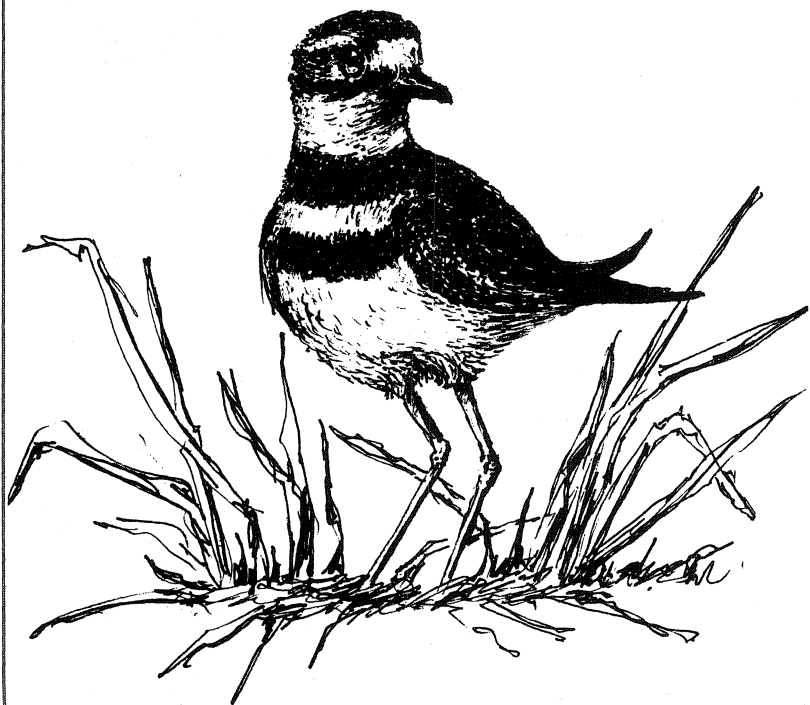


*Nova Scotia
Birds*



July 1986

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SPRING

February was sunny and cold, with temperatures generally below normal. Precipitation for the month was also below normal and fell mainly as snow. Several snowstorms struck during the month and few Cape Bretoners will forget the snow storm on the 22nd and 23rd, which ranks as the largest consecutive two-day snowfall on record. In contrast, the month also brought well above normal amounts of sunshine.

March was sunny and cold but warmed up toward the end of the month, setting record high temperatures in several localities. Melting snow accompanied by rain caused some flooding in the Truro area.

April was cloudy and mild, with below normal precipitation and below normal sunshine. On the 10th of April, a storm that brought a mixture of rain, freezing rain and snow, accompanied by high winds hit storm beleaguered Cape Breton again.

Migrating birds were late and sparse, probably due to the lingering cold weather. None-the-less, 102 birders sent in 1660 reports on 248 species including 8 not on our check list. The most frequently reported species was Indigo Bunting, followed closely by Northern Harrier and Tree Swallow.

Once again, a special thanks goes out to Keith Keddy for the seasonal weather reports and to the following for the bird reports.

--Bob Dickie
Records Editor.

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AS YOU CAN SEE, WE ARE STILL HAVING PROBLEMS WITH SIMILAR INITIALS. IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO, PLEASE GIVE US THREE (or more) INITIALS IF POSSIBLE TO PREVENT CONFUSION

JSC, Editor.

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, Little Harbour, Seal Is.
Queen's Co.	Port Joli, Port Hebert, Caledonia, Cadden Bay, Summerville 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, Hartlen's Pt.
Colchester Co. (Col. Co.)	Economy
Annapolis Co. (Anna. Co.)	Paradise, Sandy Bottom Lake, Clementsport
Kings Co.	Wolfville, Canard, Lockhartville, Black River Lake, Gaspereau, Grand Pré, Sheffield Mills
Cumberland Co. (Cumb. Co.)	Lusby Marsh, APBS (Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary)
Hants Co.	Shubenacadie
Guysborough Co. (Guys. Co.)	Hazel Hill
Digby Co.	Brier Is.

LOONS AND GREBES

There were 5 reports of RED-THROATED LOONS, but they only amounted to 7 birds, with all observers reporting singles except for the three seen on May 23 at Harbourville (JWW, Bil Thexton).

COMMON LOONS were not observed anywhere in large numbers: the biggest group was 40+ at Crescent Beach on Mar. 16 (JSC,JLC) with a smaller group of 25+ seen Mar. 7 at Hartlen's Point (CSII). Small numbers were reported wintering all around the province, and by Apr. 3, they had started coming inland to the lakes. The individual seen on Sandy Bottom Lake on that date (MCN) was joined by 4 others a few days later, and by the 7th only a pair remained, "calling and staying together". By mid-April, there are reports of birds on several lakes, and C. Dawe had 2 pairs nesting in May in the Catalone area.

There were fewer reports of PIED-BILLED GREBE than usual: 1 bird at Bissett Lake in Dartmouth on May 1 (JSC,DAC) and the obligatory group at APBS: 10 birds spotted by an NSBS field trip on May 4 (JWW).

HORNED GREBES were down drastically from last year--only about 50 individuals in 6 observations. The only concentration was a group of 40+ at Blanche (MEC,JG) on Mar. 23. Smaller numbers were reported on Mar. 16, 1 bird at Martin's Pt. (DAM,CDM); Mar. 29, 2 birds at Cape Sable (DAM,FLL,PM); and one bird on Mar. 30, at Martin's River (DAM,CDM). There were no reports at all for April, and only one for May-- 4 birds on May 1 at Hartlen's Point (JSC,DAC).

Like the Horned Grebes, there were also far fewer RED-NECKED GREBES reported than last year: only about 350 compared to more than 645 in the spring of 1985. There was no definite peak period: a group of 17 was at Baccaro on Mar. 23 (MEC,JG), Chris Field and Ross Mayhew saw 50+ at Hartlen's Point on Mar. 25, and a group of 23-40 birds stayed all April in the Lawrencetown-Conrad's Beach area (DAM, FLL,JT,ELM,IAM). David Currie and the Cohrs saw a group of 160+ at Cow Bay displaying and calling on May 1. Other reports of smaller numbers covered most of the Atlantic coast, and there is one report of an individual in the Bay of Fundy near Black Rock, on May 1 (JWW).

--CRKA/LPMP, eds.

Due to unexpected circumstances, reports of FULMARS TO CORMORANTS were not available for inclusion.



Although there have been occasional reports of wintering in the province in recent years, this Double-crested Cormorant is the first to be photographically confirmed--an immature bird on the pilings at Dartmouth Cove, Feb. 16, 1986. Photo Ian McLaren.

HERONS AND ALLIES

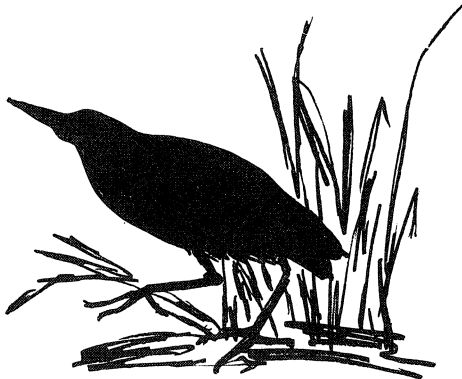
An AMERICAN BITTERN at Beaver R., Digby Co., on Mar. 31 (MEC) was only two days later than the earliest ever. The next was on Apr. 27, and by mid-May several had been seen or heard. A GREAT BLUE HERON wintered at L.W. Pubnico, but one near Bridgetown on Mar. 26 (J&WM) had evidently arrived from the south, and there were reports from the South Shore, Canning and Economy on Mar. 29-30. They reached the Sydney area by Apr. 5, but reports of "firsts" continued up to mid-April. Two were at nest sites near Argyle on Mar. 31, and a C.W.S. survey of Boot Is., Kings Co., revealed 61 nests there on May 16 (JWW).

A GREAT EGRET, rescued on Apr. 13 at Hazel Hill, Guys. Co., was cared for and fed for 24 hours and released, much improved (JNJ,JVJ). (See photographs in this issue) The next was at Overton, Yar. Co., on Apr. 15 and for 3 weeks thereafter (HGG,HJH). There was also one at St. Peters, Cape Breton Is., on Apr. 20 (BCB), and another at Lawrencetown L., Hfx. Co., on May 22-23 (Bill Farrell, B&JWT). The first SNOWY EGRET was very early at Spryfield, Halifax, on Mar. 26 (MA,Ruth Newman). One at Lawrencetown L. on Apr. 13 (sev. obs.) evidently didn't stay as they often do there. Two more were in Yar. Co., at Abrams R. dyke on Apr. 21 and Cape Forchu on May 1 (CRKA,PRD). The only reported LITTLE BLUE HERON was at Whynacht's Cove, Hfx. Co., on Apr. 20-22 (AJV) and the only CATTLE EGRET was at Chebogue, Yar. Co., on May 9 (JLG,MEC).

A GREEN-BACKED HERON, well back in the woods at Mooseland Dam on May 18, was a "lifer" for DAM. The first BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON was at Cape Sable on May 4, and a few others were seen later there, at L.W. Pubnico and on Seal Is.

A GLOSSY IBIS was at Economy on Apr. 12-13 (FS) and probably the same bird was at Bass R. on Apr. 17-18 (P&WH). Other individuals were at Sunday Pt., Yar. Co., on May 4, and on Cape Sable on May 17-25 (sev.obs.). Far more exciting was the province's fifth WHITE IBIS at Cranberry Pt., Yar. Co. An adult was reported to ER on May 30 as having been around for a few days, and the word spread rapidly. Next day, a large contingent of South Shore birders led by CRKA, took time out from a NSBS "warbler walk" to gaze at the wondrous bird. They were joined by two Halifax fanatics. Could this be the bird that had spent some previous weeks at St. John, N.B.?

--IAM, ed.



GEESE AND DUCKS

BRANT were more or less as usual, with the largest numbers being reported from Brier Island--100 on Feb. 23, 400 on Apr. 4, only small groups on May 10, back up to 200 on May 18, and finally down to 15 on May 24 (RBS, H&H Hall, L&IP, Peter MacLeod, Don MacNeill). Other reports came from the southwestern corner of the province, but a flock of about 200 was observed in late May at Starr's Point near Wolfville (B&B Thexton, JWW) and 120 were seen on the Northumberland Strait at East Linden on Apr. 26 (JSC, JLC). Ted D'Eon found 2 eggs in a trampled grass "nest" on Gull Island on May 14. The island had about 150 Brant on it at the time. Details, including a video tape(!), have been sent to the Nova Scotia Museum.

CANADA GEESE were about as usual, with flocks numbering in the thousands reported from the Canard Valley, Cole Harbour, and Morien Bar, Cape Breton. Smaller flocks in the hundreds were reported from many locations. A partial albino was at Canard Valley on Apr. 23 and 24: "...body all creamy white, cheek patch white, neck and head brown, wing-tips and tail-tip reddish brown..." (JWW).

WOOD DUCKS were lightly reported again, with only 5 birds plus a possible pair on the books. There were pairs at Drain Lake, Hfx. Co., (RBD, JSC), Mooseland (K&WT), and possibly Port Williams (JWW).

Bob Dickie and the Cohrs both report a single male EURASIAN TEAL from the Lawrencetown-Conrad's Beach area, the one on Apr. 19, and the other on Apr. 20. Don MacNeill saw a single male there on Apr. 5. A single male has been reported from this area in the spring for the last three years, so we probably have a recurring case of migratory overshoot.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL were reported from the usual locations in small numbers: mostly from south-western Nova Scotia, the Annapolis Valley, Brier Island and the Lawrencetown area. The Cohrs had 7-8 pairs at Conrad's Beach on Apr. 20.

Small numbers of BLACK DUCKS were generally distributed: about 119 birds in 19 reports. K&D Peters saw a female on a nest with 10 eggs on May 6 at Pubnico Harbour; Jim Taylor had a female with 10 downy young at Bissett Rd., in Hfx. Co., on May 19, and there was a female with 7 small downy young at Sandy Bottom Lake on May 22 (MCN).

There were 10 reports of MALLARDS, including several reports of pairs and a brood of 12 birds at the Port Williams sewage pond on May 17 (JWW, JC, GWT).

Four NORTHERN PINTAILS were present on Sullivan's Pond in Dartmouth all winter (FLL). Other reports were of small numbers of birds mostly in southwestern Nova Scotia, except for the 60+ reported from Pugwash to APBS on Apr. 26 (JSC, JLC). This is a big drop from the many hundreds reported in 1983 and 1984.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL were very lightly reported--only 19 individuals in 8 reports. The Cohrs had the earliest arrival: they saw one with about 10 Black Ducks at Riverport, Lun. Co., on May 16. This miniscule migration peaked in early May with reports of 3-4 birds at Canard Pond on May 1, and 3-4 more at Brier Island, May 9-11 (both reports RBS). Pairs were also reported at Conrad's Beach (FLL, MA), Wolfville (JWW, LL) and Pembroke, Yar. Co. (JG).

There were only five reports of NORTHERN SHOVELER, all of pairs: at Little Pond, Brier Island on Apr. 5 (RBS), Canard Pond on May 2 (B&BT), 2 males at APBS on May 4 (B&BT), and a pair at Port Williams sewage pond on May 18 (JWW).

GADWALLS were likewise poorly reported. Single birds were seen at Eel Lake, Yar. Co., on Mar. 27 (CRKA,PRD,JG); at John Lusby Marsh on Apr. 26 (JSC,JLC): a pair was also at APBS the same day (JSC,JLC); and an NSBS field trip got 8 at APBS on May 4 (JWW).

For the first time in several years there was no EURASIAN WIGEON from the APBS/Lusby area, but Fulton Lavender and Don MacNeill reported a male and female from Lawrencetown Lake on Apr. 5.

There were no large counts of AMERICAN WIGEON, with only about 20 individuals in 10 reports. A pair was seen in a marsh at Pubnico Head, "uttering soft whistles as they swam" on Apr. 16 (RSD'E),

An otherwise desolate duck situation was enlivened by the presence of one or two CANVASBACKS: a young male was seen on Mar. 10 at Little Harbour, Shel. Co. (D&J Young), and a male (probably the same bird) was reported from Pubnico Marsh on March 31 (Richard D'Entremont).

The first RING-NECKED DUCKS were reported from Milton, Yar. Co., Mar. 12 (MEC&JG). Small numbers were reported from pretty well all over, with the only large concentrations being at "Pockwock Lake System" (about 40 on Apr. 17, JC&GWT), and 30-50 in Drain Lake, Hfx. Co., on Apr. 17 & 18 (JSC,JWW). Jim Wolford visited Drain Lake again on May 14, when he saw 9 males and 1 female. He wondered if the rest of the females were on nests.

GREATER SCAUP appeared in 13 reports with a total of about 900 individuals. The largest concentration was 400 at Bayport, Lun. Co. on Mar. 16 (JSC,JLC), followed by a raft of 150 at Lingan Bay on Apr. 16 (CSM). Two pairs were reported in residence on a pond in the Mira area from Apr. 25 to June 10 (Calvin Dawe via SM). If they turn out to be nesting, this would be among the first records for Nova Scotia.

There was only one report of a LESSER SCAUP: a single female at White Head Harbour in Guys. Co., on Mar. 3 (NWP&JWP).

Like most of the ducks this spring, COMMON EIDERS were "down" as well. There was a group of about 3000 at Hartlen's Point on Mar. 22 (FLL,D&C MacNeill). The only other large flock was reported at the same location on Mar. 7: about 570 birds (CSII). The other reports were of about 15 individuals, including 2 breeding pairs at Green Bay on Apr. 4 (JSC); "usual numbers" at Brier Island from Apr. 4 to May 11 (RBS); about 50 at Annapolis Royal on Apr. 30 (RBS); 5 at Canso on May 5 (NWP&SSB); 5 at Gull Island on May 14 (K&DP); 5 more on May 17 at St. John's Island (TC&Mc'E), and "common, all in pairs" this spring at Taylor Head (K&WT).

A single report of HARLEQUIN DUCK this spring: June Graves had a pair at Cranberry Head, Yar. Co., on Mar. 22, and they were still there as of Apr. 2.

Little clumps of OLDSQUAW lingered all spring. Jim Taylor reported them as "numerous" at Conrad's Beach on Mar. 1; there were 50+ at Hartlen's Point on Mar. 7 (CSII), and a group of 25 was seen at Tangier on Mar. 16 by L&PP as they were on their way to see the infamous Brambling. Smaller numbers were reported elsewhere, including White Head Harbour (NW&WJP); L.W. Pubnico (JDD'E); Crescent Beach (NS) and Louisbourg (D. Dawe vis CSM). An unusually late record of 12 birds at Crescent Beach on May 25, from Don MacNeill, rounds out the list.

Scoters did much better than usual this spring. BLACK SCOTERS, usually sparsely reported, led the list with over 900 individuals in 10 reports. The best place to see them was at Crescent Beach, where

there were 300 on Mar. 16 and 400 in 50-50 mixed flock on May 6 (both reports JSC), and 50+ on May 25 (James Taylor). Smaller numbers were reported elsewhere, with a surprising single male at APBS, reported on Apr. 26 (Cohrs and DAC) and May 4 (JWW).

