

*Nova Scotia Birds*



*April 1995*

NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS  
A Publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society

Volume 37 Number 2

April 1995

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

ISSN 0383-9567

Publications Mail  
Reg. No. 4628  
Published four times a year

**AVE ATQUE VALE!**

We are sorry to announce the retirement of R.G.B. (Dick) Brown as one our Seasonal Editors. Dick, in his own pithy and amusing way, has been telling us about gulls, terns and alcids for over twenty years. We are greatly indebted to him. Thank you "RGG" for your long dedication.

We welcome to our editorial staff Sylvia Fullerton, who will take over "Dick's list". Sylvia is a meticulous birder who will co-ordinate your reports with the benefit of her extensive birding experience.

JSC, Ed.

**DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF REPORTS**

for

the **July 1995** issue

**May 31, 1995**

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## WINTER BIRD REPORTS 1994-1995

## LOONS AND GREBES

Following the Christmas count period, during which a total of 21 RED-THROATED LOONS were found, there were only three additional sightings of this species--each involving single birds--a pretty average showing.

On Jan. 13 Dave Young spotted a loon on the bay at Little Harbour which in many ways, but not all, suggests a Pacific Loon. For now we'll record it as a "possible". A full description is available for anyone with an interest in this sighting. COMMON LOONS seemed somewhat easier to find than they were last winter but the numbers are still lower than we've come to expect. Although reports were quite widespread, only two mentioned more than 10 birds: 16 at Louis Head Beach Jan. 15 (DHY) and a week later 15+ at Green Bay (JSC). A CBC provincial total of 267 doesn't seem very high considering how hard teams work to find every last bird.

PIED-BILLED GREBES neither lingered late nor showed up early to put in their usual appearance in the winter report. The winter showing of our two other grebes was similar to that of Common Loons--better than last winter but just slightly. As many as 10 HORNED GREBES were at East Chester from December through February (CHF) and on Feb. 12 ROC found 8 at Johnston Pond (Shel.) and 6 in Port Mouton Harbour. Eight additional reports tallied smaller numbers, almost exclusively on the south shore. Once again, Annapolis Royal CBC scored high for this species--421 birds. They also found nearly 25% of the province's RED-NECKED GREBES--24. Other reports noted 1-3 birds each, with two exceptions: 6 on Dec. 1 at Hemeon Head and the same count at Louis Head Beach Jan. 15--"present in these numbers all winter" (DHY).

BDS Ed.

## FULMARS TO CORMORANTS

Dick Brown, (RGGB) who edited this and the PHALAROPES TO AUKS section for so many years, is laying aside his pen. With his unique knowledge and experience in the field he taught us much about these relatively little-known birds. His contributions will be missed.

Perhaps it has been the unusually mild weather and the lack of northeasterly gales which have resulted in only one report of one species of tubenose: AFM reports a NORTHERN FULMAR on Sable Island on Dec. 13 and this was of an oiled bird.

Similarly, there were few reports of NORTHERN GANNETS. Angus and Stella MacLean saw up to 40 on Nov. 15 and 20 at the Canso Causeway feeding with thousands of gulls and a few Bald Eagles on small fish driven in by northerly winds; eight were noted in Digby Gut on Nov. 23 (BJA); an immature was reported from Sable Island from Dec. 14-18 (AFM). There were on the other hand 27 stragglers on the Christmas Counts, 9 from the Cheticamp Count.

The first reports of GREAT CORMORANTS come from the CBCs on Dec. 18: 1 at Hemeon Head (DHY) and 95 on the Halifax-West Count. A total of 276 were produced overall. There were 15 cormorants,(sp.)st Second Peninsula on Jan. 15, probably Greats (AFM). By Jan. 30 the 2 reported at Portuguese Cove were showing their white breeding patches (JLC,JSC); 2 were at Mader's Cove on Feb. 10 (JBM) and 2 were at Herring Cove on Feb. 19 (GWT,JCT).

The numbers of lingering and/or overwintering DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS continue to rise. Two were at Economy on Nov. 20 (FLS); an amazing 103 were tabulated on the CBCs, 85 of which were reported from southerly Cape Sable Island. Eleven, mixed adults and immatures, were seen at the head of Barrington Bay on Jan. 2, perhaps stragglers from the Cape Sable group (JCZ); 1 adult was on the LaHave River on Feb. 20 (JLC,JSC); 3 were at Port Mouton Harbour throughout Jan. and Feb. (ROC); 2 to 10 were reported through Nov. to Feb. along the Eastern Shore (KAT,WAT).

S J F , ed.



## HERONS AND ALLIES

GREAT BLUE HERONS apparently did better this winter than last. However, note that a previously unreported bird spent last winter at an artificial trout pond in Wolfville where it was occasionally fed mussels (!); one tried to do so this winter, but was found dead on Dec. 13 (fide JWW). Another seen through January around the Cornwallis R. (AMM) was probably the same bird found in poor shape near Canard Jan. 22 (fide JWW). No information was supplied on the condition of the following post-CBC individuals: Jan. 24 in Louisbourg Hbr. (fide JAC), Jan. 15 at L. W. Pubnico (RSD), Jan. 24 at the Trenton Power Plant (CGB), and Feb. 27 at Chezzetcook (fide JWT). A GREAT EGRET at Canning Dec. 4-5 (JCT,JWW) and a SNOWY EGRET at Chezzetcook Dec. 4 (R. Foxall) were presumably the same birds found in those localities in November. A CATTLE EGRET was at E. Jordan, Shel. Co., for a few days around Nov. 13 (fide DJC). An AM. BITTERN seen from time to time on Cape Sable I. in November was still there for the Dec. 17 CBC (JCZ).

IAM, ed.

## GEESE AND DUCKS

Two SNOW GEESE turned up in the Kingport area Nov. 20 (MAG).

Over 100 BRANT lingered for the Cape Sable Island CBC, and the area birders report 350 moving between The Hawk and Daniel's Head through January/February.

On Dec. 13 at 4:55 p.m., an observer at Kingsport watched half of the 800 CANADA GEESE present take to the air and head south (fide JWW). Several hundred overwintering at the Port Joli Sanctuary (ROC) and in early January 100+ were still "up north" at Westmount (JAC). From late January to mid February up to 80 honkers were at Grand Pré, near "the Guzzle" (JCT,BBT). JCT observed one wearing a collar bearing the code "H7V". Anyone who makes a similar observation should report it to CWS. Although no one sent written records of the flocks that frequent the eastern shore of Halifax Co. at this time of year, of course they were there. The Halifax East CBC had the high count for this species- 4200.

A drake WOOD DUCK was at Hennigar's Marsh, W. of Sheffield Mills Dec. 6 (JWW) and another, overwintering at Sullivan's Pond, had a female keeping him company for part of the month of January.

CBC's around the province tallied 11 GREEN-WINGED TEAL. One remained at Abercrombie until at least Jan. 21 (KJM) while in Dartmouth presumably a single bird was travelling between Tuft's Cove and Sullivan's Pond through January/February (JWW,DHH).

BLACK DUCKS were present in their usual numbers: several hundred at Port Joli Sanctuary all winter (ROC); 140+ at Bass River until late February when ice forced them to move (PWH); 250+ at Advocate Harbour (JRM); and Tantallon and Pictou with 400 each (ERC,KJM). The early appearance of three pairs on three ponds in the Green Bay area in the last half of January are testament to the exceptionally mild winter we experienced.

MALLARD numbers also appeared pretty average, although 500 at Dayspring on the LaHave River Jan. 11 seems like an awful lot of Mallards for any single location. Andrew MacFarlane counted them as they flew towards him, as if they were expecting to be fed--this would explain why so many had gathered there.

Two NORTHERN PINTAILS mixed with the flock of Black Ducks and Mallards in the Petite Riviere estuary from November to mid February (JSC). Three overwintered in the Pictou area and a pair was on Sable Island Jan. 5 (AFM). Lone drakes were at Sullivan's Pond through January and at the Kiwanis Pond, Truro Feb. 17-24 (FLS).

No NORTHERN SHOVELERS turned up but a pair of GADWALL stayed in Halifax/Dartmouth to end of the report period (JWT). A female was at a New Glasgow sewer outflow Dec. 28 (KJM,CGB).

Those who visited Sullivan's Pond in Dartmouth from early January to mid-February had the pleasure of following the transformation of a Eurasian Wigeon from its Basic plumage through to its beautiful adult drake alternate plumage, (IAM). This bird had as many as 6 of its "American counterpart" for company as it travelled back and forth from Sullivan's Pond to Tuft's Cove. On Nov. 20 there were still 23 AMERICAN WIGEON at Harris Pond, Canning (JWW) and three days later a pair was found at Digby (BJA). Singletons showed up at Bedford, Pictou and Sable Island.

A few RING-NECKED DUCKS stayed on this winter. One was at West Dublin Jan. 8 (AFM) and a pair was on Pleasant Lake (Yar) (RSD) and 2 were on a pond near Bridgewater Feb. 17 (COHRS). On Jan. 10 the Cohrs found 2 TUFTED DUCKS at the Mill Cove sewer outflow in Bedford. These are presumably two of the 3 females reported several days later by Brad Amirault and seen subsequently by many observers. Other reports of lone birds came from Dayton (Yar)—a female Dec. 18 (June Graves, Ethelda Mauphy) and a fully tufted drake near Bayport on the LaHave River Feb. 19 (ELM,IAM).

No other area can touch the Pictou area when it comes to GREATER SCAUP- the winter 94/95 population reached about 2000. Smaller flocks of up to 2 dozen birds were scattered along our coast with concentrations building up after mid-February: 400+ on the 18th off Risser's Beach (COHRS); 200 on the 22nd in the public Harbour area, where Ray d'Entremont comments—"present in places where I hadn't seen them in 30 years"; and, up to 300 at Bayport during the last week of February (ERC,ELM,IAM). Three LESSER SCAUP spent at least a month in the Cape Sable Island/ Barrington Bay area and cooperated for the CBC (sev. obs.). Two showed up with 2 Greater on Sable Island Dec. 27-28 (ZOL). In Halifax Co. a female was at the mouth of the Sackville R. Jan. 10 (COHRS) and on Feb. 26 Ian McLaren found at least 2 Lessers in a flock of 2 dozen Greater off Hartlen's Pt. and 8-9 just around the corner at Eastern Passage where they had been present for weeks (many Obs.).

Only two reports arrived for COMMON EIDERS; 1 at Sable Island Dec. 10 (AFM) and 25 on Jan. 29 at Port Mouton Harbour (ROC). Christmas Counts add 1453 to the total. Hopefully more observers will report on the spring congregations for the next issue. A description of a KING EIDER reported on the St. Peter's CBC, would need more details to confirm it as a King and not a sub-adult male Common Eider. Further details would be appreciated.

The season's first HARLEQUIN DUCK was spotted in the surf at the entrance to Ketch Harbour on Dec. 18 (SJF). A pair was off the Cripple Creek wharf (C.S.I.) Jan. 27 (JCZ) and on Feb. 8 a female arrived at Little Harbour (DHY). But Prospect continues to be the Harlequin hot-spot with up to 32 there in early February.

Annapolis Royal had another banner count of OLDSQUAW for this year's CBC-4344! More typical were: up to 40 at Mader's Cove, November-February (JBM); 8 on Dec. 18 at West Apple River (KFS); and Feb. 17: 13 at Port Mouton (ROC) and 90 along the shore from E. Chester to Hubbards (CHF).

All three scoter species were even more sparse than last winter and observers' comments ranged from "very few" to "non-existent". Green Bay had the only reports of BLACK SCOTER- 1 in mid-January and about 10 a month later (JSC). Single SURF SCOTERS popped up at a couple of Lun. Co. locales and one was at Shad Bay during the second week of January. By mid-February 4-6 were at Green Bay (JSC). WHITE-WINGED SCOTERS are usually more numerous but after a flock of 125 at Digby Nov. 23 (BJA), the only others recorded were: Dec. 23—a female off West Apple River (KFS); 6-7 joining the few other scoters at Green Bay in mid-February (JSC); and very small flocks off Prospect in February (BDS). Even though Christmas Count statistics will add to the scoter numbers, one is still left wondering where all the scoters have gone. On the other hand, birders in Kingston, Ont. may be asking where all the scoters came from as they counted 11,000 white-winged Scoters, a local record, during the annual Lake Ontario winter waterfowl count. Thousands of ducks are being drawn to that region to feast on zebra mussels, a relatively recently established species of mollusk in that area.

COMMON GOLDENEYE were present from one end of the province to the other, frequently in flocks numbering 20-40. The only larger gatherings were several hundred in the Pictou area and about 200 on the LaHave River near Bayport Feb. 26 (ELM,IAM). As usual, a few BARROW'S GOLDENEYE were sifted out. At least 2 males and 2 females spent the winter wandering about Bedford Basin (many obs.). A drake celebrated New Year's on the Cornwallis River at Kentville (BBT, G. Forsyth). Another was on the LaHave River Jan. 7 to 11 (AFM) while up to 6 or 7 wintered in the Pictou area and were still present Feb. 25 (KJM).

The Annapolis Royal CBC scored big (again!) with 576 BUFFLEHEAD. No other large gatherings were mentioned but good counts were: 30 at Digby Nov. 23 (BJA) and 35 had reappeared at the Petite Riviere estuary by Feb. 12 (JSC). Half a dozen other reports held a combined total of 29 birds and most were in Lun. Co. However 6 were seen frequently during January/February at Advocate Harbour (JRM).

In contrast with last winter's bitterly cold weather, this year's milder than average temperatures produced a better showing for the merganser clan. In the valley, 6 HOODED MERGANSERS tarried at Sheffield Mills until at least Nov. 20 and 4 were at the Canning Aboiteau Dec. 4 (JWW). On Dec. 6 the Annapolis Royal DU Pond hosted 10 hoodies (BJA). The first year male that overwintered at Sullivan's Pond became tame enough to eat from the hand--great photo opportunity. Two overwintered in Pictou (KJM) and 7 remained at the Head of St. Margaret's bay well into February (ERC). The final report was a pair at Herman's Island Feb. 17 (JBM).

The Pictou Harbour CBC had the high counts for both COMMON and RED-BREASTED MERGANSERS- 464 of the former, and 352 of the latter. 67 Common Mergansers frequented the mouth of Bass River from mid-December until ice built up in the Bay (PWH). Smaller flocks of up to 15 birds were regular along the LaHave River through January (AFM), while on the Shubenacadie River, 101 on Jan. 8 had dwindled to 35 by Feb. 16 (JDP,RCM). Smaller numbers (1-6) were reported from Point Edward, the Valley and the South Shore. On Sable Island, Red-breasted Mergansers built steadily from 5 on Dec. 9 to 75 on the 27th but most had dispersed by Jan. 5 (AFM). A number of Valley and South Shore locations report from 2-15 birds, and 3 were at Apple River Jan. 31 (KFS,MSM). Chris Field's count of 28 individuals along the shore from East Chester to Hubbards on Feb. 17 is probably fairly typical of what one could expect this winter.

Once again the winter duck report concludes with a RUDDY DUCK- this one was found Dec. 18 during the Cape Sable Island/Barrington Bay Christmas Count.

BDS, ed.



## DIURNAL RAPTORS

A wandering TURKEY VULTURE was spotted Jan. 15 near Middle Ohio, Shel. Co. (JCZ), but there were no reports from Brier I. Of 616 BALD EAGLES on the province's CBCs, an estimated 393 were on the Wolfville Count. The annual Eagle Count on Jan. 22 in King's Co. (by 33 people in 14 groups) produced a comparable 405 birds (55% imm.), "possibly too high by nearly 20" (JWW). A group of 5 imm. and 6 ad. were at chicken offal near Milford Sta., Hants Co., on Dec. 15 (MGW). Early in the season, on Dec. 5, 84 were counted from Mergomish to Big Island, Pic. Co., evidently attracted by the annual die-off of Atlantic Saury (CGB). A later gathering (for Tomcod?) developed around Caddell Rapids, on the Shubenacadie R.; 12 on Dec. 27, 50 on Jan. 8, 14 on Jan. 10, (all JDP), 34 on Jan. 16 (RCM), but only two on Feb. 15 (JDP). Also notable were 4 imm. and 3 ad. at Argyle Feb. 10 (JHD). Up to 5 were around Sydney Hbr. through winter (JAC). There were another half-dozen reports of scattered ones and twos. Following an excellent showing of 38 N. HARRIERS on Christmas Counts, there were only 9 reports of some 15 individuals from around the province, 11 of them in February.

There have been mixed assessments of an apparent decline of SHARP-SHINNED HAWKS in migration along the U.S. East Coast, some suggesting that this merely reflects an increasing tendency for them to winter farther north. They didn't seem numerous here, with only 7 reports of singles, mostly at feeders, and one report of 6 (different birds?), including a dead male Jan. 27, at Port Mouton (ROC). Northern GOSHAWKS, so dependent on mature forests, are also perceived by some to be in trouble. Only 3 post-CBC birds were reported: the usual resident on Wolfville Ridge (JCT), another near Canning Dec. 3 and a third at Green Bay Jan. 8 (both AAM). What was presumably last winter's ad. RED-SHOULDERED HAWK was discovered along the Gaspereau Road on Dec. 27 (BLF.RBS), and seen by others through winter. The BROAD-WINGED HAWK on the St. Peters CBC was undocumented and RSD reported, again without details, a "very tame (adult that) perched on wires and let me walk right under it" at Pleasant L., Yar. Co., on Jan. 19. I must again urge that all reports of wintering Broad-wings be fully documented (and preferably photographed) to distinguish them from Red-Shouldered: some raptor authorities don't believe us! Wolfville produced 119 of the 176 RED-TAILED HAWKS on CBCs, but the King's Co. eagle count on Jan. 22 turned up a "mere" 51, down from last year. There were only 8 other reports of 13 birds. Of interest is the return of the partial albino to Sheffield Mills for the 6th winter (JWW et al.). This year, it seemed whiter than ever (JWW), although still with a dark eye and dark blotch atop its head. A partial albino frequenting the Gaspereau area was thought by BBT to be the one from Sheffield Mills, although more than one such bird has been distinguished in the area in past years. Again, Wolfville got most (22) of the 40 ROUGH-LEGGED HAWKS on CBCs. However, only 4 were seen during the King's eagle count on Jan. 22 (JWW), and otherwise the maximum reports in the area were 6 at Grand Pré Feb. 18 (JCT). The other half dozen reports were of scattered singles. More details would have been desirable on the GOLDEN EAGLE observed near the Sackville landfill in mid-January (M. PELHAM, fide JWT), but the bird Dec. 3 over Cape Sable I. was a distinctive immature, with tail band and white wing flashes (M. Newall et al.).

Only 3 post-CBC AM. KESTRELS were reported: at Little Hbr., Shel. Co. Jan. 12 (DHY), Argyle Sound Feb. 22 (RSD), and through the winter on Sable I., existing alas on Ipswich Sparrows (ZOL,AFM). MERLINS were also sparsely reported: individuals at Little Hbr. Dec. 7 (DHY), at Grand Pré Jan. 29 (BBT), and through winter in Dartmouth (sev. Ob.). In addition to the PEREGRINE FALCON on the Glace Bay CBC, one was at Hartlen Pt. Dec. 18 (JWW), and a possible tundrius (imm., whitish forehead) wintered on Sable I. (ZOL,AFM), where a different (ad.) bird was seen Feb. 8 (ZOL). The GYRFALCON, Feb. 18 at Advocate Hbr., must have been a beautiful sight: "mostly all white with a very soft, pale gray back... just a hint of a mustache and ... hood" (JRM,MSM).

## GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

Last winter's "modest comeback" of GRAY PARTRIDGES around Wolfville seemed borne out by the CBC, but there was only one subsequent report of 3 birds from that area (fide JWW). On the other hand, there were two reports of presumably the same flock in Truro: 19 on Jan. 9 (CGB et al.) and 17+ on Jan. 29 (JSC et al.). A flock of

13 on Jan 13 in nearby Bible Hill (LAC) might have been different. Surprising, and doubtfully established, were 2 birds in Westmount, near Sydney (JAC). I received a couple of phone calls describing CHUKARS from the Eastern Shore. These have escaped or were illegally released, and are not a legitimate "tick". The abundant Valley RING-NECKED PHEASANTS were ignored after the CBCs, and there were otherwise three reports of scattered birds, including up to 13 at E. Chester (CHF). There were four reports of 6 SPRUCE GROUSE, and four of 19 RUFFED GROUSE; the latter may be on the increase, as they were also up 45% from last year's CBCs.

#### RALLIDS

The CLAPPER RAIL found Nov. 18 on cape Sable I. was last observed Dec. 7 (fide Murray Newall). An AM. COOT at Canard Pond Nov. 15 (JCT) was presumably the one at Canning town park Dec. 4. A near-ad. PURPLE GALLINULE was found freshly dead under a tower on Sable I. Feb. 5 by Suzanne Ambs, and sent out for the N.S. Museum by AFM. The occurrence is not unprecedented (about 7 previous winter records), but AFM's telephone description of the bird, and my in-hand scrutiny, were initially exciting and finally instructive, for the bird was quite small and had decidedly ochre legs, almost reddish on the feet and upper tibia. In fact, the bird looked somewhat like the very similar Allen's Gallinule of Africa, which has wandered to the Azores and, in mid-winter, to N. Europe! However, measurements and plumage details established it as "only" a Purple Gallinule. I found a couple of mentions of ochre leg color in young birds in the technical literature, but not in bird guides. An AM. COOT Dec. 4 in Canning town park (JWW) was presumably the same one that had been seen Nov. 15 in Canning Pond (JCT). The only ones to attempt to winter were 2 on Sable Is. from Dec. 9 to Jan. 5 (ZOL, AFM); a third appeared briefly there Dec. 28. (AFM).

IAM, ed.



Last spring's American Oystercatcher at Three Fathom Hbr. was photographed on May 8 by Judy Tufts.

## WINTER SHOREBIRDS

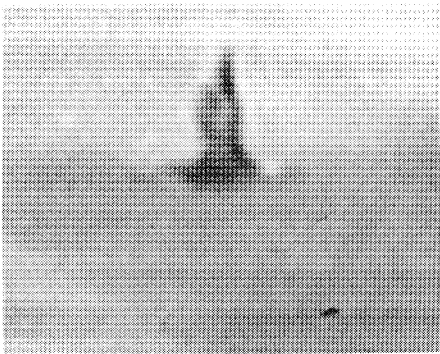
Most BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS had cleared out by mid-November; only 6 were reported on CBCs, 5 of them on Cape Sable. That area, not surprising, seems to have collected all our overwinterers, with 13 present in Jan.-Feb. (MUN,JON). No KILLDEER were noted after the 7 on CBCs, of which 4 were at Yarmouth.

Still in the southwest, a GREATER YELLOWLEGS was found on the Cape Sable Count, along with 9 RED KNOTS. Further afield, 150+ SANDERLINGS were on Sable I. from mid-Dec. to early Feb., some of them oiled (AFM,ZOL). Another 60 were overwintering on Cape Sable (MUN,JON), down from 100+ in late Dec. Although 271 PURPLE SANDPIPERS were noted on CBCs, there are no later reports, probably a case of underreporting. Not many DUNLIN lingered: 1 was at Cherry Hill Dec. 17 (SJF), 3 were at Powell Pt., Pic. Co., Dec. 27 (CGB), and 6 on the Cape Sable Count, where there was also a DOWITCHER unidentified as to species. Single COMMON SNIPE were at Pubnico Dec. 21 (RSD) and on the Yarmouth Count.

\* Two species accounts were inadvertently omitted from last fall's report; LESSER YELLOWLEGS were first noted at Cherry Hill July 1 & 9 (SJF) and Crescent Beach July 11 (JSC). Largest numbers were 25 at Conrad's July 24 (BLM,MAD) and 42 at Brier Aug. 24 (JSC). Last was 1 at Cherry Hill Oct. 10 (SJF). PECTORAL SANDPIPERS were present from July 30 to Cherry Hill (SJF) to Oct. 29 at Hartlen's Pt. (JSC,JLC), but numbers were everywhere low except for the 70 at Big I., Pic. Co. on Oct. 5 (CGB).

\*\* Confirming photos of last fall's Bar-tailed Godwit did not, as was implied in the text, accompany the report, but do appear in this issue.

FLS ed.



These rather paltry photos nevertheless suffice to confirm last autumn's Bar-tailed Godwit. Its long, upturned, probing bill is evident on the left-hand photo (Ian McLaren), and its white rump and tail (barring too fine to be shown) and pale under-wings are seen on the photo taken from Peter MacLeod's video. Both were obtained on October 22 at Dan's Head, Cape Sable Island.

## PHALAROPES TO AUKS

Zoe Lucas found a GREAT SKUA on Sable Island on Jan. 2. This is her second in two years, but last year's was found dead, this year's had an injured wing and she nursed it back to health. Ian McLaren writes, "It was in all probability a juvenile, uniform chocolate brown above, with fine tawny head and back streaks and tawny below. It was released a month later, hopefully in good health." See photograph in this issue.

At one time the largest concentrations of COMMON BLACK-HEADED GULLS were to be found in the Halifax-Dartmouth area, now they are quite wide-spread, 90 turning up on the CBCs. Five were at Eel Brook on Dec. 27 (RSD); 4 at Little Harbour on Jan. 5 (DHY); 13 in Lunenburg Harbour Jan. 13-28 (AFM); 40 at Sullivan's Pond on Feb. 15 (DHH); 1 at the Kiwanis Pond in Truro on the CBC on Dec. 29 (Ross Baker) which then lingered through February (FLS); 1 was at the NSPC outflow at Trenton from Dec. to present (KJM,CGB) and finally the most northerly report is of 28 on the St. Peters CBC.

BONAPARTE'S GULLS were concentrated as usual along the Northumberland Strait, in Pictou and Antigonish Counties: 500 were seen in the Powell Point/Black Point area and 300 at the Trenton power plant on Dec. 10 (CGB,KJM). Of 67 counted on the CBCs, 32 were on the Antigonish Count. Elsewhere there were few reports: 1 at the Ducks Unlimited pond in Annapolis on Dec. 6 and 1 at Digby on Jan. 5 (BJA); 1 at Little Harbour on Jan. 5 (DHY); 1 at Rudderham Creek, C.B., on Jan. 26 and Feb. 4 (JAC).

RING-BILLED GULLS continue to spread and are now quite common in winter: 5 were tallied on the CBCs, 223 on the Halifax-East Count. Joan Czapalay reports adults and an immature at Port Greville's Ward's Brook Beach on Aug. 28, which were the first she has seen on this beach. Fifty were noted at Eel Brook on Dec. 7 (RSD); 5 at Lower West Pubnico on Feb. 10 (JKD); 2 were on Sable Island from Jan. 30 to Feb. 8 (ZOL).

An adult MEW (COMMON) GULL was reported at Canard Pond on Nov. 21, standing on the partially frozen pond with Herrings and Ring-bills. Angus and Stella MacLean noted its darker mantle making it stand out from the Ring-bills and the small dark-tipped bill. Other reports of a 1st-year bird at Glace Bay in early Feb. and that of an adult COMMON GULL in Halifax were received. However, no details were given to confirm these sightings.

HERRING and GREAT BLACKED-BACKED GULLS have to be opportunists in order to thrive in these times. The Hemeons report that the 40 or so Herrings which hang out at the mouth of the Bass River promptly moved inland on Feb. 12 when their neighbour emptied her freezer. Observers from Lower West Pubnico, Port Mouton, Shubenacadie River, West Apple River and Sydney River all report both these species still numerous and doing well. It would be instructive if we all began monitoring numbers, age and movements of these birds. The CBC totals are similar to last year's, 36,494 Herrings and 12,362 Black-backs. It is noteworthy that of these totals 20,932 Herrings and 5,736 Black-backs were concentrated in the Wolfville area where there is obviously a reliable food supply.

No one bothered to report the LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULLS in the Halifax area but we do know that 2 were seen on the Halifax-West CBC. Blake Maybank and Roger Foxall saw another at the Barrington Municipal Dump on Feb. 5 which was still there Feb. 26 (JCZ).