SURF SCOTERS were not nearly as abundant as usual. The largest group was a flock of "100+, mostly Surf Scoters", reported from Cobequid Bay at Little Bass River on May 19 (W&PH). 40 were present at Tangier on Mar. 16 (L&PP), and the remainder of the reports were of small groups. A trio of 2 males and a female was on the Canard Poultry Pond from Apr. 29 to May 1 (LAL,JWW,RBS,GWT).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTERS were seen at various coastal locations in small numbers, never more than 20, through the early spring. A sudden peak in mid-May treated the Cohrs to more than 150 at Green Bay on May 18, and there were 100+ on the morning tide of May 19 at Little Bass River (W&P Hemeon). By the evening tide of the same day, however, only about 35 remained, and no more of this species were reported after that date.

COMMON GOLDENEYES were only reported from 5 locations. A pair were in Rocky Lake near Waverley on Feb. 28 (L&PP); there were 15+ at Mahone Bay on Mar. 12 (NS); 200-300 at Crescent Beach on Mar. 16 (JSC&JLC); and 12+ at Cole Harbour on Mar. 24 (NW&WJP). By Apr. 26, one lonely pair remained at APBS (JSC&JLC).

BARROW'S GOLDENEYE, always a chancy bird here, was mentioned in 3 reports. Two males were with a flock of Scaup ("excellent sighting") on Mar. 22, at the Annapolis Causeway (Sharon Hawboldt). A single male was seen in a marsh about 6 feet from the road at Blanche, Shel Co., on Mar. 22 (MEC,JG). Several observers reported a female at Necum Teuch, Hfx. Co., but no date was given.

BUFFLEHEADS were reported from their usual locations, starting on Mar. 30, in the Salmon River area where there were 5 birds (N&WP). There were also 5 at the Glace Bay Sanctuary on Apr. 13 (CSM). At Three Fathom Harbour, one of the traditional wintering spots, the Cohrs picked up 16 on Apr. 20. The counts reached a peak of 32 at Annapolis Royal on Apr. 30 (RBS), and the last report is of a pair at Parrsboro on May 15 (JSC&JLC).

Only four reports of HOODED MERGANSER were received, covering 2 single birds and 2 pairs. Bob Dickie had an adult male in Bedford Basin on Feb. 1, and there was a pair at Broad Cove on Mar. 28 (BAH). A pair in full breeding plumage, on Pleasant Lake in Yar. Co., from Mar. 12 to June 9, should be watched for throughout the summer (CRKA, PRD, others). The remaining individual was an adult male at Lawrence-town Lake, Apr. 13 (FLL).

COMMON MERGANSERS began appearing inland as soon as the ice disappeared, as usual. 45+ showed up at Eel Lake, Yar. Co., on Mar. 19, "First day the lake was clear of ice" (CRKA,PRD), although an intervening report of 23 on Mar. 23 (Jd'E) implies less than steady growth. Other reports were of ones and twos from widely scattered locations.

To complete this sorry tale of low duck counts, the largest accumulation of RED-BREASTED MERGANSERS only amounted to about 150 birds on salt water between Wallace and Tidnish, on Apr. 26 (JSC&JLC). Compare this to 1000 at Northport last year and 1500+ in the Tidnish-Tatamagouche area in 1984. The only report of courtship came from Jim Wolford who saw 20 birds at APBS on May 4, "very active in courtship activities".

DIURNAL RAPTORS

TURKEY VULTURES appeared as expected on Brier Is. and nearby, on Apr. 18 and May 11. Presumably the bird at Hebron on Mar. 5 (JLG) was the same one that had been seen elsewhere in Yar. Co. earlier in the winter. Other birds were at Beaver R., Digby Co., on Apr. 12 (HGH,HJH) at Halls Hbr., Kings Co., on Apr. 26 (GWT,JTI), and over Seal Is., on May 14-15 (ELM,IAM).

The first OSPREY was early at Annapolis Royal on Mar. 29 (FLL, DAM,PM), and others were not seen until a week later, including 10 in Cape Breton Co. on Apr. 6 (SM). They appeared to be slow in coming, and 3 individuals were breasting northerlies inland along Highway 103 on May 13 (ELM, IAM).

Around 40 BALD EAGLES were reported to have been fed by Lands and Forests personnel near Argyle this winter, a new high for Yar. Co. Other reports came about as usual from many localities.

Male NORTHERN HARRIERS in Dartmouth on Mar. 1 and 15 and at Grand Pré on Mar. 23 could have wintered, but one at W. Pubnico on Mar. 31 and several more up-province in the next few days were probably migrants. A nest with 5 eggs was found by John MacInnis at Big Pond, Cape Breton Co., on May 18; curiously, there were only 4 eggs on May 23, the female sitting and the male watchful (JM).

Paltry reports of SHARP-SHINNED HAWKS were all from winter, except for a small movement reported by RBS on Brier Is., on May 9-11, another seen by him in Kentville on May 18, and single birds on Seal Is. May 15-17. Surely they were under-reported. NORTHERN GOSHAWKS are more attention grabbing; there were 5 scattered birds and a nest in Anna. Co. (SH, no data).

An adult RED-SHOULDERED HAWK well observed near Canso on May 15 (JNJ) was presumably an errant "overshooting" bird. A good showing of BROAD-WINGED HAWKS was evident, the first at Wilmot, Anna. Co., on Apr. 19 (FLL et al.). There were at least 18 others, plus a small flight at Brier Is., on May 9-11. Courtship flight was seen by the early-morning birders on the NSBS field trip near Halifax on May 14, and RBS saw mating near Bridgewater on May 17. We all see, but many fail to report, RED-TAILED HAWKS during any lengthy drives around the province. There were 20+ at Canning, Kings Co., on Mar. 2. Two ROUGH-LEGGED HAWKS were still at Grand Pré on Apr. 27 (NSBS trip). Individuals on Cape Sable Is. on Mar. 30, at W. Pubnico on Apr. 18, and at Sunday Pt., Yar. Co., on Apr. 28, were probably migrants.

After a winter's dearth, AMERICAN KESTRELS were welcomed first at Canard, Kings Co., on Mar. 30 (DHY), and in several localities during the next few days. Altogether we received reports of 20 birds in 17 localities, plus "lots" on Brier Is., on May 9-11 (RBS). MERLINS at Three Fathom Hbr., Hfx. Co., on Mar. 23 and Dartmouth on Mar. 30 (both JT) may have been migrants, but there were no further reports until late April, after which 7 were seen, including an agitated pair in Anna. Co. (Geo. Alliston, Pam Matthews). PEREGRINE FALCONS were noted on Brier Is., on May 3 (LAL et al.), on Seal Is. on May 14-15 (ELM,IAM), and near Liverpool on May 25 (DAM). The Seal Island bird was a male tundrius watching for arriving migrants. It knocked one small passerine to Kingdom Come high over the island on May 15.

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

Two GRAY PARTRIDGES were at Bass R., Col. Co., on May 18; evidently they nested there last summer (P&WH). Another was calling near Windsor on May 15 (FLL et al.). Away from the Valley, there

were 5 RING-NECKED PHEASANTS near L.W. Pubnico on Mar. 1, individuals at Bass R., New Ross and Stewiacke in Apr.-May, and about 12 calling cocks on Brier Is. in mid-May. Our only SPRUCE GROUSE was at Taylor Head, Hfx. Co., on May 17 (SCM). RUFFED GROUSE reports were about par --some 22 birds, including one on a nest with 6 eggs at New Ross on May 18 (KNK).

RALLIDS

Our only VIRGINIA RAILS so far were 2 at Malagash Mine, Cum. Co., May 31 (FLL,PD). SORAS were heard at Kentville, May 19-26 (JWW), Shubenacadie on May 25 (JSC), and Drain L., Hfx. Co., on May 27 (RBD). The wintering AMERICAN COOT was still at Sullivan's Pond, Dartmouth, on Apr. 25, and 5 had returned to A.P.B.S. on May 4.

--IAM, ed.

SPRING SHOREBIRDS

Overwintering BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS were at Cherry Hill from Mar. 1, onward (JSC&JLC,SJF) and at Blanche, Shel. Co., Mar. 2 (JC,MC). In May, there were a few at Brier, May 19-24 (DM,JT,FLL,PM) and c.100 at Economy, May 25 (FS). An early SEMI-PALMATED PLOVER was at Cook's Beach, Apr. 1 (PRD,CRKA). In all, 23 were noted in May, 15 of them at Cape Sable, May 17 (FLL). The first PIPING PLOVERS were at Cherry Hill Mar. 29 (SJF) and at Conrad's, Apr. 1 (CSII). Not more than eight pairs were reported in all. First KILLDEER reports came from Gaspereau, Mar. 22 (JWW) and Mar. 22, at Little Bass River (W&PH). It was widely reported thereafter with broods noted in May at Clements-port (SH) and Economy (FS).



Although inadequate as a photograph, this serves adequately to identify this spring's Ruff, at Conrad's Beach on April 27. (the second confirmed thus in Nova Scotia). Its body size, close to that of the nearby Greater Yellowlegs, indicates that it was a Ruff not a Reeve. Photo--Ian McLaren.

A GREATER YELLOWLEGS was at L. W. Pubnico, Apr. 12 (DJd'E). The largest numbers noted were 14 at Chezzetcook, Apr. 25 (FLL,PD) and 27 on Seal, May 17 (ELM et al.). There were still 4 at Grand Pre, May 22 (JC,GWT). Few LESSER YELLOWLEGS were reported: one at Crescent, May 6 (JSC), another at Seal, May 17 (ELM et al.) and "several" near Tor Bay, Guys. Co., May 21 (SSB).

A SOLITARY SANDPIPER was reported from Cheboquid, May 17 (JG,MC). On April 25, when most observers had yet to see their first WILLET of the season, there were 40 at Chezzetcook (FLL,PD). By mid-May the species was well distributed, having reached Cape Breton by May 7 (CSM). There were no early SPOTTED SANDPIPERS: the first was at Sunday Pt., Yar. Co., May 13 (H&HH) with most of the two dozen noted occurring in the week following.

A WHIMBREL was at Conrad's, Apr. 25-28 (IAM,FLL,PD). For the second year in a row a MARbled GODWIT appeared at Sand Point, Tatamagouche, noted May 31 (FLL,PD). There were 9 RUDDY TURNSTONES at Brier, May 19 (FLL,PD) and one at Economy, May 26 (FS).

There were 8 RED KNOTS at Matthews Lake, May 1 (DH&JMY), 30 at Cape Sable, May 17 and 12 on Brier, May 19 (FLL,PM). At least 7 SANDERLINGS overwintered, noted at Cherry Hill, Mar. 17 (JLC&JSC); 1 in alternate plumage was there May 6 (JSC). There were 100 SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPERS, a large number in spring, at Cape Sable, May 17 (FLL,PM,WC); the only others were one at Brier on the same day (FLL et al.), and 1-2 at Economy, May 26 (FS). By May 16, eleven LEAST SANDPIPERS had reached New Waterford (CSM). Not many were reported, the maximum being 16 at Kingsport, May 18 (JWW). Unusual in spring, a WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER was on Brier, May 17 (FLL,WC,DM). Single PECTORAL SANDPIPERS were at Hartlen's Pt., April 14 (AIM) and on Brier, May 19 (FLL,PM). Good numbers of PURPLE SANDPIPERS were present in May: 50+ at Meteghan, Digby Co., May 2 (RSd'E), 60+ at Crescent, May 6 (JSC), 75 at Boot Island, May 16 (JWW) and 44 on Brier, May 17 (FLL et al.). There were still 25+ at Crescent, May 25 (JT,DM). Thirty-two DUNLIN, a large number for spring, were at Matthews Lake, May 1, most in alternate plumage (DH,JMY) and 18 at Grand Pr^e, May 16 (JWW).

A RUFF was at Conrad's, April 25-28 (FLL,IAM).

The first COMMON SNIPES were at Paradise, Apr. 2 (J&WM), near Gaspereau, Apr. 4 (BLF fide JWW) and about the same time, across Minas Basin in Little Bass River (W&PH). AMERICAN WOODCOCK were at L.W. Pubnico by Mar. 14 (Jd'E), at Dartmouth by Mar. 25 (JT). They were already in courtship display at Quinan, Yar. Co., by Mar. 30 (RSd'E). Melvin White found newly hatched young at Big Pond, May 9 (JM).

--FS, ed.

Due to unexpected circumstances, reports of WILSON'S PHALAROPE TO ATLANTIC PUFFIN were not available for inclusion.

DOVES, CUCKOOS, OWLS

A number of observers have noted ROCK DOVES nesting under highway overpasses, even in the boonies. One was incubating at Acadia University on Apr. 1 (JWW).

A RINGED TURTLE-DOVE killed by hitting the Bleakney's window in Wolfville was doubtless, as JWW surmises, a local escapee; at least two persons keep them in Wolfville. However, it should be noted that the very similar Collared Turtle Dove has been undergoing a spectacular spread in Europe, and may have arrived naturally to colonize S. Florida.

About 95 MOURNING DOVES were counted around the W. Pubnico on Mar. 6 (JD'E). Also of interest were 14 at Hazel Hill, Guys. Co., through mid-April (NJ&WJP). Some early movement is implied by the new appearance of individuals at Clementsport on Mar. 18 (SH), and at several localities after late March. They began cooing at M. W. Pubnico on Mar. 27, according to TD'E, who also documents an extraordinary nesting. First discovered on Apr. 9 by Edgar D'Eon, there were: an egg and a hatchling on Apr. 16, 1 young off the nest on Apr. 28, both off on May 3 and a new egg in the same nest on May 4. By May 22, there were two young of the second brood.

Our only cuckoo was a BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO at M.W. Pubnico on May 20 (MD'E).

There were only 4 reports of individuals or pairs of GREAT HORNED OWLS. The most interesting comes from JWW, who reports that Cyril Coldwell's captive 5 year old, who produced two young last year, was sitting on a cage nest by Mar. 10. Cyril's free ranging 5 year old female, which had been hand-reared at Shubenacadie Park, was apparently mated to a wild male, and incubating on a nest platform in his yard from Mar. 9 to May 2, when she abandoned the evidently empty nest. SNOWY OWLS were near Amherst on Mar. 4 (DHY,JMY), at Grand Pré on Mar. 23-24 (imm.) and again on Apr. 22 (ad.), and from Mar. 22 to at least May 1 on Devil's Is. at the mouth of Halifax Hbr. (FLL, et mult. al.). There were only 5 reports of BARRIED OWLS, including a nest with 3 chicks in Kentville on May 18 (BLF,JWW).

A LONG-EARED OWL was hooting on Wolfville Ridge on Apr. 13 (BLF, per JWW). There was a SHORT-EARED OWL at Hartlen's Pt., Hfx. Co., on Mar. 7 (CSII) and up to 4 at Grand Pré in late March (RBS). A tame NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL was at Hebron, Yar. Co., on Mar. 1 (HGH,HJH), one hung around the Payzant's feeder in Waverley, Mar. 7-10, and another was calling from May 10 at Port Joli, Queens Co. (JA). An individual of the rare BOREAL OWL was reported in Valerie Wilson's bird column in the Mirror-Examiner to have been seen by several people at Berwick for 2 days in late Feb.

GOATSUCKERS, SWIFT, HUMMINGBIRD, KINGFISHER

The first COMMON NIGHTHAWK was near Wolfville on May 10 (Mark Elderkin, vide JWW), and there was a flurry of reports, May 19-21. A WHIP-POOR-WILL was singing in its usual haunts at Burnside, Dartmouth, on May 30 (RBD,HD).

The first CHIMNEY SWIFT was near Wolfville on May 9 (H.Forsythe). Another was near Barrington on May 13, a number were reported May 15-17, and 600 or more poured into the Acadia chimney on May 18 (JWW).

The first RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD was at Wolfville, a male on May 15 (JWW). Next day there were individuals at M.W. Pubnico, Bass R., Col. Co., Wolfville Ridge, and Halifax.

Overwintering BELTED KINGFISHERS were seen in March at Cole Harbour, and at Crescent Beach and Indian Path in Lun. Co. There were no reports for April before the 20th; could arrival have been this late?

WOODPECKERS

There was no word on the RED-HEADED WOODPECKER near Kingston, although I have heard that it stayed into this reporting period. A male YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER at Bishopville, Kings Co., on Apr. 12, was somewhat early (Mark Elderkin, per JWW); 3 others appeared elsewhere Apr. 26-28, and several thereafter. One was using a nest hole in a power pole at Mt. Uniacke on May 1 (JSC). About 10 reports each of DOWNY and HAIRY WOODPECKERS were as usual. A nest of the former, with young, was found at Dartmouth on May 15 (JWT). There were 3 May reports of single BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKERS, one each from Pictou, Cum. and Lun. Co.

Wintering COMMON FLICKERS were noted in late Feb. or Mar., in Kings Co. (2 birds), Dartmouth, Cherry Hill, and in Cape Breton Co. The first evident migrant was at W. Pubnico on Mar. 27 (DJd'E), and they were widespread in early April. About 20 PILEATED WOODPECKERS were seen--a good number. Nests with sitting birds were found at Carleton, Yar. Co., on May 18 (LP) and at Kearney L., Hfx. Co., on May 19 (DAC).

--IAM, ed.



Richard Stern's stern-on photograph of the Aylesford Red-headed Woodpecker shows it coming into adult plumage, with much red on the head, in early March, '86.

FLYCATCHERS TO HORNED LARKS

Flycatchers were late in arriving this year, which explains the paucity of reports. Only two OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHERS made the deadline, one May 18 at Crousetown and one, May 24, at Kearney Lake. Only two EASTERN WOOD PEEWEES were seen/heard: on Brier, May 18-20, and on Wolfville Ridge, May 20 (FLL,JCT). Three YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHERS arrived to be counted: May 15 in Anna Co., May 18, Starr's Pt., Kings Co., and May 24 near Kearney Lake, Hfx. Co. (FLL,RBS,RBD). An ALDER FLYCATCHER on Seal, May 17, was the only flycatcher of the trip for ELM&IAM. Two or three were heard on the Shubenacadie Field Trip on the 25th. LEASTS fared better for, although JSC heard none at all in Halifax or Lun. Counties, there were five in Kings Co. (Wolfville, May 15, Greenfield on the 18th and Kentville on the 19th), two in Yar. Co. (Argyle Head, May 19 and Carleton on the 25th), and one on Brier, May 18. A pair of unprecedentedly early Least's was seen by Jim Taylor at Kingston on April 27 (the previous early date was May 4, 1896!)

Our early arriving EASTERN PHOEBE was seen first at L.W. Pubnico on March 27, then on Brier, Apr. 4, White Rock and Lumsden, Apr. 6, and Wilmot by the 12th. One was at Kingston, Apr. 27 and Porter's L. May 21. RBS notes that a pair of Phoebes are nesting for the second year at a "convenience" in a Kentville area campground. A GREAT-CRESTED FLYCATCHER was well seen (and heard-who could miss it) on May 19, near Timberlea, Hfx. Co., by CSII&AJV. The pair at Birch Cove Park in Dartmouth, May 22-24, were seen and reported by many. A fourth was calling at the Kentville Experimental Station (where they nested in 1985) on May 22.

EASTERN KINGBIRDS were well reported although not in the high numbers of 1985. An extremely early bird appeared at Baccaro, March 23, seen by June Graves and Margaret Churchill. A few odd Kingbirds were seen in April, but the real migration took place from May 15-20, when 11 reporters saw over 70 from Yar. Co. to Canso. The largest concentration was 40+ at Westport on May 20 (FLL,PM).

HORNED LARKS were becoming scarce by the middle of March, the last few reported being 7 at Cherry Hill on Mar. 17 (all alpestris) (JSC), 78 on the same day at Centerville (JWW) and 1 at Hartlen's Pt. on Mar. 23 (JWT). Last of all were a pair at Lingan Bay, April 16, followed by 30 there the next day - obviously a migration (CSM).

SWALLOWS TO CORVIDS

No one knows when the PURPLE MARTINS arrived in Amherst (or if they do they are not telling) but three pairs had arrived at Oxford on May 4. There were single birds May 7, 15 and 22 at Gaspereau, Seal and W. Pubnico (JWW,ELM,LD).

The migration of TREE SWALLOWS began in Yar. Co., spread up through Anna. and Kings Co., to Hfx. Co and thence to Cape Breton. It began at Pleasant Lake with 2 birds, March 28, one each at L.W. Pubnico and L. Argyle, Apr. 1 and several more at Pleasant Lake by Apr. 6. These latter increased to 95 the next day and the movement was on. (JLG,JD,CRKA, PRD). They were as far as Clementsport, Wolfville and Hubbards by mid-April (with 200 at Canard Pond on Apr.20) and by Apr. 21 had spread to Fall River and Spryfield. On the 28th they were seen at Mooseland Road, where they came in, in more than usual numbers (SM). The first report from Cape Breton was May 10, at Glace Bay.

A single ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW was on Seal on May 16 (ELM,IAM). A BANK SWALLOW noted by Jackie Kenney on his clothesline in Clark's

Harbour on April 5, was clearly abnormal. It would appear to be the earliest on record, the previous date being April 20. Perhaps the same bird had progressed to W. Pubnico by the 13th, when one was seen by Delisle J. d'Entremont! More normal sightings were May 14, when three dozen were established at a sand pit colony near Canning, and May 17, when they (6) reached Port Howe (JWW,JWT).

The earliest CLIFF SWALLOW was seen May 6, at Publicover Lake, Lun. Co. (JSC). Jackie MacNeill confirmed that 25 had returned to the colony at Big Pond by May 14. The only other report of Cliffs is one bird at Port Williams on May 17 (JWW). This year's sweepstake for the first BARN SWALLOW spotted was won by Barry Sabean, who had a good look at one at a distance of 5 feet at Round Hill on April 8. A few 'singles' were seen after that during April, but the real migration was from May 1-7, when many groups of two and three were seen, mostly in the Valley and in Hfx. Co. At Mooseland Road, Sandra Myers witnessed the arrival of the first flock--40 on May 3. They were not common in Yar. Co. until the 14th and had reached Big Pond by the 15th.

CORVIDS TO THRUSHES

A few GRAY JAYS were reported in this period--mostly in groups of three or less. Jean Addelson has had four resident jays at Point Joli and the first pair brought two immatures to her feeder just before press time on May 21. They hope to hear from the other pair soon. BLUE JAYS continued to tend feeders as long as food was put out. A possible migration was at Martin's River March 16, where Don and Carol MacNeill saw a flock of 15 "in the wild", nowhere near any feeders. Chris Field has a pair nesting at home on Grant Street in Halifax with 3 eggs under incubation.

With the arrival of spring and more interesting birds, few members reported AMERICAN CROWS. Those who did decided that they were normal for their area, carrying nesting materials in March and April and "sitting" in May.

An adult JACKDAW was seen at The Hawk on March 29, by a large party of birders, and was still about on May 11--a remnant of the few seen in this and Quebec provinces in 1985, or a new immigrant? COMMON RAVENS got short shrift in this report with a few mentions of courtship displays and nest building in March and April. AJV noted two nesting pairs with four young in each nest near Lewis Lake on May 17.

More BOREAL CHICKADEES were seen than the BLACK-CAPPED species, which latter were regular as long as feeders were up. Sharon Hawbolt was lucky to hear a Boreal singing on April 21. They seem numerous at wood edges, especially in Halifax and Shelburne Counties and the Canso area.

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES were common in the woods in the reporting period and regular at feeders too. Phyllis Hemeon wrote that not only do her Red-breasts eat sunflower seeds (see April issue p. 15) they eat them from her hand! Ten WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCHES, all at feeders, are two more than last year, but still quite low. Encouragingly, a pair at Paradise were seen investigating a nest box near the feeder on May 24 (Morses). Four BROWN CREEPERS were seen in March (L.W. Pubnico, Bass River, Hants & Hfx. Counties), and one in early April (Anna. Co.). A spring bird was singing its sweet and unusual song as it spiralled the pines along Somerset Rd., Lun. Co., on May 18. It is possible that creepers nest at that spot as they are heard singing there most years (JSC).

This may be about to develop into a WINTER WREN year. At least

twenty were heard, twice the number of 1985. The first one was at the Mersey Paper Rd., Hfx. Co., on Apr. 13 (AJV), followed closely by one on the 19th at Hazel Hill (SSB). They were on Brier and in Yar. Co. by May 3, Kings Co. by the 6th, Seal on the 13th and Lun. Co. on the 18th (AJV, ED, RSD, GWT, ELM, JSC). Several Halifax area birders investigated a logging road near Kearney Lake during May and the estimated number of singing wrens there is from three to ten! (RBD, DAC, JSC, FLL). A lone MARSH WREN was heard chattering in Lawrencetown Marsh, Apr. 20, at the same place one was seen and heard Dec. 8, 1985 (JSC).

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLETS, very lightly reported, were heard singing their spring song at APBS, Apr. 26, and by May 18 were "rather common and in full song" at New Ross and in the woods around Green Bay (JSC, KNK). The first RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET arrived at Deerfield, Yar. Co., on March 18 (PRD), but there was a long wait until April 26, when they appeared ubiquitously in small numbers. They were "common" on Brier on May 10 and 11 (HJH et al.) and from then on seem to have become more than usually plentiful. Maggie Nickerson, writing from Sandy Bottom Lake, says, "21st April--one arrived and started singing, the first of a flood of them in the woods. I never thought I'd get sick of their song, but I am." The only BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER was a male bird on Brier on May 19 (FLL, PM). Exciting news of a possible EASTERN BLUEBIRD nest record is of a pair investigating a nest box put up by Bernard Forsythe near Sunken Lake. We hope to have more (good) news of the outcome in the next issue. The last documented bluebird nest was in 1957. The other bluebird news is sad. On April 14 on Brier, Richard Stern found a dead female impaled on the top of an alder out in the open in an area frequented by Northern Shrikes.

THRUSHES TO STARLING

The earliest VEERY sang at Hazel Hill, May 13 (NWP, SSB) but the 17th was THE day for veerys; they were heard at Somerset Rd., Shubie Park and on Seal (JSC, JLC, DAC, ELM). From then to the end of May, they appeared to be widespread in their appropriate habitats. Two rare GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSHES came to light--May 11 at Quinan and May 18 on Brier, both seen by Jim Taylor and Fulton Lavender. Sandra Myers had an early SWAINSONS THRUSH at Mooseland Rd., May 2. Others were May 19, Kearney Lake (DAC) and the 22nd (several) at Three Fathom Harbour. A few HERMIT THRUSHES appeared in the van of the main migration-- 3 on Mar. 8 at Lewis Lake, were exceptional (AJV). Next was one at Hebb's Cross, Apr. 20, and singles at Shearwater and Sandy Bottom Lake on the 21st. By the 27th, they were "all over" at the latter location and thereafter spread throughout the province. A WOOD THRUSH at Riverside was really too late for our deadline (May 30) but was telephoned in, in time to be included.

AMERICAN ROBINS are always heavily reported--like swallows, they mean the coming of spring--and this year was no exception. Overwintering birds tend to cloud the issue so that notations as to bright spring plumage are helpful when reporting. Twelve robins at Risser's Beach on Mar. 18, were bright and bouncy, as were two at Smiley's Park, Hants Co. on the 22nd. (JSC, JLC, R&DM). Thirty-six arrived at Paradise on the 25th, and a dozen at Milford (Anna. Co.) on the 28th (J&BM, MCN). The first wave got to Big Pond by the 31st, and from then on they were HERE. The only note of any large numbers was on April 4-5 at Green Bay and Petite Riviere, when it was "robin weekend", with every field and garden covered with robins--perhaps 1500 or so (JSC).

One wonders whether the GRAY CATBIRD, seen at M.W. Pubnico on Feb. 23 by DD was attempting to overwinter. The first spring bird was on May 3 on Brier, followed on the 6th by one at Green Bay (LAL, JSC). The general migration was from May 16-19, when they

appeared and sang(?) at Wolfville, Glace Bay, Seal, Paradise and Coldbrook.

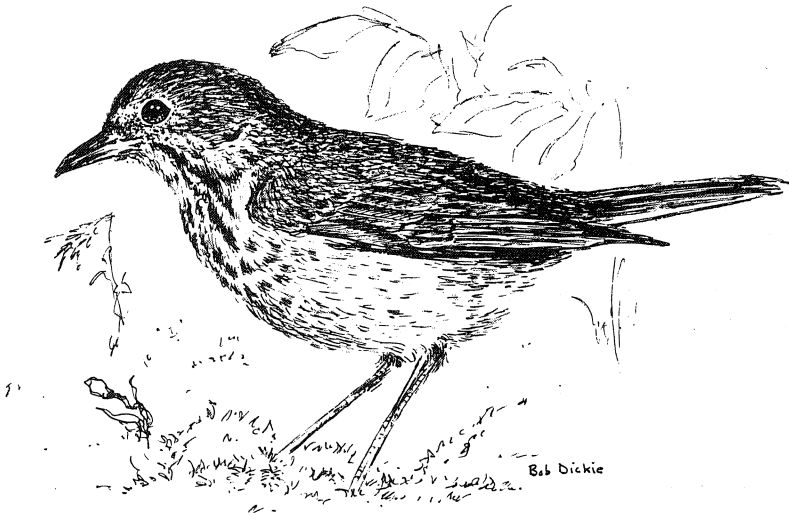
Nine NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRDS were seen, two in Mar., six in April and one in May. Probably they spent the winter with us. A few WATER PIPITS passed through on their way to the tundra to nest: three at L.W. Pubnico, Mar. 21, one at Conrad's Beach, Mar. 22, 35 at L.W. Pubnico on the 19th. By May, most had left with four remaining at Pubnico, May 7, and three at Pond Cove, May 17.

Three hundred and eighty BOHEMIAN WAXWINGS were seen between Mar. 5 and Apr. 7. This is double those of this season in 1985, as might be expected after the unprecedented numbers last winter. Unexpectedly, the three reports of CEDAR WAXWINGS were all in March and there were none in April or May, when they usually appear. March 18 saw a single bird at Bass River and a flock of 10 at Wolfville and on the 30th, twelve were at Argyle Head (PH, JWW, CRFA).

NORTHERN SHRIKE numbers were well up -12, as against 3 last year. Three were identified as immature birds. They were seen along the Atlantic coast from Yar. Co. to Moser's River, in the Valley and at Economy.

Many people felt that EUROPEAN STARLINGS were down in number. A partially albino bird, sandy coloured with white flight feathers was seen throughout the winter and into spring at Grand Pré. Brenda Thexton suspects that it's the same bird she's been seeing since the summer of 1984.

--JSC, ed.



VIREOS AND WARBLERS

The SOLITARY VIREO arrived first on Brier Is., May 3 (LL) and one was at Quinan, Yar. Co., on the same date (DD,RSD). By May 7, the northward migration brought reports from the Valley area (JC,GWT,MCN). The first sightings for the rest of the province were around May 15, and they were on territory in Kentville by May 18-19 (RBS). PHILADELPHIA VIREO was discovered first in Pubnico Pt. on May 17 (JK), then on the 19th, 3 were seen on Brier near the north light (FLL,PM).

The earliest RED-EYED VIREO was on May 11 at Quinan (JWT). There were several at Mooseland from May 17 (SM) and by the 20th, Guys. Co. allowed at least one to be spotted there (NWPT). Two WARBLING VIREOS were seen, one on Brier, (Westport) on May 20, (FLL,PM) and the other on May 22, in Dartmouth at Birch Cove Park, by Jim Taylor. This bird conveniently stayed a few days to allow at least a few fortunate people to see it.

All twenty-two of our resident wood warblers have been accounted for with almost two hundred and fifty reports received. In addition there was a bonus--that of a lone BLUE-WINGED WARBLER, seen by John Kearny at Pubnico Point on May 30. Large movements were noted by Richard Stern on Brier Is., from May 9-11, where hundreds were heading NE at dawn from North Point. The night of May 14-15, brought a large influx to the Tuskent-Raynardton areas with Yellow and Yellow-rumped warblers so numerous Phyllis Dobson and CRK Allen lost count of them the following day.

The TENNESSEE WARBLER was first reported in Port Howe on May 18 (JWT) and by the 21st they were singing incessantly in most areas on the mainland. May 14 brought the first NASHVILLE WARBLER to L.W. Pubnico (RSD'E). All ten reports from May 14-18 showed general distribution with 2-6 birds noted per observer.

One of our favourite and more recognizable songsters, the NORTHERN PARULA was well documented between May 15-18, from Yarmouth to Sherbrooke and throughout Cum. Co. The earliest date was May 10 at Gaspereau (ME) and several were on Brier that day (RBS). Six days later, Sharon Hawboldt watched a pair build a nest near Eleven Mile Lake. Twenty YELLOW WARBLERS arrived on Seal Is., May 14 (ELM,IAM), the earliest date, but by May 19, most counties on the mainland had good numbers. As well, SHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLERS entered the province on May 14 with three in L.W. Pubnico and one on Seal (RSD,ELM).

Of the 14 reports of MAGNOLIA WARBLERS, half of them, from Yar. Co. to Pictou Co., occurred on May 18-19. They were earliest at Seal on the 14th, and one arrived in Glace Bay, May 23 (SM). Only one CAPE MAY WARBLER made it in time for the reporting deadline. This was at South Mt., Anna. Co., on May 15 (FLL,PD,PM). The BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER was first seen May 15 in Laurie Park, Hfx. Co. (JWT). They were rather common in New Ross by the 18th (KNK) and near Kearny Lake there were 7-10 males with two distinctly different songs heard on the 21st (JSC,DAC,AJV).

Undoubtedly, our most numerous and earliest warbler is the YELLOW-RUMPED. Ten were seen Mar. 16, at the top of Crescent Beach (J&SC), one Mar. 23, in Crousetown (NS) which represented the survivors of the winter. Although most reports centered around April 30 for arrival dates, a female was seen at Tuskent Falls on April 16 (PRD, CRKA). This could quite possibly be a migrant since there were males singing in Gaspereau and Clementsport on April 21 (BF,SH). Judging by the last four years, it seems as if BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLERS arrived slightly late this year. Our earliest was May 9, on Brier Is. (RBS). However, May 14-15 seemed to be the day for first sightings in the majority of locations.

was May 9, on Brier Is. (RBS). However, May 14-15 seemed to be the day for first sightings in the majority of locations.

The BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER was first "picked up" on May 15, when 4 males were seen in Bedford (HB,RBD) and a lone bird at South Mt., Anna. Co. (FLL et al.). Twenty-five reporters registered large numbers of PALM WARBLERS beginning with two spotted at Overton (HH) on Apr. 18, one at Hebb's Cross (SJF,BAH) and dozens May 2 in North Kemptville (BS,JM). May 22 brought the first report from Cape Breton, that of one seen in Glace Bay (SM). The tardy BAY-BREASTED WARBLER was first noted May 18, on Brier (FLL et al.). Several were singing at Ingrauport on the 19th (HD,RBD), two males in Wolfville, May 20 (JWW) and Brier still had them moving through on May 24 (DAM,JWT).

Only two reports of BLACKPOLL WARBLERS were received, one at Lawrencetown Lake, May 24 (CSII, AJV) and interestingly, May 25 in Glace Bay (SM). BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER numbers were good with the first seen near Crousetown on May 5 (JSC), a bit later than usual. There were no large concentrations but they were generally reported as very common and well established by May 17-18.

The flashy AMERICAN REDSTART first showed up on Wolfville Ridge, May 15 (JCT,GWT), several at Mooseland, May 17 (SM) and a pair at Green Bay on May 18 (JSC). More often than not, a secretive bird is also a very vocal bird, which certainly holds true for the OVENBIRD. May 13 brought 3 calling on South Mt. (ME) and one at Sandy Bottom Lake (MCN). Others followed, being reported throughout by May 15-16.

Near slow moving streams and stillwater, NORTHERN WATERTHRUSHES can be found in fair numbers in Nova Scotia. The Mooseland Rd. had several singing May 17 (K&WT), there was one each in Port Howe, New Ross and Gaspereau on May 18. (JWT,KNK,JT&GWT). The earliest arrivals were on May 15 in Sherbrooke and South Mt. (AJV,FLL). The elusive MOURNING WARBLER was seen only twice, once May 25, well observed and very well heard singing near Shubenacadie (JSC) and one seen near Kearny Lake, May 27 (FLL,DM).

YELLOWTHROATS started singing May 15 at Wilmot and Kingston (FLL et al.). They were generally reported throughout by May 17-18. The only WILSON'S WARBLERS encountered were three: one seen each in Wilmot and Kingston on May 15 (FLL et al.) and one at Grand Pré on May 19 (JWW). There were two CANADA WARBLERS at South Mt., May 15, and one distinct male in small firs at Sandy Bottom Lake (MCN). Other reports of one May 18 on Somerset Rd. (JSC) and three singing at Paradise May 19 (JWW).

TANAGERS TO INDIGO BUNTING

Seal Island yielded a male SUMMER TANAGER with green wings and belly on May 15 (ELM,IAM). Four male SCARLET TANAGERS were seen, May 8, in Crousetown (NS), one singing on Wolfville Ridge on May 21 (BF fide JWW), one on the same date near Kearny Lake (JSC,DAC,AJV), and the last reported by John Kearny at Pubnico Pt. on May 31.

There were two reports of NORTHERN CARDINALS, one in full song for about a week from Apr. 7 near Tusket (CRKA) and another male on Seal May 15 (ELM,IAM).

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAKS were reported 23 times with 33 individuals seen between April 24 and May 20. They were well distributed from Yar. Co. to Guys. Co., and males outnumbered females 4 to 1. Eleven BLUE GROSBEAKS were tallied, all males except two. The first was an immature male, Apr. 14 in Halifax (JSC). By May 1, there were two males in Bedford (IAM) and one at Lewis Lake (AJV). Other reports are as follows: male, Apr. 27, L.W. Pubnico (JD'E), a sub-adult,

May 6, also in W. Pubnico (RSD); a female on the same date in Upper Kingsburg (NS); a female, May 9 at Chebogue (JG,MC); a male and imm. On Seal, May 14-15 (ELM,IAM) and lastly, a beautiful male from May 16-23 in Hazel Hill (SB,NWP). It wasn't a bonanza year for INDIGO BUNTINGS as was 1984. However, 36 observers found a total of 65 individuals. The earliest was April 1, in L.W. Pubnico, where two spent five weeks at a feeder (DDE). The last were two, (males, unfortunately) at Petite Riviere on May 18 (Cohrs'). Most appeared singly or with the company of one or two but there were five reports of four or more visiting feeders or along roadsides.

SPARROWS TO SNOW BUNTING

The TREE SPARROW was a regular visitor to feeders in two's and three's during the winter but by late March, most have moved northward to breeding grounds in northern Quebec and Labrador. There were two exceptionally late dates: one April 11 in Glace Bay (JG fide SM), and three singing near Pugwash, April 27!! (Cohrs'). On May 9, several CHIPPING SPARROWS arrived in Hazel Hill (NWP) as well as one at a feeder in Lewis Lake (AJV) On May 10, the Halls and Prossers had many on Brier Is. As many as 17 were seen that day in one front yard in Westport, Brier Is. (RBS).

While on Seal Is., Eric Mills and Ian McLaren photographed, at very close range, an adult CLAY-COLOURED SPARROW. According to Eric, this May 14 sighting is one of only about four previous spring records for the island.

Possibly four separate VESPER SPARROWS were seen, two, May 14, on Seal, a probable third individual on May 16, again on Seal, by ELM,IAM, and Richard Stern had one in full song in the middle of a field in thick fog May 19, in Kentville. The SAVANNAH SPARROW was first singing on Apr. 6, in Greenwich (LL), Sara MacLean reports one on April 20, at Morien Bar, C.B. and by the end of April, they had become well established throughout. The IPSWICH SPARROW was seen at Hemeon Head, with four there on Mar. 23 (SJF,IAM). On April 14, Ian McLaren photographed one in his backyard in Halifax, an event that may not happen again for a while. Only one SHARP-TAILED SPARROW arrived in time to be included, "singing weakly in the fog" on May 26, at Petite Riviere (JSC).

The FOX SPARROW was well reported with twenty-one observers counting about 120, plus some people advising of several or many in their locations. Although a few reports were of over-wintering birds, the main migration centered on Mar.20, with almost every county represented by Apr. 1. Although SONG SPARROWS were found occasionally singing in Feb, March 5 had one heralding spring in Bedford (KNK). May 18, one was seen carrying food in Wolfville (JWW) and May 19, a nest with four eggs was found at Big Pond, C.B. (JM). On May 18 a LINCOLN'S SPARROW was seen and heard near Lewis Lake (AJV), and one near Shubenacadie on May 25 (JSC). Others were one each at Kearny Lake and Riverside on May 27 (FLL et al.). A SWAMP SPARROW was singing Mar. 31 at W. Pubnico, then two "singing heartily" in L.W. Pubnico, Apr. 3 (RSD). The first and the second week of May showed more from most locales, singing on territory.

On May 2 WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS were found commonly at Mooseland (SCM). From May 9-11, there were literally hundreds all over Brier Is. (RBS). It has seemed over the last few years, that populations of White-throats have declined. However, reporting this spring seems to indicate good numbers from all locations. Seven WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS entered the province with one at Westport, May 10-18 (RBS, FLL), one in W. Pubnico, May 11 (DDE), then 2 on Seal, May 14 (ELM, IAM). Others were, one May 15-22, at the popular Hazel Hill feeder

(N&WP), and one May 17, alive and well at the Yarmouth cemetery (WC, PM,FLL).

The DARK-EYED JUNCO was reported in good numbers all winter with the first singing on March 2 in Wolfville (JM). Sandra Myers said she'd never heard so many singing at Mooseland, May 2 and 3, as was the case in Port Joli and Bass River (JA,W&PH).

Several LAPLAND LONGSPURS lingered on, with one seen at Grand Pré Mar. 2 (SAM), 6 at Cherry Hill Beach, with two males in breeding plumage among them, Mar. 29-30 (IAM,SJF,BAH). The last report was of three on the Grand Pré fields, April 13 (JWW). SNOW BUNTINGS stayed later than usual this spring. There were about 100 in a flock at Port Williams, Feb. 27 (RBS), but after that severe ice storm on Mar. 15, J & S Cohrs totalled 140 birds at Centreville, Bayport, Riverport and Crescent. Mar. 20 brought several hundred to the Wolfville area with one flock of at least 200 (JT).

BOBOLINK TO ORIOLES

The earliest BOBOLINK occurred in Port Howe, on May 13 (JWT). It is fascinating to note that all first sightings from Yar. Co. to Cape Breton occurred between May 14-18. The Bobolink's migration schedule must be very rigid indeed. The largest groups were 60 on Seal, and 50 or more at Willington on May 17 (JG,MC). A bright male RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD was observed at Pleasantville, Mar. 19 (JSC), then from Mar. 20-25, many reporters had their "firsts" throughout the mainland. By Mar. 27, Cape Breton had its first, with one seen at Glace Bay (SM). A single EASTERN MEADOWLARK was seen, that, on May 18 at Westport, Brier Is. (FLL,WC,PM). RUSTY BLACKBIRDS showed on Mar. 23 in Brooklyn, Hants Co. (PJS), two joined a pair which spent the winter at a feeder in Big Pond, C.B. on Mar. 28 (JM). On May 7, PRD & CRKA watched a male carrying nesting material, a rare sighting for this species in their area of Yar. Co. Fifteen COMMON GRACKLES were the first for the season seen in Greenville on Mar 2 (MC,JG). The norm seemed to be March 20-25 for first spring dates throughout the province and numbers indicated normal or above average by many. A large flock of 220 was reported in Waverley on Mar. 30 by the Payzants. Large numbers of BROWN-HEADED COWBIRDS appeared throughout the winter and by mid-April, most had disappeared from feeders. Many reports showed arrival dates of April 2-8.

An incompletely spring-attired male ORCHARD ORIOLE was seen May 15 in Clementsport by Sharon Hawboldt. One was watched west of Gaspereau on May 18 (LL), and two females were seen, one on each day May 19 and 20, on Brier Is., which were apparently different birds (FLL,PM). Ten reporters sent sightings of eighteen NORTHERN ORIOLES with the first extremely early date of Apr. 31, of a male in West Lawrencetown (LC). There was one on Brier, May 10 (H&HH); up to 4 on Seal, May 15-17 (ELM,IAM); one in Wolfville, May 16 (JT), and a male in full song, May 18 at Carleton Dam, Yar. Co. (CRKA & group). Others were, a male and female in Coldbrook, May 19 (GW&JT), one, May 22, in Hazel Hill (K&LH) and one still on Brier, May 24 (JWT,DAM).

FINCHES TO HOUSE SPARROW

Very few PINE GROSBEAKS were seen during this report period. Most were seen in one's and two's with the largest flock of over 15 seen near Bridgewater on Mar. 6 (NS). An early breeder, the Pine Grosbeak seems to favour our Eastern Shore areas from Mooseland to Canso. Mid-Feb. brought large numbers of PURPLE FINCHES to feeders everywhere. It was an unusually good year for this bird with an extremely large number of people commenting on their abundance. By April, numbers had dwindled at feeders and pairing and courtship was

beginning by the 1st of May. As reported in the April issue, the HOUSE FINCH had been visiting the feeder of Eva Urban in Avonport. A good number of observers gratefully managed to see a bright male at this feeder until May 6. Brenda Thexton in Wolfville also had a male at her feeder on May 11. The only other sighting was a male seen with Purple Finches at Westport, Brier Is., on Mar. 2 (LL).

The abundance of RED CROSSBILLS was evidenced by 21 reports received. The bulk of the sightings were recorded in mid-March from Yarmouth to Canso. A heavily streaked juvenile, likely a recent nestling, was reported to us by Jim Wolford in Wolfville. The first ever seen at Jim Taylor's feeder in Dartmouth, had a brief stay before it was taken by a Sharp-shinned. (It was never meant to be, Jim) The latest group was seen roosting and warbling in deciduous trees, May 17, at Fairview Cemetery, Hfx (DAC). WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL was recorded in Homeville, 1st Feb., with 30-40 seen by W. Peach. They were seen occasionally until Mar. 18, with 3-25 seen in Wolfville (PCS,JSB).

The COMMON REDPOLL was true to its name this winter, with flocks of several hundred seen at times in February. March had reduced numbers per flock. However, they were reported in many locations until late in the month. The lone exception was an immature bird seen in Dartmouth on Apr. 18 (FLL). Since my A.O.U. check list hasn't the following bird listed, I shall insert it here, whether right or wrong.

At this time it is not possible to make a definitive statement about the apparent female EURASIAN SISKIN that appeared at the McLaren feeder in Halifax on Mar. 26. This obviously different bird stood out from the many Pine Siskins which were in the area and delighted many observers, including visitors from all over the United States, until it disappeared on Apr. 28. Examination of a range of siskins visiting local feeders and an afternoon spent by Dr. McLaren in the Royal Ontario Museum, comparing specimens of Pine and Eurasian Siskins made it clear that the identification problem is difficult.

Some female Pines can be very greenish, have extensive yellowish wing markings and yellowish rumps. At least one such bird was at the McLaren feeder and another photographed at the McNeill feeder in Halifax. Ian believes that his female, of which he obtained very good slides, had field marks that are initially different from any Pine Siskin. Some authorities however, contend that extreme Pines cannot be distinguished from female Eurasians on plumage characteristics alone. Before the final decision can be made, it is clear that more work will have to be done comparing photographs of European birds and museum specimens, work to which Dr. McLaren plans to devote much time and effort. PINE SISKINS became extremely abundant, starting early in March. Typical were reportings of small flocks, steadily building by mid-March province-wide, staying on through April and dispersing during May. The Hemeon's in Bass River, averaged 30 per day in March to 21 per day in April and then 8 daily in May. The Valley feeders had a 'substantial invasion', Mar. 4-5, when there were 30-40 birds per feeder (JWW). In Halifax, the siskins arrived by the hundreds settling into areas where thistle seed was dispensed. There was no shortage of AMERICAN GOLDFINCHS this year with medium (10-25) flocks visiting feeders regularly in March and April. By mid-April plumage had started to change. Mixed flocks of birds in various stages of molt were seen until mid-May, when most males have completed their new garb. CRKA included an interesting anecdote of a single goldfinch (M or F?), grooming a male Purple Finch, "nibbling at its beak and base of bill while the Purple Finch sat passively, apparently enjoying the process".

The large concentrations of EVENING GROSBEAKS this winter brought a carry-over, well into May, where feeders were still being replenished. The Hemeons in Bass River had 25-30 until at least May 15. Scattered reports of pairs feeding together came from various parts of the province, generally in April.

Always just outside the bedroom window, the incessant 'chirp' of HOUSE SPARROWS awakens one to the annual problem of which species should take over the carefully positioned and newly painted nest box. It's not much of a decision but it's always a problem. If there has been decline in House Sparrows, it seems to be in less urbanized areas. Most observers feel they are holding their own and continue to congregate in medium to large flocks whenever feed is available.

--DAC, ed.

LATE HIGHLIGHTS FROM SABLE ISLAND

Zoe Lucas sent a list of the spring's birds on Sable Island a bit late for inclusion in the main accounts. However, a few of her sightings are of some interest and are here placed on record.

An adult LONG-TAILED JAEGER on May 28, was one of our few records of this graceful bird. A dead WOOD THRUSH was found on May 10 near East Light. A NORTHERN WHEATEAR on May 29, seen also by Gerry Forbes, was the island's third and the province's fourth spring record. A YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER on May 15, was the island's second and province's fourth one in spring. Finally, a breeding-plumage male SNOW BUNTING on June 4, was the latest spring record for the province.

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF REPORTS

FOR

THE JANUARY ISSUE

NOVEMBER 25, 1986

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

NEW RARE BIRD ALERT

The Halifax based Rare Bird Alert is to be reorganized in September, in time for all the fall rarities!

With people moving away, changing telephone numbers, or becoming more or less interested in being included, the simplest way of doing this is to COMPLETELY CANCEL the present lot and start afresh.

IF YOU WISH TO BE INCLUDED PLEASE LET US KNOW BEFORE AUGUST 30

Include: Name, address and a telephone number for daytime and evening
If you live outside the Metro area please state that you are willing to accept collect telephone calls.

All members who participate in the RBA are reminded of the OBLIGATION TO GET THE NEWS PASSED ON, even if your first contact(s) is temporarily unavailable. Sometimes this means a fair amount of telephoning down the list as well as making the effort to reach the unavailable parties later.