Ian McLaren and Eric Mills were challenged with a 'mystery gull' on an islet near Blue Rocks on Feb. 19. Ian describes it as 'a large, near-adult (4th winter?) gull with pinkish legs, notably larger and slightly darker than nearby Herring Gulls, bill longer and in fact bird approached size of a Great Black-back, but was paler-backed than a graellsii Lesser Black-backed Gull.' Ian postulates that it might have been a hybrid. Although viewed at 300M by scope the light and distance did not afford as good a view as needed.

ICELAND GULLS were first sighted Dec. 11 when 50 were counted at the sewer outfall in New Glasgow (KJM). On the same day 4 were seen at the Bedford Waterfront Park (DHH); 80 were seen at the East River sewage treatment plant on Dec. 14 (CGB).

The CBCs had a high number of 697, Glace Bay reporting 64 of these. Further south there were reports of ones and twos in Canning, Wolfville, W. Grand Pré and Lockport (JKD,JCT,JWW,DJC).

GLAUCOUS GULLS are much less common and seem to have arrived earlier this year: 56 were tabulated on the CBCs, the highest count being of 26 from Cheticamp. An early report comes from Angus MacLean who saw 1st- and 2nd-year birds at Saxon St., Canard on Dec. 5. One was at Little Harbour on Dec. 12 (DHY) and one on the Broad Cove Count on Dec. 29, an uncommon bird there (SJF). Judy Tufts reports 2 still at Saxon St. on Jan. 17; Francis Spalding had 2 1st-winter birds at the Kiwanis Pond in Truro from Feb. 3-23; Robert Chivers saw an adult at Port Mouton Harbour in Feb. Jim Taylor has been watching one at Morash Park in Dartmouth, feeding with Ring-bills and Herrings, and he notes that in competing for food it is much less aggressive than the other two.

On Nov. 12 a thousand or more BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKES were counted in small flocks of 15 to 25 passing in a northeasterly direction along the Cape Breton coast from Neils Harbour to Ingonish (AAM). Seven were seen in Digby on Nov. 23 (BJA) and the only other reports come from Sable Island where 260 were seen on the CBC and a flyby of thousands, mostly adults, were tallied on Jan. 10 (AFM,ZOL).

Alcid numbers were somewhat lower than usual, perhaps as there were few major storms to drive them ashore. The CBCs report 125 DOVEKIES, 2 COMMON MURRES, 31 THICK-BILLED MURRES, 2 RAZORBILLS and 180 BLACK GUILLEMOTS. One DOVEKIE was found wrecked and dying on Deep Hollow Rd., between White Rock and Greenwich on Nov. 19 by Reg and Ruth Newell (JWW). Other reports of twos and threes come from numerous observers from Mader's Cove to Cape Sable Island. On a disturbing note Andrew MacFarland reports a total of 26 heavily oiled corpses in a 48 minute walk along North Beach on Sable Island on Dec. 15.

COMMON MURRES were few as is to be expected. The Morses reported 2 at Crescent Beach on Jan. 8; 1 was at Port Mouton Harbour on Feb. 6 (ROC); 1 on Sable Island on Feb. 11 (AFM). The first THICK-BILLED MURRE was seen at Pubnico on Dec. 9 (RSD); 29 were counted on the Annapolis CBC but elsewhere there were few reports. Donna Crosby says they were scarce off Lockport's Crescent Beach all winter and reports only 1 from Jan. 29 to Feb. 11. A report of 30 comes from Cape Breton on Feb. 1 (AAM).

The only RAZORBILLS reported were the 2 on the Annapolis CBC and one on Sable Island on Feb. 18. And again on Sable there were reports of fresh corpses on Feb. 11 and 21 (AFM).

Our commonest alcid, the BLACK GUILLEMOT, was well reported: 56 were tallied on the Cape Sable CBC and reports were received from Digby Gut, Maders' Cove, Lunenburg Harbour and Port Mouton Harbour.

S J F , ed.





## DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Do readers have the impression that ROCK DOVES are increasing in the province? They never used to receive much attention, but this winter we have 6 reports, two noting their persistence at feeders, and two noting large flocks in agricultural land. I continue to be astonished at their numbers around overpasses along our major highways. MOURNING DOVES apparently had a good winter, judging from our dozen reports. Big feeder flocks included two of 40+ and up to 36 on Wolfville Ridge (JCT), 135 on Feb. 22 at Avonport (EVU), 40-40 during January along N.W. Arm, Sydney Hbr. (JAC), and up to 44 in Bass R. (PWH). Others reported 2-14 birds.

As usual, at least one GREAT HORNED OWL was heard quite often around Apple R. (KFS), but no one else reported them. The winter's only reported SNOWY OWL was seen daily at Dan's Head, Cape Sable I. through late February (J. Nickerson, et al.). The only reported BARRED OWL was at Milford Station, Col. Co., Jan. 15 (AFW). A bird described as a huge, light gray owl with a round head was seen in early January near Glenmount, King's Co., but reported belatedly to JWW; we have yet to obtain a fully confirmed sighting of Great Gray Owl in this century! Up to 3 SHORT-EARED OWLS haunting Grand Pré this winter (sev. ob.) were still present Feb. 26 (JCT). Another was spotted in L. W. Pubnico Feb. 14 (JKD). A N. SAW-WHET OWL was seen near New Minas during the last week of November (fide JWW), and individuals were heard Feb. 1 at Elgin, Pic. Co., (KFS,BAS).

Given such an open winter, more BELTED KINGFISHERS probably stayed than suggested by reports. However, the 7 noted were all late: in January at Argyle (JCZ), Jan 6 at Bear River (FLS), Jan 19 at Eel Brook, Yar. Co. (RSD), Jan. 27 at L. LaHave (EHC), Feb. 21 at the Trenton power plant (KJM), and Feb. 27 at Lawrencetown, Hfx. Co. (JWT). At least 2 RED-HEADED WOODPECKERS occurred this winter: one in Dartmouht persisted until at least early December (E. Black), and another (?) turned up on the Halifax East CBC (JLC,JSC). A bird on the Truro CBC was seen subsequently, but not reported. A male, in increasingly adult plumage, at nearby North River Jan. 8 and Jan. 29 (LAC,JSC) might have been the Truro bird. Christmas count totals of both of our common woodpeckers were up slightly from last year, and 14 reports of 22 DOWNY WOODPECKERS suggested that they were at least holding their own. However, we received only 5 reports of 7 HAIRY WOODPECKERS, compared with 20 birds last winter; SJF notes that she had "not seen one around Board Cove since October!" Three BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKERS were on CBCs, but only one, a bird seen periodically through winter in Point Pleasant Park, Halifax, was noted subsequently. There were almost twice as many N. FLICKERS on almost twice as many CBCs, in comparison with last year's totals. Thirteen reports of some 35 post-CBC birds (allowing for possible "repeats") were also a record for this season. A half-dozen reports of 13 PILEATED WOODPECKERS were about as usual, although they were somewhat more common on CBCs.

IAM, ed.



## FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS

The update promised in the Jan. edition on the Myarchus flycatcher seen and puzzled over by a number of observers in Greenwich in mid-Nov. 1994 is that the bird was a rather pale, washed-out-appearing GREAT-CRESTED FLYCATCHER. Observations at the time (ELM etc.), subsequently backed up by perusal of slides (RBS,BLF), suggest that it was too bulky and the wrong shape and the wrong plumage, bill-colour etc. for an Ash-throated. This was despite the late date, the recent strong prevailing westerlies that had brought several western vagrants into the province, and the appearance of an Ash-throated flycatcher at the same time in New Brunswick. Another individual was seen on telephone wires in Allendale, Shel. Co. Nov. 17 (DJC).

A WESTERN KINGBIRD, an annual vagrant in small numbers to the province, was reported on the Halifax West Xmas count (DAC).

Small flocks of HORNED LARK were as expected around the province (ZOL,BJA,KJM,CGB,JRM etc.), with the largest individual size being of about 50 birds at Grand Pré, Feb. 4 (BBT). MUN etc. identified one in a flock of 14 at Daniel's Head, CSI, as being one of the prairie races. There were 213 total on Xmas counts, with 89 on the Yarmouth count.

## CORVIDS THROUGH GNATCATCHERS

The expected numbers of GRAY JAY were reported, with 7 separate reports from various areas (CHF,RCM,JBM etc.), including, as usual, a few coming to a feeder in Apple River (JFS). A more accurate estimate of numbers is probably the total of 137 on combined Xmas counts, with 17 at Springville. No doubt the open winter kept larger numbers in the woods and away from habitation.

2882 BLUE JAYS were seen on combined Xmas counts, down by 25% from last year. The largest number was reported from the Wolfville count- 586. No doubt many of these birds were seen at Avonport all winter, and MSM has had up to 8 wintering in Apple River. Others have noticed that they desert feeders from about Xmas time through till spring.

An intriguing letter was received from Glenda Clooney of London, Ont. Her mother, of Maitland, described a bird that had visited her yard last summer, as looking like a Blue Jay, but with a black head and back, and a crest. She pointed to the picture of a Steller's Jay in a field guide, and identified it as the bird she had seen. Of course as any kind of record this would be at best hypothetical, but it would be an extra-ordinary record for this basically non-migratory western species if it could ever be substantiated.

As usual these days the AMERICAN CROW capital of Nova Scotia in the winter seems to be Kentville, with 15,000+ in one roost in late Dec. and early Jan., 26,040 altogether on the Wolfville Xmas count, and 33,451 on combined Xmas counts. This was twice last year's total. The Kentville roost has become a much publicised nuisance in the town, with press articles etc., suggesting (so far unsuccessfully) how to get rid of them.

MSM in Apple River and PWH in Bass River reported Crows visiting their feeders. A probable all-white albino was reported to JWW near the Acadia University campus on Dec. 24.

By reporting time Crows have started to appear carrying nesting material.

COMMON RAVENS were well in evidence as usual with 1382 on combined Xmas counts, and several individual reports, including 30+ at Milford Station Dec. 18 (MGW).

There were 11 individual reports of BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE

(ROC,KFS,PWH,MGW,JKD,JDP,JAC,MEE,JWT,KAT and RCM- "hundreds from Shubenacadie to Sth. Maitland Feb. 16"). Most observers noted them coming to feeders all winter as usual, and the combined Xmas count total for the province was 5779, almost identical to last year's. 476 BOREAL CHICHADEES, representing 8% of this year's Black-capped total, is a little higher than last year's ratio. The highest total was 45 on the Halifax West count, no doubt reflecting the abundance of easily accessible "boreal" habitat in that area. RCM noted 20-25 from Shubenacadie to Sth. Maitland on her birding trip along the Shubenacadie River on Jan. 16. There were 4 other reports of small numbers through the winter (WAT,MSM,RSD,KFS).

689 RED-BREADED NUTHATCHES were reported from Xmas counts, almost 50% more than last year, and there were a further 10 reports from throughout the winter. AEW had 8 on Feb. 10 at Milford Station, RCM had 8-12 on her Jan. 16 walk (see above), JDP had 4 daily in late Jan. at Enfield, JBW could hear large numbers in the woods on Feb. 17 at Herman's Island, and others reported visits to feeders. 59 WHITE-BREADED NUTHATCHES were on Xmas counts, giving a red-to-white-breasted ratio of 11.7 to 1, a higher number than last year, because of more of the former and fewer of the latter. JWT saw a male on Jan. 12 in Dartmouth, and RSB has had a pair coming to the (Kentville) feeder all winter.

BROWN CREEPERS were much in evidence to people searching for the Hermit Warbler at Green Bay in late Dec. and early Jan. Other individual birds were in Upper Sackville (BJA), Apple River (KFS) and Enfield (JDP) during Jan. and Feb.

A HOUSE WREN, a rare but regular vagrant, was seen at Hartlen's Pt. on Dec. 18 (JWT). A MARSH WREN, rare indeed for King's county, was seen by BLF on the Wolfville Dyke on Jan. 1, for a good start to the year.

BJ of Truro was lucky enough to have a CAROLINA WREN, number 5 or 6 for the province, visit his back yard all winter up till Feb. 23, and display, call, sing to, and allow its photo to be taken, by numerous observers. This is a species said to be expanding its range northwards, and if so, would be expected to become more common in the province, and one day even a breeder.

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLETS were around in small numbers, again possibly because the open winter allowed them to scatter in deeper woods away from observers. There were 987 on Xmas counts, a third more than last year, with the highest count being 97 in Wolfville. RCM saw about 2 dozen on her Jan. 16 trip (see above), and others were reported by JH, KFS and ROC. 10 RUBY-CROWNED KINGLETS seen on Xmas counts seems quite a high number for late Dec./early Jan. 4 more may have overwintered - 1 in Wolfville, (Jan. 29- JWW, 2 in Port Mouton in Jan - ROC, and 1 on the Shubenacadie River Feb. 15.- JDP). True over-wintering of this species in the province has only been reported once before, in Dartmouth, and again one wonders about the effect of the mild and open winter.

A BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER, one of our more common true vagrants, turned up in Lr. Sackville Dec. 21 (BJA).

#### BLUEBIRDS THROUGH STARLINGS

Although traditionally a summer bird in our province (albeit a rare and local one), winter sightings of the EASTERN BLUEBIRD are becoming more frequent, and often in small flocks. This winter 6 males were at Seal Pt., Shelburne Co. on Jan. 18 (MUN) feeding on red berries, and at least one male and one female wintered at nearby Clam Pt., CSI (JON,MUN).

A female MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD was on Sable Island briefly on Jan. 10 (ZOL). The overall blue colour but with gray back and head were duly noted, and it was confirmed photographically (IAM). This species is noted for occasional vagrancy to the E. coast of N. America; there is just one confirmed, and other possible sight records for N.S., and even one that landed on a boat in the N. Atlantic off Massachusetts a few years ago. A second bluebird that turned up there Jan. 30 - Feb. 24 was noted to have bright blue wings and tail, smudgy streaky gray breast, some rusty or buff on the upper

breast, some blue on the throat, and some rusty colouration on the nape and head (AFM). It was thought to be this species, but the odd head pattern and rusty tones make it safer to leave as not firmly identified for now. A video was taken, so more information may be available later.

An over-wintering HERMIT THRUSH is not totally unprecedented, but certainly very unusual. One turned up in TD's yard in Beaverbank (JSC), where he feeds mealworms to tame exotic birds, and seemed to thrive on them right through from early Feb. to press time.

It was a good winter for AMERICAN ROBINS, at least in south-west Nova Scotia. JKD reports that a flock of 800+ at Lr. W. Pubnico on Jan. 10 had risen to 1500+ 10 days later, and RSD found 1000+ at nearby Pubnico Pt. on Feb. 8. The abundance of ash berries remaining on the trees provided ample food. Other flocks included 50-75 in the Advocate Harbour area in Feb. (MSM,JRM), and 100 at Pictou Landing in late Dec. (CGB). Sable Island even hosted one (AFM), and at the other end of the province one was "in full voice" in Petersfield Provincial Park, C. Breton on the unlikely date of Jan. 26 (JAC).

8 reports of NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD was somewhat fewer than the last few winters. 1 was in Broad Cove Nov. 19 and again Jan. 1 (SJF). 1 was on Sable Island Dec. 22-Jan.17 (ZOL), and another report from the same place (same bird?) was from AFM, from Dec. 7 - Jan. 6 and again on Jan. 30. Others were at New Glasgow (CGB,KJM), CSI (JON,MUN) and Habitant, near Canning (GE, per JCT). However, the "official" reports were slightly eclipsed by the total of 10 on Xmas counts, 3 being on the Halifax West count (DAC).

A BROWN THRASHER visited JKD's feeder in Lr. W. Pubnico for the local Xmas count, and stayed till mid-Jan.

The AMERICAN PIPIT flocks reported in the Jan. edition had thinned out by winter, to leave just 13 seen on Xmas counts (5 on CSI), and 4 other reports (IAM,BAH,RSD,JWT) of 15 birds, all from the southern half of the province.

It has definitely not been a repeat of last winter's BOHEMIAN WAXWING bonanza. There were just 239 on Xmas counts, with the highest total being on the C.B. Highlands count- 142. Apart from that, the largest flocks seen were of 26 birds, on Sable Island Jan. 29 - Feb. 2 (ZOL) and 22 at Sambro Jan. (IAM). In contrast, wintering CEDAR WAXWINGS were more numerous this year than for some time, and appear to have easily outnumbered Bohemians. For example there were 25 in Digby Nov. 25 (BJA), between 18 and 40 in Wolfville from Dec. 25 through Feb. 24 (JWW,GET), 21 at Pubnico Point Jan. 18 (RSD) and other smaller flocks dotted around the area.

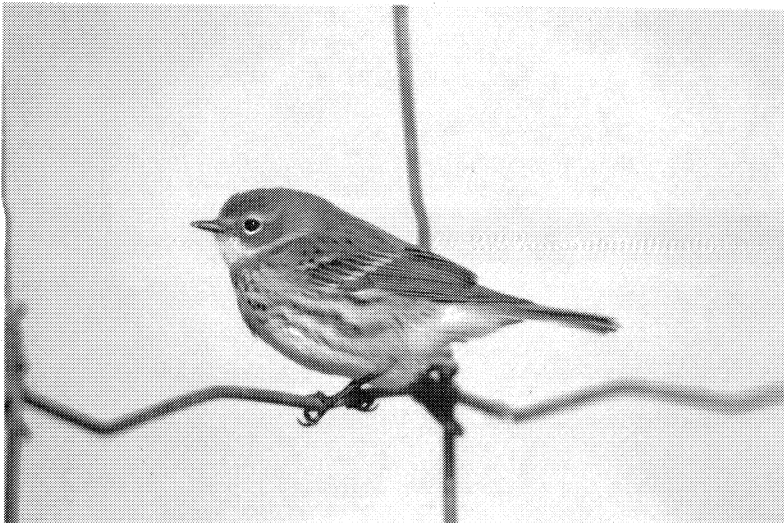
NORTHERN SHRIKES are always well-reported, perhaps because they are easy to see on prominent perches, exhibit interesting behaviour for a passerine, and are relatively rare. This winter there have been plenty to see, with 16 on Xmas counts, and at least 22 more reported around the province all season. MUN etc., noted several in the Shelburne/CSI/Yarmouth area, KJM and CGB had 3 along the Eastern shore near Canso Jan. 29, and 2 others in Pictou Co., the Cohrs had one ad. on the LaHave Islands Jan. 21, JCT had up to 2 birds along the Wolfville Ridge Rd. and vicinity on several dates from Dec. to Feb.: 17, FLS had one at Economy Feb. 4, and just 1 was reported from C.B., at Westmount Feb. 22 (JAC).

46,728 EUROPEAN STARLINGS were seen on Xmas counts, with over half those being on the Wolfville count. One partial albino bird was noted by JWW at Grand Pré Jan. 15- it was "strikingly white all over with sandy-brown on the body". Other sizeable flocks included 100+ at Westmount, C.B. (JAC) and 250+ at BJA's feeder in Upper Sackville Feb. 2.

R.B.S. ed.



Two warblers, a long way from home. The young Blackburnian Warbler was photographed by Judy James on the Seahawk near Sambro Ledges on August 20, and the young Yellow-rumped Warbler was caught posing on a fence on Sable Island by Andrew MacFarlane, October 29, 1994.



## VIREOS AND WARBLERS

No vireos were reported, despite the mild winter, but a number of warbler species took advantage of the rare weather to set late date records.

A total of 10 ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLERS were found, the most in the 8 winters I have been writing these reports. One was at Broad Cove on Nov. 19 (SJF), 2 were at Brown's Point, Pic. Co., on Nov. 25 (CGB) and 4 were found between Halifax and Ketch Hatbour on Nov. 27 (*David Currie and Azor Vienneau, reported in Barbara Hinds' "Bird Watch"*). Singles were found in Halifax on Jan. 15 (LAC,JSC), at Cherry Hill on Jan. 21, travelling with Black-capped Chickadees (JSC) and again in Halifax (this one very late) on Feb. 16 (LAC,JSC,JLC). A well-detailed account of a late adult male NASHVILLE WARBLER was received from SJF, who with Blair Hodgman, viewed this bird on the Broad Cove CBC on Dec. 29. Included in her description was "light lores, prominent whitish eye-ring; throat gray; breast bright, clear yellow, lighter on lower belly; flanks yellow".

Though I did not receive documentation on Nova Scotia's first VIRGINIA'S WARBLER, the Barbara Hinds' column in *The Mail-Star, "Bird Watch"*, indicated that some 25 birders enjoyed the rare sighting at White's Lake, Hfx. Co., on Nov. 19-20. First discovered by Bev Sarty at her feeding station, Hinds said, the bird is common at high altitudes in the dry southwestern U.S. The bird was recorded on videotape by Peter MacLeod, who first made the identification.

A late MAGNOLIA WARBLER at Big Island, Pic. Co., was found by CGB on Nov. 18. The BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER has been setting late date records. An adult male on the Caledonia CBC on Dec. 18, and well-described by Peter Hope, was observed firsthand by Nadine Mansfield. A second bird in Dartmouth which frequented a feeder from late December was last seen on Jan. 12 (JWT,IAM).

Singletons and small flocks of the YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER were observed to deadline in Shel., Queens, Pic. and Hfx. Cos. (JCZ,ROC,CGB and JWT, resp.). The Hfx. Co. record was of a singleton at a Dartmouth feeder from mid-January to deadline, existing on a diet of suet and peanut butter. In addition, daily counts of 15-30 were found on Sable I., (Maximum 31) throughout the winter. Reports from Sable by AFM and ZOL will be sorely missed should the Sable Island Weather Station become a casualty of the Federal Program Review.

Our first winter HERMIT WARBLER, an adult male, well-substantiated by video, photographs and many observers, was seen at Green Bay on a number of occasions from Dec. 29 until Jan. 22 (Cohrs,Currie,JCZ et al.). This was a great find for the Broad Cove CBCers, and was only the province's third record. Written details were included of diagnostic marks which ruled out a few somewhat similar *Dendroica* species; for example, "head and neck bright yellow predominates, forehead yellow, crown yellow as face but with some gray becoming completely black down to nape and back; eye black with no eye line or auricular patch, just bright yellow; some gray/black flecking along flanks, otherwise underparts snow white", and much more.

The Glace Bay CBC on Dec. 31 came up with a rarity as well, this one a YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER (Cathy Murrant). This had been attending a Glace Bay feeder for 3 weeks, and was seen by others. Written details were terse but adequate; consider "gray head, nape and back; auricular black, white superciliary... Yellow throat, belly white, streaked sides". This was a bird of the white-lored race. The white patches on the sides of the head were not mentioned, but a white eyebrow and lores were; which ended (my) speculation regarding a possible first record for the Grace's Warbler.

At least half-a-dozen PINE WARBLERS were listed. JWW kept tabs on a very bright adult at a Wolfville feeder during the last two weeks of December; then, at the end of that month, the bright adult was replaced by a poorly-marked immature which remained until Feb. 8. IAM wrote of 2 in Halifax (Robie St.) until at least early January. There was 1 at a New Glasgow feeder on Feb. 4 (CGB,KJM) and a male at a Dartmouth feeder from December to Feb. 12 (JWT). Half-a-dozen PALM WARBLERS were also mentioned: 1 in Dartmouth on Nov. 18 (BJA), 1 of the 'western' race on Sable Island on Dec. 23 (ZOL), 3 in Dartmouth on Jan. 12 (JWT) and a record late bird at

Port Mouton, Queens Co., on Feb. 25 (ROC, who remarked that it was 'an unusual visitor this time of year").

I hope the Cohrs' Halifax OVENBIRD on Christmas Day, wasn't really a "Golden-brown Turkey". Seriously, this 'nice Christmas present' was our second latest record, the latest being Jan. 27 (1987) at Point Pleasant Park, Halifax.

JCZ and Lillian Perry found a NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH on the record late date of Jan. 27, in a ditch at the head of Cripple Creek Wharf Road (county unspecified). They had a very good look (10+ min.) at the bird, which was "healthy looking - turning leaves, dipping to drink", and they sent along corroborating details. The bird was said to be " a near-perfect match for the picture in the National Geographic field guide".

A WILSON'S WARBLER was in west-end Halifax on Nov. 22 (IAM), and a late male was at Port LaTour (Cape Sable Island CBC) on Dec. 17 (JCZ,JOW).

Barbara Hinds' Dec. 16 "Bird Watch" related the story of a YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT which liked to surf down a barn roof during pouring rain at West Bay, C.B. (Nov. 19). She mentioned at least 2 other Chats in the late November or early December which were otherwise unreported: 1 at the Hawk, Shel. Co., and 1 in Dartmouth. In addition, 1 was at Big Island on Nov. 18 (CGB), 1 was at Broad Cove on Nov. 28 and again (same bird?) on Dec. 31 (SJF), 1 was in Wolfville on Dec. 11 (JWW), 1 was at Hartlen's Point on Dec. 18 (CBC) and 1 persisted to at least Jan. 8 in Bedford (IAM).

KNK, ed.



This photo from the TV screen does not do justice to Peter MacLeod's video of the lively Virginia's Warbler that appeared in White's Lake. However the uniformly gray upperparts and conspicuous eyering are evident.

## NORTHERN CARDINAL TO DICKCISSEL

NORTHERN CARDINALS, were seen on several Christmas Bird Counts, 12 in total seen on count days. Yarmouth alone contributed 6 birds to that total. Besides these birds a male was found at Bedford throughout January, and females were frequenting feeders through December, January and February at Allen Heights, St. Margaret's Bay and at the Cohrs' residence in Halifax.

A detailed account was submitted of a male ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK discovered on the Port L'Hebert Christmas Count on December 18 by Bill Curry. This bird was subsequently seen by others in the area. This is the second record for a Christmas Count and only one of a half dozen winter records. DICKCISSELS were widely reported from Cape Breton to Yarmouth. Although there were 8 seen on CBC's notable were two found at Antigonish and Pubnico. The two Pubnico birds were seen at least until January 14 at Reg D'Eon's feeder (JCZ,LP). Other records were of one at Milford on Dec. 9 (ROW,RCM) and one at Sable River on December 19 (DHY).

Two RUFIOUS-SIDED TOWHEES were lingering at feeders during January. The first was a female seen in Halifax on January 9. This bird was still there at least until the first of February. A second bird, a male was found at Smith's Cove at a feeder on the property of Kelsey Raymond from January 27 through February 16.

## TREE SPARROW TO SNOW BUNTING

AMERICAN TREE SPARROWS were quite common this winter but as is typical only in small groups of 5-7 individuals. An exception was over 30 in a flock at Apple River during January and February (KFS). There were over 1,000 seen on 29 Christmas Counts with over a third of that number seen during the Wolfville Count. CHIPPING SPARROWS were very uncommon this winter with only 6 birds seen during the period. Two managed to find shelter and food at Eva Urban's back garden during December but only one stayed on into February. Other records were of single birds at Port L'Hebert and Brier Island on Christmas Counts and Little Harbour, Shel. Co. during December and one found feeding along the roadside in central Caribou on January 2 (KJM,CGB). A good description of a CLAY-COLOURED SPARROW was submitted by Calvin Brennan and Ken McKenna who encountered this rare winter jaggard at Lyon's Brook on December 1. Two other reports of this species came from East Chezzetcook and Westphal in Halifax County during mid to late January, however details were not included.

SAVANNAH SPARROWS were a rare find in most parts of the province, even where they are normally found during the winter months. There was only one at Cherry Hill Beach (of the IPSWICH variety), until at least February 12 (SJF). There were no sightings at their usual haunts at Oxner's, Kingsbury, and Hirtle's Beaches in Lunenburg Co. (ERC). The few sightings were at Plymouth where two were seen on Dec. 28 - Feb. 26, one at Barrington Bay into February, one on Sable Island and several in the Wolfville area. Forty-four were counted on Christmas Counts with Wolfville accounting for 27 of those. The Ipswich stronghold as could be predicted was on Sable Island where over 100 were wintering there (ZOL). GRASSHOPPER SPARROWS were found in three separate areas. The first was one seen by many birders at The Hawk on Nov. 18 (RSD). A second bird was discovered at Economy on the Christmas Count on December 27 (FLS). The third was a well described bird visiting Sable Island during January 1-5 (ZOL). There was only one single report of a lone SHARP-TAILED SPARROW at Cape Sable Island during the Christmas Count there on December 17.