The present RBA remains in effect until replaced by the new one:

DEADLINE: AUGUST 30

CONTACT: SHIRLEY COHRS
8 ROSEMOUNT AVE.
HALIFAX, N.S. B3N 1X8

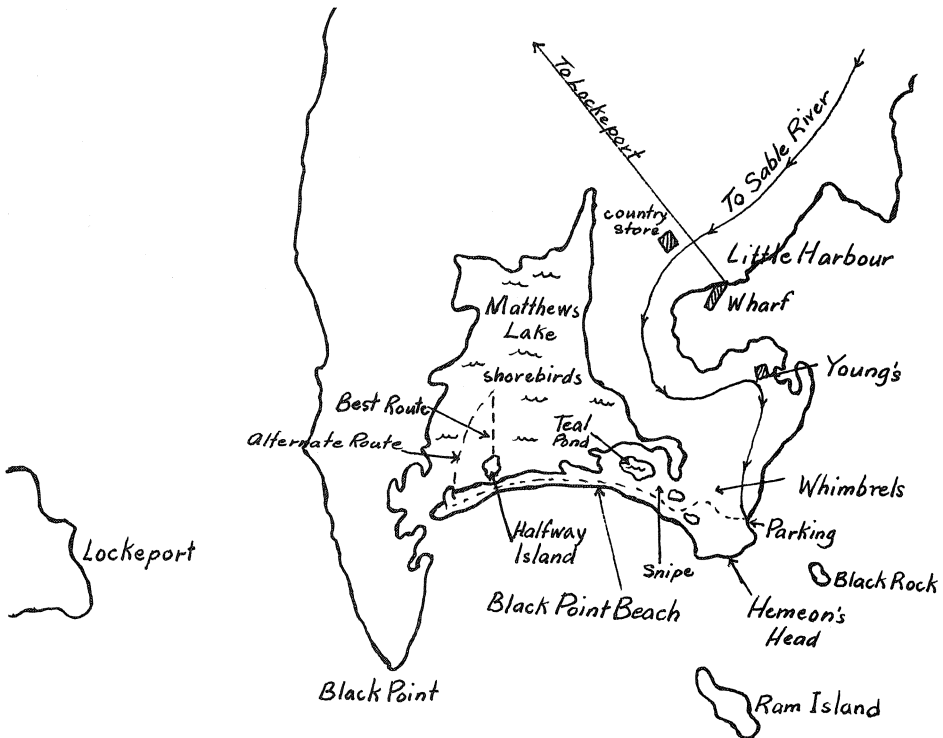
TELEPHONE: 477-6036

BIRDING AT MATTHEW'S LAKE

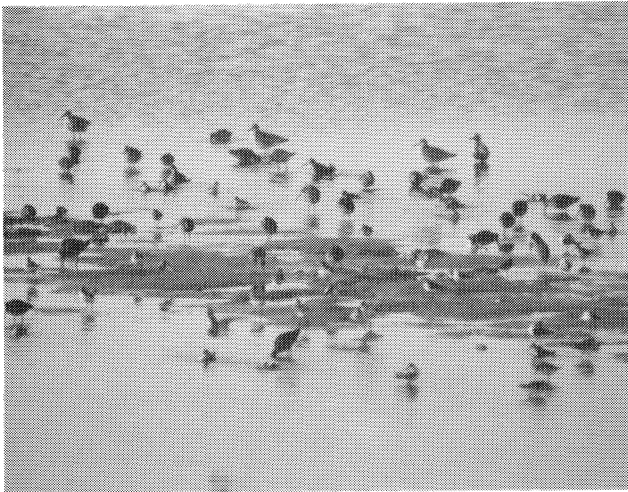
by David H. Young

Photographs by Shirley Cohrs

Matthews Lake (Little Harbour Lake on some older topo maps), is situated in Shelburne County, approximately 20 km south of Sable River on highway 103. This large marsh, beach, and tidal lagoon area can be reached by turning south at exit 23 off highway 103, proceeding about 4 km to the Little Harbour turn on the left and then going about 12 km to the Little Harbour Country Store at the crossroads. Proceed 4 km straight through this intersection (south) to the end of the gravel road where there is a small parking area and turn-around at Hemeon's Head. Our house is located on the left side of the road about 1.5 km from the end and is a good place to stop for refreshments and further information.



After parking and examining the ocean nearby and also Black Rock to the east and Ram Island to the south for gulls, guillemots, cormorants and eiders, as well as possible shearwaters, fulmars and phalaropes (during dummer and early fall), follow the track west along the beach for about 2.5 km to the access to the Matthews Lake sand and mud flats (see map). The timing of your arrival is quite important to the success of your shorebirding, which is the primary attraction of the area. The greatest numbers of shorebirds, particularly during the fall migration, will be seen on the flats in the middle of the lake at low tide. This area is approximately another kilometer north of the beach. Low tide in the lake lags behind low tide in the ocean about 2½ hours, so that arrival at the flats should be timed for approximately 2½ hours after the tide tables say it will be low water at either Lockeport or Halifax.



A typical gathering of shorebirds at the lake

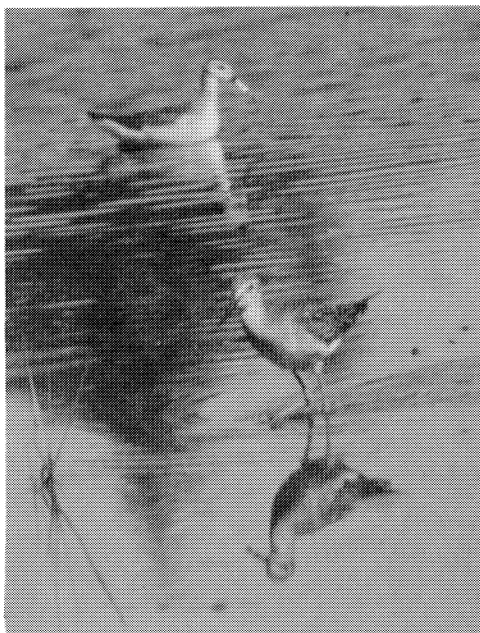
At this time, except during periods of very high tides, the flats can be reached "dry shod" or ankle deep at worst, and birded for about 2½ hours before the rising tide will force a decision to leave or swim! The whereabouts of the birds at high tide is a bit of a mystery, though many can be seen along the ocean on Black Point Beach, especially just west of Hemeon's Head, and near the lake outlet on the west end of the beach.

Now for the birds: George Perry examined this area for the Maritimes Shorebird Survey and I am endeavoring to carry on in his footsteps. Between these surveys and other observations, some 27 species of shorebirds have been seen, about as great a variety as any of the census areas in the Maritimes. The actual total numbers are not great; to see a thousand or so during August and early September is common, but this is a good area for Hudsonian Godwits (August), Red Knots, Dowitchers, Whimbrels, White-rumped Sandpipers, Pectoral Sandpipers (late), as well as the more common species. Buff-breasted Sandpipers, Baird's Sandpipers and Curlews (very rare) are also possible. There seems to be at least one pair of Semipalmated Plovers breeding here and a pair of Greater Yellowlegs have been observed during the breeding season and acting "suspiciously". The birds seem to be tired, especially during the fall migration and can be approached quite closely. The area around the first pond you pass is especially good for Snipe in the fall (as many as 15) and also Bitterns, Sora and other rails.



Short-billed
Dowitchers
(left)

Wilson's Phalarope
(right above)



Lesser Yellowlegs
(right)

The area shown as "Teal Pond" is especially good for both Teals and other ducks such as Black, Mallard, Gadwall and Pintail. Common Egrets have also been seen here. The lake itself harbors many hundred Canada Geese during the late fall and winter, as well as goldeneye, mergansers and Brant (spring). Offshore, a few thousand eiders gather during the summer molt and this is a good spot to watch the parade of gannets during late September and October. Needless to say, this whole area is not a good place to bird during the duck hunting season.

Other than the waterbirds, the fall migration seems to be a good time here to observe Merlin, Peregrine Falcons, Harriers, warblers and also western rarities such as Summer Tanager, Blue Grosbeak, Western Kingbird, Cardinal, etc. These latter birds are more often seen along the road and shore between Sable River and Hemeon's Head.

One final note: Black-headed Gulls have been seen numerous times during winter and early spring and it has been suggested that they may eventually breed here. Also, I believe a few pairs of Roseate Terns are breeding nearby, probably on Ram Island.

Don your wet-weather footwear and come on out to see us. Joan and I are sometimes home and always happy to see other birders. Our phone number is 656-2225.



Solitary
Sandpiper

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

March 23 - Eastern Shore

Luck was with us again; March 23 was sunny with a light breeze as our group of birders (varying from 22 to 25) set out on an extensive tour. We had not planned to cover quite so much country, but who wanted to miss the newly-arrived Snowy Owl reported by F. Lavender to be on Devil's Island. After a good look at Sullivan's Pond and a quick detour to Dartmouth Cove, we set up the 'scopes at Hartlen's Point and were rewarded by a thorough, if distant, view of the owl --a lifer for several of the party.

Leaving there, we followed the shore around Cow Bay to our planned route to Conrad's Beach (no Purple Sandpipers but a large flock of C. Redpolls), through Lawrencetown to Lr. Three Fathom Harbour for lunch at the trestle bridge. The Causeway Road, Seaforth and Grand Desert Beach areas were covered, finishing at Chezzetcook, along the Shore Road.

Typical of late March, there were late wintering birds, migrants and new arrivals. From the Snowy Owl to a Varied Thrush, Iceland Gulls to singing Song Sparrows, courting C. Goldeneye to winter-plumaged C. Loons, Killdeer to Horned Larks; the list was as varied as we could expect. The final tally was 49 species, not all seen by everyone.

--Joyce Purchase

April 26 - Cape Breton

Our first Cape Breton Field Day of 1986, was held on April 26. The March Trip was cancelled due to a superabundance of snow.

The morning of April 25 was cold with rain but improved before noon. We had 12 observers and 24 species. We had our lunch in Two Rivers Park at noon. We had called at C. Hussey's on the way there but there was no sign of the Pileated Woodpecker. Common Loons were in the Mira River and we saw robins, juncos, warblers, chickadees and Red-breasted Nuthatches. We also had a profitable walk in the Sandfield Cemetery. We were glad to have a Grade X student with us and hope he continues to be interested.

---Hedley Hopkins

April 27 - Wolfville Area

Although the morning looked ominously dark and rainy, about 26 people took a chance, and we all "lucked out" with an overcast, cool morning then a sunny afternoon.

At Grand Pré we saw 2 Rough-legged Hawks (and there was a mini-controversy over whether some saw a Harrier), about 50 Brant, 3 Snipe, Double-crested Cormorants and a few Great Blue Herons were flying to and from Boot Island. Port Williams, the Canard Valley and Starr's Point provided about 250 Canada Geese (some of the flocks showed many individuals breaking away to wildly drop and recover as they approached their landing sites--we often see that in their roosting flights), Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal, Mallard and a Kestrel.

The sky cleared while we relaxed in Merritt and Wilma Gibson's home in Canning, and enjoyed the delicious fish chowder and a variety of pies. At their feeder and elsewhere on their property, there were lots of Pine Siskins, Purple Finches and Evening Grosbeaks. We tried to locate their overwintered Mockingbird but only two people

were able to see it.

After lunch, Canard Poultry Pond showed us a few dozen Tree Swallows, a Common Goldeneye and a pair of American Wigeon (but no Shovelers were seen yet this year, which is unusual).

Finally, at Cyril Coldwell's home at Gaspereau, we viewed various raptors in cages (including a permanently crippled Snowy Owl).

Thanks once again to the Gibsons and Betty Rockwell for their Valley hospitality and calorific delights!

--Jim Wolford

May 4 - Anherst Point-John Lusby Marsh

Spring, and the birds were late this year--but this did not prevent some enthusiastic birders from Halifax, Wolfville and Economy from coming to see what the Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary had to offer. The weather had not been too promising the day before but turned out to be pleasant on Sunday, May 4. The swallows were there and some warblers, but the main objects of interest were the waterfowl, which included 10 species of ducks, a good number of Pied-billed Grebes, some Coots and Cormorants. Raptors were represented by 4 Ospreys and waders by some Greater Yellowlegs.

In the morning the usual tour was made through the sanctuary and in the afternoon a reduced number of us went down to the John Lusby Marsh. On one of the impoundments there was a group of about 20 Red-breasted Mergansers.

For the finale, the impoundment on APBS along the Nappan Road was observed. Here were seen among others, a number of Gadwalls and a Common Scoter, which seemed to be somewhat out of place in this fresh-water environment. However, since he stayed for a number of weeks, he must have liked the territory. This was the same sentiment expressed by those who participated in the field trip.

--Con Desplanque

May 10 - Halifax - Dartmouth Parks

About a dozen keen bright-eyed birders turned out on a cool May 10 morning at 10:00 a.m. to see if any spring birds could be found.

At Point Pleasant Park, the highlights included White-breasted Nuthatch, Iceland Gull and a robin finishing its nest. Yellow-rumped Warbler and Ruby-crowned Kinglet were also heard singing.

At Powder Mill Park (formerly known as Waverly Park), we watched Hermit Thrushes, Tree and Barn Swallows, and a Swamp Sparrow, a Ruffed Grouse and listened to a Common Loon yodeling.

The trip officially ended at Laurie Park, which proved birdwise to be more like April than May. The best birds recorded on the last stop of the day were Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Brown Creeper and Barred Owl. The sapsucker and creeper were lifers for some of those present.

Lunch was eaten back at Powder Mill Park. Birds were scarce but the weather was good, the company most enjoyable and because of the latter, it was time well spent by all.

--Fulton L. Lavender

May 15 - Morning Warbler Walk - Prospect Road

The steady northeasterlies of the previous two weeks, during prime migration time, slowed things down this spring so much that we had to scratch for the three warbler species we found. In spite of a perfect morning (sunny and sparkling clear, 5^o, no wind to speak of, dry underfoot, and no flies) all we got for 2½ hour's looking were Yellow-rumped, Palm (both common, the former everywhere, the latter only on the Tamarack bog), and a few Black-throated Greens.

However, that is not to say we didn't have a thoroughly enjoyable time; who could fail, rising early on such a day? As ever, we found a few Solitary Vireos, Hermit Thrushes ringing their high, clear carillions and peeping querulously in the brush by the road; Ruby-crowned Kinglets burbling mightily from the treetops and Golden-crowned pipers piping thinly from below; Black-capped and Boreal Chickadees working round and about and Tree Swallows joyously circling their nesting boxes. We saw (or heard) three special birds: a pair of Broad-winged Hawks, a pair of Swamp Sparrows, and, for the first time in five years on the Prospect Road in spring, Winter Wrens singing. We welcomed them back.

The total counts were five participants, and twenty-five species.

--Fred Dobson

May 17 - Mooseland

Pea soup fog engulfed the 107 Highway and those birders leaving the cities at 6:00 a.m., wondered why they kept driving east. For the eight who did, and the seven already there, the field trip proved to be very enjoyable.

At Mooseland, 16 km inland, the weather was heavy overcast and cool, but not very foggy.

During the first part of the trip, we walked the main road, some new logging roads and an old mining road (gold). We were rewarded with a wide variety of birds--happy, cheerful, brightly coloured and very vocal. Barred Owls were identified by their calls; groups at 2 opposite areas thought the other party was calling owls--neither were!

The group relaxed at mid-morning at the cottage in a newly-added "atrium" (sun porch). It was properly initiated by birders, who sat on the floor, having coffee and muffins while watching an interesting variety of birds just outside. These included a small fight among three species trying to possess one bird house.

In late morning, we drove 25 km to Taylor Head Beach Provincial Park. En route, there were several stops to observe various birds, but mainly to see paired Common Eider and nesting Double-crested Cormorants. The weather at the shore was cold, raw and rainy. However, it improved enough for us to quite enjoy our lunch at the Park picnic area and tally our morning birds - 51 species.

After lunch, everyone elected to walk along the beach, where we added 4 more species (as well as rabbits and seals). On a fine day, one could walk the entire headland. On this day, fortunately, everyone elected not to do so. The pouring rain came as we got in our cars and it did not let up for the next 12 hours.

People departed, quite pleased with an interesting rewarding trip, on a somewhat less than perfect day. Many left with the intention of

stopping to buy our world-famous Nova Scotia smoked salmon (or mackerel or eels) where it is made. I'm sure many loons and cormorants kept them company along the Eastern Shore drive back to the city.

--Wendie Tay

May 19 - Cadden Beach

May 19 was a sunny but very windy day when 34 members gathered at Port Joli for an outing to Cadden Beach. The wind and rough sea combined to reduce the number of species seen to only nineteen, but most important for many was their first sighting of Piping Plover. Unfortunately, the numbers appear to be down. Although admittedly, our count was far from thorough and hopefully on the low side, we saw only fourteen. This compares with 28 pairs reported in 1975 and 29 individuals in 1982.

We were fortunate to have with us Peter Hope, park naturalist from Kejimikujik Natural Park. The Cadden Beach area has recently been incorporated into the Park and Peter explained to us the measures being taken to protect this beautiful beach. Most important from the viewpoint of the Piping Plover, access to their critical nesting area will be strictly forbidden during the nesting season.

Although the walk to Cadden Beach and back is strenuous, we had an enjoyable outing with an enthusiastic group of birders, which made it well worth while.

--Eric Cooke

May 21 - Shubie Park

For anyone who has not yet visited Shubie Park in Dartmouth, it is well worth a stroll in the early morning. The well laid pathways encompass lake, stream and mature woodland habitat which affords one the opportunity of observing a variety of birds at leisure.

Twelve energetic individuals arrived at 6:30 with rain threatening, to catch glimpses of our colourful spring passerines. It was an exercise to brush up on songs unfamiliar since last spring and commit the more vocal of them to memory. Of the fourteen wood warblers seen or heard, Tennessee, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian and Ovenbird were very co-operative to hear and view.

After the hour walk through Shubie, it was decided to continue along the Waverley road by car to Rocky Lake Drive and again venture through woodland near Powder Mill Park. Eastern Wood Pewee, Parula, Black-throated Blue and Canada Warblers were added to the list which by now totalled over 40. Unfortunately, employment requires us to be on the job in order to be paid so the group dispersed by 9:00 a.m., pleased with newly learned birds, songs and familiarity with new territory.