There were only three FOX SPARROWS spotted this winter. Although certainly uncommon in the winter this number is very low. There were only two uncovered during Christmas Counts, one at Port L'Hebert and one at Annapolis Royal. The other bird was seen on Sable Island by Andrew MacFarlane on Dec. 16. SONG SPARROWS seemed almost non-existent compared with most recent years, however Christmas Counts in the province produced higher numbers than last year and about average over the last 10 years. Only five reports were received not including the Count data with ten being the highest number at Port Mouton throughout the winter (ROC). A rare winter record for LINCOLN'S SPARROW turned up on the Wolfville Christmas Count. These birds have been recorded about a half dozen times in the province during winter.

The first record for SAGE SPARROW in Nova Scotia was one seen and photographed by Bernard Forsythe on Nov. 13 at Brier Island. (Write up in this issue). This bird is normally found in very western parts of the U.S. in the foothills and along coastal areas. A tantalizing description of an odd-looking sparrow came by way of a Calgary birder, Bill Walker, who describes what could have been a second Sage sparrow on October 21 along the shore at Peggy's Cove. This bird's gray colouration, lack of wingbars, and odd running behaviour with tail cocked up along with other field marks makes this at least a possible or probable record. SWAMP SPARROWS were quite uncommon. Besides the 27 seen during Christmas Counts, 13 of which occurred in the Wolfville area, only two other sightings were reported. The first was one at Pubnico Point on Dec. 5 (RSD) and the second was one at Munroe's Island, Pic. Co. on January 2 (KJM,CGB).

WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS were one of the more commonly seen sparrows with small pockets in thickets near feeders throughout the province. Typical were groups of 4-12 but as many as 20 could be seen at one feeder at Port Mouton throughout the winter (ROC). There were two immature WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS during the period. The first was one at a feeder in Wolfville (PCS) and the second was one seen by Raymond Savoie in Pictou on January 1. This bird lingered on until at least Feb. 11 (CKB,KJM).

DARK-EYED JUNCOS couldn't have been considered abundant. However, over 1200 were seen during Christmas Counts with the valley area, especially Wolfville, accounting for the majority of birds. Most sightings were of small flocks of between 10 and 40 birds. Judy Tufts wrote to say there was a possible "OREGON JUNCO" at Wolfville Ridge at her feeder on January 18. This bird's grey hood and pinkish flanks were certainly much different than the other juncos that were always close by for comparison.

LAPLAND LONGSPURS were found at Daniel's Head in December (JCZ), 4 were seen at Grand Pré on Jan. 30 (JCT), two at Apple River on Feb. 14-16 (KFS) but a tremendous gathering of about 250 were found along the Dyke Rd. at Grand Pré on Feb. 12 (JSC,AJV,DAC). SNOW BUNTINGS could be found in most areas. Large flocks of at least one thousand could have been found at the Halifax International Airport during January and February, at Old Barns in early February and at Grand Pré on Feb. 12. Smaller flocks of 100-250 were not uncommon especially in Colchester and Cumberland Counties.

#### ICTERIDS

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS were only occasionally sighted. December records included 5 at Milford Stn. (MGW); up to 9 at Apple River (KFS); and 6 at Upper Sackville (BJA). February records are of one at Broad Cove (SJF) and four at Avonport on Feb. 1 (EVU). Two EASTERN MEADOWLARKS were flushed from the grasses at Lower West Pubnico on Jan. 6 (RSD) and one was still there on February 6 (JKD). Other sightings were of one at Margaree on the Christmas Count there and a "meadowlark species" was found at Hemeon's Head on Feb. 14 (DHY). A single RUSTY BLACKBIRD was spotted on the Antigonish Christmas Count in December and one other was seen at feeders in Apple River from Dec. 5-9 (MSM,KFS). There were fewer COMMON GRACKLES sighted during the winter months than usual. There were up a maximum of 12 in and around Advocate from December through February (MSM,JRM,KFS); 5 near Shubenacadie on Dec. 4 (JDP) and up to 2 visiting the popular

Urban feeders in Avonport until January 1 (EVU). BROWN-HEADED COWBIRDS were found in several locations including one on Sable Island from Feb. 6-11 (AFM,ZOL). The largest number reported was 4 at Avonport on Jan. 4 (EVU). Others seen were one at Apple River and 2 at Lower West Pubnico (KFS,MSM,RSD). Of this group of birds the most reported was NORTHERN ORIOLE. There were eight separate sightings from Westmount, Cape Breton to Lower West Pubnico. The hopeful survivors of the winter were birds catered to at feeders at Osbourne until at least Feb. 7 (DHY) and a male at Cape Sable Island until Feb. 4 (MUN,JON).

#### WINTER FINCHES

PINE GROSBEAKS were found in deep coniferous forests and rarely heard or seen elsewhere this winter. Small groups were seen in Apple River and area in Nov., Dec., and January with 5 being the maximum number (KFS). Others were 6 each at Pockwock and Stewiacke on Feb. 10 and 16 respectively (BJA,RCM). The only other sighting besides those counted on Christmas Counts was of 10 at Mooseland on Feb. 11 (KAT). The late December "Counts" revealed a total of 108 with Economy having 33 of that number. PURPLE FINCHES were well reported, (over 20 sightings) but relatively few were seen before late January. Christmas Counts, with almost 800 observers, tallied a total of 223 in all with 53 found on the Broad Cove Count. The largest single flock was 25 seen at East Chester during January and February (CHF). Although there was just one seen on a Christmas Count (Pictou Harbour on Jan 1), there were at least 7 in southend Halifax and 3 including an orange coloured male at the Crosby's feeder in Lockport throughout the winter. The only other sighting was of two females at Port Williams during January and February (JWW).

WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL outnumbered RED CROSSBILLS by about 20:1. Reds were found in several areas including Tantallon, Shubenacadie and throughout Lunenburg Co. White-winged Crossbills could be found throughout the province and in relatively small flocks of 6-20. It's interesting that over 80% were sighted during February.

COMMON REDPOLLS were virtually non-existent and especially noted after the banner year last year. The only records were those on Christmas Counts. A total of 31 individuals were seen with, not surprisingly, Cape Breton Highlands National Park tallying 16 of those. November and December failed to hold many PINE SISKINS. There were only 239 seen during the Christmas Counts. These birds did however return very gradually towards the end of January showing up at feeders. The largest single flock was 75 at Marshdale, Pic. Co. on Feb. 1 (CGB). AMERICAN GOLDFINCHES were undoubtedly the one finch species that added enjoyment to backyard birding. Almost five thousand were counted during the count period of Dec 17-Jan 3. Larger flocks were seen at feeders in Plymouth with 80 seen there during February (KJM) and over 100 at Timberlea daily through January and February.

EVENING GROSBEAKS were found visiting feeders throughout the province except for the most southern parts where they were completely absent. Although these birds were never daily visitors they were regular especially in Cumberland and Colchester counties. Larger flocks of up to 200 were seen at Bass River (PWH) but most were of 10-30 individuals.

HOUSE SPARROWS continue to decline although slightly. There were over 4000 tallied during the Christmas Counts which is a lower than average number and considering that there were more people observing and very good weather conditions we may have expected a higher count. Our provincial total usually exceeds 4500 of these birds. One fairly sizable flock was of 75-100 at Lockeport throughout the winter (DJC).

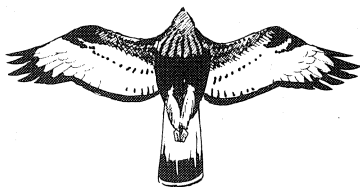
## CONTRIBUTOR LIST

Amirault, Bradford	BJA
Brennan, Calvin	CGB
Chivers, Robert	ROC
Cohrs, John	JLC
Cohrs, Lise	LAC
Cohrs, Shirley	JSC
Cooke, Eric	ERC
Cox, Margaret	MGC
Cretien, Jacqueline	JAC
Crosby, Donna	DJC
Czapalay, Joan	JCZ
D'Entremont, Raymond	RSD
D'Eon, Jerome	JKD
Ellis, Margaret	MEE
Field, Chris	CHF
Fullerton, Sylvia	SUF
Gibson, Merritt	MAG
Hemeon, Phyllis & Ward	PWH
Hinds, Barbara	BAH
Hippem, Dennis	DHH
Keddy, Keith	KNK
Lucas, Zoe	ZOL
MacLean, Angus	AAM
MacLean, Stella	SMM
MacFarlane, Andrew,	AFM
MacPhee, Roslyn	RCM
McKenna, Ken	KJM
McLaren, Ian	IAM
Mills, Eric	ELM
Mills, Jane	JRM
Mills, Maureen	MSM
Moore, Bernice	ABM
Morse, Jean & Bill	JBM
Newell, Murray	MUN
Perron, Jacques D	JDP
Raymond, Kelsey	KER
Spalding, Francis	FLS
Spicer, Blaine	BAS
Spicer, Kathleen	KFS
Tay, Karl	KWT
Tay, Wendie	WAT
Taylor, J.W.	JWT
Tempa, Jean	JGT
Thexton, Brenda & Bill	BBT
Thorpe, Gordon & Diane	GDT
Trueman, Gerry	GET
Tufts, Gordon	GWT
Tufts, Judy	JCT
Urban, Eva	EVU
Waldron, Joan	JOW
Waldrope, Roger	ROW
West, Myrna G	MGW
West, Arthur E	AEW
Wolford, Jim	JWW
Young, David	DHY
Ted Dalglish	TD
George Estey	GE
Bernard Forsythe	BLF
John Harwood	BJ
Richard Stern	RBS

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, Eel Brook, Melbourne Overton, all the ubnicos, Glenwood, Dayton, Quinan.
Shelburne Co. (Shel. Co.)	Cape Sable Is., Cape Sable, Matthews Lake, Lower Ohio, The Hawk, Seal Is., Little Harbour, Port L'Hebert W.
Queen's Co	Port Joli, Port L'Hebert E.
Lunenburg Co. (Lun. Co.)	Cherry Hill, Broad Cove, Petite Riviere, Green Bay, Crousetown, Crescent Beach, Publicover Lake.
Halifax Co (Hfx. Co.)	Three Fathom Hbr., Conrad's Beach, Lawrencetown, Cole Hbr., Martinique Beach, Hartlen's Point, Laurie Park, Powder Mill Park, Chezzetcook
Colchester Co. (Col. Co.)	Economy, Glenholme
Annapolis Co. (Anna. Co.)	Wilmot, Round Hill,                    Annapolis Royal, Clementsport.
Kings Co.	Wolfville, Greenfield, Canard, Black River Lake, Gaspereau, Grand Pré, White Rock, Starr's Pt., Lumsden Reservoir
Cumberland Co. (Cumb. Co.)	Lusby Marsh, APBS*, Linden, Port Howe
Hants Co.	Shubenacadie, Noel Shore
Digby Co.	Brier Island
Guysborough Co. (Guys. Co.)	Hazel Hill
Cape Breton (C.B.)	Big Pond, C.B. Highland National Park (C.B.H.N.P.)

\*APBS-Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary  
CBC - Christmas Bird Count



## NOVA SCOTIA BIRD RARITIES IN PERSPECTIVE

### Part 1: Loons to Waterfowl

By Ian McLaren

About 20 years ago, I wrote such a perspective in four issues of the *Nova Scotia Bird Society Newsletter* (November 1973, April 1974, November 1974, and April 1975). Much has happened since then; the numbers and sophistication of birders have greatly increased, and we now have much better resources for identification of potential vagrants. Some rarities have proved almost routine and do not merit an update, unless they pose identification problems. Others have materialized that were merely predicted as possibilities, or not even dreamed of, in that earlier account.

Again, our records and expectations of such rarities cannot be fully understood without referring to the their wider patterns of distributions and wanderings. Much information is available in the *National Audubon Society Field Notes* (formerly *American Birds*, and before that *Audubon Field Notes*), which summarizes bird records for the four seasons for the whole of North America. (I refer below to that journal as **AB**). Another useful source is the monthly newsletter *Winging It*, produced by the American Birding Association, with its monthly summary of outstanding rarities in Canada and the United States. The new Canadian publication, *Birders Journal*, is developing a role in documenting extreme rarities in Canada.

Before going to the list, I want to plead for more rigorous documentation of our rarities. Many sightings included in the old *N. S. Bird Society Newsletter*, in *Nova Scotia Birds* (referred to here as **NSB**), and even in the editions of Tufts' *Birds of Nova Scotia* (the 3d edition is referred to herein as **Tufts**), must be largely taken on faith, since concrete evidence (photos, specimens), and even published descriptions are not available. Of course, we all know that many of those birds were well seen by competent birders, and sometimes by many observers. But this will not convince readers many years hence who know nothing of our collective skills. One solution, widely practised, is a regional or provincial rare birds committee, somehow mandated to accept or reject submissions for an "official" list. At the North American level (e.g., the A.O.U. Committee to determine what goes into their Checklist) this makes sense. However, at the local level such committees often become overwhelmed by submissions and can generate controversy and ill-feelings. Also, there have been numerous major publications in which authors have ignored the decisions of such committees and have practised their own judgements based on available information. It is noteworthy that the pioneering British rare birds committee is becoming increasingly bypassed by timely publication of accounts of rarities in the newish British journal, *Birding World*. **There is no substitute for a published account**, available for all future compilers to see and judge. The editors of our seasonal bird reports have not yet always been quite brave enough to invoke the rule (from our former Records Editor, Bob Dickie, in the January 1994 issue) that all species not on the Society's checklist, and some "difficult" ones that are on the list, will not be recorded in *Nova Scotia Birds* unless accompanied by details. Just as important is the publication of such details in *Nova Scotia Birds*. Often a few words on critical details reported to a seasonal editor should suffice; sometimes a full writeup by the observer(s) is called for. Of course, a diagnostic picture is worth a thousand words. For this means of documentation, it would be useful if a properly archival repository for slides and prints of rare birds were set up for Nova Scotia, possibly in our Museum of Natural History.

In this updated overview, I comment on the patterns of occurrence of our rarities, here and elsewhere, and sometimes give some identification hints that are not found in the usual field guides. I also comment on the adequacy of documentation of some of our recorded rarities. In doing so, I don't mean to pass judgement on particular sightings, but hope to encourage us to do better in future.

**PACIFIC/ARCTIC LOON.** Pacific Loons, sometimes still listed as Arctic/Pacific, are now sufficiently routine along the U.S. East Coast (10 in winter 1993-94 in **AB** 48) so that they are not boldfaced in **AB** reports for some regions. The records in **Tufts** (1985) are not referable to one or the other species, which were "split" from one another in 1985. Discriminating details have not been published for a half-dozen post-**Tufts** sight records, but Roger Foxall's writeup (**NSB** 36[1], p. 68-69) is convincingly Pacific. The Arctic Loon, breeding in Europe and Iceland, has not been reliably reported anywhere in eastern North America, although not totally out of the running. The most useful feature is the dark band of feathering along the flanks below the folded wing in the Pacific, but not the Arctic Loon, which is markedly white-flanked. Beware that the Pacific Loon may show pale sides below this dark band when sitting high, especially near the rear. The Arctic is also a larger bird, with a heavier bill and lacks the thin "chinstrap" usually found in winter Pacifics. Photographs would easily discriminate either species in the province.

**YELLOW-BILLED LOON.** The description (**NSB** 33[2]:5) of a "possible" individual of this species is plausible. Yet, the 1983 A.O.U. checklist mentions only one East Coast record of this species, and I am aware of only one other, unsubstantiated, report of one in more recent years - in South Carolina in Dec. 1994. There should be no problems in discriminating a Yellow-billed Loon at reasonably close ranges using head pattern and bill shape and colour. However, beware that in some lights the bill of Common Loon may seem to have an ivory tone. The Common Loon always shows some darkening of the end of the bill, at least along its upper and cutting edges, whereas the Yellow-billed never (?) does.

**EARED GREBE.** No descriptions have been published for our three sight records, the latest in winter 1992-93. The bird has become almost routine along the eastern seaboard of the U.S., with at least 22 from Massachusetts to Georgia in winter 1993-94 (**AB**). One actually summered in coastal Massachusetts in 1990. Although field-guides seem to make the identification of winter grebes easy, very dusky (first-winter?) Horned Grebes can be superficially like Eared Grebes according to Kaufman (**AB** 46, p. 1187-1190). Kaufman also suggests that we scrutinize any apparent Horned Grebe seen before mid-October, as Eared Grebes are more likely to be on the move then.

**WESTERN/CLARK'S GREBE.** The Western Grebe continues to be very rare on the U.S. East Coast, with only 3 reported for winter 1993-94 in **AB**, including one that has spent 17 winters near Georgetown, ME. I am aware of only one documented sighting of Clark's Grebe elsewhere on the East Coast. Among our half-dozen reports, three brief published descriptions in **NSB** pertain to Western Grebes. The account of an apparent Clark's Grebe (**NSB** April 1990) seems to eliminate the remote possibility of the somewhat similar Old-World Great Crested Grebe. I have seen some Red-necked Grebes with unusually pale cheeks and neck that might have been taken for Western Grebes at a distance in poor light, so photo records are greatly desirable.

**ALBATROSSES.** Since the single sight record of **Black-browed** and two of **Yellow-browed Albatrosses** given in **Tufts**, there have been one documented record of the former (with photo) and three of the latter with sufficient details in **NSB**. A couple of other albatross records

have not been documented. Even a distant photo (like the mislabelled one in *NSB* 32[1], p. 43) can discriminate between these two species, although some have suggested that a remotely possible Gray-headed Albatross could be confused with Yellow-nosed. It is noteworthy that one of the two other East Coast albatross reported in *AB* since 1985 was a Yellow-nosed photographed over Moncton, NB, in spring 1993. We seem to be unusually privileged in Atlantic Canada.

**BLACK-CAPPED PETREL.** The one plausible sighting for our waters (in *Tufts*) lacks details published details. It is uncommon, but routine, through the year off the Carolinas (Lee, 1986, *AB* 40:409-412; Patterson and Brinkley, 1994, *Winging It*, 6[1]: 1, 4-8)) and found occasionally closer to us, although only recently confirmed as far north as Massachusetts (Apr. 22 1991, photo). Two other gadfly petrels are remotely possible. Following a first sighting of a *Herald Petrel* in 1978, pelagic trips off North Carolina now advertise it as almost routine there in late summer. *Soft-plumaged (Cape Verde) Petrels* are also listed as possibilities in spring trips! We would have to much further out, but why not? The hypothetical *Bulwer's Petrel* in *Tufts* (p. 455) is much less plausible, with only two other East Coast reports, from Florida and N. Carolina. A *Cape Petrel*, like the one off North Carolina in July 1985, would be a very distinctive prize, although we are told to beware of partially albino Sooty Shearwaters.

**MEDITERRANEAN SHEARWATER.** Most pelagic trippers have now become familiar with the once-rare *Manx Shearwater*. However, Dick Brown's sightings of individuals with brownish underparts (see *Tufts*) take on new significance, as the brownish races of southern Europe have recently been "split" from *Manx* as the Mediterranean Shearwater, which is known to be regular off Britain in late summer. Any such birds should be carefully studied.

**LITTLE SHEARWATER.** The status of this tiny shearwater off eastern North America was reviewed by Lee (1988, *AB* 42: 213-220). Three recent sightings from North Carolina have been in late fall and winter. Since the 1896 specimen (of the race *baroli*) from Sable Island, none of our subsequent sightings, mostly designated as "possible" or "probable", has been fully convincing. One near the Lurcher Shoals off Yarmouth in October 1994 by two expert U.S. birders was thought to be of the Cape Verde race, *boydi* (*Guillemot* 24, p. 39). This race is sometimes thought to belong to the next species. We await published details.

**AUDUBON'S SHEARWATER.** Our first Audubon's Shearwater was well documented (Brown, 1980, *Can. Field-Nat.* 94:466-476), and Roger Foxall's description (1993, *NSB* 35(2): 33-34) of one off Brier I. in Aug. 1992 is a model of detail, including some puzzling features that may be useful in resolving the origin or race of that particular individual. Lee (see above) warns that Audubon's Shearwaters do not always have the dark undertail coverts promoted as a distinctive field mark in bird guides.

**WHITE-FACED STORM-PETREL.** There were three records from waters well off Atlantic Canada prior to 1985 (Watson et al. 1986, *AB* 40:401-408). Since then, there have been several U.S. East Coast records, including a bird off Nantucket, MA, 23 Aug. 1993. The inadequately documented bird over Crowell Basin, NS, in mid-August 1990 is plausible.

**BRITISH STORM-PETREL.** There have evidently been no sightings of this bird since the one captured on Sable Island in Aug. 1970 (*Tufts*) and the other seen from the *Bluenose* ferry in Maine waters on June 28 that year.

**BAND-RUMPED STORM-PETREL.** These were becoming recognized as routine in late summer off the Mid-Atlantic States by the 1980s. However, only a

few have been seen farther north, including one as near as Massachusetts in 1985. I saw the "possible" bird off Halifax on Aug. 3, 1991, bird, as reported in *NSB*, and believe that we have to be more familiar with unusual flight behaviours of our regular species before listing this bird; a photo might show the shallow tail notch, darker wings and lack of foot projection, as distinctions from Wilson's and Leach's Storm-Petrels.

**WHITE-TAILED TROPICBIRD.** We have had no reports since the 1960s. They are regular off North Carolina in summer. There were several in the northeastern U.S. in autumn 1986, and one in Massachusetts after hurricane Bob in Aug. 1991. The **Red-billed Tropicbird** also occasionally wanders north. One particularly well-studied individual was traced from Mt. Desert Rock, ME, to Martha's Vineyard, MA, where it stayed through fall 1987.

**BOOBIES.** There is one photographically supported record of a **Brown Booby** in **Tufts** and a documented record of a **Masked Booby** 80 mi. SW of Nova Scotia by Strawinski (1990, *NSB* 32[3]: 58). Other possible Nova Scotia sightings have not been documented. There has only been a handful of East Coast reports of Brown Booby (most in late summer, and none closer than New York), and none of Masked Booby north of North Carolina in the last decade. Immature plumages in some gannets can be rather like those of Brown Boobies, and occasional near-adult gannets with black primaries and secondaries, but otherwise pure white, look like Masked Boobies. Identified boobies should be close enough to see their distinctive underwing patterns and "squared off" face patches.

**ANHINGA.** One or two "possible" sightings in Nova Scotia have not been documented. Sometimes soaring cormorants have been mistaken for this species. Anhingas nest in North Carolina, and there have been about a dozen more northerly records (3 as close as Massachusetts) in the last decade.

**MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD.** Since those in **Tufts**, there have been two reports (*NSB*, Nov. 1, 1989, May 15, 1992), and the bird has been noted with some regularity off northeastern U.S. (including Maine in 1985). Observers should beware that there is a specimen of the very similar **Lesser Frigatebird** from Maine, so detailed descriptions are required for certain identification.

**"GREAT WHITE HERON".** Two very large white herons reported in Nova Scotia are more likely to have been albinos rather than representatives of this southern phase of the Great Blue Heron. "Great White Herons" have occasionally reached North Carolina.

**LITTLE EGRET.** Although our regular summer resident on Bon Portage seems to have given up, two or three still occur each year in New England and the Mid-Atlantic States, and a few in the West Indies. Observers might also keep in mind the closely related (some say conspecific) **Western Reef-Heron**, one of which occurred in Massachusetts in summer 1983, and which has been found subsequently in the West Indies. Its usual dark phase is unmistakable.

**REDDISH EGRET.** Our old sight records (**Tufts**) still seem plausible, but only about ten have been reported in the last decade from South Carolina to Massachusetts (with a 3d state record there in 1992).

**WHITE-FACED IBIS.** These are great wanderers, and two reached Massachusetts in 1990. Immatures are tricky or impossible to identify.

**ROSEATE SPOONBILL.** Our hypothetical record for Sable Island (**Tufts**, p. 455) is merely suggestive. The first confirmed sighting north of



Maryland was on Staten Island, NY, in August 1992.

**WOOD STORK.** There are old East Coast records as far north as Maine. However, one in New York in October 1991 was the first north of the Mid-Atlantic States since 1985, and another was in Massachusetts in late fall 1994. This bird is in trouble in Florida, and might be expected less frequently as a stray.

**GREATER FLAMINGO.** All records of this species in North America, except for a recent handful in Florida, remain suspect. The Greater Flamingo near Wallace in Aug. 1985 (NSB 28 [1]: 12) turned out to be an escaped Chilean Flamingo.

**FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK.** Our 1976 records have not been matched since. Indeed, none have even wandered to coastal New England in recent years, although good numbers reached the mid-Atlantic States in autumn 1989 and 1991. Single birds, like that in upstate Vermont in Oct. 1990 might be suspect as possible escapees.

**BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING DUCK.** A wandering flock or two turned up in Quebec, Ontario, and Pennsylvania in summer 1993, prior to which there were almost no records beyond southeastern and midwestern U.S. Is this bird about to "break out" of its usual range?

**SWANS.** Tundra Swans can be expected from time to time, and it is worth noting that one of the European race, "Bewick's" Swan, reached Labrador in May 1988. Although all our Mute Swans to date, except possibly the one found dead on Sable I. on Feb. 19, 1985, have been presumed escapees, "wild" ones have been spreading north in New England and Brian Dalzell believes that one wintering on Grand Manan I., NB, last year had arrived from that source. Apparently a lake in Shelburne Co. carries a Mi'kmaq name meaning "the place where swans moult". I wonder if Trumpeter Swans once occurred here, as they did elsewhere in Eastern North America? They are being reintroduced in Ontario, and migrating to mid-Atlantic U.S., and might some day return to us. Finally, Whooper Swans, nest in Iceland and occasionally visit Greenland. However, eastern North American records have generally been dismissed as escapees.

**BEAN GOOSE.** There have been two fall occurrences of this species among Snow Geese at Cap-Tourmente, Quebec: one of the N. European race in 1982, and another of the E. Siberian race in 1987. Although we are outside the Greater Snow Goose flyway, might such a wanderer visit us?

**PINK-FOOTED GOOSE.** This species, sometimes classed as a race of the Bean Goose, nests on Iceland, and thus seems more likely to occur here than the above. The first unambiguous N. Am. occurrence was in N. Newfoundland in spring 1980, another was with Snow Geese in Quebec in October 1989, and a third there in Nov. 1990. Why not in between?

**WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE.** This species is kept in captivity, and some of our few records (certainly the possibly hybridized wanderer of summer 1988) may be suspect. Orange bills, which field guides have promoted as characteristic of the seldom captive Greenland race, are now known to occur in North American forms (Kaufman, 1994, *Birding* 26: 380-382). Circumstances are important (e.g., a wary bird with Snow or Canada Geese should be acceptable).

**ROSS' GOOSE.** This tiny goose has in recent autumns occurred regularly in small numbers among Greater Snow Geese at Cap-Tourmente, Quebec, upstate N.Y., and along the U.S. coast south of New England, although one is not likely to deviate from that flyway. Note that a few of these eastern birds have been of the rare "blue" morph.

**BRANT.** DeBenedictis (1991, *Birding* 23: 357-359) reviews technical literature stressing the genetic distinctiveness of the "Black" and "Atlantic" Brant that nest respectively in the eastern and western Canadian arctic. We have at least one record of "Black" Brant in Tufts. However, note that Brant nesting in Spitsbergen and N. Russia are also dark-bellied, though distinguishable by their less pronounced white neck patches. Some day this complex may be split into two species, so be alert!

**BARNACLE GOOSE.** The appearance of a group of escapees in fall 1990, now resident on Cape Sable Island, should serve as a caveat. Might even the 1969 report of a tame flock of seven (Tufts) also be suspect? Indeed, there are those who argue that any in North America, apart from a handful for Newfoundland and Labrador, are wandering escapees (Ryff, 1984, *Birding* 16: 146-154). Most of us, including myself, will probably retain the lone bird of November 1989 on our lists.

**CANADA GOOSE.** DeBenedictis (1991, *Birding* 23: 357-359) reviews technical literature on the genetic difference between the grouped small races and grouped large races of these geese, and suggests that two species might be forthcoming. Four records of the small race *hutchinsii* which occurs more regularly along the East Coast to the south, are mentioned in Tufts. A Black-Duck sized individual on Sable Island in late December 1989 (NSB) was presumably of this race.

**GARGANEY.** Our single male in spring 1991 was alas not publicized before it departed. But, take heart as there have been several recent records in eastern America, including N.B. and P.E.I. Some of the ca. 15 East Coast individuals prior to 1985 might have been escapees. However, Kaufman (1990, *AB* 44: 386) speculates that its increased frequency in recent years traces from birds blown across to Central America from Africa. In addition to the field marks for females in, for example, the *National Geographic Guide*, note the more prominent white trailing edge of the speculum and more contrasty underwings, with a darker leading edge, than in other teal species (Jackson, *Birding* 24: 214-223).

**COMMON POCHARD.** Some have suggested that this will be the next waterfowl vagrant to reach us from Iceland, where some breed. Always check out winter Redheads, especially females and young males

**TUFTED DUCK.** This species, predicted in my 1973 "perspectives", did not do so until January 1991, but has since become almost regular in winter. Our first-year birds, some appearing after similar individuals had vacated S.E. Newfoundland, are certainly genuine vagrants. This is not certain for some records from inland Canada and the U.S. East Coast.

**STELLER'S EIDER.** A couple of sightings near Halifax of birds resembling females of this N. Pacific species have been reported, but not documented or confirmed, in the last two years. Its occurrence is not totally implausible, as there are old records for the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Maine, and Massachusetts.

**SMEW.** Some of us have been hoping for an occurrence of this small, distinctive merganser species, which does occasionally reach Iceland. However, there are no East Coast records. The pattern West Coast records suggest that they are true vagrants there, but the several occurrences in inland North America most likely represent escapees.

# The Feeder Page.

## SMALL BEGINNINGS

Joyce Purchase

Before we became interested in identifying birds in the field, we tried to attract the local passerines to our yard. Mind you, we had never heard of the word 'passerine' and our recognition skills extended no wider than robins and blue jays, but there we were in our new home in the country with a mixed forest at the bottom of the garden. Well, the garden was a fond hope for the future. In the fashion of the time, the yard was bare, absolutely devoid of trees or grass, not a weed marred the expanse of mud and gravel. Our first offerings were ignored completely.

Eventually the idea occurred to us that a feeding tray close to the woods might attract some attention. I don't remember the first visitor, probably a Bluejay or Black-capped Chickadee, but one species led to another, the feeders were slowly moved closer to our kitchen window and we were finally in business.

Then began the learning process. Cheap mixed seed attracted Starlings and House Sparrows--hundreds of them; the more expensive seed brought in the variety of species that was more interesting to us, so the basement filled with bags of striped and black sunflower seeds, white millet, red milo, peanut hearts and niger seed. When it came to feeding stations, we realized that 'more' is better: tubes, trays and tables, hoppers and globes, suet balls, peanut-butter logs, seeds under trees, seeds on the railings, grapes tied to discarded Christmas trees--as many as can be managed. They are best placed near cover.

Nova Scotia winters make an icy mess of untended feeders, so they need regular attention (some birders we know bring their hanging feeders in overnight to keep them dry near the woodstove). With knee-deep snow or wind-driven sleet, feeders at the far end of the yard seem to be in a much less desirable location than the ones just outside the door!

So, the birds came and we were pleased BUT...all species don't eat seed or suet. There was a whole range of birds we didn't see. Then we made a new discovery. We had been having trouble attracting hummingbirds to the sugar-water feeders until one year we planted our gladiolas nearby and, suddenly, we had a yard full of them--three, anyway. The flower garden was re-arranged with the requirements of the birds in mind: scarlet runner beans, impatiens, bee-balm, anything that had a nectar cup for the hummingbirds. From there it was an easy step to bachelor's buttons, cosmos, calendula, all those plants which held their seeds through the winter for the seed-eaters. Trees, shrubs, hedges, vines were chosen or retained with an eye to their use as shelter, protection, nesting sites, seeds or fruit. A bird bath completed the setting.

The honeysuckle berries bring the Cedar Waxwings, the Bohemian Waxwings flock to the hips of the multiflora roses. Chipping Sparrows and Robins nest in the evergreens, but the Song Sparrow prefers the barberry hedge. Warblers and Brown Creepers glean insects from the apple trees near the second nest of the Robins, while a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker drills in the bark to the sap. Purple Finches pluck the flowers of the maple tree. Juncos and Fox Sparrows scratch up the fallen seeds of the petunias. There is always something to watch.

The great calamity is that there are fewer migratory birds each year, but we are at least trying to replace the habitat that was here before we built our home and raised our young.

Here are some suggestions for "avian plantings":

TREES AND SHRUBS RECOMMENDED FOR ATTRACTING BIRDS:

1. CONIFERS for cones, protection and nesting sites:

Pines, Larches, Firs, Spruces, Hemlock, Junipers, Cedar

2. DECIDUOUS (larger) for seeds, protection and nesting sites:

Maple	( <i>Acer saccharum</i> )
Birch	( <i>Betula</i> /most species)
Oak	( <i>Quercus</i> /most species)
Hazelnut	( <i>Corylus cornuta</i> )
Beech	( <i>Fagus grandifolia</i> ..if nectria beech canker is not a problem)

3. DECIDUOUS (smaller) for fruit, protection and nesting sites:

Mountain Ash	( <i>Pyrus americana</i> )
Choke Cherry	( <i>Prunus virginiana</i> )
Black Cherry	( <i>Prunus serotina</i> )
Pin Cherry	( <i>Prunus pensylvanica</i> )
Hawthorne	( <i>Crataegus</i> ...various)
Indian Pear	( <i>Amelanchier</i> /most species)=Shadbush, Bilberry
Alder	( <i>Alnus</i> /most species)
Fruit trees--especially ornamental crab-apples	
Mulberry	( <i>Morus rubra</i> )

4. DECIDUOUS SHRUBS for fruit, protection and nesting sites:

Elderberry	( <i>Sambucus canadensis</i> , possibly <i>pubens</i> )
Canada Holly	( <i>Ilex verticillata</i> )=Black Alder
Honeysuckle	( <i>Lonicera canadensis</i> , <i>tartarica</i> )
Sweet Gale	( <i>Myrica Gale</i> )
Bayberry	( <i>Myrica pensylvanica</i> )
High-bush Cranberry	( <i>Viburnum trilobum</i> )
Multiflora Rose	( <i>Rosa multiflora</i> )
Sand Cherry	( <i>Prunus depressa</i> )
Cotoneaster	( <i>Cotoneaster pyracantha</i> )=Firethorn
Sumac	( <i>Rhus typhina</i> )
Barberry	( <i>Berberis vulgaris</i> , <i>thunbergii</i> )
Currant )	(Ribes/most species)
Gooseberry )	
Raspberry	( <i>Rubus strigosus</i> )
Blackberry	( <i>Rubus allegheniensis</i> )
Blueberry	( <i>Vaccinium</i> ...various)
Huckleberry	( <i>Gaylussacia</i> ...various)
Bearberry	( <i>Arctostaphylos</i> ...various)

FLOWERS RECOMMENDED FOR ATTRACTING BIRDS:

## 1. Hummingbirds and other nectar-feeding species:

Bee balm, Columbine, Coral bells, Delphinium,  
Fritillaria, Fuchsia, Gladiola, Heliotrope, Impatiens,  
Nasturtium, Phlox, Pulmonaria (William-and-Mary),  
Scarlet runner-beans and Honeysuckle Vine

## 2. Seed-eaters (sparrows, finches, etc.):

Aster, Bachelor's buttons, Black-Eyed Susan,  
Calendula, Cosmos, Lupins, Marigold, Sunflower,  
Zinnia, most older-variety perennials, Grasses (Cereal  
and Ornamental)

N.B. Allow Annuals to go to seed after Sept. 1 and leave  
over winter before tidying--Perennials, also, if that does  
not harm the plant.

Many so-called weeds are attractive and useful to birds, e.g.:

Jewelweed (Touch-me-not), Thistles, Knapweed, Dandelion, etc.

ADDITIONAL ATTRACTIONS

Feeding Stations  
Nest Boxes  
Bird Baths / Fountains  
Brush Pile

JP



Bernard Forsythe's Sage Sparrow, on Brier Island last November 13, is here immortalized in the stony, barren ditch, not unlike its terrain in the American Southwest.



ST. MARGARET'S BAY RAPTOR REHABILITATION CENTRE  
 SPONSORED by the NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY

H E L P !

For present and new members of the Nova Scotia Bird Society, this request is a plea for help needed at the Raptor Rehabilitation Centre at Mason's Point in St. Margaret's Bay. We have been in operation for 12 years and as a result of a dedicated volunteer team of avian care specialists, the centre has been given National and International recognition. We are grateful to the Nova Scotia Bird Society for all their support during the past 12 years to allow us to grow into a very credible rehabilitation centre.

We have operated at full capacity for some time now. This has become a full-time occupation requiring many hours of avion care, maintenance, upkeep and increased record keeping. This work is labour intensive and involves specialized medical surgical procedures.

The Dartmouth Veterinary Hospital and the Rehabilitation Centre sometimes work as a team in providing education seminars on Raptor Rehabilitation to various wildlife interest groups as well as guest speakers at several schools. At the Centre several students come to our home where they can examine specimens we have from the freezer and participate in discussions on the environment and its long term effect on various bird populations.

Currently we are the only centre which has the facilities and intricate networking required to operate on a high success rate. However, the Centre desperately requires financial help to repair the existing units, (partial replacement of roofing and repairs) but of crucial importance, the construction of a flight pen suitable to accommodate Eagles and Ospreys. Michael and I cannot physically build another unit, especially one of this size. We require a contractor to review the design and build the unit. A rough estimate will be from \$8,000.00 to \$10,000.00. At present we do not have a suitable flight pen and at times the recovery period is slow due to the occupancy rate and the present design which does not provide adequate facilities for Eagles and Ospreys required for flight time.

We have given all we can and will continue to do so but we are asking for your support for the construction of the Eagle/Osprey flight pen in the spring of 95. Please help us. Send your donations to the Nova Scotia Bird Society Sanctuary Trust Fund

c/o David Currie, Treasurer  
 52 Dorothy Crescent  
 Timberlea, N.S. B3T 1E2

and mark it "Raptor Programme". Charitable tax receipts will be issued.

Mike and Elaine Kew

**WE NEED YOU NOW!**

## FORTHCOMING FIELD TRIPS

**Reminder:** Please be sure to phone the field trip leader or contact person ahead of time to register for the trip. In this way no trip is oversubscribed and you can be contacted in case of cancellation.



## APRIL

Sun. 23 Wolfville Area. Leader: Judy Tufts (542-7800). Pond hopping for ducks and early migrants. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at Robie Tufts Nature Centre, Front St., Wolfville. Joint trip with the Blomidon Naturalists Society.

Sun. 30 Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary. Leader: Alan Smith (H 506-536-0164 or W 506-364-5038). Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the APBS parking lot. Take Exit 3 from the TCH 104 at the Wandlyn Inn and proceed a few km. toward Nappan; the entrance is on the left. Wear appropriate footwear for wet conditions and bring a lunch. Enjoy a day of observing waterfowl, shorebirds and early migrants.

## MAY

Sat. 6 Eastern Shore. Leader: Fulton Lavender (455-4966). Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the old golf course entrance, Hartlen's Point.

Sat. 13 Spring Arrivals, Peters Field, C.B. Leader: Jackie Chretien (564-4640). Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Cape Breton Shopping Centre.

Sun. 14 Lunenburg County. Leader: Bill Caudle (766-4465). Meet at Exit 11 off Hwy. 103, at 7:30 a.m. Munch a lunch near New Germany. Trip ends near Bridgewater. Slow-paced introduction to birding for beginners. Learn about new birding spots.

Wed. 17 Halifax County Warbler Walk. Leader: Fred Dobson (852-3042). Meet at 6:00 a.m. at the parking lot at the junction of the Prospect Rd., Rte. 333 and St. Margaret's Bay Rd.--2-3 hours duration.

Fri 19 Bon Portage Island. Leader: Angus MacLean (679-5878). Meet at the Prospect Pt. wharf at Shag Harbour, Fri., May 19 at 6:30 p.m. There will

Mon. 22 be a charge for crossing and accommodation. Bring food, drinking water, sleeping bags, necessary clothing and appropriate footwear. Reservations are necessary. Depart Island Mon. afternoon at 3:00 p.m. See B/C Night Heron, nesting Ospreys, probably Snowy Egret. Lots of migrants, always exciting rarities.

Sun. 21 Hopewell Area (Pic. Co.). Leader: Harry Brennan (923-2780). Meet at 8:00 a.m. at St. Columbia Churchyard, about 1 mile south of Hopewell. Saw-what and Barred Owls possible. General birding--excellent for beginners.

Sat. 27 Hants County Day. Leader: Margaret Clark (443-3993). Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the railway crossing in Mt. Uniacke. Observe abundant birdlife in a variety of habitats. This trip extends into the early afternoon.



- Sun. 28 Shubenacadie Area. Leader: Rosyln McPhee (758-3265.) Meet at 7:00 a.m. in front of Scott's Restaurant in Shubenacadie.

## JUNE

- Sat. 10 Birds of Kings County. Leader: Angus MacLean (679-5878). Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the west end of Butler Rd., 20 mins. south of Kentville on Route 12. For the beginner through intermediate, learn to identify warblers and flycatchers (in particular) by sight and sound.
- Sat. 17 Warbler Walk, Birch Grove, C.B. Leader: Junior Metcalfe (849-5054). Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot of the former Heavy Water Plant site, Glace Bay.
- Sat. 17 Cumberland County. Leader: Fulton Lavender (455-4966). Meet at 7:30 a.m. at Wentworth Valley Prov. Park (just north of the ski hill). Trip ends at Amherst Point. Marsh Wren, Black Tern, Sora, Purple Martin, Vesper Sparrow. A great opportunity to see birds seldom seen by the beginner.

## JULY

- Sat. 15 Port Joli. Leader: Ian McLaren. A field trip as part of Port Joli's Discovery Day celebrations. This outing is tentative so contact Ian at 429-7024 as the day approaches to get the final word, meeting place, etc.
- Sun. 23 Wallace Bay Area. Leader: Jim Taylor (434-8516). Meet at Wallace wharf at 8:30 a.m. A variety of habitats including shoreline, woodland, riverside and marsh. Nesting eagles for a grand finale! No registration necessary. Bring a lunch.
- Sat. 29 North River, C.B. Leader: John McKay (562-3956). Meet at 8:00 a.m. at The Cape Breton Shopping Centre, Sydney River.

## AUGUST

- Mon. 7 President's Field Day, Crescent Beach. Leader: Lisé Cohrs (477-6036). Meet at 8:15 a.m. at the western parking area at the entrance to Crescent Beach, Lunenburg County for a Shorebird Bonanza.
- Sat. 12 Yarmouth Area. Leader: Eric Ruff (H742-8145 or W 742-5539). Meet at the former CPR station at 8:30 a.m. Bring a lunch and suitable footwear for rocky and wet walking.
- Sat. 19 Economy Area. Leader: Francis Spalding (647-2837). Meet at the general store at 9:00 a.m. Returning shorebirds and birds of the area. Great scenery and lots of back roads.
- Sat. 26 Hartlen's Point. Leader: Fulton Lavender (455-4966). Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the old entrance to the golf course.
- Sat. 26 Point Michaud, C.B. Leader: George Digout (535-3516). Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Dept. of Transport building, Hwy. 4 and Point Michaud Turnoff, St. Peters.

Any questions or suggestions should be directed to the Field Trip co-ordinator, Angus MacLean (679-5878), 2992 Lovett Rd., Coldbrook, N.S. B4R 1A4. (If there is anyone interested in leading any of our trips to Bon Portage Island, please let Angus know).

## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

September 2--Bon Portage Island

The 1994 Thanksgiving field trip to Bon Portage consisted of six birders and two guests who met at Prospect Wharf on a sunny afternoon at 3:00 p.m. We loaded the cape islander and boarded the boat to sail across the waters to the island. The dock on the island was under repair so we had to anchor off and be transported in relays in a smaller boat, manned by Peter Smith.

The field trip co-ordinator was unable to contact a leader and this was disappointing to us novices. Thanks to the generosity of one very knowledgeable birder, Calvin Brennan, we were able to be taken around the island, spotting many more species of birds than we would otherwise have seen. Two novice birders who travelled from Cape Breton were very grateful to Calvin.

The total number of species seen was 75 with one sub-species. In the group were Alan Covert, Bernice Moores, Inez Roberts, John MacKay and Junior Metcalfe.

On Saturday evening, we were invited to a delicious Thanksgiving dinner, prepared by Peter Smith, his wife Lynda and friends which highlighted the field trip, making it a very enjoyable weekend.

Inez Roberts

January 14--Halifax-Dartmouth Sewer Stroll

It was overcast and a balmy 4° C at 8:00 a.m., when sixteen optimistic birders met at Hartlen's Point for the first Sewer Stroll of 1995. As the day progressed, cool drizzle and poor visibility dogged us; however, they could not overcome the group's spirit or sense of enjoyment. Fifty species were sighted in all (an average count for this event) including 32 water and 18 land species.

The water birds cooperated nicely in that good numbers of most species were observed. One exception was the lone Great Cormorant seen resting on a buoy off the coast of Dartmouth. Along with the usual array of common shore birds, the coastal area from Hartlen's Point through Dartmouth yielded Lesser Scaup, Scoters, Black Guillemot, Red-necked Grebe, and a Northern Harrier hovering near the Devil's Island lighthouse.

From the coast to Sullivan's Pond in the heart of Dartmouth- a most rewarding visit. A male Wood Duck (seemingly a permanent resident) looked right at home, but no more so than the six fine American Wigeon, accompanied by their guest, an immature Eurasian Wigeon. And, smack in the middle of the pond was a nominate Iceland Gull, of the Greenland race. It was an immature, experiencing its first winter.

Next stop was the northwest end of Bedford Basin, via Magazine Hill. As we approached Shore Drive, visibility worsened and mist and drizzle began to pose serious problems for lenses. A passerby informed us that we had missed sighting an owl prone to frequent both sides of the Magazine Hill road.

Our arrival at Fish Hatchery Park brought renewed excitement. Amongst a large flock of mixed ducks were two Tufted Ducks that persisted in diving for tidbits more often than we might have wished. We had to wonder whether the adult and immature females were a Greater and a Lesser Scaup, Common Merganser and Common Goldeneye. All were scouting for food at the mouth of the Sackville River.

By shank's mare we proceeded to the residential sections of Shore Drive in hopes of spotting a Cardinal and a Yellow-breasted Chat at a particular private feeding station. No luck! But, farther along the street, a slight movement in a bramble hedge brought us to a quick halt. Five or six feet ahead perched a beautiful Hermit Thrush (the highlight of our day). It posed momentarily before moving once again into the brambles.

At this point most people said farewell, but a few hardy souls pressed on to the Mill Cove treatment plant where several delightful Barrow's Goldeneye were seen. Following a lunch at Tim Horton's the remaining strollers made the final traditional sewer stroll stops. A Lesser Black-backed Gull was spotted at the Fairview Container Terminal. After visits to Black Rock Beach and several points south, the tour ended on a happy note, when at Herring Cove, two Dovekie bid our party close of day.

Ever deteriorating visibility and general weather conditions, which shortened the day a good two hours, certainly influenced the disappointing number of land bird sightings. Even so, recalling the Bluejays, Chickadees, Crows, Snow Bunting, Goldfinches, House Sparrow, Song, White-throated and Tree Sparrows, Northern Mockingbird, Golden and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Juncos, Rock Doves and Downy Woodpecker, together with the birds mentioned earlier, reminds us how very pleased we were with our day.

Next up, Sewer Stroll II on February 11!

Elaine Black

#### February 12, 1995 - Halifax/Dartmouth Sewer Stroll #2

A forecast of snow for Saturday, Feb. 11 postponed the stroll by one day. A smaller group of nine met Sunday at Hartlen's Point at 8:00 a.m. The three degree temperature was dropping rapidly- going down by another ten degrees within three hours.

The winds were strong from the northwest. So strong in fact that the birds had trouble negotiating the gusts and the whitecaps.

One of the first birds sighted was a Bald Eagle flying low over the land at Hartlen's Point. We were reminded that 25 to 30 years ago this bird would have been a very rare sighting indeed.

From Hartlen's Point through Eastern Passage and two lookoff spots in Dartmouth, we saw Common Goldeneye; Oldsquaw; Greater Scaup; Thick-billed Murre; Iceland, Black-backed, Black-headed, and Ring-billed Gulls; and a nice little group of Lesser and Greater Scaup bobbing together in the waves.

It is such a pleasure to approach Sullivan's Pond in Dartmouth. Hundreds of water birds make their winter home there. There is always much vocalizing and scrapping among the residents. We always look forward to the unexpected and once again we were rewarded. On shore, the Wood Duck preened its feathers while several American Wigeons moved gracefully about looking for a tidbit or two.

So many birds gather at the pond that even an unusual species can be hard to spot although it is literally right there before one's eyes. This was true of the newest resident seen flashing through the crowd--a female Hooded Merganser. After several dives, she pulled up on shore to rest and to sun herself on a handy pile of straw. A beautiful pair of Gadwall tried to obscure themselves in the crowd as well. On the previous stroll, we reported an immature male Eurasian Wigeon. He has wintered nicely with one noticeable change: he has grown up! His lovely reddish head and buff forehead now are clearly visible as he rests and preens.

From Sullivan's Pond to Tuft's Cove. Here we saw Barrow's Goldeneye at some distance and, closer up, Greater Scaup and Common Merganser. The move to Fish Hatchery Park and the Shore Drive area of Bedford was welcome both for the more sheltered locations and for anticipated sightings of land birds. Our wish for more success than previously experienced in spotting a Cardinal was granted. A stroller's Screech Owl call brought him out into low thickets. The property owner let us trespass and several viewings ensued before this Cardinal (the first ever seen on a sewer stroll!) flew off. Golden-crowned Kinglets were abundant, along with Brown Creeper, Chickadees, and Goldfinches.

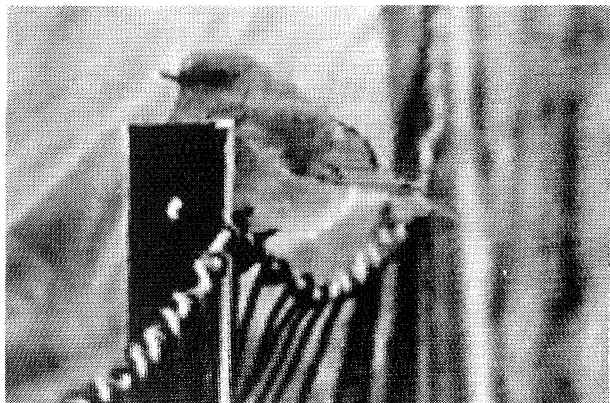
As we neared the mouth of the Sackville River, we were greeted by the usual assortment of ducks and mallards. But, we were totally unprepared for what came next. There before our incredulous eyes was a male Mandarin Duck among his relatively nondescript companions. Clearly he had escaped from some safe haven. His colouring was dazzling: purple, pink, black, white, and tan- all in iridescent shades against the dark hue of the water.

From the river's mouth to points southeast along the Bedford Basin and Halifax Harbour, we added five species to our list: Dovekie, Robin, Cedar Waxwing, Boreal Chickadee, and White-throated Sparrow. Fifty species (25 land and 25 water) were identified in all, not counting the Mandarin Duck. We had a great time, and we thank our leader, Fulton Lavender.

Elaine Black



This errant Grasshopper Sparrow appeared in early January on Sable Island, where it was photographed by Zoe Lucas on January 5.



This second of two Mountain Bluebirds on Sable Island was videotaped there by Tom Wood on February 2.

## P R O F I L E.....

## WENDIE TAY



Born and brought up in Woodside, N.S. (now part of Dartmouth), Wendie and her family were always interested in birds and wildlife but the Bird Identification course presented by Roger Pocklington in 1972 converted her into a devoted birder: walks became bird walks; trips began to centre around birding and binoculars became a part of outdoor attire. Even trips to Windsor, Ontario, the home of husband Karl's parents became an excuse for trips to Point Pelee when family duties allowed.

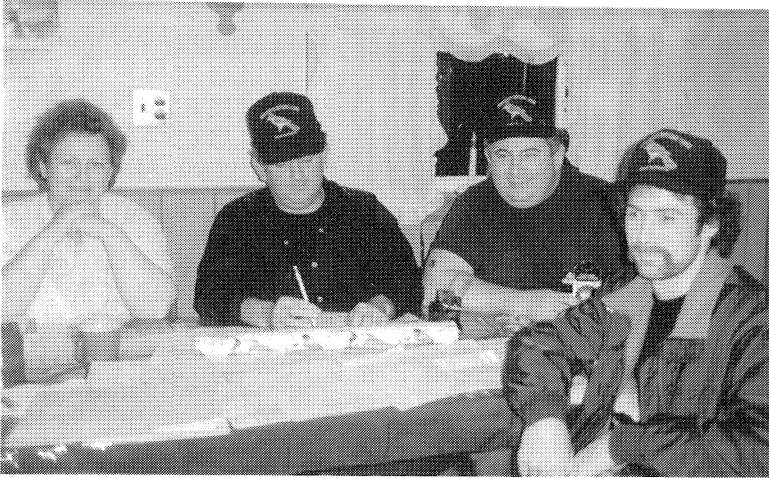
Much of Wendie's and Karl's birding is done at "Swallow Hollow", their cottage at Mooseland, which they suggest should be renamed Warblerland, for warblers outnumber moose by about 3000 to one. The original Swallow Hollow has been replaced by Swallow Hollow II, and the name is still appropriate. The area is rich in birds, being in the midst of great tracts of boreal forest. Wendie, Karl and their two children, Derek and Julie, also bird from one end of Nova Scotia to the other, although the favourite walk is still a nine kilometer trip down the Tangier River with no form of human habitation to be found. The beaches of the Eastern Shore also offer excellent birding, being relatively unspoiled and insulated.

Wendie has recently retired from the Victoria General Hospital, where she worked as a supervisory laboratory technologist. From our point of view, however, her *real claim* to fame is that she has taken over the painstaking and taxing job of Records Editor for **Nova Scotia Birds**.

Welcome aboard, Wendie.

## THE SOUTHWEST NOVAS

A new Bird Club has arisen in the province, the "South Western Nova Scotia Bird Watchers". Joan Czapalay writes of them, "What a great time we have had this year. We have no dues, officers, meetings or rules but we do get together often, and we do share what we find. We have little contests among ourselves; "who got the first \_\_\_\_\_ this year?" Joan sent us two photographs of the club members. The first shows them planning the 1993-94 Christmas Count and the second a group ready for spring birding in June 1994.



South Western Nova Scotia Bird Watchers from left Sandra Nickerson, Murray Newell, Johnny Nickerson, Wilfred Atwood, Jr. (Skipper), taken by Joan Czapalay at Sandra and Johnny's house.



From Left- Joe Waybret, Terry Crowell, Murray Newell, Joan Czapalay.  
Photo- Joan Czapalay.

## HOW TO PHOTOGRAPH BIRDS

Fred Greene

### PART I

Since building a bird blind in 1990 I have enjoyed the incredible experience of observing and photographing birds at close range. With my photographic record I can clearly bring back memories of each occasion at the blind and continue to enjoy that experience over and over again. It is also great fun to share my experiences with others and to encourage them to participate in the art of photography.

#### Choosing a Camera:

One of the biggest decisions for the beginning photographer is choosing the "right" camera. A "single lens reflex" camera, one that enables you to view your subject directly through the camera lens, will allow you to change lenses, attach it to a tripod and place threaded filters on the lenses. (A depth of field preview button is also useful). Such a camera will allow you to use other lenses and equipment as you learn to make photographs.

Buy a camera manufactured by one of the top makers. Get assurances before making your purchase that the camera may be serviced and parts will be available in the future.



"Bald Eagle No. 1" Printed from a colour slide

### Beware of the Fully Automated Camera:

Over the past few years camera manufacturers have presented the first time camera buyer with a series of easy-to-use "fully automatic" cameras. The buyer may find however, that he/she may be restricted and therefore disappointed with what the automatic can or cannot do. "Automatic" cameras will take quite satisfactory pictures using print films under "average" conditions. The biggest drawback of the fully automatic camera is that the film speed is also set automatically making it incapable of exposing color slide film satisfactorily!

Winter photography creates very real problems especially for the "fully automatic" camera. Camera meters read all tones as if they were reflecting a tone of 18% gray (also called "neutral gray"). Snow is not neutral gray and if you cannot adjust your camera to compensate, it will underexpose and render the snow as a tone of gray, as the meter assumes (incorrectly) that it is reading neutral gray reflected light.