--Dave Currie

May 25 - Shubenacadie

Seventeen early risers set out to stalk marsh and woods in search of birds. Some stalwart enthusiasts had been up at 4:00 a.m., in order to be in Shubenacadie by 6:00 on a cool, foggy morning. The birds co-operated by singing, winnowing, screeching, or just sitting in trees where they could be well seen, as did an unconventional cat bird.

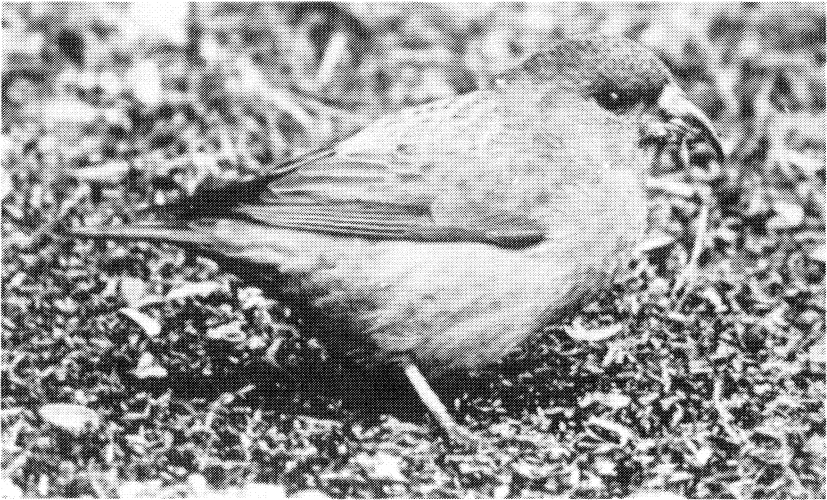
Although some birds that are usually back by this time had not

yet arrived, seventy-six species were seen or heard. The variety included Sora Rail, a Bittern, Blue-winged Teal, a family of Black Ducks, Alder, Least, and Olive-sided Flycatchers, Solitary Vireos, five kinds of woodpeckers, and most of the common warblers. One Lincoln's Sparrow and one Mourning Warbler were found.

Although many of the birds did not sing later in the morning, they were present and observed.

The black flies were few and, aside from disappearing chickadee nests, nothing marred the expedition. Probably because of its central position in the province, and its wide variety of habitat, the area is a showcase for many bird species.

Roslyn MacPhee



Red Crossbills were quite common around the Dalhousie University campus this winter. This one took a side trip to Ian McLaren's feeder, awkwardly snatching thistle seeds, in early April 1986.

UP-COMING FIELD TRIPS

Friday
August 1

CRESCENT AND CHERRY HILL BEACHES - early shorebirds. Leader: Shirley Cohrs (477-6036). Meet at the entrance to Crescent Beach at 0830 hours. Come prepared for a short easy walk at Crescent Beach in the morning, lunch at Risser's Beach and a fairly long rugged hike up Cherry Hill Beach in the afternoon.

Saturday
August 9

YARMOUTH COUNTY - shorebirds. Leaders: C.R.K. Allen (1-648-2752) and P.R. Dobson (1-648-2058). Meet at Yarmouth CPR station at 0900 hours.

Saturday
August 9

SCATARI ISLAND - a search of the bogs and barrens of this island off Cape Breton for whimbrel and of course Willow Ptarmigan. Leader: David Harris, Coxheath, Cape Breton (Dept. of Lands and Forests, Wildlife biologist, 1-564-6389). Bring hiking boots or sturdy waterproof footwear. We will travel over and back on the same day. It will be necessary to register for the boat trip before June 15 with either Dave Harris or Bob McDonald (number below). Bad weather in the morning could mean cancellation of the trip or postponement to the next day. Participants should also be prepared for an overnight stay if weather does not permit our return. (We can stay in the cabin but a sleeping bag and some provisions will be required). Meet at the Government Wharf in Main a Dieu at 0730 hours.

Saturday
August 16

FULLERS BRIDGE (CAPE BRETON) - mostly shorebirds. Leader: Eldon Meikle. Meet at Marion Bridge at 0800 hours.

Saturday
August 16,
Sunday
August 17

CANSO AREA - a chance to explore this exciting part of the province. Leaders: Nancy and Warren Peters (1-366-2792 or 366-2889). Various habitats will be visited for shorebirds and other early migrants. Meet at 0700 hours on both mornings at the parking lot of the curling rink about 500m past the old brick cable office in Hazel Hill (just west of Canso). Accommodation is available at the Dorian Motel (366-2400) in Hazel Hill. Reserve well in advance at this number or with the manager at 366-2124. For further information contact Bob McDonald.

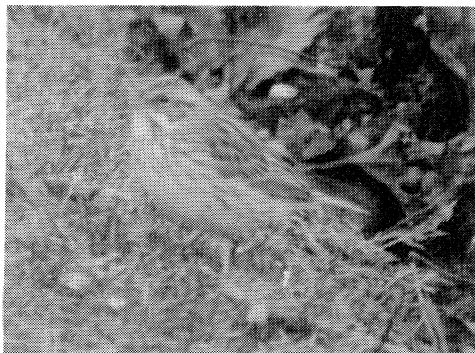
Saturday
August 23

NORTHUMBERLAND SHORE (TIGNISH TO WALLACE) - waterfowl, shorebirds and marsh birds. Leader: Stu Tingley (1-506-536-2862). Meet at the bridge at Tignish Bridge on Route 366 (roughly 16km east of Amherst) at 0930 hours.

- Saturday August 30 to Monday September 1 BON PORTAGE ISLAND - Labour Day long weekend excursion to Evelyn Richardson's "The Living Island". Leader: Peter Smith (1-542-5998). Meet at the wharf in Shag Harbour (3 1/2 hours from Halifax or Wolfville) on Saturday at 0930 hours for the 40-45 minute boat trip over (rough cost - \$10 return). Advance registration before July 15 is necessary; contact Peter or Bob McDonald (number below). A limited number of bunks are available indoors; outdoor accommodation is unlimited. Bring sleeping bag, food, hiking boots and personal gear in waterproof containers. Return on Monday early afternoon.
- Saturday September 6 NORTH RIVER - fall migrants. Leader: Edie MacLeod. Meet at Sydney River Woolco store at 0800 hours.
- Sunday September 7 HALIFAX/DARTMOUTH AREA FALL ROUND-UP - our second annual. Coordinator: Bill Caudle (469-7841). Last year's count yielded 125 species; with a few more counters, we could do better! Contact Bill for an area to cover. Weather permitting we will meet back at the parking lot in Shubie Park at 1730 hours for a barbeque (bring your hot dogs and hamburgers) and a tally of the day's sightings.
- Sunday September 14 ADVOCATE HARBOUR/MINAS BASIN - leader: Michael Malone (1-392-2352). A visit to a new location - we will search for waterfowl in fresh and salt water and visit a CWS Peregrine Falcon release site. Meet at the wharf in Advocate Harbour (about 45km west of Parrsboro) at 1000 hours.
- Saturday September 27 TUSKET ISLANDS (YARMOUTH CO.) - migrating hawks, possibly including broad-wings. Leader: Mike Rymer (1-742-8582). Meet at the Tuna Wharf in Lower Wedgeport at 0800 hours. Two boats will be chartered; the trip will include a look at the Society's Bald Island group. Transportation cost- roughly \$10/person. If planning to attend, contact Mike or C.R.K. Allen (1-648-2752) before September 20.
- Saturday, October 11 to Monday, October 13 BRIER ISLAND - for Thanksgiving. A great spot at this time of year for late migrants (shorebirds, hawks, unusual transients) and the occasional accidental. Leaders: various. We will meet each morning at 0800 hours to exchange birding information and plan the day's events. A pelagic trip for whales and birds can be arranged at fairly short notice if there is sufficient interest.
- Camping on the island remains primitive; the nearest proper campground is Sandy Cove. Also in Sandy Cove is the Olde Village Inn (1-834-2202). Mr. and Mrs. D. Eaton (1-839-2879) operate a tourist home (The Brier House) in Westport and have the names of others in the village willing to accommodate birders if they are full.
- Sunday October 26 EASTERN SHORE - late shorebirds and early winter arrivals. Leader: Bob Dickie (443-0993). Meet at the shopping centre at the end of Porter's Lake at 0900 hours. Various locations will be visited - from Martinique to Lawrencetown - so bring a lunch.

- Sunday
January 18 SEWER STROLL I - Leader: Bill Caudle (469-7841). This trip will begin as usual at Hartlen's Point at 0830 hours and work in a counterclockwise direction towards Herring cove. Bring a lunch, warm clothing and lots of hot coffee.
- Early
February WOLFVILLE AREA/KINGS CO. - wintering birds of the dykes, marshlands, rocky shores and town. Meet at 1000 hours in the parking lot of the Acadia University Gymnasium. Bring lunch, dress warmly and wear warm waterproof footwear. More details will follow in the January issue or contact Bob McDonald.
- Sunday
February 15 WINTER BIRDS OF HALIFAX COUNTY - various habitats, several locations. Leader: Dave Currie (443-0490). Meet at 0900 hours in the parking lot of the 24-hour Sobeys store on the Bedford Basin at Hammonds Plains Road (next to Wacky Wheatley's) in Bedford. We will visit the Mill Cove Pollution Plant, possibly other spots on the Basin, Hammonds Plains Road and the Head of St. Margaret's Bay. The trip will end in the early to mid-afternoon so bring a lunch.
- Saturday
February 28 SEWER STROLL II - Leader: Bill Caudle (469-7841). This trip will begin at Herring Cove, visit the Volvo plant (for the L.B.B. Gull), several locations on the Bedford Basin working towards Hartlen's Point in late afternoon. Bring a lunch and the usual winter birding paraphernalia. Meet at 0830 hours in the parking lot of the Canadian Tire store in Spryfield.

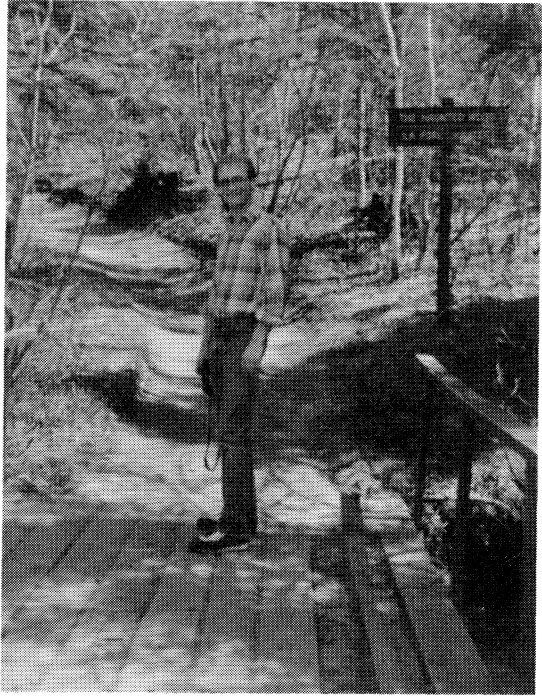
Any questions on mainland field trips or suggestions regarding future trips should be addressed to Field Trip Coordinators, Bob and Wendy McDonald (443-5051).



This Ipswich Sparrow, found by Bernice McLaren in her mid-Halifax garden on Apr. 14, was a most astonishing sight in such a built-up area. There is one other city record--on a south-end seaside lawn in April, 1971.

THE THIRD OF A SERIES ABOUT MEMBERS...

PROFILES.....



Meet Dave Currie,

The NORTHERN THREE TOED WOODPECKER was seen, for the first time in Point Pelee National Park on a Christmas count in 1972. It was spotted by a young eighteen year old by the name of David Currie, who was teamed up on that count with Norm Chesterfield. The bird was a minor sensation and became a "lifer" for many people in the area.

David Alan Currie was born in Amherst, N.S., in 1954. His family moved to Dartmouth when David was five and while her, he remembers catching HOUSE SPARROWS and STARLINGS with a box set up on a stick. This gave him a chance to observe the birds but he soon learned that there is a better way and that there are better birds.

In 1968, the Currie family moved to Toronto and then on to London Ontario, where Dave completed his education. Here, with Point Pelee a mere two hours away, birding became a much bigger thing in his life. In addition to the THREE TOED WOODPECKER, he found rare nesting HENSLOW'S SPARROWS and the first nesting CLAY COLORED SPARROWS in the entire county.

In 1975, the family moved again; this time to Moncton, New Brunswick, where Dave started working at the Woolco Department Store which eventually transferred him to Halifax in 1980, where he promptly joined the Nova Scotia Bird Society.

Dave Currie has taken on the ominous task of mailing out Nova Scotia Birds to society members all over the world and as if that

weren't enough, he also assumed responsibility for the Halifax (West) Christmas bird count. He is also a member of the Society's Conservation and Environment Committee.

When Linda and Peter Payzant began setting up the Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas Trust, they asked Dave if he would serve as a trustee and, characteristically, he accepted the responsibility. An "atlasser" himself, he is working at present on two Squares, one at Porter's Lake, and another at Amherst.

Dave said to me, "I love birding in Nova Scotia because more unexpected species turn up here than any other place I've been. It's a great place to bird."

When asked if his wife Louise is a birder, Dave smiled and said, "She tolerates it."

"What about your daughter, Jennifer?"

"She's too little now, but as soon as she's big enough I'm going to take her with me."

I suspect that in the not-too-distant future, the name Jennifer Currie will appear among our list of reporters in Nova Scotia Birds.

--Bob Dickie

ANNOUNCING

A NEW BIRD JOURNAL

T H E B U L L B I R D

A NEWFOUNDLAND BIRDWATCHING JOURNAL

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

EDITOR - BRUCE MACTAVISH

1st Issue--January, 1986

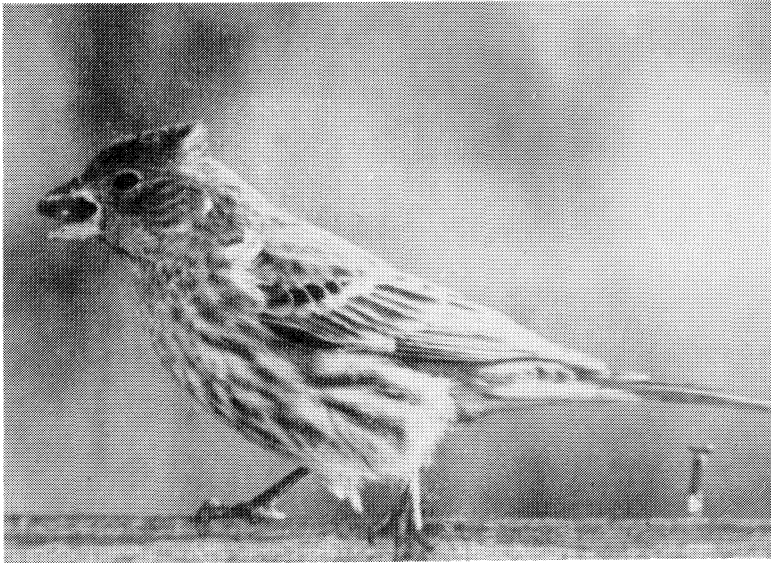
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Newfoundland A1E 1C5

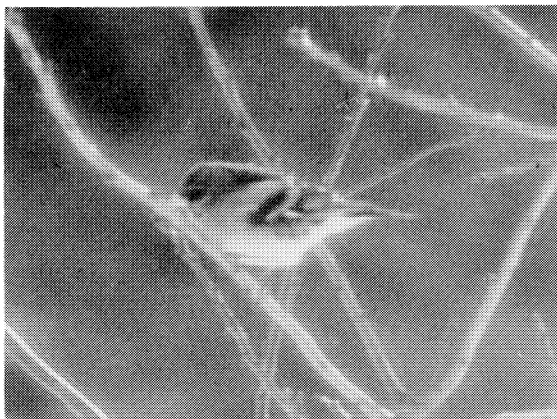


Since no-one else has submitted photographs of either of our two metro Lesser Black-backed Gulls, this will do. However, which one might this be? Photographed at Sullivan's Pond, Dartmouth, Jan. 27, 1980,

--Ian McLaren



This male House Finch, looking every cm the Garbarian invader, is much more striking on the slide, with his strawberry-red breast and head. Photographed by Jim Wolford at the feeder of Mrs. Eva Urban, Avonport, Dec. 7, 1985.



Nova Scotia's second Brambling, a male, was photographed on Mar. 8, 1986, at Moser's River. Don MacNeill caught it with a lesser friend at the Bezanson's feeder, and Ian McLaren snapped in a nearby tree.

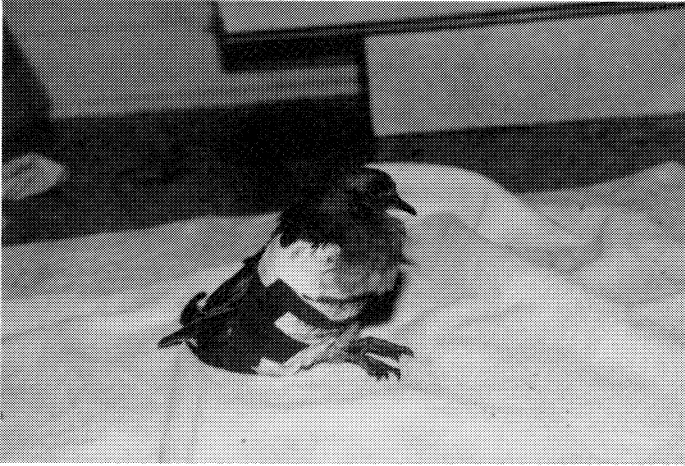
A Greater Red-faced Editor

The owl photograph on page 49 of the April issue shows, of course, a Great Horned Owl and not Barred Owl as captioned. This was a slip of the pencil of mine and NOT the error of the besieged Photographic Editor to whom I abjectly apologize--JSC. (P.S. I DO know the difference and I CAN see the "horns"!)