With a manually adjusted camera the snow can be compensated for by opening the aperture or slowing the speed of the shutter. Brightly lit "fresh" snow will require up to 2 stops more exposure than your camera meter indicates! So make certain that the camera you buy has a manual film speed setting, to allow exposure meter calibration and manual exposure settings of the aperture and shutter (or at least an override option in its automatic mode for exposure compensation and the "bracketing" of exposures).

### Consider a Good Used Camera:

You might consider a good used camera, and not just for price, as many of the lower and middle priced models currently do not have some of the features such as depth of focus preview button, manual film speed setting, flash sync. connection for external flash, etc. These once standard features are now only found on the top of the line or "professional models"!

### Camera Service and Repair:

Halifax is fortunate to have a good camera repair shop. I have used and can recommend the Camera Repair Centre. They can test and adjust the shutter, calibrate the meter, clean, service, and repair many models of cameras.

### Lenses for Bird Photography:

To photograph birds a lens of 200 mm (4 X the magnification of a normal lens) is considered minimal. My main lens is a 300mm f 2:8, but I always have my 80-200 mm zoom handy. I frequently use a 2 X tele-converter that "doubles" the focal length of the lens. Adding a tele-converter will however "slow" your lens by 2 f stops. A 2X tele-converter will make a 200mm f 2:8 lens into a 400mm f 5.6 lens, a 100-200mm f4 zoom lens into a 200-400 f 8 zoom lens, etc.

Used with a 200mm or longer lens, assuming that both optics are compatible and of good quality, the combination will make a very acceptable "bird lens".

### An Inexpensive "Alternative" Lens:

An inexpensive alternative to a "normal" telephoto lens is a catadioptric (or mirror) lens. They are easy to carry as they are very short in overall length. The 500mm is the most popular "cat" lens. They have two possible drawbacks; you may or may not like the effect of out-of-focus highlights that may appear as tiny circles, or the look of out-of-focus tree branches in the background. They have a pre-set f stop, usually f 8, which is rather "slow". The very cheap ones have problems with sharpness and color; however, I have taken award winning photographs with a very inexpensive "cat" lens. I have had good results using a 500mm "Tamron" mirror lens.

### Tripod:

You do not need a tripod "as heavy as a truck jack", but you do need one that will extend to a comfortable height and hold your camera and long lens steady. A tripod is considered to be a nuisance by the novice photographer, but it serves an even more important function than "just holding your camera steady". It slows you down and allows you to hold the same view so you can study the composition and tones for proper metering.



Rule for Minimum Shutter Speeds:

Remember that "the longer the lens the more noticeable even the slightest camera movement". The rule for minimum shutter speeds for hand holding the camera is: the shutter speed must, at least, match the focal length of the lens. That is, 50mm lens=1/60 sec., 100mm lens= 1/125 sec., 200mm lens= 1/250, etc.

Focusing:

As the lens gets longer the "depth of focus" becomes shallower and therefore increasingly important to focus carefully. Always try to focus on the eye of the bird.

Depth of focus:

A depth of focus preview button is very important to the serious photographer. Using a single lens reflex camera you view your subject through the lens with the aperture fully open for easy focusing. If the lens is a 300mm f 4 with a 2 X tele-converter attached, what you see through your viewfinder, at near distance, will be only sharp for inches! To get acceptable depth of focus you may need to "stop down" the lens. When the lens is set at this larger aperture number you must press the depth of field button to see the depth of focus, and its effect on the background. This is a very important part of creative photography. Making photographs, not just taking pictures!

Remember that "depth of focus" carries 1/3 the distance in front of and 2/3 the distance behind the point of focus on your subject. This will become very important with the shallow "depth of focus" of a "long lens"!

Composition:

Take the shot of the bird for the record, before it takes flight, then take the time to consider the best way to place your subject in your viewfinder for the most pleasing composition. Try to move your subject out of the center of the photograph and if it is directional give it more room on the side that it is facing.

Get closer:

Even with the long lens, once you have taken the record shot, try to move in close. I have found that I can get closer to most wildlife subjects by moving slowly and indirectly and by not looking directly at the subject.

Tips for Photographing in Very Cold Weather:

Keep a second set of fresh camera batteries in a warm inside pocket.

Carry your camera inside an outer jacket (do not let it get too warm as the lens may fog).

When ready to take a photograph keep the battery area covered with your gloved hand.

When your camera has been exposed for some time to bitterly cold weather, advance or rewind the film slowly as film becomes temporarily brittle in extreme cold.

Both manual and electronic shutters tend to slow down as your camera becomes very cold, and you should "bracket" to underexpose slightly for best results.

To be Continued:

In the July issue of "Nova Scotia Birds" the following topics will be discussed: What film to use, Calibrate your camera meter to shoot slide film, Check the sensitivity of your meter, accurate metering, Print film versus slide film, Battery tips, Tips on print film processing labs.

Fred Greene APSA, AFIAP, has been the "Photographer of the Year" at the Photographic Guild of Nova Scotia on eight occasions. He has lectured and judged international exhibitions in Canada, USA and the U.K. He has received more than 700 international awards for his photography.

For information on the Photographic Guild of Nova Scotia Contact:

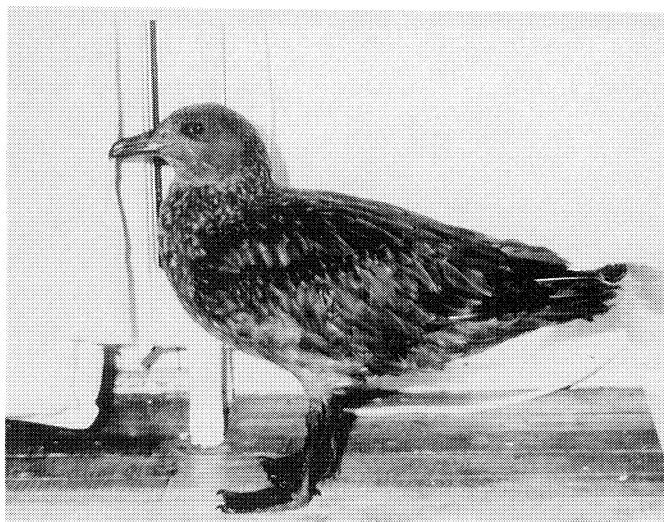
Ruby Brown, Treasurer  
Photographic Guild of Nova Scotia  
9 Story Court  
Bedford, Nova Scotia  
B4A 3R8  
Phone (902) 835-6989

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The Editor, *Nova Scotia Birds*:

I just have to comment on *Living Island VIII*, in the July 1994 issue. Like another lady, Dorothy Wordsworth, she describes the beauty of nature's sights and sounds which touches that mysterious something in all of us. I almost passed over the item, but fortunately picked up the column during the holidays. Thank you Evelyn.

Walter E. MacKinnon.



This Great Skua was found disabled with an injured wing on the beach of Sable Island in early January. With rest and good food from Zoe Lucas, it was in condition to be released there in February.

PROJECT HUMMERTIME WANTS YOU!

Some folks in Ontario are monitoring the spring arrival (and fall departure) dates of the Ruby-throated Hummingbird across its range in North America. This project has been underway for several years now. They have a fair number of volunteer observers in Ontario and Quebec and some of the states around the Great Lakes, but so far nobody in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

All you have to do is record the date when you see the first male and female (not necessarily together) Ruby-throats at your feeders. Pass along this information to: Hummertime, c/o Queen's University Biology Station, Box 31, R. R. 1 Elgin, Ontario, K0G 1E0. Should you wish to call in the information, the number is (613) 359-6423.

All participants in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island will eventually receive a free newsletter detailing results of the 1995 spring migration.

## HERMIT WARBLER

A First on a Christmas Count for Canada  
J. Shirley Cohrs

If any reader is expecting an erudite scientific treatise here he will be disappointed. Detailed descriptions of the bird, theories and statistics can be found elsewhere. This is an account of an exciting experience enjoyed by five friends taking part in a Nova Scotia Christmas Count in the country.

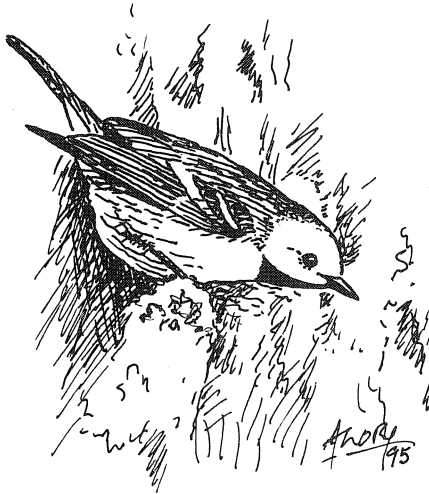
December 29, 1994, was the day of Sylvia Fullerton's Broad Cove Count and my husband John and I had Don and Joyce Purchase and Dave Currie as guests at our Green Bay cottage.

On our return from the morning's activities, our group, which had been out in three parties since shortly after dawn, sat down to eat our ham sandwiches and drink our coffee, while getting the composite list sorted out. On glancing up, I noticed a small passerine flying into the tree in front of the window, which we were all facing.

"There's a bird in the tree--probably another chickadee", I said, returning to my paper work.

There wasn't much of a reaction from anyone else and things might have rested there, had not John idly picked up my binoculars from amongst the coffee cups and trained them on the bird.

"It's not a chickadee", he said quietly, "it's got a yellow face."



Sandwiches flew in every direction as five birders headed for the door, donning whatever outer clothing came quickly to hand. By this time the bird had flown to another spruce tree and all were able to see it, although only John and I and Dave got a reasonably good look as it was very high up and in a thick part of the spruce. It then flew off to some distance away and we were unable to locate it.

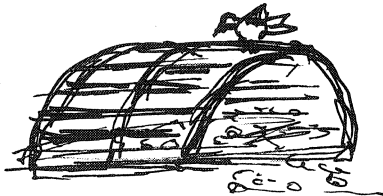
Of course, on seeing a warbler in Nova Scotia with a yellow face and black bib, one immediately thinks, 'Black-throated Green', but the bird seemed wrong for that species. The face had no line through the yellow and the face patch was a different shape and a paler colour. The black bib was wrong too, being short and cut off like that of a chickadee. Humph! Could it **possibly** be a Hermit Warbler? The three of us who had had the best looks thought so. On looking up the Hermit Warblers, we were not happy to read that, at this time of year, Hermit Warblers are found in southern Mexico and Central America!

We returned, somewhat stunned, to pick our sandwiches off the floor and finish lunch. We contemplated a thorough search for the bird. However, mindful of the fact that Christmas Counts are not about rarities or summer hangers-on but are designed to census winter populations, we dutifully reorganized ourselves into two parties for the afternoon.

When Dave and I returned about 3:00 p.m., having completed our area, he decided to have a look around, while I went inside to get ready to go to Sylvia's at Broad Cove—I had to be there early, since I was bringing the punch. I decided to change into less bulky clothing and it was while I was busy doing this that Dave hammered on the window yelling, "it's here". So there was I, in the midst of our garden, with binoculars at the ready but with bare feet, no coat and, I regret to say, an undone zipper. Never mind—we had an excellent view of what was undoubtedly a male HERMIT WARBLER. John, Joyce and Purch arrived back just at the right time and were able to share the thrill.

The announcement at the count tally resulted in a deadly silence, followed by much excitement and many eyes lit up in anticipation. In the days that followed, many birders were able to see and photograph the bird, which was predictable and co-operative most of the time. I ran out of cookies early, but the tea and coffee supplies held out.

It was undoubtedly the most exciting Christmas Count in which I have ever participated and I am most thankful for two things: that so many people were able to see such a beautiful bird; and that, at the time the bird first appeared we were eating sandwiches and not hot soup!



## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

### Assessments of local bird populations--or not?

by Dennis Paulson

Talking to several people about their CBC experiences has prompted me to get on my soapbox again. It is really getting old and battered from overuse, and one of these days it will probably collapse under me, but until it does, I'll use it to my best ability.

Those of you who know all this already, don't read this message. Christmas Bird Counts were begun around the turn of the century (the 'previous' turn of the century, if anyone can conceive of that long ago), actually as an alternative to the day when hunters competed to see how many birds they could shoot in a day. Within a few decades it was realized by ornithologists that these counts provided one of the few ways by which North American nongame bird numbers could be monitored over time, at least during the winter season. By the '70s and '80s CBC numbers were being used in a big way for this purpose, both for overall bird populations and for specific species. Even with the acknowledged problems with using the data, trends seemed to be apparent, and the counts were used because they were basically all we had.

During the same period, the Breeding Bird Surveys were begun, and they are our primary data source for temporal changes in bird populations on this continent in the 'breeding' season. They don't take the place of the CBCs, which gather data in very different ways for, in many cases, different bird populations.

Even when I was a kid I detected a dichotomy in viewpoints about CBCs. I was trained by several 'serious' birders in southern Florida, who understood the value of the counts to our understanding of birds and who taught me to be as rigorous as I could in counting and estimating numbers and in trying to work the same areas consistently from year to year. The whole point of the count was to get as accurate an assessment as we could of local bird populations. Of course everyone was excited when a rare species was found, and--would you doubt it--there was also a competitive aspect ("Loop Road beat Miami for the first time this year"). My first encounter with a really different viewpoint came when I went on the Cocoa, Florida, count (#1 in the country for species for some years) and was introduced to the "who gives a damn how many birds there are, as long as we find all the species" viewpoint. This shocked my tender young ears (the concept, not the language), another of life's small and large disillusionments as I grew older.

From what I have heard recently, it sounds as if the second group has stolen the show. People run from place to place, where some 'good bird' is expected to be, counting desultorily if at all as they go. They move into others' count areas during the day just to check them out for rarities, rather than staying in their own and trying to find every individual bird they can. I've heard comments like "we just estimated numbers at the end of the day", and "three different parties were assigned that species as a goal, told by the count compiler 'don't come back without it'", and "our party leader told us not to waste time counting song sparrows, we still had a Lincoln's Sparrow to find" (honestly, this is true).

Several thoughts emerge from this. First, I hope everyone in Tweeterland (and please tell your birding friends) is aware that CBCs are the 'only' ongoing population estimates we have for many North American birds (especially the many species that breed primarily north of the Breeding Bird Survey routes). The less dependable they are from year to year, the less of value they tell us. CBCs furnish an opportunity for every birder to contribute to gathering information about one of the most important questions about each bird species at this point in time: is its population increasing, decreasing, or stable? We have to know this information to be able to see problems arising in their early stages and to manage those in their later stages.

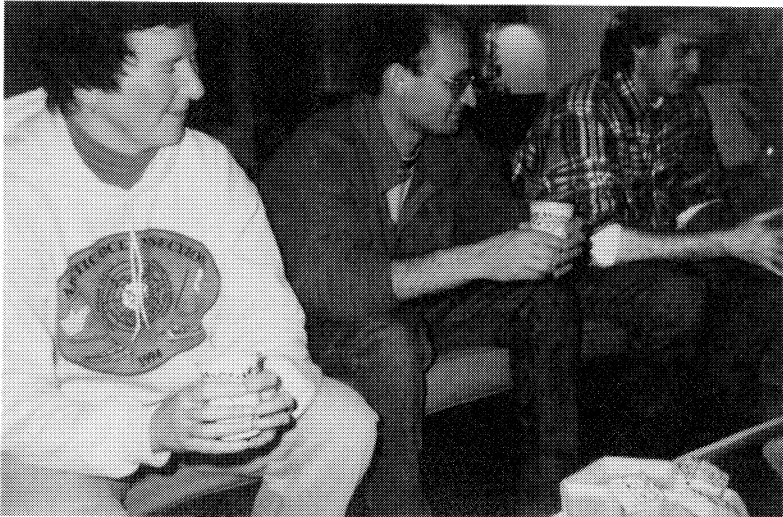
You have heard about the book **Where Have all the Birds Gone?** by John Terborgh in this forum. One of his main points in the book is how easy it is for amateurs to contribute to knowledge about birds to serve the very straightforward goal of

PRESERVING THEM. I can do no better than to quote him (p. 11): "Although basically an organized competition and social event for birdwatchers, the ostensible purpose of the counts is to provide a record of winter bird populations." He doesn't say much about that, although he and others have used these data at great length.

Other questions come to mind, spinoffs from the idea that to most counters the Christmas Bird Count is somehow akin to the Super Bowl. Why is it so important that something be a competitive sport to generate so much interest and enthusiasm? Why couldn't that much interest and enthusiasm be merely a response to knowing that what we are doing is important in conserving our planet's fellow inhabitants?

Again, I know many of you out there didn't need to read this (preaching to the converted). I'd be interested in hearing rationalizations of why sports/competitiveness will get people out of bed in the middle of the night to slog across mudflats in the cold wind and rain, when knowing they are contributing to an environmental cause won't. Any other constructive comments are appreciated.

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Gillian Elliott, Dave Currie and Andrew Boyne listening to the compilation at the Halifax West Christmas Count, Dec. 18, 1994.

Photo Ruth Ballem

## SPELLCHECK BIRDS

Typographical errors are, and always will be a hazard of most publications. The emergence of 'spellcheck' should have prevented a lot of mistakes--but it can actually add to problems. Should a mistake constitute another REAL word the spellcheck is useless--passes it regardless. This, especially in a birding journal can result in some mind-boggling effects:

Yellow-bullied Flycatcher--the shyest of the flycatcher family

Lusty Blackbird--the bird with seventeen nests

Fish Crew--perched on a scallop dragger

Hell's Vireo--the motorcycling bird

Black Scooter--that small dark seabird, frantically swimming in large circles

Beery--heard singing outside the pub

Black-bellied Lovers--no comment!

Red-eyed Videos--found late at night

Wooded Merganser--the Pinoccio of the avian family

Hood Duck--not to be confused with...the gangster species

Slack-throated Blue Warblers--elderly birds with blue rinses that sing a lot

Bellow-throated Warbler--the Wagnerian of the bird world

Red Knob--bird with a bad cold

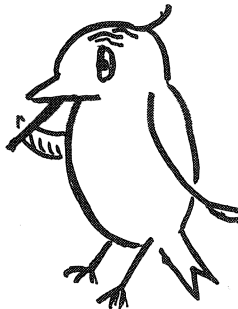
Glue-winged Teal--ideal candidate for a tethered decoy

Warm-eating Warbler--only feeds during the summer months

Tainted Bunting--a bird of poor morals

Yellow-hosed Albatross--the Malvolio of the bird world

DOES ANYONE HAVE ANY MORE?



PIPING PLOVER GUARDIAN PROGRAM

The Piping Plover Guardian Program has returned from hibernation, alive and well! We are currently looking for volunteers to help save the Piper in Nova Scotia and the rest of Atlantic Canada.

Plovers nest on the Eastern, South and Northern shores of NS, as well as in PEI, NB and Nfld.

We especially need volunteers to set up in Shelburne County, as we have not, so far, been active in that area.

Perhaps you have a cottage near a Plover beach? Or just like to visit beaches in NS?

If you can give us a minimum of 20 hours, we will give you an indenifying T-shirt and hat, and everything you need to help educate the public about one of Canada's Endangered Species.

Please call Cathy Fulton-Strugnell at 835-8289, or write to us, care of Halifax Field Naturalists, C/O NSM, 1747 Summer St. Halifax, N.S. B3H 3A6

Thankyou

The Piping Plover Guardian Program would like to thank the NS Bird Society for the opportunity to spread the word, at the recent Boat Show. We spoke with several interested people, and recruited a few new volunteers. Thank you very much!  
PPGP

FOURTH ANNUAL  
NORTH AMERICAN MIGRATION COUNT (N.A.M.C.)  
SATURDAY, 13 May 1995

Have you ever wondered: "What is the **SHAPE** of migration, particularly of Songbirds? By what paths do Neotropical migrants move from Central and South America to their breeding grounds?"

Many of you have participated in Christmas Bird Counts. The rules are simple. Spend a day in the field counting birds in a specified area and keep track of hours and kilometres on foot, car, boat, feeder watching. The "North American Migration Count" is like the Christmas Bird Count but with a few twists. The area for any one count is not a 15 mile diameter circle, but an entire county. The big twist is the timing: unlike Christmas Bird Counts, which are spread over several weeks, this count is done on just a Single Day.

The choice of the second Saturday in May has been made to try to find the peaks of movement of neotropical species while they are still where most of the birders are. It will not peak everywhere; the Northern States of USA and Canada will be getting the first glimmer of spring and the Deep South will be in early breeding season, but the overall goal is of importance to everyone.

The main goals are to obtain information on the abundance and distribution of each species and a picture of the progress of Spring Migration, while having fun birding. There are NO FEES for Participants.

Anyone interested in participating either as a bird counter, or as a 'County' Co-ordinator, in Nova Scotia, on this date, please contact  
Judy Tufts, Tel: 1-902-542-7800 or P.O.Box 1313, Wolfville, N.S. B0P 1X0



## THE HISTORIC HANTS COUNTY FIELD TRIP

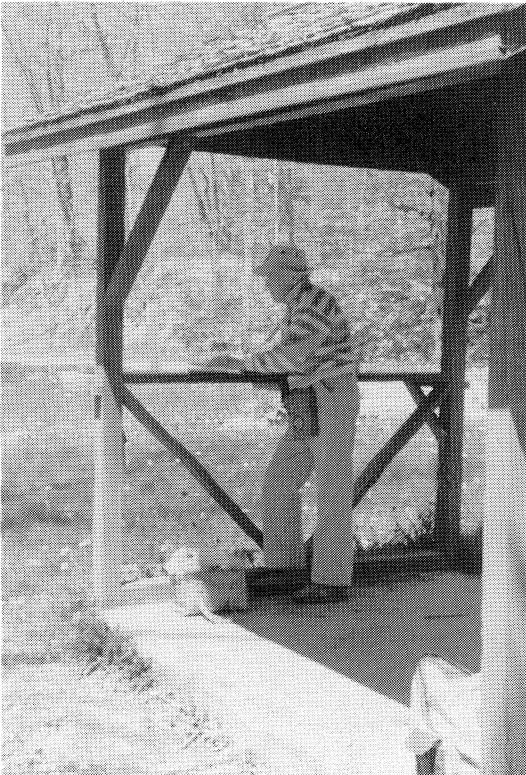
Shirley Cohrs with Margaret Clark

In the early days of the Bird Society, few field trips were held--just the occasional outing. One of the first of these was to the Mount Uniacke area of Hants County. It proved very successful and in the late 1960s, because of CRK (Charlie) Allen's interest in the area around the Meander River, both for fishing and for birding, it seemed natural that he would lead an annual trip to this part of the province. The trip became a tradition--the "Hants County Field Trip", held on the last Saturday in May. It is our oldest continuously held trip.

These early outings were during the halcyon days of birding in Nova Scotia. Birds were abundant and at every stop birdsong was difficult to distinguish, there was such a cacophony. All the warblers were represented according to habitat; Winter Wrens gave forth from all wren-like territory, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were common, while flycatchers 'wee-be-od' and 'chebk-ed' all over the place. I remember seeing my first Black-throated Blue Warbler, my first Red-eyed Vireo and my first Ovenbird within twenty minutes in a beautiful stand of beech. Before entering this road, CRKA told us what we might expect to see...and we did!

In addition to all the passerine areas visited, we stopped at a large pond where there was always a snipe, some Black and other ducks, Yellow Warblers around the edges, and Bobolinks singing in the fields across the road.

Lunch was at Smiley's Provincial Park, where invariably, a Bittern flew over during the stop and White-breasted Nuthatches and Black-throated Blue Warblers were seen in the tall trees.



Margaret getting the list up to date at Smiley's, 1994.

-Photo-Margaret Slatkin

After lunch came a dykeland stop, where we saw Willets, more ducks, Yellowlegs and Spotted Sandpipers, and once, a flurry of excitement when a RCMP cruiser stopped to enquire if anyone was drowning! Another area where a stream (most likely another oxbow of the well-named Meander) ran under a bridge over shallow stones provided us with a singing Waterthrush and a Spotted Sandpiper for sure, as well as Cedar Waxwings.

In 1975, CRKA retired to Tusket and lucky we were to have Margaret Clark take over the leadership. Margaret was brought up in the village of St. Croix and at that time her mother still lived in the charming old house there.

For some time the trip continued along the same routes and after the day out, we repaired to the St. Croix home for an 'Old Fashioned Country Saturday Night Supper' of scalloped potatoes, baked beans, stewed rhubarb from the garden, topped off with home-made cake. These companionable suppers concluded with a walk to a field nearby, behind the house, where we usually found a covey of Grey Partridge to add to the list. Some of us kept lists of wildflowers as well as birds, for although primarily a birding trip, late May in Hants County is a fine time for viewing flowers. Painted Trilliums, Bloodroot (if the weather has been warm) Yellow Violets, Bluets and many better-known species are in flower in their appropriate habitats.

In the last decade the route has changed drastically, due to development of the area. There has been much house-building and the closure of some areas to the public. Many trees have gone, including the beech grove. Margaret has been hard put to find new and interesting areas. That she has been successful will be bourne out by the many participants of the last few years who continue to thoroughly enjoy the experience.



Walking amongst the birds and the wildflowers in 1994. Brad Amirault, Rich Peckham, Margaret, and Ethel Crathorne

--Photo by Margaret Slatkin

Some statistics:

- The fewest number of participants was in 1983, when Margaret, Margaret Slatkin, John and Shirley Cohrs covered the route in pouring rain.
- The largest number was in 1990, when forty-six turned out, possibly because it was the first sunny day in the entire month. (It is interesting to note that the four in 1983 counted 74 species and the forty-six in 1990 had 76!)
- Twenty-one species have been seen in every year from 1973-1994, including seven species of warblers.
- the average number of species is 71.7; the lowest was 43 in 1973; the highest was 83 in 1978, 1980, 1985. (There were days of rain and freezing temperatures, fog, wind and days of 80° F with strong sunshine--typical of Nova Scotia in May!)

Some of Margaret's highlights over the years include:

- Golfinches, Purple Finches and Indigo Buntings, feeding together at Century Farm in 1980.
- Two male Scarlet Tanagers singing on territory (alas, probably in vain) at two stops in 1984.
- Two Pileated Woodpeckers in 1989.
- a Great-crested Flycatcher in 1994.

I hope that the Hants County Trip will go on for a long time to come. It is always a joy to bird Hants County and welcome back our spring migrants. Some of the old haunts may have disappeared but new ones have been found; Smiley's is still welcoming and the company is always superb.



The NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY'S  
"NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS"

has been accepted for inclusion in the ZOOLOGICAL RECORD, an index to the world's zoological literature published since 1864.

The Zoological Record is a joint publication of BIOSIS, a non-profit organization supported by the biological community, and the Zoological Society of London (England). It covers all aspects of the natural biology of animals and is distributed worldwide as a printed bibliography, an online service now on CD ROM. Nova Scotia Birds is also sited in the companion product Zoological Record Serial Source.

## RECORDING A NOVA SCOTIA SAGE SPARROW

by Bernard Forsythe  
Wolfville, N.S.

Every birdwatcher has experienced the thrill of seeing a new bird for the first time. Details of some sightings will remain fresh for years. Who could forget their first eye level view of the flaming orange throat of a male Blackburnian Warbler or the flying skill of a Raven playing with a Red-tailed Hawk in a thermal updraft. Birds that require some effort will be special. It took two trips to Tatamagouche in February of 1992 for me to finally meet an owl I had long wanted, the northern Hawk-owl.

Finding a bird never before reported from a large geographical area is an experience that is even rarer. Many birdwatchers will not hit this jackpot in a lifetime of looking. My payoff came on November 13, 1994. The early morning was sunny and warm so Sandra and I decided to spend the day on Brier Island. It was to be a casual visit of combined sightseeing and birdwatching. By late morning we were driving slowly along the road to the west light. As my van passed the dry barren ditch between the two cemeteries a small bird flushed but returned to the ditch and began feeding before I was able to park the van. At the first look I knew this was a good one. It was a sparrow but certainly not one with which I was familiar.

The temptation was great to rush to the field guides but what if the bird flew out of sight. From somewhere came, "Calm down Forsythe, do this right or you will goof up on one of the best birds you will ever find." The little voice continued, "Start taking notes of what you see." The sparrow's almost frantic feeding was only interrupted as vehicles passed by. It would fly from the ditch but return within seconds to continue feeding. Its movements were peculiar for a sparrow. The tail was in almost constant motion, back and forth, up and down. When I got too close, the tail would cock up almost wren-like as the sparrow ran a short distance. It fed along the ditch unconcerned, while I stood above it on the side of the road.

It was a pale looking sparrow with a grey head. The back and wings were light greyish brown with streaking on the back and the tail was much darker. Its white eye ring and broad white mustache stood out even without optical aide but the white lore above and ahead of the eye was not as bright. A dark line separated the mustache from the white throat. Underparts were white with streaking on the sides. There was a dark central breast spot that looked like a bar or a smudge depending on the viewing angle.

A half hour had now passed and the voice returned, "Take a photograph." Luckily I had my 300 m.m. lens with me. Because the sparrow was so active, it was hard to get a good pose so I took several shots, hoping for at least one good one. Confident that I now had material to back up my sighting I went to my National Geographic Field Guide. I still can hardly believe what I found. It was a Sage Sparrow, a bird not previously recorded in Eastern Canada. Sage Sparrows live in the western United States from Washington and Colorado south to Northern Mexico and Texas and are not prone to wander great distances.

It was now past lunch time so we had our sandwiches in the van with a Sage Sparrow feeding in the ditch beside us. More than a hour had passed by and a thought came to mind, "What if my photos don't turn out? I will need another birder to back me up on this one." Several trips were made around the island roads but on this day it was easier to find a Sage Sparrow on Brier Island than another birdwatcher. I need not have worried as my slides clearly show an adult plumaged Sage Sparrow. A camera is a great asset when cashing in on such an unlikely bird for Nova Scotia. It is encouraging to know there will always be new birds to be found, so everyone keep looking and happy birding. Thanks to Richard Stern and Ian McLaren for getting word of the find out to the birding world.

## BREEDING BIRD SURVEYS

Counting birds as a duty, as a pastime, or as a habit.

A.J. (Tony) Erskine

At a meeting in Ohio 30 years ago, Chandler Robbins asked me if enough people in the Maritimes could identify birds by song to cover one survey route in each degree-block of latitude/longitude. Sorting out in my mind how many surveys this meant, and how much travel it might entail, took me a couple of minutes, and I replied "Yes. Northern New Brunswick will be difficult, but I think we can do it". And we did. Routes were done the first year (1966) in every sampling-block except one, and two routes in half of them, and Maritimes coverage exceeded 40 routes in each of the next ten years, a standard of continuous coverage never elsewhere in Canada. There are still more long-term BBS observers here than even in Ontario, which has far more birders to draw on. Three of the eager people who jumped on our BBS bandwagon in 1966 will reach their 30th year in 1995, Jim Wilson and David Christie having covered the Hampton and Penobsquis routes each year since.

In recent years, BBS coverage has slipped a bit. Though our veterans continue to survey their routes year by year, we've recruited few others- and many of our newer people have been of the same generation as the veterans. Few people continued past age 70, because of failing hearing or waning energy; I had to give up before I turned 60. Thirty years is a long time in anyone's life, and most of us argue that we're still effective some time after we really know better. We need more new people in the BBS, even if we have to train them specially for the game. Getting them started is more than half the battle, but it needn't be an ordeal for them if they aren't responsible for the results first time around. I still remember my "first-time jitters", driving from stop to stop all tensed-up with worries over stopping in the right places, getting there as soon as possible, being able to recognize all those songs when I heard them, and wondering if the weather was going to let me down. All BBS people have their stories of the times things didn't work out, as well as those that did. But we wouldn't have missed those adventures for anything.

To ensure that BBS coverage continues after us, we need to share our experiences with newcomers. Each veteran observer should take along someone else who might, in the future and when necessary, take over that route, after they've had a chance to experience the excitement of this pastime. Getting a newcomer started on a route that hasn't been done recently takes more organizing. Going along with them on their first try may be enough, giving encouragement as well as assistance- but remember not to point out birds that observer hasn't yet registered. I still go along on BBS routes, even though I can't do the survey myself. It's a habit I'm not trying to kick.

Now of course the BBS was not set up just to be a fun thing. We've all heard doomsayers expounding declines of birds in general or of some particular group, back at least to the days of **Silent Spring** (Rachel Carson, 1962). In the last five years, writing scientific papers using the BBS to show declines, especially in "neotropical migrants", has become a growth industry. If the statisticians could agree on how best to analyse BBS results, the population biologists' interpretations might agree more often. When analyses of the same data-set, by only slightly different statistical methods, show either an increase or a decrease depending on which method is used, one is left with little confidence in subsequent interpretations. I'm not arguing that no birds have declined, but we still aren't sure which species have changed and by how much. Nevertheless, all analyses depend on survey data, and the longer that BBS routes are surveyed by the same capable observers, the more likely we are to detect trends that are not just statistical artifacts. In the first years of the BBS, I remarked that we probably could assess trends just as accurately by asking a dozen "experts" in each region each year to rank each species as "large or small increase, no change, small or large decrease", but that the statistical baffle used in analysing the BBS results might be more likely to convince a bureaucrat or politician who didn't know a Blue Jay from a Cardinal (except by their baseball uniforms). We still need BBS results, so doing these surveys is also a duty, to future generations who wouldn't forgive us for letting bird populations go down the tubes for not knowing they were in trouble. Keep up the good work, and spread the fun more widely. That all our duties were so enjoyable!

If you want to get involved in the BBS, and don't know anyone nearby to team up with, contact the author, at:

P.O.Box 1327, Sackville, N.B. E0A 3C0

**NOVA SCOTIA CHRISTMAS COUNTS**  
**December 17, 1994 - January 3, 1995**

Generally good weather prevailed through this year's count period, allowing for a high tally of 212,328 individual birds. Seven hundred and ninety observers (459 in the field), found 154 species of which 4 were new to the list. The all-time species list for Christmas Counts in Nova Scotia now stands at 243.

Of the new species, the **Tufted duck**, not found in Nova Scotia until 1991 and present last winter as well, was the highlight of the Yarmouth count. It breeds as close by as Iceland and with increasing regularity, a few have been finding their way to our coasts. The **Carolina wren** at Truro had been present since October and is now (Feb) well on its way to overwintering. Neither fact suggests the anxiety with which local birders awaited its appearance on Count Day. Since it is more regular at our latitudes further west (Quebec, Maine, New Brunswick) it may be that, like its ecological cousin the titmouse, it has a sensible aversion to long flights over salt water. Last year a **Nashville warbler** was recorded for the count period in Halifax and this year, at Broad Cove for the day itself. Although last Christmas one was found as nearby as Boston, it normally winters no further north than the Gulf coast of Texas. There were two **Black-throated blue warblers** seen during count period this year, one at Caledonia, Queens County and one in Dartmouth. These two males were not found on count day and although the Dartmouth bird was seen in early January, both bird's prospects for survival are bleak. In a class of its own was the **Hermit warbler**, also seen on the Broad Cove count. Having crossed the Rockies on its errant way from the Northwest, it arrived here instead of Central America and at last report (late Jan.) was still consorting with chickadees, creepers et al. at Green Bay. Its close western relatives, the Townsend's and Black-throated gray warblers have also occurred on the Nova Scotia counts, but a fourth member of the group, our commonly summering Black-throated green, has not. When it finally does show up we shall have to wonder, given the group's habit of wandering, whether it is a vagrant from Saskatchewan or a local laggard.

Among other notable sightings were two **Red-headed woodpeckers** (Hfx West, Truro), **Marsh wren** (Springville), **Gray catbird** (Cape Sable), **Yellow-throated warbler** (Glace Bay), **Rose-breasted grosbeak** (Port L'Hebert), **Grasshopper sparrow** (Economy), and **Lincoln's sparrow** (Wolfville). A **Chukar** on the Annapolis Royal count is presumably a lucky escapee from a hunting club in the area. These birds are becoming a popular gamebird being raised and released by private sportsman's clubs in the Atlantic and elsewhere.

Cape Sable's 90 species was the highest count total; the area promises to challenge the Halifax counts' long time dominance in the years ahead. Wolfville, as always, tallied by far the most birds; its 44 field observers and 80 feeder watchers counted 90,460 birds, or over 42% of the provincial total. Annapolis Royal made a big effort this year (11,256 birds, 66 species, 56 feeder watchers); its seabird totals are especially noteworthy.

The addition of a new species is always cause for celebration, or at least satisfaction, at the end of a count day that may not otherwise have been especially productive. The following list contains both common birds and rarities and may serve as an introduction to counts one doesn't follow closely.

**SPECIES ADDED THIS YEAR TO COUNTS THAT HAVE BEEN HELD FOR AT LEAST 10 YEARS**

Antigonish	-Ring-necked pheasant -Pine warbler -Dickcissel
Brier Island	-Ruffed grouse
Broad Cove	-Nashville warbler -Hermit warbler
Cheticamp	-Bonaparte's gull -Northern mockingbird
Economy	-Ring-necked pheasant -Belted kingfisher -Grasshopper sparrow
Eskasoni	-Ring-necked pheasant
Glace Bay	-Brant -Peregrine falcon
Margaree	-Great horned owl
Northport	-Common eider
Port L'Hebert	-Rose-breasted grosbeak
St. Peter's	-King eider
Springville	-Northern flicker
Wolfville	-Lincoln's sparrow
Yarmouth	-Tufted duck

Of the 29 counts held this year, 13 may be considered established, having been held for more than 20 years. While every count contributes to the provincial picture, a great deal can be said for going over the same ground year after year. Not surprisingly, coastal counts in the southwest can hope to find more species than those further north, especially where the sea, if not frozen, is often choked with ice. In cold climates, generally cities, great providers of shelter, sewage and a degree or two of heat, have the advantage. Halifax and Dartmouth generally lead the way, so do Boston in Massachusetts and Portland in Maine. (Although Cape Sable was our high count, a Big Day held during count period that covers parts of both Halifax Counts had a higher total; it is submitted to the Audubon Society (U.S.) as a Christmas Count.

But looked at another way, every count has its own potential; measuring one's actual success against it allows for a rough comparison with the results of other quite differently situated counts. If a species seen in ten of the last ten years, it is given a probability of 1 (10/10) and so on down to .1 (1/10). If you then add up the number of times each species has occurred in the last ten years and divide the grand total by 10, it gives the number that should be seen in an average year. As new species are added, those not seen in the most recent ten years will drop from the list, so the

overall change should be slow for an established count.

	OBS.	POT'L	ACT'L	NEW '94	PERFORM.
SPRINGVILLE	8	35	46	1	1.32
GLACE BAY	27	43	50	2	1.17
ECONOMY	10	49	56	3	1.15
WOLFVILLE	44	71	79	1	1.11
AMHERST	17	45	48	0	1.07
FT. L'HEBERT	17	73	78	1	1.06
CB HIGHLANDS	39	41	43	0	1.06
BROAD COVE	25	71	73	2	1.03
HFX WEST	26	80	82	0	1.03
YARMOUTH	10	70	67	1	.95
MARGAREE	3	28	26	1	.93
HFX EAST	16	80	56	0	.93
BRIER IS.	4	47	31	1	.66
AVERAGE					1.03

Conditions will vary widely from count to count in a given year, but it is hard to imagine that the performance of Springville (the only landlocked count on the above list) will soon be matched. Also noteworthy is how closely the average of all the counts approaches the expected norm.

#### Miscellany:

Fox sparrow joins the list of species seen in each of the past 20 years, none was dropped, and the number now stands at 89. The CBCer of the Year Award (which consists of being mentioned here) goes to Ken McKenna who got out on 5 counts!

#### NOVA SCOTIA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS 1994-1995

ADVOCATE/APPLE RIVER, Dec. 20; 7:30AM to 5:00PM. Temp. -8 to -5C. Wind NW 15-25kmph. Snow 46cm. Still water frozen, moving water partly frozen. A.M. Clear P.M. Partly cloudy. 5 field observers in 3 parties, 5 at feeders. Total party hours 21.5 (18 on foot, 3.5 by car). Total party kilometres 96 (11 on foot, 85 by car).

Great cormorant 19; American black duck 200; Common eider 4; Oldsquaw 2; Common goldeneye 4; Bufflehead 2; Red-breasted merganser 5; Bald eagle 2; Northern harrier 1; Sharp-shinned hawk 3; Northern goshawk 2; Red-tailed hawk 3; Rough-legged hawk 2; Ring-necked pheasant 2; Spruce grouse 1; Ruffed grouse 2; Herring gull 155; Great black-backed gull 1; Mourning dove 23; Great horned owl 1; Downy woodpecker 1; Hairy woodpecker 3; Gray jay 3; Blue jay 18; American crow 75; Common Raven 8; Black-capped chickadee 12; Boreal chickadee 1; Red-breasted nuthatch 4; Golden-crowned kinglet 26; Northern shrike 1; European starling 64; American tree sparrow 41; Song sparrow 3; White-throated sparrow 4; Dark-eyed junco 24; Snow bunting 30; Red-winged blackbird 4; Common grackle 1; Pine grosbeak 12; White-winged crossbill 73; American goldfinch 35; Evening grosbeak 26; House sparrow 6.

**Total species 44, about 909 individuals.** (CP. Red-throated loon, Mallard, White-winged scoter, Northern saw-whet owl, Pileated woodpecker, Brown creeper, American robin, Bohemian waxwing, Purple finch). Donna Barber, Jane Mills, Maureen Mills, Marjorie Morris, Fran Spalding, Cindy Spicer, Kathleen Spicer (compiler).



**AMHERST**, Dec. 22; 7:30AM to 4:45PM. Temp. -2 to 7C. Wind SW 15kmph. Snow 30cm. Still water frozen, moving water partly open. A.M. Clear. P.M. Clear. 17 field observers in 7-13 parties. Total party hours 59.25 (21.5 on foot, 37.75 by car). Total party kilometres 501.5 (43.5 on foot, 458 by car).

American black duck 4; Common merganser 27; duck species 4; Bald eagle 8; Northern harrier 4; Sharp-shinned hawk 1; Red-tailed hawk 5; Rough-legged hawk 13; Ring-necked pheasant 21; Ruffed grouse 14; **Ring-billed gull 34**; Herring gull 506; Iceland gull 3; Great black-backed gull 1309; Rock dove 317; Mourning dove 18; Short-eared owl 1; Downy woodpecker 9; Hairy woodpecker 5; Northern flicker 2; Pileated woodpecker 8; Gray jay 3; Blue jay 68; American crow 216; Common raven 62; Black-capped chickadee 377; Boreal chickadee 29; Red-breasted nuthatch 58; White-breasted nuthatch 2; Brown creeper 2; Golden-crowned kinglet 91; American robin 23; Northern shrike 1; European starling 1134; American tree sparrow 169; Savannah sparrow 2; Song sparrow 8; White-throated sparrow 8; Dark-eyed junco 33; Snow bunting 661; Common grackle 1; Brown-headed cowbird 21; Pine grosbeak 27; Purple finch 21; White-winged crossbill 113; American goldfinch 201; finch species 4; Evening grosbeak 321; House sparrow 229.

**Total species 48, about 6205 individuals.** Paul Bogaard, Neil Burgess, Dan Busby, Evelyn Coates, George Finney, Nev Gerrity (compiler), Andrew Hicks, Randy Hicks, Ron Hounsell, Robert Lyon, Colin MacKinnon, Keith McAloney, Bill Murphy, Harold Popma, Theo Popma, Al Smith, Russ Tilt.

**ANNAPOLIS ROYAL**, Dec. 17; 7:30AM to 5:15PM. Temp. -8 to 0C. Wind calm. No snow cover. Still water frozen, moving water open. A.M. cloudy; P.M. cloudy. 17 field observers in 8 parties, 56 at feeders. Total party hours 41.7 (25.41 on foot, 15.29 by car). Total party kilometres 397.9 (60.7 on foot, 324.2 by car).

Red-throated loon 1; Common loon 24; Horned grebe 421; Red-necked grebe 24; Great cormorant 1; Double-crested cormorant 8; Great blue heron 2; American black duck 850; Mallard 2; Greater scaup 36; scaup species 144; Common eider 5; Oldsquaw 4344; Black scoter 5; Surf scoter 27; White-winged scoter 134; Common goldeneye 237; Bufflehead 576; Common merganser 2; Red-breasted merganser 11; Bald eagle 6; Sharp-shinned hawk 4; Red-tailed hawk 4; **Chukar 1; (escape, ed.)** Ring-necked pheasant 40; Ruffed grouse 9; Bonaparte's gull 10; Ring-billed gull 1; Herring gull 632; Great black-backed gull 67; Black-legged kittiwake 4; gull species 7; Dovekie 5; Thick-billed murre 29; Razorbill 2; Black guillemot 3; alcid species 24; Rock dove 114; Mourning dove 95; Downy woodpecker 12; Hairy woodpecker 7; Pileated woodpecker 5; Gray jay 3; Blue jay 347; American crow 323; Common raven 30; Black-capped chickadee 454; Boreal chickadee 8; Red-breasted nuthatch 24; White-breasted nuthatch 2; Golden-crowned kinglet 36; Ruby-crowned kinglet 2; American robin 47; Bohemian waxwing 55; waxwing species 6; European starling 1021; Northern cardinal 2; American tree sparrow 16; Fox sparrow 1; Song sparrow 10; White-throated sparrow 9; sparrow species 1; Dark-eyed junco 42; Snow bunting 18; Brown-headed cowbird 11; Pine grosbeak 2; Purple finch 15; White-winged crossbill 8; Pine siskin 58; American goldfinch 252; Evening grosbeak 177; House sparrow 341.

**Total species 67, about 11,256 individuals.** (CP. Great horned owl, Yellow-rumped warbler, Cooper's hawk (no details) Canada goose, sandpiper species) Ruby Adams, Simone Angers, Joan Bateman, Bob Bennett, Marilyn and Ted Brown, Betty Burrell, Doug Cameron, Mary Cameron, Debbie Cummings, Kathleen Cox, Allison Dalton, Jane DeWolfe, Rhonda Dunn, Ada, Alvin, Earl, Helen, and Rebecca Ellis, Jean Estey, Dorothy Everett, Barry Frail, Trish Fry, Angela, Glen and Margaret Hall, Andrew Hardy, Leroy and Nina Haynes, Sharon and Stephen Hawboldt, Millie Hawes, Rita Hearne, Charlotte Hollett, Marg Horsfall, Harold Horwood, Clifford Jones, Shirley Kerr, Sheila Krant, Ginny Langley, Scott Leslie, Karen Lewis, Abbie Marshall, Margaret

McCaul, Ethel and Glendon McCormick, Laurie McGowan, Ernie and Margaret McGrath, Gail Morrison, Valerie Mount, Molly Payne, Jon and Polly Percy, Gini Proulx, Valerie Richards, Bob Sanford, Marj Saunders, Bernie and Maddy Spicer, Juanita and Otis Sproule, Don and Doreen Thexton, Alison Thomson, Jack and Julie Turner (compiler), Giselle Vidito, Charlotte, Maureen and Owen Wade, John Vanderweit, John Wells.

**ANTIGONISH**, Dec. 18; 7:40AM to 4:30PM. Temp. -7 to 2C. Wind W 20kmph. Snow 7cm. Still water frozen, moving water partly frozen. A.M. clear. P.M. clear. 12 field observers in 5 parties, 8 at feeders. Total party hours 30.5 (9 on foot, 21.5 by car). Total party kilometres 337.5 (15 on foot, 322.5 by car).

Common loon 1; Horned grebe 18; Red-necked grebe 16; Northern gannet 8; Great cormorant 1; Canada goose 300; American black duck 251; Greater scaup 50; Common eider 2; Oldsquaw 22; White-winged scoter 2; Common goldeneye 60; Bufflehead 1; Common merganser 11; Red-breasted merganser 22; Bald eagle 16; Northern harrier 1; Sharp-shinned hawk 1; accipiter species 1; Red-tailed hawk 3; **Ring-necked pheasant** 1; Ruffed grouse 14; Common black-headed gull 7; Bonaparte's gull 32; Ring-billed gull 197; Herring gull 504; Iceland gull 3; Glaucous gull 1; Great black-backed gull 28; Rock dove 134; Mourning dove 19; Downy woodpecker 2; Hairy woodpecker 6; Pileated woodpecker 8; Gray jay 4; Blue jay 65; American crow 223; Common raven 28; Black-capped chickadee 222; Boreal chickadee 26; Red-breasted nuthatch 18; Golden-crowned kinglet 20; American robin 3; Northern shrike 1; European starling 264; Pine warbler 2; **Dickcissel** 2; American tree sparrow 50; Song sparrow 2; Dark-eyed junco 38; Snow bunting 30; Rusty blackbird 1; Purple finch 7; American goldfinch 101; Evening grosbeak 85; House sparrow 114.

**Total species 55, about 3049 individuals.** Calvin Brennan, Avon Brophy, Vicki Bunbury, May Goring, Randy Lauff (compiler), Marjorie Lydon, Anne Louise and Frank MacDonald, Harriet and Lillian MacMillan, Celia Mallon, Heather Mayhew, Paula McConnell, Ken McKenna, Tony Miller, Kerstin Mueller, Marilyn O'Brien, Marilyn O'Brien, Beth Parker, Brian Starzomski.

**BRIDGETOWN**, Dec. 17; 8:00AM to 4:30PM. Temp. -12 to -3C. Wind NE 10kmph. Snow cover 7cm. Still water frozen, moving water frozen. A.M. partly cloudy. P.M. partly cloudy. 6 field observers in 4 parties, 33 at feeders. Total party hours 18 (6 on foot, 11 by car). Total party kilometres 170 (16 on foot, 154 by car).

Common loon 31; Horned grebe 4; Great cormorant 1; Common eider 12; Oldsquaw 164; Surf scoter 110; White-winged scoter 358; scoter species 25; Barrow's goldeneye 5; Red-breasted merganser 18; Bald eagle 1; Sharp-shinned hawk 2; accipiter species 1; Red-tailed hawk 11; Ring-necked pheasant 31; Ruffed grouse 5; Herring gull 197; Great black-backed gull 6; Rock dove 117; Mourning dove 194; Barred owl 4; Downy woodpecker 14; Hairy woodpecker 4; Northern flicker 2; Pileated woodpecker 3; Gray jay 2; Blue jay 222; American crow 401; Common raven 25; Black-capped chickadee 114; Red-breasted nuthatch 4; White-breasted nuthatch 1; American robin 1; Northern shrike 1; European starling 1372; American tree sparrow 11; Song sparrow 4; White-throated sparrow 5; Dark-eyed junco 24; Common grackle 3; Brown-headed cowbird 30; Purple finch 8; Pine siskin 2; American goldfinch 232; Evening grosbeak 117; House sparrow 135.

**Total species 44, about 4037 individuals.** Winnie Bent, Don Bowlby, Laurie and Kourtney Burrell, Pearl Chambers, David Colville (compiler), Jan Coulter, Thelma Devenney, Doris and Marilyn Durling, Marie Gaul, Marion and Graham Graves, Mike Hamilton, Danny Harlow, Marguerite Hirtle, Avora Howse, Maude Joudrey, Audrey Kennedy, Marg Messenger, Roger Mosher, Dave Nowe, Carl and Danny Phinney, Eric Porter, Jane Racine, Frances Saunders, Jory and Margaret Smith, Donnie Troop, Gladdie Weir and Roger Weir, Jim and Marion Whitman.

**BRIER ISLAND**, Jan. 1; 8:00AM to 4:00PM. Temp. -2 to 5C. Wind light and variable. No snow cover. Still water partly frozen, moving water open. A.M. Light snow, P.M. heavy rain. 4 field observers in 2 parties. Total party hours 8.5 (3.5 on foot, 5 by car, .5 by ATV). Total party kilometres 41 (2.5 on foot, 37 by car, 1.5 by ATV).

Common loon 2; Red-necked grebe 3; Great cormorant 4; American black duck 19; Mallard 2; Common eider 96; Oldsquaw 8 Common goldeneye 43; Red-breasted merganser 2; Red-tailed hawk 1; Ring-necked pheasant 1; Ruffed grouse 1; Purple sandpiper 45; Bonaparte's gull 3; Herring gull 500; Iceland gull 10; Great black-backed gull 200; Black guillemot 11; Mourning dove 4; American crow 6; Common raven 5; Boreal chickadee 5; Cedar waxwing 21; European starling 20; American tree sparrow 1; Chipping sparrow 1; Song sparrow 2; Snow bunting 35; Red-winged blackbird 1; American goldfinch 19; House sparrow 17.

**Total species 31, about 1088 individuals.** (CP. Double-crested cormorant, Turkey vulture, Bohemian waxwing, Golden-crowned kinglet). Elizabeth Stern, N. Stern, Richard Stern (compiler); T. Stern.

**BROAD COVE**, Dec. 29; 7:30AM to 4:30PM. Temp. 2.5 to -2C. Wind NW 5-35kmph. No snow cover. Still water partly frozen, moving water open. A.M. cloudy, P.M. cloudy, light snow. 25 field observers in 13-15 parties. Total party hours 98.5 (71 on foot, 27.5 by car). Total party kilometres 507 (173.5 on foot, 333.5 by car).

Red-throated loon 5; Common loon 30; Horned grebe 10; Red-necked grebe 9; Great cormorant 59; Canada goose 4; American black duck 177; Mallard 139; MallardxBlack duck hybrid 40; Northern pintail 1; Greater scaup 213; Common eider 382; Oldsquaw 179; Black scoter 20; Surf scoter 44; White-winged scoter 40; scoter species 25; Common goldeneye 74; Bufflehead 26; Hooded merganser 1; Common merganser 62; Red-breasted merganser 155; Bald eagle 6; Sharp-shinned hawk 3; Red-tailed hawk 2; buteo species 1; American kestrel 1; Ring-necked pheasant 6; Ruffed grouse 10; Sanderling 5; Purple sandpiper 12; Herring gull 739; Iceland gull 1; Glaucous gull 1; Great black-backed gull 441; Dovekie 10; Black guillemot 6; Rock dove 212; Mourning dove 167; Belted kingfisher 1; Downy woodpecker 6; Hairy woodpecker 4; Northern flicker 4; Horned lark 6; Gray jay 2; Blue jay 122; American crow 387; Common raven 53; Black-capped chickadee 385; Boreal chickadee 20; Red-breasted nuthatch 68; White-breasted nuthatch 3; Brown creeper 6; Golden-crowned kinglet 71; American robin 13; Cedar waxwing 6; Northern shrike 1; European starling 486; **Nashville warbler** 1; Yellow-rumped warbler 2; **Hermit warbler** 1; American tree sparrow 22; Savannah (Ipswich) sparrow 1; Song sparrow 30; Swamp sparrow 2; White-throated sparrow 53; Dark-eyed junco 104; Snow bunting 3; Red-winged blackbird 1; Brown-headed cowbird 10; Purple finch 53; Red crossbill 8; Pine siskin 13; American goldfinch 437; Evening grosbeak 84; House sparrow 113.

**Total species 73, about 5900 individuals.** Kell Antoft, Ruth Ballem, Noel Brady, Bill Caudle, Margaret Clark, John Cohrs and Shirley Cohrs, Eric Cooke, Mary Lou Courtney, David Currie, Jim Elliott, Sylvia Fullerton (compiler), Barbara Hinds, James Hirtle, Blair Hodgman, Ian McLaren, Pat McLarty, Anne and Eric Mills, Bill and Jean Morse, Don and Joyce Purchase Nellie Snyder, David and Joan Young.

**CALEDONIA, QUEENS CO.**, Dec. 18; 7:30AM to 5:00PM. Temp. -8 to 5C. Wind Calm. No snow cover. Still water frozen, moving water partly frozen. A.M. partly clear. P.M. Partly cloudy, light rain. 28 field observers in 14 parties, 35 at feeders. Total party hours 35.75 (27.25 on foot, 8.5 by car). Total party kilometres 199.75 (56.75 on foot, 143 by car).

Bald Eagle 6; Red-tailed hawk 3; Ring-necked pheasant 1; Ruffed grouse 13; Rock dove 28; Barred owl 4; Downy woodpecker 11; Hairy

woodpecker 10; Pileated woodpecker 3; Gray jay 4; Blue jay 117; American crow 48; Common raven 60; Black-capped chickadee 305; Boreal chickadee 13; Red-breasted nuthatch 105; White-breasted nuthatch 17; Golden-crowned kinglet 26; European starling 111; American tree sparrow 4; Song sparrow 3; White-throated sparrow 1; Dark-eyed junco 7; Red-winged blackbird 1; Brown-headed cowbird 10; Purple finch 6; Red crossbill 3; Pine siskin 2; American goldfinch 232; Evening grosbeak 157; House sparrow 29.