THE SAGA OF "PERKY"

Lynda M. Conrad

Please find enclosed two photos of "Perky", the Mourning Dove which I found injured on my front lawn on July 25, 1985. The one with the bandage was taken the day of the surgery, July 26, and the other was taken August 15. As the photos show, poor Perky was pretty well



restrained when he came home from surgery. However, the dove is very, very active now and will be returning on Tuesday, September 2, for another visit with either Dr. MacKay or Dr. Cameron



Dr. Cameron sutured the under-wing area as it had been very badly torn and also placed a pin in the humerus which was completely snapped. Perky came through the operation without any complications, but Dr. Cameron advised me that the biggest problem would be getting him to eat. I was given some Amoxil, which was to be administered 1/4 milligram each day for six days.

The fun had just begun; Perky wouldn't eat, so I cooked an egg and injected the Amoxil into it with a needle. I placed Perky on the floor and gently pressed on his lower jaw. He opened his mouth immediately and I was able to force feed him a tiny portion of the egg yolk. It took an hour to get about an eighth of a teaspoon of food into him. There was no problem with water, as Perky drank without difficulty. Dr. Cameron had told me that I might get up some morning and find the dove dead even if it did eat. I was determined to save him so dismissed this from my mind entirely.

Perky was still alive the next morning and I began again with the egg yolk. After three days on the egg, Perky finally ate some wild bird seeds. The biggest problem now became the bandage which was awkward and made maneuvering difficult. He could occasionally get up on his own if he fell over, but at other times I had to place him on his feet. (Dr. Cameron wasn't certain whether Perky was male or female).

After another few days Perky gained enough strength to keep his balance with his good left wing. I cut some of the bandage away from the belly area, since he was having some difficulty walking and this was a great help. Then I began putting him outside on the sundeck in his cage. Other doves came to visit, walked all around the cage and even tried to eat his food through the bars. He got very excited when I brought him in and it seemed he knew he belonged outside. I felt he must have been one of the regulars at my feeder as he spent a lot of time watching the birds eating on the lawn and was not in the least afraid of my dog Goldie, who sat before his cage as if on guard. None of the regulars at the feeder are afraid of Goldie.

On August 2 Perky went to the vet again. This time Dr. MacKay looked after him, cleaning the vent area and removing some of the feathers which had become dirty. Dr. Cameron was on vacation, but Dr. MacKay told me that Perky was very tame compared to other doves. He was surprised that the dove had survived and that he appeared to be in excellent health.

The bandage began to fray and the pin began to protude, so I called the vet and took Perky in on August 6. Dr. MacKay snipped about 1/4 inch off the pin as he felt it might interfere with the back of Perky's neck. He also took the bandage off, as he felt that the pin was still doing its job and there wasn't any need to worry. So, when Perky got home, he was free from the bandage and walked about all over the place. The removal of the bandage made all the difference in the world; Perky began to be afraid of me, he was afraid of the dog when I put him out on the sundeck and I could no longer let him wander about the back room. I was afraid he might damage the wing more when I went to place him in the cage, so he was put into a double bird cage where he has remained ever since. He began to preen every night as dusk was coming on and the right wing rose up every now and then. I had to stop putting him outside as he began to flop about the cage when I went to bring him inside and again I was afraid of more injury.

The pin became visible again on August 18, and by suppertime it had come completely out and was in Perky's water dish. His wing appeared to be somewhat drooped but he was moving it, raising both wings at once and preening at dusk.

Perky went to the vet again on August 19. Dr. MacKay examined the wing and removed the dead tissue where the sutures had been and found the area to be very badly infected. For this he gave me an ointment to put on it twice a day. He said that Perky might never fly again as there wasn't any gristle around the bone. With the aid of the new ointment, if gristle was going to form at all, it would begin

within the next two weeks or so. From then on Perky began to gain strength and began to flap his wings in the cage so I could only hope and pray that he would eventually be free to join the other doves at my feeders. Dr. MacKay advised me that I might obtain a permit to keep Perky should he not be able to fly, so I wrote to the proper authorities explaining the situation and I was told that I wasn't allowed to keep him but someone would take him off my hands and if he was a good specimen he would be placed in a museum, STUFFED!! I promised myself that this would never happen. He's a migratory bird and Mr. Fred Payne of the Department of Lands and Forests told me they would not issue a permit for him for this reason.

On September 4, Perky went to see Dr. MacKay, who examined him and was very pleased with his progress. The infection in the wing had pretty well all cleared up and gristle had begun to form which would eventually help in strengthening the bone. He told me to continue administering the medication to seal the tiny opening which was still present. He said he now felt certain that Perky would fly again; I was more than pleased.

Dr. MacKay advised me to try to put Perky into a larger area so he could exercise his wings and perhaps fly a short distance. On Monday, September 16, Perky was placed in a wire cage, 6 feet long, 5 feet high and 3 feet wide, where he began to fly from perch to perch. Other Mourning Doves came down on the sundeck to keep Perky company, so, he was quite at home in his new cage. Dr. MacKay advised me not to let him loose until the spring of 1986, when he would probably be completely rehabilitated.

May 13, 1986--Finally, after all this time, Perky has been banded by Mike O'Brien at the Waverly Lands and Forests Office--band number 54321901. The age and sex were undetermined, although Perky is thought to be a male as there is quite a prominent pinkish wash over the breast area.

Perky lost all his tail feathers last week, at a very odd time to molt. However, new ones are beginning to appear and of course it means that it will be some time before he flies, if he flies; there is some question at this time.

The injured wing does not extend properly and it is either caused from not using the wing in the pen or from a possible fusion of the bones and if it is the latter, Perky will never fly any great distances. I plan to build another pen between 50 and 100 feet in diameter behind my home among some small spruce trees--quite heavy cover, and see what takes place. Here he will have the company of other birds as well as protection from any hawks which might be flying about. This way I am within the law and Perky, if he is able to fly, will be able to leave when ready.

Perky is the only Mourning Dove to be banded in Nova Scotia this year and of course, if he flies we will want a report of any sightings and if he dies, the same applies.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY HAS, FOR THE SECOND TIME, BEEN SELECTED TO RECEIVE AN AWARD FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL CULTURE COUNCIL. THE AWARD IS FOR THE INITIATION OF THE MARITIME BREEDING BIRD ATLAS, WITH SPECIAL RECOGNITION TO PETER AND LINDA PAYZANT, AND WAS PRESENTED TO THE SOCIETY AT PROVINCE HOUSE, MARCH 3, 1986.



Shown above are Linda and Peter Payzant receiving the award from Environment Minister Guy LeBlanc, flanked by Premier John Buchanan on the left and Lands and Forests Minister Ken Stretch on the right.

BIRDWATCHING IN AUSTIN CITY LIMITS

Richard B. Stern

In late April 1986, I attended a conference for four days in Austin, Texas, and combined business with some birding. Austin is about 160 miles north of the Texas coast and is on a north/south running fault line with prairie and hardwood groves to the east and the Edward's Plateau, much drier with juniper, live oak, cacti and much more "southwestern" terrain to the west of the city. Consequently, the bird life is different to the east and west of the city as well with many eastern species reaching the western limits and many western species reaching their eastern limits in the immediate vicinity of Austin. The city itself is well laid out with parks and trees and has a river running through the middle.

Before my trip, I looked up the name and address of the Christmas Bird Count compiler for the area in "American Birds", as a possible contact and wrote to him, Greg Lasley. He replied with a local check list and an account of where to bird in the Austin area. When I arrived, I also discovered a "birding hot line" number in a local guide book, rang it, and obtained details of a field trip the following lunch hour in the grounds of the State Capitol, right in the city centre, as well as a tape recorded message detailing the rarities that had been seen within the last week.

As my conference lasted each day from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., for four days, and I was there on my own, I got up at dawn each day, birded for an hour before breakfast and then a couple of hours of birding again before dusk. The first day I spent in one of the city parks and saw numerous Cardinals and Mockingbirds and Great-tailed Grackles were everywhere (and looking very like the bird that appeared two winters ago in Annapolis Royal). I also saw Nashville Warblers and my first Carolina Chickadees, Mourning and Inca Doves, Red-bellied Woodpeckers and some Blue-grey Gnatcatchers.

The one hour field trip the next day was run by the Travis Audubon Society in the treed grounds of the State Capitol at lunchtime. About 30 people turned out, many with briefcase in one hand and binoculars in the other. I was told that the long dry spell and continuous northerly winds for the previous few days made for poor migration, but we did see Western Kingbird, several Nashville and Black and White Warblers, Great-crested Flycatcher, and Yellow-Breasted Chat. I also got more information on where to bird and what to look for in the area. One of the best places I found out about was not a birding locality but the American Birding Association Bookstore, also located in Austin, featuring every bird book you could want (including Birding Nova Scotia). Also that evening I took the first of several trips to an excellent sewage treatment plant on the outskirts of the city--lots of exposed mud, flies, and the height of the shorebird migration. On several visits I saw both Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpipers, Killdeer, Willets, Spotted, Least and Pectoral Sandpipers and Long-billed Dowitchers that were close enough to allow careful scrutiny and positively identify the field marks that separated them from Short-billed Dowitchers. There were also Eared Grebes, Coot, Blue-winged Teal and 2 Black-bellied Whistling Ducks.

To the west of the city and in the more desert-like country with groves of juniper and oak were more Western birds, for example, Scrub Jay, Black-chinned Hummingbirds, Bewick's Wren, Tufted Titmouse, etc., and I got two beautiful views of male Painted Buntings, as well as seeing Northern Rough-winged Swallows and a Roadrunner nearby.

There were also Scissor-tailed Flycatchers perched on the wires alongside of the road every few hundred yards.

However, by early evening on the last day, I had still not seen the real specialty of the area, Golden-cheeked Warbler. These birds live only on the Edwards Plateau of West Central Texas and nowhere else in the world, although they winter in Central America. The total population has been estimated to be about 15,000. They look and sound a bit like Black-throated Greens. Finally, however, I heard a buzzy song coming from a tall juniper and found a beautiful male bird which stayed there for a full five minutes (I had just run out of film, having just taken my last shot on the assumption that I probably wouldn't see one!). Other interesting birds seen on the trip included White-faced Ibis, Loggerhead Shrike, Black and Turkey Vultures, Eastern Meadowlark and a total of 70 species of which 15 were new to me.

Unfortunately I was unable to get down to the Texas coast which is the real hot spot in the southern U.S.A., in the last week of April, but perhaps another year...



This Saw-whet Owl, at Waverley in early March, looked quite sleepy, possibly after a mousy meal gained from the ground under the Payzant's bird feeder

ROUGHING IT

As I stood in the elegant lobby of a large Halifax hotel, telescope in one hand, bird book in the other, two pairs of binoculars, Lopi sweater, faded jeans and mud stained sneakers; I found it a bit difficult to be inconspicuous.

"Are you Bob Dickie?"

"I'm afraid so.", I replied, and meant it.

Three days earlier, I had received a call from Barbara Hinds, asking me if I would be willing to accompany some people from the United States on a birding trip that Sunday. I agreed, with some reluctance, since the birding had been terrible lately and the weather forecast was for heavy cloud, cold temperatures and very high winds.

"He's an industrialist.", Barbara volunteered.

Because they wanted to see shore and water birds, I decided to drive out to Conrad's Beach, Lawrencetown, Chezzetcook, etc. I was advised that they had rented a large car so the group could travel together.

As we walked across the lobby to meet the rest of the party, my companion told me that it was my sweater that had tipped her off to my identity. Evidently the two pairs of binoculars, scope and bird book weren't that helpful.

We exchanged greetings and headed for the door. A huge chauffeur-driven limousine had just pulled up in front of the hotel and when one of our party got in, it dawned on me that we were going birding in a car that is as expensive as my house and just about as big.

"I'm not used to birding from a limo", I mumbled.

Everyone looked at me rather strangely. I knew I shouldn't have said that but I was assured that they weren't used to it either and the conversation soon turned to birding.

Outside Dartmouth, we stopped to look at some Black Ducks. As I grabbed the door handle to get out, the door opened by itself and the uniformed attendant stepped back to let me by. I had my scope in my hand and it was all I could do to convince him that I could set it up myself. As it turned out, the "Blacks" were lifers so they elicited considerable excitement.

By the time we reached Conrad's Beach, the sky had become charcoal and the wind took on ominous proportions. The unfortunate chauffeur looked as if his hair drier had gone berzerk as he struggled with the doors against the gale-force winds. The breakers crashed on the beach as clouds of spray blew from their crests. Kelp rolled like tumble weed; even the sand was moving.

Just as I was beginning to think the Lord had foresaken us, I spotted two Piping Plovers. These brought forth "oohs" and "aahs" and "aren't they beautiful" and instantly the weather was forgotten, as everyone stood transfixed for about fifteen minutes.

As we returned to the car we noticed a surf sailor taking advantage of the high wind. Actually, the high wind was taking advantage of him. He approached the bridge at incredible speed when he

apparently lost control of his craft and fell (or jumped) into the water. All we could do was to stare in amazement until the surfer was seen crawling out on the rocks, dragging his boat behind him. Shaken, we climbed into the car and decided to have our lunch.

Naturally, lunch was served by the chauffeur. Out of the trunk came a magnificent wicker basket laden with fruit, prepared vegetables, sandwiches, beverages, napkins, table cloth and all. As we ate in the warm protection of the Caddie, something flew (blew) past at about 200 miles per hour.

"Greater Yellowlegs", I mumbled. For all I knew, it might have been a tennis ball but everyone was suitably impressed and jotted it down on their lists. Actually, we did see quite a few Greater Yellowlegs later on, but not one tennis ball.

After a leisurely drive as far as Chezzetcook, we returned to the hotel, where we all lied about what a great day it had been and the chauffeur was instructed to drive me home.

After thanking the driver for his kindness, I walked slowly up my driveway saying a little prayer under my breath.

"Please Lord, let the neighbours be watching."

Bob Dickie.

Author's Note: This story is absolutely true. The names of my guests were omitted to preserve their privacy. They are charming people with a terrific attitude and a great sense of humor. I hope they come back sometime during the fall migration so that I can take them out again. --Bob



MYSTERY PHOTOGRAPH

First it should be confessed that the bird in this photograph, a challenge from the last issue, cannot be certainly identified, even on Charles Tupper's original colour print, on which the bird looks about the same as in this black and white version.

Several readers sent in or phoned in guesses as follows:
 Juvenile Fork-tailed Flycatcher--3 votes
 Juvenile Eastern Kingbird--1 vote
 Eastern Phoebe--3 votes
 (Eurasian) Blackcap--1 vote (probably not serious)

There is consensus that it is a flycatcher, as its upright stance and broad bill (note wide shadow at base) suggest.

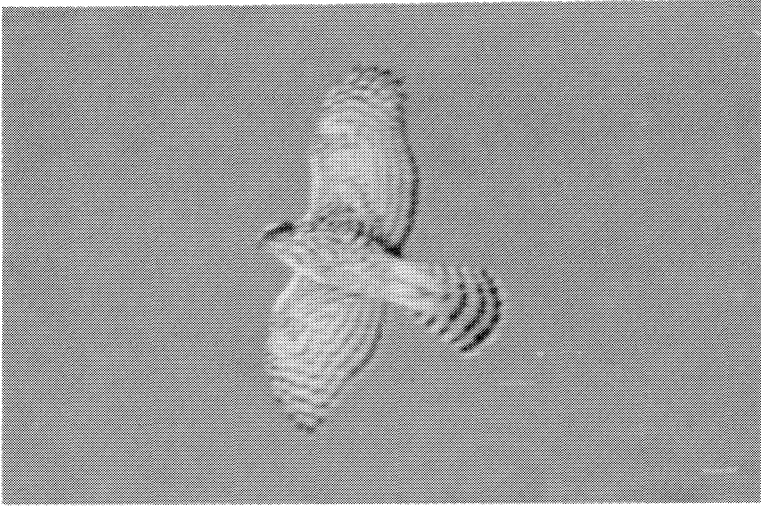
There are two reasons for supposing that it is not Nova Scotia's fourth Fork-tailed Flycatcher. 1--although juveniles of this species have short tails, these are distinctly notched. 2--even juveniles have white underparts, not smudged (with olive-gray on the original print) on the sides like this and most other flycatchers with light underparts.

A major reason for supposing that it is not a juvenile Eastern Kingbird is that it seems unlikely that even strong light would wash out the blackness of a kingbird's tail with its contrasting white tip.

There remains Eastern Phoebe. Not everyone realizes how dark-capped these can appear, especially individuals with whitish throats. The size of the bill, to the extent that this can be discriminated, seems about right too. This would be my choice.

--IAM



THE NEW MYSTERY PHOTOGRAPH

Clearly a hawk, but what sort? Photographed at Hopewell, Pictou County by Harry Brennan. Send your diagnosis and we'll answer the question in the next issue.