**Total species 31, about 1340 individuals.** (CP. Canada goose, Common goldeneye, Northern goshawk, Great horned owl, Black-throated blue warbler) Justine Ashton, Eric, Judy and Lorna Cole, Jean Douglas, Connie Eaton, Judy Flemming, Hester, Jerry Frail and Lynn Frail, Arthur, Donnie, Nancy and Sheila Frayle, Marguerite and Myra Holdright, Lorraine, Peter (compiler), Sean and Stephen Hope, Jennifer, Pamela, Peggy and Steve Hopper, Leslie and Megan Jones, Mary, Peter and Rod Keirstead, Len MacDonald, Paul MacDonald, Tom MacDonald, Daniel Mansfield, Lesley and Peter Rogers, Althea Rowter, Tom Sheppard, Tom Shupe, Shirley Smith, Bill, Jessy and Julie Whitman, Eva Zong.

**CAPE BRETON HIGHLANDS**, Dec 27; 7:30AM to 4:30PM. Temp. -3 to -2.5C. Wind NW 9kmph. Snow cover 3-10cm. Still water frozen, moving water partly open. A.M. Clear. P.M. Clear. 39 field observers in 19 parties, 13 at feeders. Total party hours 39.5 (18.5 on foot, 21 by car). Total party kilometres 283.7 (33.5 on foot, 250.2 by car).

Common loon 11; American black duck 19; Common eider 2; Harlequin duck 2; Oldsquaw 86; Black scoter 5; White-winged scoter 11; Common goldeneye 190; Common merganser 13; Red-breasted merganser 24; Bald eagle 8; Spruce grouse 3; Ruffed grouse 18; Purple sandpiper 53; Herring gull 118; Iceland gull 14; Glaucous gull 3; Great black-backed gull 25; Dovekie 50; Common murre 1; Black guillemot 1; Mourning dove 14; Downy woodpecker 1; Hairy woodpecker 7; Pileated woodpecker 4; Gray jay 13; Blue jay 87; American crow 295; Common raven 84; Black-capped chickadee 143; Red-breasted nuthatch 10; Golden-crowned kinglet 3; American robin 1; Bohemian waxwing 142; European starling 125; White-throated sparrow 1; Dark-eyed junco 7; Snow bunting 9; Purple finch 3; Common redpoll 16; Pine siskin 1; American goldfinch 45; Evening grosbeak 51.

**Total species 43, about 1719 individuals.** James, Kathryn and Micheal Bridgland, Audrey Budge, Aggie and Tom Donovan, Alice Doyle, Allan and Wendy Gibbs, John Gorman (compiler), Anita, George Jr., George Sr., Maxine and Steven Hardy, Gail and Rich Irwin, Jim and Marilyn Maclean, Logan Marsh, Frances, John and Fritz McEvoy, Ruth McLagan, Ann and Freeman Morrison, Ken and Marjorie Murray, Ben and John Parker, Allen and Tim Reynolds, Joe Robinson, Murray Stockley, Cheryl, Karl, Ken and Stefan Verner.

**CAPE SABLE ISLAND**, Dec. 17; 7:20AM to 4:20PM. Temp. -1 to 0C. Wind NE 15kmph. No snow cover. Still water frozen, moving water partly frozen. A.M. partly clear. P.M. cloudy. 16 field observers in 7 parties, one at feeder. Total party hours 57 (8 on foot, 48 by car, 1 by boat). Total party kilometres 528 (24 on foot, 496 by car, 8 by boat).

Red-throated loon 2; Common loon 39; Horned grebe 1; Red-necked grebe 6; grebe species 1; Northern gannet 6; Great cormorant 69; Double-crested cormorant 85; cormorant species 5; **American bittern 1**; Great blue heron 5; **Brant 100**; Canada goose 171; Green-winged teal 2; American black duck 163; Mallard 5; **Northern pintail 2**; Greater scaup 84; Common eider 423; Harlequin duck 1; Oldsquaw 219; Black scoter 23; Surf scoter 18; White-winged scoter 77; Common goldeneye 290; Bufflehead 184; Common merganser 5; Red-breasted merganser 112; **Ruddy duck 1**; duck species 2; Bald eagle 1; Northern harrier 8; Sharp-shinned hawk 2; American kestrel 1; Merlin 4; Ring-necked pheasant 2; Black-bellied plover 5; **Semipalmated plover 1**; Killdeer

2; **Greater yellowlegs** 1; Red knot 9; Sanderling 113; Purple sandpiper 9; dowitcher species 1; Common black-headed gull 2; Bonaparte's gull 1; Herring gull 1065; Glaucous gull 7; Great black-backed gull 640; Black-legged kittiwake 2; Dovekie 8; Thick-billed murre 1; murre species 9; Black guillemot 56; Rock dove 9; Mourning dove 63; Snowy owl 1; owl species 1; Northern flicker 12; Horned lark 9; Gray jay 1; Blue jay 16; American crow 279; Common raven 15; Black-capped chickadee 69; Boreal chickadee 19; Red-breasted nuthatch 4; Golden-crowned kinglet 59; **Ruby-crowned kinglet** 1; American robin 306; **Gray catbird** 1; Water pipit 5; Northern shrike 1; European starling 1114; Yellow-rumped warbler 45; **Palm warbler** 1; **Common yellowthroat** 1; **Wilson's warbler** 1; **Dickcissel**; American tree sparrow 20; Savannah sparrow 1; Sharp-tailed sparrow 1; Song sparrow 57; Swamp sparrow 3; White-throated sparrow 43; Dark-eyed junco 16; Snow bunting 14; Common grackle 2; Brown-headed cowbird 67; **Northern oriole** 1; White-winged crossbill 14; American goldfinch 142; House sparrow 60.

**Total species 89, about 6541 individuals.** (CP. Lesser scaup, Red-tailed hawk, Ruffed grouse, **Semipalmated sandpiper**, Iceland gull, Great horned owl, Downy woodpecker, Cedar waxwing, Chipping sparrow, Red-winged blackbird, Evening grosbeak). Wilfred "Skipper" Atwood Jr., Terry Crowell, Joan Czapalay (compiler), Jerome D'Eon, Raymond D'Entremont, Donna Ensor, June Graves, Cathy Holmes, Rita Jenkins, Blake Maybank, Ethelda Murphy, Murray Newell, John E. Nickerson, Sandra Nickerson, Lillian Perry, Joan Waldron.

**CHETICAMP**, Dec. 17; 7:45AM to 4:00PM. Temp. -10 to 2C. Wind SE 10kmph. Snow cover 4cm. Still water open, moving water open. Skies clear all day. 13 field observers in 6 parties. Total party hours 37 (24.5 on foot, 12.5 by car). Total party kilometres 168 (24 on foot, 144 by car).

Red-throated loon 1; Common loon 2, Red-necked grebe 1, Northern gannet 9; Great cormorant 3; **Brant** 5; American black duck 59; Common eider 18; Oldsquaw 9; Black scoter 4; Surf scoter 1; Common goldeneye 38; Bufflehead 1; Common merganser 12; Red-breasted merganser 4; merganser species 15; Bald eagle 37; Red-tailed hawk 2; Ring-necked pheasant 6; Ruffed grouse 9; Common black-headed gull 1; Bonaparte's gull 1; Herring gull 85; Iceland gull 35; Glaucous gull 26; Great black-backed gull 62; Dovekie 2; Black guillemot 1; Mourning dove 1; Downy woodpecker 4; Hairy woodpecker 1; Northern flicker 1; Gray jay 5; Blue jay 35; American crow 149; Common raven 25; Black-capped chickadee 71; Boreal chickadee 18; Red-breasted nuthatch 5; Golden-crowned kinglet 12; Northern mockingbird 1; European starling 85; Yellow-rumped warbler 1; Savannah sparrow 1; Snow bunting 79; Pine grosbeak 7; Pine siskin 4; American goldfinch 6; Evening grosbeak 8.

**Total species 46, about 965 individuals.** (CP. Gyrfalcon, Pileated woodpecker) Chusong, Heather Davis, Gordon Delaney, Bill Devereaux, Rene Deveau, David Lawley, Claude Maillet, Rachel Malenfant, John McKay, Allan Murrant, Cathy Murrant, MacWilliam Savoy, Randy G. Thompson (compiler).

**ECONOMY**, Dec. 27; 7:30AM to 5:15PM. Temp. -12 to -5C. Wind W 25kmph. Snow cover 8cm. Still water partly open, moving water partly frozen. Skies clear all day. 10 field observers in 8 parties, 5 at feeders. 1 Hour and 10 km. owling. Total party hours 59 (51 on foot, 8 by car). Total party kilometres 202 (45 on foot, 157 by car).

Red-throated loon 2; Canada goose 10; American black duck 602; Mallard 2; Northern pintail 5; Common eider 1; Oldsquaw 49; Black scoter 1; Surf scoter 4; White-winged scoter 2; Common goldeneye 3; Bufflehead 30; Common merganser 44; Red-breasted merganser 1; Bald eagle 4; Northern goshawk 1; Red-tailed hawk 4; Gray partridge 2; Ring-necked pheasant 6; Ruffed grouse 21; Purple sandpiper 30; Ring-billed gull 30; Herring gull 710; Great black-backed gull 66;

Rock dove 27; Mourning dove 64; Great horned owl 1; Belted kingfisher 1; Downy woodpecker 11; Hairy woodpecker 11; Pileated woodpecker 4; Gray jay 14; Blue jay 48; American crow 208; Common raven 65; Black-capped chickadee 236; Boreal chickadee 32; Red-breasted nuthatch 43; Brown creeper 2; Golden-crowned kinglet 96; Northern shrike 1; European starling 218; American tree sparrow 57; **Grasshopper sparrow 1**; Song sparrow 5; White-throated sparrow 2; Dark-eyed junco 144; Snow bunting 40; Common grackle 2; Pine grosbeak 33; Purple finch 28; White-winged crossbill 209; Pine siskin 13; American goldfinch 140; Evening grosbeak 193; House sparrow 52.

**Total species 56, about 3631 individuals.** Brad McLaughlin, Ken McKenna, Bill Murphy, Rachel Smith, Rene Smith, Edgar Spalding, Fran Spalding (compiler), Kerry Spalding, Cindy and Kathleen Spicer.

**ESKASONI**, Dec. 26; 8:00AM to 5:00PM. Temp. -4 to -10C. Wind NW 50-75kmph. No snow cover. Still water partly open, moving water open. A.M. partly clear, P.M. partly clear. 24 field observers in 9 parties, 6 at feeders. Total party hours 43 (6 on foot, 37 by car). Total party kilometres 460 (13 on foot, 447 by car).

Common loon 1; Red-necked grebe 1; American black duck 80; White-winged scoter 9; Common goldeneye 42; Red-breasted merganser 34; Bald eagle 34; Red-tailed hawk 2; Ring-necked pheasant 1; Ruffed grouse 6; Bonaparte's gull 1; Herring gull 81; Iceland gull 1; Great black-backed gull 12; Rock dove 2; Mourning dove 8; Downy woodpecker 2; Hairy woodpecker 1; Gray jay 6; Blue jay 76; American crow 143; Common raven 41; Black-capped chickadee 174; Boreal chickadee 28; Red-breasted nuthatch 6; Golden-crowned kinglet 35; Ruby-crowned kinglet 1; Northern shrike 2; European starling 133; Pine warbler 1; American tree sparrow 2; Snow bunting 6; Common grackle 1; Pine grosbeak 3; Purple finch 5; Pine siskin 26; American goldfinch 88; Evening grosbeak 105.

**Total species 38, about 1200 individuals.** (CP. Common snipe) George Ball, Myra and Terry Barss, Terry Boone, Donald F. Campbell, Theresa Cash, Jackie Chretien, George and Sharon Digout, Joshua Donham, Peter Barss-Donham, Silas Donham, Joe Donovan, David Harris, Joe Klemka, Gordon MacEachern, John W. MacInnis, John MacKay; Brian MacNeil, Duncan MacNeil, Jack MacNeil (compiler), Laurie MacNeil, Hugh Metcalfe, Bernard Murphy, Allan Murrant, Cathy Murrant, Maria Salah, Donald Tuttle, Melvin White.

**GLACE BAY**, Dec. 31; 7:00AM to 4:30PM. Temp -5.3 to -3C. Wind NW 50-70kmph. Snow cover .6cm. Still water partly open, moving water partly frozen. A.M. cloudy, light snow, P.M. partly cloudy, light snow. 27 field observers in 11 parties, 2 at feeders. Total party hours 80 (12 on foot, 68 by car). Total party kilometres 210 (18 on foot, 210 by car).

Common loon 3; Horned grebe 6; Great cormorant 10; **Brant 1**; Canada goose 597; American black duck 355; Mallard 19; Greater scaup 257; Common eider 7; Oldsquaw 206; White-winged scoter 49; Common goldeneye 36; Bufflehead 38; Common merganser 47; Red-breasted merganser 76; Bald eagle 6; Northern harrier 3; Red-tailed hawk 1; **Peregrine falcon 1**; Ruffed grouse 3; Common black-headed gull 19; Herring gull 1092; Iceland gull 264; Glaucous gull 2; Great black-backed gull 310; Rock dove 106; Mourning dove 30; Downy woodpecker 3; Gray jay 1; Blue jay 45; American crow 249; Common raven 41; Black-capped chickadee 25; Boreal chickadee 9; Red-breasted nuthatch 1; Golden-crowned kinglet 12; American robin 2; European starling 587; **Yellow-throated warbler 1**; American tree sparrow 4; Savannah sparrow 1; Song sparrow 2; Dark-eyed junco 3; Lapland longspur 11; Snow bunting 62; Red-winged blackbird 1; **Northern oriole 1**; American goldfinch 97; Evening grosbeak 35; House sparrow 332.

**Total species 50, about 5069 individuals.** (CP. **Broad-winged hawk**, Black guillemot, Short-eared owl, Northern shrike) Catherine Bray, Cheryl Bray, Erik Bray, Jennifer Bray, Kelly Bray, Steve Bray, George

Crowell, Bill Devoe, Joy Gates, Andrew Gingell, Jackie Ingraham, John W. MacInnis, Gordon MacLean, Jack MacNeil, John McKay, Geraldine Metcalfe, Hugh Metcalfe, Allan and Cathy Murrant (compiler), Della Murrant, Emily Murrant, Erin Murrant, Jim Murrant, Nelson Murrant, Mike O'Callaghan, Pixie and Rhys Williams.

**HALIFAX (EAST)**, Dec. 26; 7:30AM to 4:30PM. Temp. -4 to -1C . Wind N 40 kmph. No snow cover. Still water partly frozen, moving water open. Skies clear all day. 16 field observers in 8 parties. Total party hours 50 (29 on foot, 21 by car). Total party kilometres 356 (49 on foot, 307 by car).

Common loon 2; loon species 2; Canada goose 4200; American black duck 866; Mallard 36; Northern pintail 1; Greater scaup 27; **Lesser scaup 8**; Common eider 25; Oldsquaw 63; Black scoter 24; White-winged scoter 10; Common goldeneye 8; Bufflehead 32; Common merganser 17; Red-breasted merganser 81; duck species 1; Bald eagle 2; Sharp-shinned hawk 1; Red-tailed hawk 3; Rough-legged hawk 1; American kestrel 2; Ring-necked pheasant 16; Spruce grouse 1; Common black-headed gull 8; Ring-billed gull 223; Herring gull 821; Iceland gull 10; Great black-backed gull 40; Black guillemot 2; Rock dove 127; Mourning dove 48; Downy woodpecker 4; Northern flicker 3; Horned lark 4; Gray jay 3; Blue jay 82; American crow 264; Common raven 12; Black-capped chickadee 150; Boreal chickadee 28; Red-breasted nuthatch 11; Golden-crowned kinglet 34; Water pipit 14; Northern shrike 1; European starling 477; American tree sparrow 16; Savannah sparrow 5; Savannah (Ipswich) sparrow 1; Song sparrow 10; White-throated sparrow 1; Dark-eyed junco 46; Snow bunting 34; Purple finch 1; Red crossbill 56; Pine siskin 8; American goldfinch 151; Evening grosbeak 97; House sparrow 111.

**Total species 56, plus 1 subspecies, about 8321 individuals.** Ruth Ballem, Phyllis Bryson, Bill Caudle, John and Shirley Cohrs, Eric Cooke (compiler), Joan Czapalay, Fulton Lavender, Sylvia Fullerton, Barbara Hinds, Ian McLaren, Maureen and Rich Peckham, Don and Joyce Purchase, Christine Ross.

**HALIFAX (WEST)**, Dec. 18; 7:30AM to 4:30PM. Temp. -3 to 2C. Wind calm. No snow cover. Still water partly open, moving water open. Skies clear all day. 26 field observers in 12 parties. 2 hours and 5km owling. Total party hours 66 (37.5 on foot, 28 by car, .5 by boat). Total party kilometres 405 (72.5 on foot, 330 by car, .5 by boat).

Red-throated loon 1; Common loon 13; Horned grebe 3; Red-necked grebe 8; Northern gannet 1; Great cormorant 95; Double-crested cormorant 2; Great blue heron 1; Canada goose 1; American black duck 1970; Mallard 130; **Gadwall 2**; **American wigeon 6**; Greater scaup 6; Common eider 316; Harlequin duck 2; Oldsquaw 120; Black scoter 6; White-winged scoter 15; Common goldeneye 26; **Barrow's goldeneye 1**; Bufflehead 5; Red-breasted merganser 112; Bald eagle 1; Sharp-shinned hawk 2; Merlin 2; Ruffed grouse 7; Purple sandpiper 118; Common black-headed gull 13; Bonaparte's gull 1; Ring-billed gull 8; Herring gull 3247; Iceland gull 71; **Lesser black-backed gull 2**; Glaucous gull 8; Great black-backed gull 790; Dovekie 8; Thick-billed murre 1; Black guillemot 40; Rock dove 623; Mourning dove 69; **Red-headed woodpecker 1**; Downy woodpecker 14; Hairy woodpecker 7; Northern flicker 1; Pileated woodpecker 1; **Western kingbird 1**; Gray jay 2; Blue jay 135; American crow 1059; Common raven 29; Black-capped chickadee 380; Boreal chickadee 45; Red-breasted nuthatch 10; White-breasted nuthatch 3; Golden-crowned kinglet 67; **Ruby-crowned kinglet 3**; American robin 44; Northern mockingbird 3; Cedar waxwing 39; European starling 2710; **Orange-crowned warbler 1**; Yellow-rumped warbler 9; Pine warbler 1; Palm warbler 6; warbler species 1; **Dickcissel 1**; American tree sparrow 9; Savannah sparrow 1; Song sparrow 52; White-throated sparrow 2; sparrow species 1; Dark-eyed junco 90; Common grackle 3; Brown-headed cowbird 1; Northern oriole 1; Pine grosbeak 4; Red crossbill 2; White-winged crossbill 9;

American goldfinch 106; Evening grosbeak 1; House sparrow 460.

**Total species 82, about 13,174 individuals.** Ruth Ballew, Andrew Boyne, Phyllis Bryson, Margaret Clark, John, Shirley (compiler) and Lise Cohrs, Eric Cooke, David Currie, Gillian and Jim Elliott, Bill and Jonathan Freedman, Sylvia Fullerton, Jean Hartley; Barbara Hinds, Tom Keith, Tony Lock, Annette Ludermann, Peter MacLeod, Bernice Moores, Linda and Peter Payzant, Bev Sarty, Marg Slatkin, Azor Vienneau.

**MARGAREE**, Dec 20, 7:45AM to 3:45PM. Temp. -4 to -1C. Wind NW 30-45kmph. Snow cover 4cm. Still water partly frozen, moving water open. A.M. Cloudy, P.M. Cloudy, light snow. 3 field observers in 2 parties. Total party hours 16 (4 on foot, 12 by car). Total party kilometres 114 (8 on foot, 106 by car).

American black duck 34; Common goldeneye 17; Common merganser 3; Bald eagle 6; Red-tailed hawk 1; Ring-necked pheasant 1; Ruffed grouse 2; Herring gull 37; Iceland gull 12; Great black-backed gull 36; Great horned owl 1; Downy woodpecker 2; Hairy woodpecker 3; Pileated woodpecker 2; Gray jay 6; Blue jay 13; American crow 71; Common raven 47; Black-capped chickadee 9; European starling 229; Lapland longspur 2; Eastern meadowlark 1; Pine grosbeak 1; Pine siskin 8; Evening grosbeak 33; House sparrow 21.

**Total species 26, about 598 individuals.** Frances Hart (compiler), Baxter Ingraham, David Ingraham.

**NORTHPORT**, Dec. 26; 7:15AM 4:15PM. Temp. -1 to 1C. Wind calm. Trace of snow. Still water frozen, moving water partly frozen. A.M. Cloudy. P.M. cloudy. 2 observers in 1 party. Total party hours 9 (2 on foot, 7 by car). Total party kilometres 78.8 (6.4 on foot, 72.4 by car).

Canada goose 6; Common eider 10; Common goldeneye 21; Ring-necked pheasant 1; Herring gull 16; Great-blacked gull 6; Rock dove 135; Mourning dove 6; Downy woodpecker 1; Hairy woodpecker 1; Pileated woodpecker 1; Blue jay 10; American crow 61; Common raven 7; Black-capped chickadee 7; European starling 270; American tree sparrow 5; Snow bunting 29; Evening grosbeak.

**Total species 19, about 599 individuals.** (CP. Bald eagle) Duncan S. MacNeil, Robert G. MacNeil (compiler).

**PICTOU HARBOUR**, Jan. 1; 7:45AM to 4:30PM. Temp. 0 to -5C. Wind N 10kmph. Snow cover 5cm. Still water frozen, moving water partly frozen. P.M. Cloudy, P.M. Light snow. 14 field observers in 4 parties, 14 at feeders. Total party hours 31.5 (9 on foot, 22.25 by car). Total party kilometres 399 (15 on foot, 384 by car).

Double-crested cormorant 6; Canada goose 385; American black duck 308; Mallard 8; **Northern pintail 2; American wigeon 1;** Greater scaup 2111; Common eider 10; Oldsquaw 530; Surf scoter 1; Common goldeneye 385; **Barrow's goldeneye 2;** Common merganser 464; Red-breasted merganser 352; Bald eagle 24; Northern harrier 1; Sharp-shinned hawk 3; Red-tailed hawk 1; Ring-necked pheasant 1; Ruffed grouse 1; Common black-headed gull 2; Ring-billed gull 14; Herring gull 754; Iceland gull 61; Glaucous gull 1; Great black-backed gull 90; Rock dove 22; Mourning dove 5; Belted kingfisher 2; Downy woodpecker 12; Hairy woodpecker 13; Northern flicker 2; Pileated woodpecker 10; Blue jay 134; American crow 475; Common raven 82; Black-capped chickadee 235; Boreal chickadee 4; Red-breasted nuthatch 12; Golden-crowned kinglet 5; American robin 41; **Northern mockingbird 1;** Bohemian waxwing 30; Cedar waxwing 20; European starling 1666; **Palm warbler 1;** American tree sparrow 64; **Savannah sparrow 3;** Song sparrow 8; **White-crowned sparrow 1;** Dark-eyed junco 41; Lapland longspur 3; Snow bunting 40; Common grackle 4; Purple finch 1; **House finch 1;** Pine siskin 20; American goldfinch 94; Evening grosbeak 223; House sparrow 167.

**Total species 60, about 8959 individuals.** (CP. Bufflehead, Bonaparte's gull, Black guillemot, Chipping sparrow, Swamp sparrow).



Calvin, Harry and Jean Brennan, David and Sheila Bunn, George and Lois Burton, Kaye Davidson, Elwin and Janet Hemphill, Carla Henderson, Margaret Kenney, Brundridge MacDonald, Margaret MacDonald, Tanya MacKay, David MacLennan, Duncan MacMaster, Ken McKenna (compiler), Lorne McKenna, Raymonde Savoie, Wendy Skinner, Henry Snow, Amy and Ashley Sutherland, Polly Szantor, Phyliss Williston, Bobbie Wilson.

**PORT L'HEBERT**, Dec. 18; 7:00AM to 5:00PM. Temp. -3 to 3C. Wind SE 5-10kmph. No snow cover. Still water partly open, moving water open. A.M. Cloudy, P.M. cloudy, light rain. 17 field observers in 10 parties, 2 at feeders. Total party hours 80.5 (60 on foot, 20.5 by car). Total party kilometres 430 (102 on foot, 328 by car).

Red-throated loon 5; Common loon 58; Horned grebe 42; Red-necked grebe 23; Great cormorant 4; Double-crested cormorant 1; Great blue heron 1; Canada goose 3297; Green-winged teal 3; American black duck 748; Mallard 27; Greater scaup 40; Common eider 108; Oldsquaw 79; Black scoter 27; Surf scoter 5; White-winged scoter 18; Common goldeneye 153; Bufflehead 24; **Hooded merganser** 2; Common merganser 22; Red-breasted merganser 31; Bald eagle 1; Sharp-shinned hawk 1; Ruffed grouse 14; Black-bellied plover 1; Sanderling 14; Common snipe 1; Common black-headed gull 7; Ring-billed gull 3; Herring gull 469; Iceland gull 1; Glaucous gull 1; Great black-backed gull 119; Dovekie 1; Black guillemot 24; Rock dove 45; Mourning dove 62; Barred owl 1; Belted kingfisher 1; Downy woodpecker 4; Hairy woodpecker 3; Northern flicker 12; **Pileated woodpecker** 1; Gray jay 13; Blue jay 35; American crow 104; Common raven 11; Black-capped chickadee 164; Boreal chickadee 43; Red-breasted nuthatch 91; White-breasted nuthatch 3; Golden-crowned kinglet 90; American robin 210; Cedar waxwing 16; European starling 231; **Orange-crowned warbler** 1; Yellow-rumped warbler 36; Palm warbler 1; **Rose-breasted grosbeak** 1; American tree sparrow 22; Chipping sparrow 1; Savannah sparrow 2; Fox sparrow 1; Song sparrow 36; Swamp sparrow 6; White-throated sparrow 103; Dark-eyed junco 75; Common grackle 2; **Northern oriole** 1; Pine grosbeak 11; Purple finch 6; Red crossbill 5; White-winged crossbill 9; Pine siskin 10; American goldfinch 202; Evening grosbeak 47; House sparrow 30.

**Total species 78, about 7123 individuals.** (CP. Merlin, Water Pipit, **Dickcissel**, Snow bunting, Red-winged blackbird, Brown-headed cowbird) Lloyd Cameron, Bill Crosby, Donna Crosby, Russel Crosby (compiler) Bill Curry, Andy Dean, Dean and Emerson Fiske, Danny Mason, Ron Sigston, Francis Spalding, Edith Taylor, Mark Townsend, Robert Turner, Carmen Williams, David and Joan Young.

**PUBNICO**, Dec. 26; 7:30AM to 4:00PM. Temp. -1 to 1C. Wind N 20kmph. No snow cover. Still water open, moving water open. Skies clear all day. 14 field observers in 3 parties, 5 at feeders. Total party hours 35 (10 on foot, 13 by car). Total party kilometres 298 (18 on foot, 280 by car).

Common loon 8; Red-necked grebe 2; Great cormorant 6; Great blue heron 2; Greater scaup 109; Common eider 1; Oldsquaw 25; Black scoter 8; Common goldeneye 69; Bufflehead 9; Red-breasted merganser 42; Bald eagle 6; Sharp-shinned hawk 1; Red-tailed hawk 1; Ring-necked pheasant 3; Ruffed grouse 1; Purple sandpiper 4; Ring-billed gull 8; Herring gull 201; Iceland gull 1; Great black-backed gull 147; Black guillemot 2; Rock dove 2; Mourning dove 47; Belted kingfisher 2; Hairy woodpecker 1; Northern flicker 17; Horned lark 3; Blue jay 14; American crow 153; Common raven 22; Black-capped chickadee 91; Boreal chickadee 8; Red-breasted nuthatch 4; Golden-crowned kinglet 29; American robin 19; **Brown thrasher** 1; Water pipit 4; European starling 226; Yellow-rumped warbler 46; **Yellow-breasted chat** 1; **Northern cardinal** 1; **Dickcissel** 2; American tree sparrow 10; Song sparrow 12; White-throated sparrow 14; Dark-eyed junco 5; Snow bunting 4; Red-winged blackbird 1; Brown-headed cowbird 2; **Northern**

oriole 2; White-winged crossbill 6; American goldfinch 53; Evening grosbeak 16; House sparrow 165.

**Total species 55, about 1639 individuals.** (CP. Horned grebe, Glaucous gull, Black-legged kittiwake, Dovekie, Thick-billed murre, Gray jay, Brown creeper, Cedar waxwing) Kirk Atkinson, Wilfred Atwood Jr., Germain D'Entremont, Lisette d'Entremont, Raymond D'Entremont, Claire D'eon, Geneva D'eon, Jerome D'eon, Lester D'eon, Milton D'eon, Nigel D'eon, Rachel D'Eon, Reginald D'eon, Ted D'eon (compiler), June Graves, Ethelda Murphy, Murray Newell, Doris and Kenneth Peters.

**SABLE ISLAND**, Dec 18; 7:30AM to 4:10PM. Temp. 3 to 5C. Wind 20-30kmph. No snow cover. Still water partly frozen. A.M. Partly clear, P.M. Partly cloudy. 1 field observer. Total party hours 8.75 (5.5 on foot, 3.25 by car). Total party kilometres 70 (11 on foot, 59 by car).

Common loon 1; Northern gannet 1; Canada goose 1; American black duck 51; Mallard 2; Greater scaup 2; Red-breasted merganser 45; American kestrel 1; **American coot 2**; Sanderling 73; Herring gull 60; Iceland gull 45; Glaucous gull 3; Great black-backed gull 750; Black-legged kittiwake 260; gull species (white-winged) 20; Dovekie 10; **Northern mockingbird 1**; Bohemian waxwing 5; European starling 50; Yellow-rumped warbler 7; Savannah (Ipswich) sparrow 18; Snow bunting 10.

**Total species 22, about 1418 individuals.** Andrew MacFarlane (compiler).

**ST. PETER'S**, Dec. 27; 7:30AM to 4:30PM. Temp. -3 to -1C. Wind WNW 20-30kmph. Trace of snow. Still water frozen, moving water open. A.M. Partly clear, snow squalls, P.M. Partly cloudy. 10 field observers in 7 parties, 9 at feeders. Total party hours 21 (5 on foot, 16 by car). Total party kilometres 239 (19 on foot, 220 by car).

Red-throated loon 2; American black duck 2; **King eider 1**; Oldsquaw 10; White-winged scoter 3; Common goldeneye 7; Bufflehead 6; Common merganser 1; Red-breasted merganser 10; Bald eagle 1; Sharp-shinned hawk 2; **Broad-winged hawk 1**; Red-tailed hawk 4; Spruce grouse 2; Ruffed grouse 4; Common black-headed gull 28; Bonaparte's gull 1; Herring gull 235; Dovekie 18; Common murre 1; Rock dove 1; Mourning dove 2; Downy woodpecker 1; Hairy woodpecker 1; Gray jay 7; Blue jay 19; American crow 74; Common raven 10; Black-capped chickadee 61; Boreal chickadee 18; Red-breasted nuthatch 1; Brown creeper 1; Northern shrike 1; European starling 100; **Dickcissel 1**; American tree sparrow 7; Song sparrow 4; Dark-eyed junco 6; Snow bunting 3; Brown-headed cowbird 6; Purple finch 13; American goldfinch 160; Evening grosbeak 120; House sparrow 40.

**Total species 43, about 995 individuals.** Aloysius Burke, Donnie Campbell, Floyd Carter, Shelly Carter, Billy Digout (compiler), Frances Digout, George Digout, Murdock Digout, Candace Fougere, Eva Landry, George Landry, Jack MacNeil, Keats Landry, Katherine Robertson, Betty Rogers, Jeannie Shermerhorn, Ronola Stone, Amy Vanderhoeden, Melvin White.

**SHUBENACADIE**, Dec. 18; 7:00AM to 4:00PM. Temp. -12 to -1C. Wind N 5-15kmph. Snow cover 1-2cm. Still water frozen, moving water partly open. Skies clear all day. 28 field observers in 11 parties, 16 at feeders, .5 hours and 10km owling. Total party hours 53 (40 on foot, 13 by car). Total party kilometres 465.5 (76.5 on foot, 389 by car).

Canada goose 6; Green-winged teal 1; American black duck 24; Mallard 11; Common merganser 105; Bald eagle 27; Sharp-shinned hawk 2; Northern goshawk 1; Red-tailed hawk 2; Ring-necked pheasant 17; Ruffed grouse 11; Ring-billed gull 6; Herring gull 149; Great black-backed gull 19; Rock dove 177; Mourning dove 116; Great horned owl 1; Barred owl 1; Downy woodpecker 19; Hairy woodpecker 21; Black-backed woodpecker 1; Pileated woodpecker 5; Gray jay 15; Blue jay 297; American crow 823; Common raven 121; Black-capped chickadee

375; Boreal chickadee 34; Red-breasted nuthatch 54; White-breasted nuthatch 1; Brown creeper 2; Golden-crowned kinglet 58; American robin 1; Cedar waxwing 2; Northern shrike 1; European starling 1243; Dickcissel 1; American tree sparrow 30; Song sparrow 1; White-throated sparrow 1; Dark-eyed junco 81; Red-winged blackbird 1; Common grackle 11; Brown-headed cowbird 1; Pine grosbeak 3; Purple finch 21; White-winged crossbill 65; Pine siskin 16; American goldfinch 275; Evening grosbeak 456; House sparrow 79.

**Total species 51, about 4791 individuals.** (CP. Northern mockingbird) Barbara Aitken, Mark Anthony, Fred Ashley, Douggie Back, Barbara Bower, Terry Carroll, Gretchen Dawe, Ivan DeLong, Nancy Ettinger, Herb Fassett, Brenda Grantmyre, Glennys Hutton, Joan Jarvis, Herman and Rikki Juurlink, Rosemary and Trevor Lloyd, Allan MacDonald, Anne MacDonald, Harry MacDonald, Pam MacInnis, Scott MacKay, Joan MacKay, Joan Mackey, Roslyn MacPhee (compiler), Elaine MacCarthy, Reg McCurdy, Muriel Miller, Pat Moore, Eldon Pace, Jacques Perron, Anne Perry, Christine Queripel, Judy Queripel, Nancy Reid, Jessie Sinclair, Rosalie Stewart, Connie Stott, Audrey and Lorne Tyler, Linda Vaughan, Roger Wardrope, Lorne Weaver, Art and Myrna West, Peggy Williams.

**SPRINGVILLE, Dec. 17; 7:30AM to 4:30PM. Temp. -6 to 0C. Wind NE 15kmph. No snow 2cm. Still water frozen, moving water partly open. A.M. partly clear, P.M. clear. 8 field observers in 4-5 parties, 1 hour and 30 kilometres owling. Total party hours 34.5 (4.5 on foot, 30 by car). Total party kilometres 423.5 (11.5 on foot, 412 by car).**

American black duck 4; Bald eagle 11; Sharp-shinned hawk 2; Northern goshawk 1; Red-tailed hawk 2; Ring-necked pheasant 2; Ruffed grouse 3; Ring-billed gull 3; Herring gull 54; Iceland gull 15; Great black-backed gull 4; Rock dove 566; Mourning dove 18; Barred owl 3; Downy woodpecker 13; Hairy woodpecker 15; Black-backed woodpecker 2; Northern flicker 2; Pileated woodpecker 3; Gray jay 17; Blue jay 109; American crow 408; Common raven 37; Black-capped chickadee 288; Boreal chickadee 17; Red-breasted nuthatch 37; White-breasted nuthatch 1; Brown creeper 2; **Marsh wren 2**; Golden-crowned kinglet 26; American robin 2; European starling 1020; **Common yellowthroat 1**; American tree sparrow 58; Song sparrow 3; Swamp sparrow 3; White-throated sparrow 1; Dark-eyed junco 38; Common grackle 4; Purple finch 12; White-winged crossbill 17; Common redpoll 3; Pine siskin 7; American goldfinch 184; Evening grosbeak 200; House sparrow 95.

**Total species 46, about 3315 individuals.** Calvin Brennan (compiler), Donna, Harry, Jean and Tim Brennan, Frank Calder, Dorothy and Jim Chisholm, Kaye Davidson, Marjorie Dewar, Claire and Ralph Foote, Margaret Kenney, Randy Lauff, David MacLennan, Ken McKenna, Helen Melanson, Fred and Sally Polley, Rita Young.

**STRAIT OF CANSO, Dec. 29; 8:00AM to 4:50PM. Temp. 2C. Wind SSE/SSW 9-50kmph. Snow cover 5cm. Still water frozen, moving water partly open. A.M. Cloudy, light rain, P.M. partly clear. 9 field observers in 4-5 parties, 13 at feeders, 1.25 hours and 13 km. owling. Total party hours 25.5 (6.25 on foot, 19.25 by car). Total party kilometres 346.8 (12.5 on foot, 334.3 by car).**

Common loon 5; Horned grebe 1; Red-necked grebe 1; Northern gannet 2; Great cormorant 2; Double-crested cormorant 1; American black duck 69; Greater scaup 5; Common eider 2; **Harlequin duck 2**; Oldsquaw 106; Common goldeneye 59; Bufflehead 12; Hooded merganser 1; Common merganser 30; Red-breasted merganser 72; Bald eagle 3; Ruffed grouse 9; Common black-headed gull 3; Bonaparte's gull 17; Ring-billed gull 2; Herring gull 73; Iceland gull 117; Great black-backed gull 27; gull species 7; Dovekie 10; Black guillemot 30; Rock dove 84; Mourning dove 26; Great horned owl 1; Belted kingfisher 1; Downy woodpecker 2; Hairy woodpecker 1; Gray jay 9; Blue jay 36; American crow 167; Common raven 10; Black-capped chickadee 94; Boreal

chickadee 39; Golden-crowned kinglet 30; American robin 4; Northern shrike 1; European starling 149; American tree sparrow 13; Song sparrow 2; White-throated sparrow 5; Dark-eyed junco 15; Pine grosbeak 5; Pine siskin 6; American goldfinch 52; House sparrow 44.

**Total species 50, about 1467 individuals.** (CP. Pileated woodpecker, Chipping sparrow, Snow bunting, Purple finch, Evening grosbeak). Calvin Brennan, Marie Bolger, Mary Hemmings, Lorraine, Peter and Sean Hope, Keith Jensen, David Johnson, Randy Lauff, Ken McKenna, Rilla MacLean, Jim Meagher, Tom Meagher, Kerstin Mueller (compiler), Gillis Strachan, Lora Swain, Betty Talbot, Roy Welsh.

**TRURO**, Dec. 29; 8:00AM to 4:30PM. Temp. 0 to 5C. Wind SW 10kmph. Snow cover 5cm. Still water frozen, moving water partly frozen. A.M. Cloudy, light rain, P.M. cloudy. 8 field observers in 5 parties, 5 at feeders. Total party hours 39.5 (25.5 on foot, 14 by car). Total party kilometres 338 (40 on foot, 298 by car).

American black duck 268; Mallard 304; Bald eagle 4; Red-tailed hawk 1; Gray partridge 21; Ring-necked pheasant 7; Ring-billed gull 2; Herring gull 1206; Iceland gull 5; Great black-backed gull 434; Rock dove 169; Mourning dove 14; **Red-headed woodpecker 1**; Downy woodpecker 8; Hairy woodpecker 1; Pileated woodpecker 1; Horned lark 30; Gray jay 1; Blue jay 47; American crow 473; Common raven 15; Black-capped chickadee 170; Boreal chickadee 12; Red-breasted nuthatch 2; Brown creeper 1; **Carolina wren 1**; Golden-crowned kinglet 43; European starling 593; American tree sparrow 11; Savannah sparrow 2; White-throated sparrow 1; Dark-eyed junco 40; Purple finch 3; White-winged crossbill 40; Common redpoll 1; Pine siskin 7; American goldfinch 102; Evening grosbeak 140; House sparrow 22.

**Total species 40, about 4210 individuals.** Ross Baker, Allen Clark, Linda and Ross Hall (compiler), Bernard Jackson, Margaret LeMaistre, Marilyn MacWha, James Murray, Bruce and Rene Smith, Francis Spalding, Harold Stewart, Leroy Tedford.

**WOLFVILLE**, Dec. 17; 7:30AM to 5:00PM. Temp. -6 to -3C. Wind light, variable. No snow cover. Still water frozen, moving water partly frozen. A.M. cloudy, P.M. clear. 44 field observers in 22-28 parties, 80 at feeders. Total party hours 184.5 (106.5 on foot, 78 by car). Total party kilometres 970 (166.5 on foot, 803.5 by car).

Red-throated loon 1; Common loon 2; **Red-necked grebe 1**; Great blue heron 1; Canada goose 231; Green-winged teal 2; American black duck 2757; Mallard 51; MallardxBlack duck hybrid 1; Oldsquaw 1; Black scoter 1; Surf scoter 2; White-winged scoter 17; Common goldeneye 3; Common merganser 29; Bald eagle 393; Northern harrier 17; Sharp-shinned hawk 9; Northern goshawk 3; Red-tailed hawk 119; Rough-legged hawk 22; Merlin 2; Ring-necked pheasant 167; Ruffed grouse 8; **Killdeer 1**; Ring-billed gull 48; Herring gull 20932; Iceland gull 11; Glaucous gull 1; Great black-backed gull 5736; Rock dove 916; Mourning dove 711; Downy woodpecker 78; Hairy woodpecker 26; Northern flicker 21; Pileated woodpecker 10; Horned lark 66; Gray jay 3; Blue jay 586; American crow 26040; Common raven 395; Black-capped chickadee 994; Boreal chickadee 7; Red-breasted nuthatch 109; White-breasted nuthatch 26; Brown creeper 2; Golden-crowned kinglet 97; **Ruby-crowned kinglet 3**; American robin 50; Northern mockingbird 2; Bohemian waxwing 7; Cedar waxwing 6; Northern shrike 2; European starling 25827; Yellow-rumped warbler 2; **Pine warbler 1**; **Palm warbler 1**; **Common yellowthroat 1**; **Yellow-breasted chat 1**; **Northern cardinal 3**; American tree sparrow 352; Savannah sparrow 27; Song sparrow 177; **Lincoln's sparrow 1**; Swamp sparrow 13; White-throated sparrow 23; **White-crowned sparrow 1**; Dark-eyed junco 318; Red-winged blackbird 5; Common grackle 2; Brown-headed cowbird 3; **Northern oriole 1**; Purple finch 18; Red crossbill 7; White-winged crossbill 16; Common redpoll 11; Pine siskin 38; American goldfinch 1182; Evening grosbeak 288; House sparrow 1412.

**Total species 79, about 90462 individuals.** (CP. Gray partridge,

Barred owl, House finch). Agar Adamson, George and Margaret Alliston, Jim and Judy Amos, Adeline and Gordon Bayne, Joanne and Ron Bezanson, Sherman Bleakney, Sherman Boates, Larry Bogan, Soren Bondrup-Neilsen, Joe and Pat Clifford, Lana Churchill, Ed and Peggy Connelly, Graham and Iv Daborn, Debbie and Jim Daigle, Gail and Pat Davis, Ed and Ev Eagles, Joan Eagles, Mark and Paul Elderkin, Wendy Elliott, Bob Flecknell, George Forsyth, Harold Forsyth, Margaret Forsythe, Jamie and Merritt Gibson, Barbara Graham-Stephen, Ed and Robie Hancock, Eileen Harris, Sharon Harris, Lorna Hart, Blanche Healey, Tom Herman, Ken and Maxine Hill, Bob Horne, Isobel Horton, John Horton, Winnie Horton, J.P. Huang, Douglas Jackson, Peter Jackson, Shirley Jackson, Dave Johnson, Dave Jones, Ann and Jerry Karttunen, Daniel Kehler, Pat Kelly, Fulton Lavender, Angus MacLean (compiler), Stella MacLean, Ron Margeson, Don and Sheila Marston, Bill Martell and Pat Martell, Bernard and Eleanor Mason, Clint McInnes, Pat MacLeod, Pam Mills, Randy Milton, Terry Murphy, Gary and Janet Ness, Andy and Linda Nette, Huey Nickerson, Nancy Nickerson, Pam Nickerson, Mike O'Brien, Linda and Terry Pearson, Caroline and Terry Power, Mary Pratt, Ladny Richmond, Stan Reigs, Kathy Schaffner, Rhonda and Steve Schofield, Jack and Ruth Scott, Mabel Sheffield, Steve Slipp, Ada Smith, Peter Smith, Richard Stern, John Sutcliffe, Brad Sweet, Miriam Tams, Jim Taylor, Bill and Brenda Thexton, Dianne Thorpe, Jean Timpa, David Tracey, Gerry Trueman, Gordon and Judy Tufts, Deanna and Eva Urban, Gertrude Waseem, Sherman Williams, Jim Wolford, Frank Woolaver, Don Wright, Elizabeth Wright, Irene Wright, Jeni Wright, Barry and Betty Yoell.

**YARMOUTH**, Dec. 18; 8:00AM to 5:00PM. Temp. 0 to 3C. Wind ENE 0-12kmph. No snow cover. Still water frozen, moving water open. A.M. cloudy, P.M. rain. 16 field observers in 6 parties, 14 at feeders. Total party hours 56 (8.75 on foot, 29.75 by car). Total party kilometres 514 (20 on foot, 494 by car).

Red-throated loon 1; Common loon **24**; Horned grebe 3; Red-necked grebe 10; Great cormorant 2; Great blue heron 2; Canada goose 324; Green-winged teal 3; American black duck 874; Mallard 213; **American wigeon 2**; **Ring-necked duck 1**; **Tufted duck 1**; Common eider 29; Oldsquaw 189; Surf scoter 1; White-winged scoter 2; Common goldeneye 134; Bufflehead 53; Hooded merganser 4; Common merganser 12; Red-breasted merganser **139**; Northern harrier 3; Sharp-shinned hawk 1; Red-tailed hawk 1; Rough-legged hawk 2; American kestrel 2; Ring-necked pheasant 6; Ruffed grouse 5; Killdeer 4; Ring-billed gull 126; Herring gull 1856; Iceland gull 18; Glaucous gull 2; Great black-backed gull 997; Dovekie 3; Black guillemot 4; Rock dove 443; Mourning dove 87; Barred owl 2; Downy woodpecker 6; Hairy woodpecker 3; Northern flicker 17; Horned lark 89; Blue jay 99; American crow 277; Common raven 42; Black-capped chickadee 174; Boreal chickadee 4; Red-breasted nuthatch 7; Golden-crowned kinglet 21; American robin 214; Northern mockingbird 2; European starling **5203**; Yellow-rumped warbler 7; **Northern cardinal 6**; American tree sparrow 16; Song sparrow 36; White-throated sparrow 71; Dark-eyed junco 63; Snow bunting 7; Common grackle 2; Brown-headed cowbird 105; American goldfinch 215; Evening grosbeak 7; House sparrow 48.

**Total species 67, about 12338 individuals.** (CP. Bald eagle, Double-crested cormorant, Pileated woodpecker). Charlie Allen, Martin Bowler, Marilyn Burns, Elsie Crosby, Raymond d'Entremont, Ted D'Leon, Andrea Doherty, June Graves, John Green, Andre Haines, Helen and Hubert Hall, Phylliss Hayes, Carol Jacquard, Mary Morton, Dale Mullen, Ethelda Murphy, Marg Newell, Arthur Porter, Marcie Rogers, Barbara and Eric Ruff (compilers), Robin Rymer, Vera Sollows, Gerry Somers, John Terry, Jim Thibeau, John Wainwright, Grace Walker, Barbara White.

1994 Summary of Highest Counts of Individuals

The following list comprises of all 154 species seen during the 1994 Christmas Counts and where the highest number of these were recorded in the province.

There were four new species (emboldened with underline) added to the list this year, bringing the all-time provincial list to 243 plus 3 additional races. There were 29 Christmas Counts conducted, a decrease of one over last year. West Hants and Spry Bay were NOT run this year but we welcome Sable Island with compiler Andrew MacFarlane this year. In addition to the four new species, there are species (emboldened) which broke or tied previous all-time high counts.

Red-throated loon 5 (Broad Cove, Port L'Hebert); Common loon 58 (Port L'Hebert); **Horned grebe 421** (Annapolis Royal); Red-necked Grebe 24 (Annapolis Royal); Northern gannet 9 (Cheticamp); Great cormorant 95 (Halifax West); **Double-crested cormorant 85** (Cape Sable Island); **American bittern 1** (Cape Sable Island); Great blue heron 5 (Cape Sable Island); **Brant 100** (Cape Sable Island); Canada goose 4200 (Halifax East); Green-winged teal 3 (Port L'Hebert, Yarmouth); **American black duck 2757** (Wolfville); **Mallard 304** (Truro); Northern pintail 5 (Economy); Gadwall 2 (Halifax West); American wigeon 6 (Halifax West); Ring-necked duck 1 (Yarmouth); **Tufted duck 1** (Yarmouth); **Greater scaup 2111** (Pictou Harbour); Lesser scaup 8 (Halifax East); Common eider 423 (Cape Sable Island); King eider 1 (St. Peter's); Harlequin duck 2 (Strait of Canso, Cape Breton Highlands, Halifax West); Oldsquaw 4344 (Annapolis Royal); Black scoter 27 (Port L'Hebert); Surf scoter 110 (Bridgetown); White-winged scoter 358 (Bridgetown); Common goldeneye 385 (Pictou Harbour); Barrow's Goldeneye 5 (Bridgetown); Bufflehead 576 (Annapolis Royal); Hooded merganser 4 (Yarmouth); Common merganser 464 (Pictou Harbour); Red-breasted merganser 352 (Pictou Harbour); Ruddy duck 1 (Cape Sable Island); **Bald eagle 393** (Wolfville); **Northern harrier 17** (Wolfville); Sharp-shinned hawk 9 (Wolfville); **Northern goshawk 3** (Wolfville); **Broad-winged hawk 1** (St. Peter's); Red-tailed hawk 119 (Wolfville); Rough-legged hawk 22 (Wolfville); American kestrel 2 (Halifax East, Yarmouth, Merlin 4 (Cape Sable Island); **Peregrine falcon 1** (Glace Bay); **Chukar 1, escape** (Annapolis Royal); Gray partridge 21 (Truro); Ring-necked pheasant 167 (Wolfville); Spruce grouse 3 (Cape Breton Highlands); Ruffed grouse 21 (Economy); **American coot 2** (Sable Island); Black-bellied plover 5 (Cape Sable Island); **Semipalmated plover 1** (Cape Sable Island); Killdeer 4 (Yarmouth); Greater yellowlegs 1 (Cape Sable Island); Red knot 9 (Cape Sable Island); Sanderling 113 (Cape Sable Island); Purple sandpiper 118 (Halifax West); Dunlin 6 (Cape Sable Island); dowitcher species 1 (Cape Sable Island); Common Snipe 1 (Port L'Hebert); Common black-headed gull 28 (St. Peter's); Bonaparte's gull 32 (Antigonish); Ring-billed gull 223 (Halifax East); Herring gull 20932 (Wolfville); Iceland gull 264 (Glace Bay); Lesser black-backed gull 2 (Halifax West); Glaucous gull 26 (Cheticamp); **Great black-backed gull 5736** (Wolfville); Black-legged kittiwake 260 (Sable Island); Dovekie 50 (Cape Breton Highlands); Common murre 1 (Cape Breton Highlands, St. Peter's); Thick-billed murre 29 (Annapolis Royal); Razorbill 2 (Annapolis Royal); Black guillemot 56 (Cape Sable Island); Rock dove 916 (Wolfville); Mourning dove 711 (Wolfville); Great horned owl 1 (Advocate/Apple River, Economy, Margaree, Shubenacadie, Strait of Canso); Snowy owl 1 (Cape Sable Island); Barred owl 4 (Bridgetown, Caledonia); Short-eared owl 1 (Amherst, Cape Sable Island); Belted kingfisher 2 (Pictou Harbour, Pubnico); **Red-headed woodpecker 1** (Halifax West, Truro); **Downy woodpecker 78** (Wolfville); Hairy woodpecker 26 (Wolfville); Black-backed woodpecker 2 (Springville); Northern flicker 21 (Wolfville); Pileated Woodpecker 10 (Wolfville);

**Western kingbird 1** (Halifax West); Horned lark 89 (Yarmouth); Gray jay 17 (Springville); Blue jay 586 (Wolfville); American crow 26040 (Wolfville); Common raven 395 (Wolfville); Black-capped chickadee 994 (Wolfville); Boreal chickadee 45 (Halifax West); Red-breasted nuthatch 109 (Wolfville); **White-breasted nuthatch 26** (Wolfville); Brown creeper 6 (Broad Cove); **Carolina wren 1** (Truro); Marsh wren 2 (Springville); Golden-crowned kinglet 97 (Wolfville); Ruby-crowned kinglet 3 (Halifax West, Wolfville); American robin 306 (Cape Sable Island); Gray catbird 1 (Cape Sable Island); Northern mockingbird 3 (Halifax West); Brown thrasher 1 (Pubnico); Water pipit 5 (Cape Sable Island); Bohemian waxwing 142 (Cape Breton Highlands); Cedar waxwing 39 (Halifax West); Northern shrike 2 (Amherst, Eskasoni, Wolfville); European starling 25827 (Wolfville); Orange-crowned warbler 1 (Halifax West, Port L'Hebert); **Nashville warbler 1** (Broad Cove); Yellow-rumped warbler 46 (Pubnico); **Hermit warbler 1** (Broad Cove); **Yellow-throated warbler 1** (Glace Bay); Pine warbler 2 (Antigonish); Palm warbler 6 (Halifax West); Common yellowthroat 1 (Cape Sable Island, Springville, Wolfville); **Wilson's warbler 1** (Cape Sable Island); Yellow-breasted chat 1 (Halifax West, Wolfville); **Northern cardinal 6** (Yarmouth); **Rose-breasted grosbeak 1** (Port L'Hebert); Dickcissel 2 (Antigonish, Pubnico); **American tree sparrow 352** (Wolfville); Chipping sparrow 1 (Brier Island, Port L'Hebert); Savannah sparrow 27 (Wolfville); Savannah (Ipswich) sparrow 18 (Sable Island); **Grasshopper sparrow 1** (Economy); Sharp-tailed sparrow 1 (Cape Sable Island); Fox sparrow 1 (Antigonish, Port L'Hebert); Song sparrow 177 (Wolfville); **Lincoln's sparrow 1** (Wolfville); Swamp sparrow 13 (Wolfville); White-throated sparrow 103 (Port L'Hebert); White-crowned sparrow 1 (Pictou Harbour, Wolfville); Dark-eyed junco 318 (Wolfville); Lapland longspur 11 (Glace Bay); Snow bunting 661 (Amherst); Red-winged blackbird 5 (Wolfville); Eastern meadowlark 1 (Margaree); Rusty blackbird 1 (Antigonish); Common grackle 11 (Shubenacadie); Brown-headed cowbird 105 (Advocate/Apple River); Northern oriole 2 (Pubnico); Pine grosbeak 33 (Economy); Purple finch 53 (Broad Cove); House finch 1 (Pictou Harbour); Red crossbill 56 (Halifax East); White-winged crossbill 209 (Economy); Common redpoll 16 (Cape Breton Highlands); Pine siskin 58 (Antigonish); American goldfinch 1185 (Amherst); Evening grosbeak 456 (Shubenacadie); House sparrow 1412 (Amherst).

David Currie  
Francis Spalding

## CONTEST

A LOGO is needed for the Nova Scotia Christmas Counts. It should be rendered in black and white and fit inside a square 3" x 3" (7.5 x 7.5 cm).

A prize will be awarded to the designer of the winning entry. Enter as many designs as you wish.

Address them to David Currie,  
52 Dorothy Crescent  
Timberlea, N.S. B3T 1E2

### DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES JULY 15, 1995.

The winner will be announced and the design used in the Fall Flyer









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NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS  
A Publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society

Volume 37 Number 2

April 1995

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

ISSN 0383-9567

Publications Mail  
Reg. No. 4628  
Published four times a year