Time for a few more "birdy" collectives
to add to your collection:

A DYNASTY OF KINGLETS

AN ICARUS OF WAXWINGS

A ROPE OF KNOTS

SIBLINGS OF SISKIN

A SHEAF OF WHEATEARS

A BALLET OF NUTCRACKERS

A HIJINK OF LARKS

A ROUNDHOUSE OF CHOUGHS

A CHAMBER OF NIGHTJARS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor, NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS:

Birds hitting our windows are by now commonplace events; usually Evening Grosbeaks trying for a short cut or perhaps a warm spot by the fire. So, the "tap-thud" on the kitchen window produced the usual response--a casual look without, for the stunned aviator.

There it was in the snow bank outside, the fallen one. What a pose, it looked as if it had dived in vertically with its wings folded --just a tail and wing tips sticking out. It would have been funny if it wasn't sad. I carefully retrieved him, complete with a handful of snow. His tail gave a few flicks; his engine still seemed to be running! "He" was a male Purple Finch.

I found a shoebox and, having got rid of most of the snow, put him in - a few holes in the sides for air, and into the linen closet with him.

An hour later there was no sound; like half of our "rescues", the impact had perhaps been too much for him. (As I wrote that, a Fox Sparrow bounced off our livingroom window but kept on flying. Should we move the house?) So, he lay in his box, on the shelf, forgotten.

Four hours later, Glennys found Brandy, our lady Tonkinese cat, on top of the shoe box and definite sounds of life coming from within. So, outside we went with the box and carefully lifted the lid. Inside, a very dazzled and very puzzled looking gentleman Purple Finch looked up.....a whir of wings and away he went.

The shoe box-dark, quiet place-couple of hours idea seems to work well. It was taught to me by an old Plains Indian who said that long ago they did the same with bison. I think that you'd need bigger air holes.

--Cliff Hutton

Editor, NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS:

In mid April, a Great Egret arrived in our immediate area and for several days was observed feeding and flying back and forth near the pond below our house.



On April 16, the cold (about 4°C) and wind (N15-20 MPH) accompanied by heavy mist, got to be too much for the bird, and it retired to the alders at the edge of the pond, obviously weakened by efforts to wade in icy water, which level had risen several inches due to rain and run-off.

About 11:30 a.m., Stephen Bushell had no trouble sneaking up on the bird, where it was huddled with its head under its wing. He netted it in a large minnow net, and brought it to the house. We placed it in a huge cardboard carton in which we had placed a hot water bottle. In half an hour the warmth had dried the feathers and revived the bird to the extent that it no longer seemed weak and dejected.

We obtained some fresh smelts from a friend and force-fed the first two, moistening them first and being sure, of course, to put them in head first. By 6 p.m. we no longer had to hand feed, but laid the smelts in the box and the bird "caught" and ate them.

The fire had returned to his/her eye when I covered the box for the night. By this time, due to our ignorance of the bird's gender, we had dubbed it "Sheehee".



Sam Jarvis holds Sheehee as Stephen Bushell puts the first smelt in the bill.

At daylight I uncovered the box and presented two more smelts, which disappeared faster than I can write about it. Independent eating continued thereafter.

Weather conditions here were still the same, so we decided to release Sheehee in what we hoped would be a more hospitable place. That afternoon we released the bird in a marsh near a meander that joined "Cooper's shop Lake", between New Harbour and Coddles Harbour, Guys. Co.



Stroking the throat to encourage swallowing

Sheehee was teetering from the 30 mile car drive, but otherwise seemed strong. We left some smelts nearby and left him/her surveying the new surroundings. We hope he/she is alive and well and living somewhere near you.



Shehee surveys new stomping ground

--June N. Jarvis

Editor, NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS:

On the Victoria Day weekend, I packed my car and headed out for what I thought would be an enjoyable couple of days birding on Brier Island. Such was not to be.

About ten miles outside of New Minas, my car decided that it did not want to come with me and promptly gave up the ghost. If you have ever tried to find a garage open on a long weekend that has a spare wheel-bearing, you might have some idea how frustrated I felt.

I ended up staying in a motel in New Minas for two days and it was not until Monday afternoon and \$200 later that I got back on the road. By then it was too late to continue my trip, so I reluctantly got back on the highway and headed for New Brunswick. That is not the end of the story though. Although resigned to the fact that I would have to stay in town for two days, I decided to make the most of it. Thanks to a member of your society, I did just that.

Racking my brain for the name of a birdwatcher in the area, I thought of Bernie Forsythe and gave him a call Saturday night. To make a long story short, he gave me directions to a spot I could go birding-- within walking distance of my motel. With that information I set out Sunday morning for the Kentville Research Station with the sun blazing overhead and the smell of fresh manure wafting through the air. No sooner had I got there when I heard a strange call coming from high up in the treetops that sounded like a hoarse Evening Grosbeak. After five minutes of straining for a glimpse of the bird, I was rewarded with a new species of Nova Scotia-- a Great-crested Flycatcher.

As if that was not enough, I soon heard another one and discovered that there were two. They were about 100 metres apart and singing at each other, so I assumed they were both males. Farther up the trail along Elderkin Brook, I discovered an Eastern Phoebe and an Eastern Bluebird (female); two more new species! I also discovered a flock of about 50 Red Crossbills feeding high up in some Red Pines and a pair of Red-breasted Nuthatches excavating a nest hole beside the trail. Least Flycatchers were everywhere, calling in the half-open canopy overhead, and I recorded 12 species of warblers as well.

What could have ended up as a lost weekend turned into a satisfying trip thanks to a member of your society. I just want to thank Bernie for getting out of bed to answer his phone and I hope he got three more new species for his Nova Scotia list too!

-- Brian Dalzell, Moncton, N.B.

Editor, NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS:

I felt the condemnation of Ducks Unlimited in the letter to the Editor in Nova Scotia Birds was harsh and unwarranted. D.U. has been working with private landowners and all levels of government to preserve and develop marshes all across Canada for the increase of waterfowl. If this means that hunters will be able to kill more ducks, should D.U. stop what it is doing? Certainly not! More ducks may be killed, but more will be seen by birders as well. Whether D.U. exists or not, more ducks will be killed. D.U. at least gives them a fighting chance. Even though many organizations and groups have approached D.U. asking them to lend support and prestige to many other causes such as hunting regulations and so on, the fact remains, their single purpose is to restore, preserve and to improve the prime waterfowl breeding habitat in Canada. Opinions and emotions aside, this is what they are doing...and very successfully. It is largely the hunter, who loves his sport (I use the terms hunter and sport in the truest sense of the words) of duck hunting, that is responsible for contributions of money and land that gives hope for our waterfowl. It is D.U. that solicits these donations of funds and lands and then either conserves them as wetlands or makes wetlands by ambitious building projects. Their completed projects, consisting of millions of acres across Canada, provide not only benefits to waterfowl but improved habitat for many species of songbirds, mammals and fish.

Without Ducks Unlimited, I dare say that there would be very few ducks left. Give the hunters their due, there is nothing intrinsically wrong with hunting. Like anything else, it is the minority of hunters that leave a bad taste in our mouths because of their irresponsible and deplorable actions (personally, I do not hunt but am not against hunting). With or without D.U., hunters will still exist. In the meantime, D.U. pursues its single, above mentioned mandate...to preserve wetlands!

If we were to dig deep enough among our own fraternity of birders, we would easily find those who have no regard for people's property in their ever more difficult quest for the rare bird. Or, as documented, those that even kill the bird they are looking for--as the fate of an elusive Black Rail years ago that was trampled to death by over-zealous birders, or the hummingbird that was killed to prove its identification as the first Ruby-throated in California, three years ago...it wasn't a Ruby-Throated Hummer!

In summation, if all the comments directed against D.U. could have been directed against all hunters and birders who pursue their hobby/sport with reckless abandon, not caring for other people, places or the wildlife concerned.

--Mike Almon
Halifax

DUES AND RENEWALS

The Editor wishes to thank all those members who wrote to express their opinion on the question of an increase in dues or a curtailment of Nova Scotia Birds. The response was overwhelming, both in the number of letters and the positive responses to keep the publication as it is (or even to expand it) and to raise the dues accordingly. Thank you for taking the time to let us know how you feel. All the staff feel most encouraged.

This year we are changing our subscription renewal policy. Up to now, all members paid up for one calendar year received the January issue of Nova Scotia Birds with the renewal notice for that year enclosed. The turnover in membership each year is around one hundred. That is, we gain about 100 new members and about the same number do not renew. Our present policy results in about 100 issues (which cost us over \$3.50 each to produce and mail) being sent free to non-renewers. To save this unnecessary expenditure, the Executive has decided to send out renewals with the Fall Flyer in September and to send January issues only to those who have renewed by then. (Of course, those who renew or join later in the year will receive all back issues for that year) At the same time, due to the rapidly rising cost of producing Nova Scotia Birds, it has become necessary to implement an increase in membership dues. This is usually done at the Annual General Meeting of our Society in November. However, in order to be able to send out the applications with the Fall Flyer in September, we must know the new amounts by then. Accordingly, this matter will be addressed before the usual September meeting at a SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING of our Society, called under by-law No. 19.

NOTICE

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

OF THE

NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY

8:00 P.M. SEPTEMBER 25, 1986

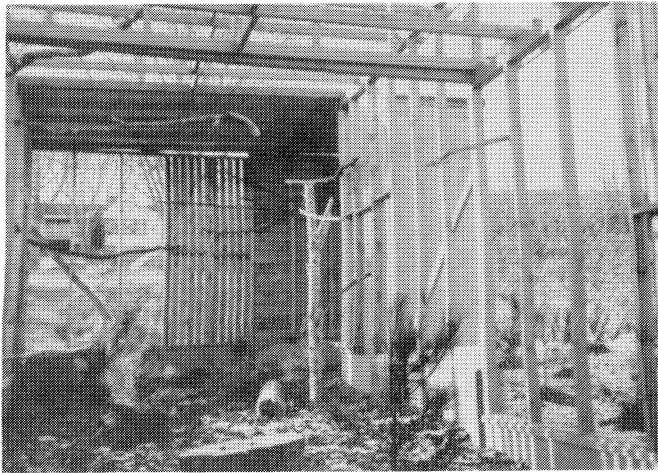
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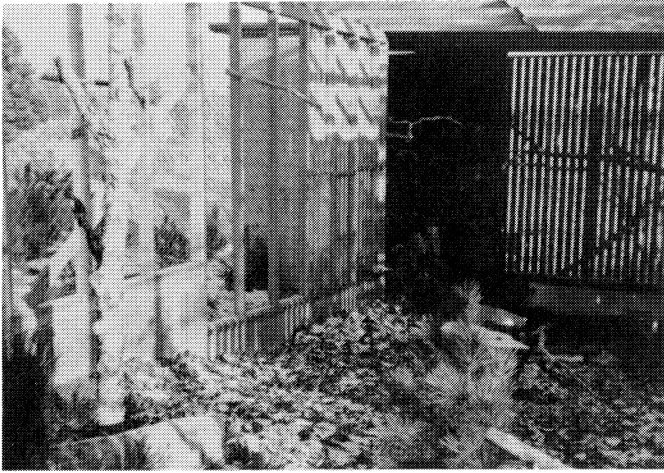
TO DISCUSS A CHANGE IN MEMBERSHIP DUES IN ACCORDANCE WITH BY-LAWS
No. 16 AND No. 19 OF THE SOCIETY

Following the Special Meeting we will proceed with our regular monthly meeting. The topic will be "Shorebirds"

RAPTOR REHABILITATION PROGRAMME

Exterior and interior details of the new flight cage built by Mike Kew at the Mason's Point rehabilitation center.





Birds in Poetry

Arranged by -- George Montgomery
 Province of Quebec Society for the Protection of Birds

WHAT BIRD IS IT?

1. A jolly old bird is the ()
 Whose bill can hold more than his belly can.
Ogden Nash
2. (), je te plumerai.
Francais, traditionnel
3. Ful prively a () eek coude he pulle.
Geoffrey Chaucer
4. This grown-up man, with pluck and luck
 Is hoping to outwit a ().
Ogden Nash
5. Maître (), sur un arbre perché
 Tenait à son bec un fromage.
Jean Lafontaine
6. () down the logging road whistles, "Come to me!"
 Spring has found the maple-grove, the sap is running free.
Rudyard Kipling
7. () sing before they die, t'were no bad thing
 Should certain persons die before they sing.
S.T. Coleridge
8. Why look'st thou so? "With my cross-bow
 I shot the ()" S.T. Coleridge
9. I come from haunts of () and hern,
 I make a sudden sally.
Lord Tennyson
10. Tous les oiseaux du monde y vont pour faire leur nids,
 La (), la tourterelle et le joli perdrix.
Francais, traditionnel
11. () and the sun in October
 On the hill's summery shoulder.
Dylan Thomas
12. St. Agnes eve, ah bitter chill it was
 The (), for all his feathers, was a-cold.
John Keats
13. Where the rage of the (), the love of the turtle
 Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime!
Lord Byron
14. In and out, through the motley rout,
 The little () kept hopping about.
Thos. Ingoldsby
15. A () sat on an oak,
 Watching a tailor shape his cloak.
English, traditional

16. Et la (), en attendant l'aurore,
Aux premiers buissons verts commence à se poser.
Alfred de Musset
17. The () fed the cuckoo so long
That it had its head bit off by its young.
Wm. Shakespeare
18. While the () sings on the orchard bough
In England - now!
Robert Browning
19. O (), shall I call thee bird
Or but a wandering voice?
Wm. Wordsworth

ANSWERS ON PAGE 61



Sea Rocket

Editor's Note:

The following was written for the Parrsboro Citizen in April, 1986, by Mike Malone, one of our members, and reprinted here with his permission.

NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY AND EPICS

GAIN PROTECTION

FOR SEABIRD COLONY

SPENCER'S ISLAND -- The Nova Scotia Bird Society, through its Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund, has successfully negotiated a 10 year lease with Scott Maritimes Ltd., for protection of the Spencer's island seabird colony.

The island, approximately 20 acres in size, is located in the Minas Channel near the village of Spencer's Island, Cumberland County.

Action to acquire the island was initiated by "EPICS" - Environmental Protection in Cumberland South, a Parrsboro based environmental group. EPICS approached the Nova Scotia Bird Society, Halifax, and the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Toronto, for assistance in purchasing the island to provide permanent protection of this habitat for nesting colonial waterbirds.

However, because outright purchase was denied, the organizations settled for the lease arrangement, which they hope will be renewed after the new 10 year agreement expires.

Of the 10 islands in the upper Bay of Fundy, hosting colonial nesting birds, Spencer's Island has the richest diversity. Census data provided by EPICS and collected over a 7 year span, demonstrates the importance of the island to a variety of birds, including Great Blue Heron, Double-crested Cormorant, Black Guillemot, Common Eider, Great Black-backed Gull, and Herring Gull. Numerous passerine species nest there as well.

Islands attract colonial waterbirds because they usually have fewer terrestrial predators which afford protection of eggs and chicks.

The sheer cliffs of Spencer's Island plunge into the ocean, a feature preferred by some specialized seabirds such as the Black Guillemot, a member of the Alcid family. Fledgling guillemots, at about 30 days of age, make an erratic dive from the cliff face nest site into the sea below. Although incapable of aerial flight, they inherently know how to "fly" underwater and are excellent swimmers until taking to the air.

While islands are unique breeding sites for many species of birds, at the same time they are frequented by man for recreational use such as cottage sites. They have been favoured as safe haven by mariners for thousands of years.

The ecology of islands is easily adversely affected once man arrives. Sailors around the world have marauded islands in search of easy food gathering in the form of eggs and in the concentration of adult breeding birds which often will not fly away, as they defend their chicks.

Of the 78 bird species which are known to have become extinct in

the last 300 years, 88% were island forms.

Here in Atlantic Canada, our ancestors have caused the extinction of the Great Auk, a 2½ foot tall member of the Alcid family. These large, flightless seabirds, which usually nested on islands, were decimated on their colonies, often being herded alive onto ships where they provided fresh meat for long voyages.

If the exploitation of seabird colonies by man did not eliminate the birds, sometimes what he brought along with him could decimate a colony. Rats have wiped out seabirds which use ground burrows for raising their young. Similarly, the introduction of domestic cats onto islands has led to the elimination of some species of seabirds.

Environmentalists and all people who respect our wildlife heritage can be encouraged by the fact that Scott Maritimes Ltd. has seen fit to offer protection for this unique island. Wise use of our natural resources sometimes must mean leaving alone areas for use by life forms other than man.

Mike Malone



Birds in Poetry

A N S W E R S

- | | | |
|-------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. pelican | 8. albatross | 14. jackdaw |
| 2. alouette | 9. coot | 15. carrion crow |
| 3. finch | 10. caille | 16. gelinote |
| 4. duck | 11. blackbirds | 17. hedge sparrow |
| 5. courreau | 12. owl | 18. chaffinch |
| 6. robin | 13. vulture | 19. cuckoo |
| 7. swans | | |

Notes

Notes

Notes

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

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Membership Fees

Life Membership	\$240.00
Single Membership	8.00
Family Membership	10.00
Student Membership	6.00
(available to those under 18)	
Institutional	12.00
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