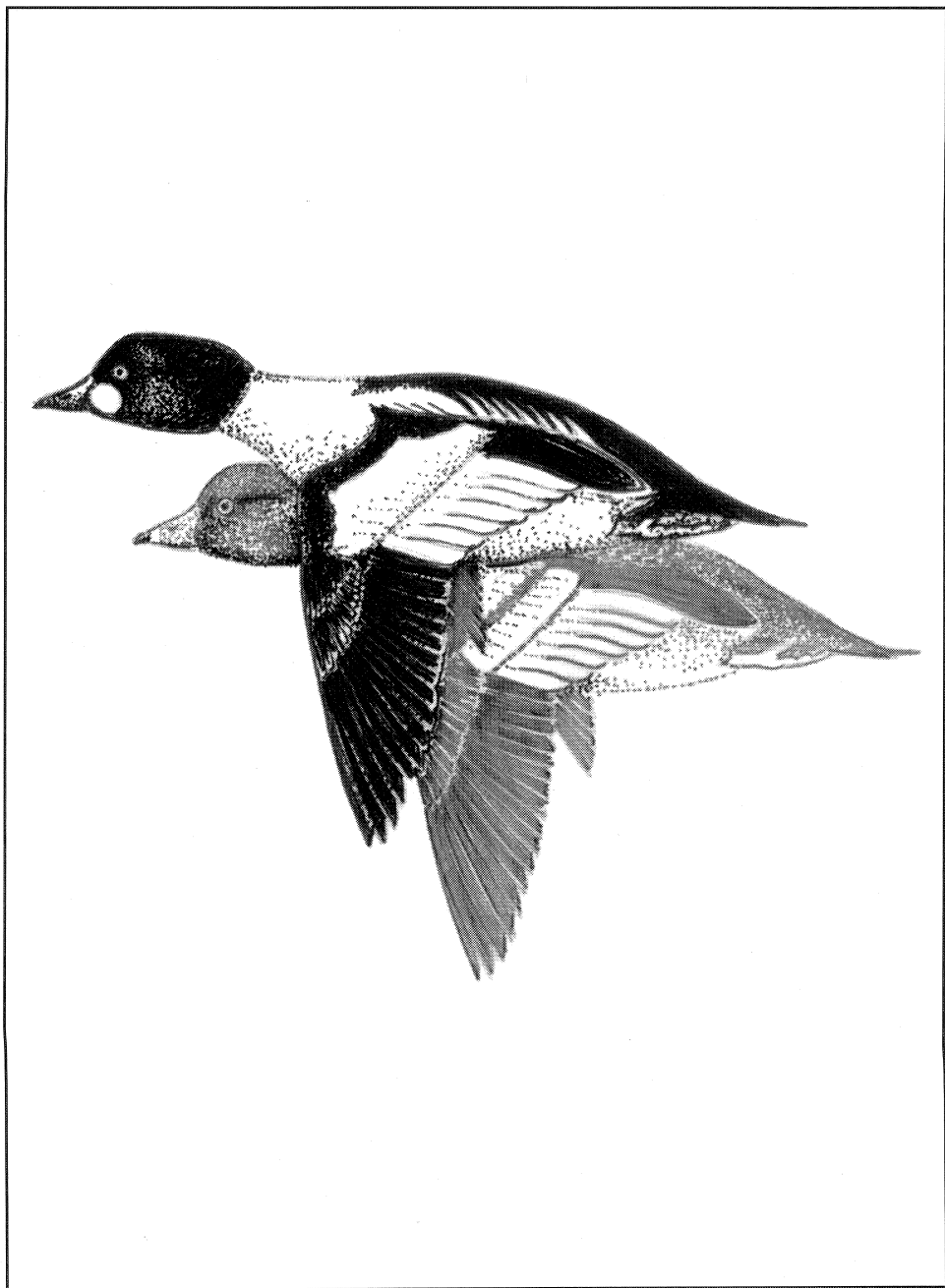


# Nova Scotia Birds



January 1996

NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS  
A Publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society

Volume 38 Number 1

January 1996

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 Happy  
 New Year!  
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FROM YOUR  
 1995-1996 EXECUTIVE



Left to right: Bob Dickie (Past. Pres.), Chris Field (VP), Doug Roy (Director),  
 Wendie Tay (Sect'y), Shirley Cohrs (Editor), Lisé Cohrs (Pres.), Gisele d'Entremont  
 (Director), Bill Caudle (Treas.). Missing; Shirley Brotheers (Director), Christine Ross  
 (Membership Sect'y) Photo--Peter Payzant.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This year we had a very active and enthusiastic executive. Early on in our agenda we had to find a new Slide Collection Coordinator and Program Director for our monthly meetings. Without a lot of fuss, two of our new directors voluntarily took on these tasks. Lorne Tyler became our new Slide Collection Coordinator and Gisele d'Entremont our new Program Director.

Gisele has done an excellent job this year in providing our members both varied programs and interesting speakers. She is always open to new ideas for speakers, so if any of you have some, please feel free to let her know. Lorne had done extensive work in organizing the slide collection, finding out what pictures were lacking, duplicates we had, and constructing a lovely wooden carrying case for the slide boxes. The Bird Society purchased 69 pelagic bird slides from Vireo Co. in the USA, financed by the Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund. This will greatly help that fairly non-existent section of our slide collection. I would like to thank Linda and Peter Payzant for their donations of slides to our collection throughout the year—especially the seabirds. The executive also agreed to have a sign-out sheet for the slides borrowed from the collection to keep track of their whereabouts.

### Membership and mailing

Our Membership Secretary has been very proactive this year in trying to gain new memberships and retain old ones. A questionnaire went out to members who had not renewed their memberships. Again Peter Payzant looked after entering all membership information into our data base, provided us with mailing labels to ensure we all get our copies of **Nova Scotia Birds**. I would like to thank Brad Amirault who very capably looked after the mailing of our magazine and has the supreme capability of understanding and working with our Canadian Postal system.

### Editor

Shirley Cohrs has agreed to continue in her capacity as Editor of the **Nova Scotia Birds** for another year. The dedication and endless effort she puts into every issue does not go unnoticed, and I think I would be correct in saying that our members greatly appreciate all the imagination, design and expertise she devotes to the magazine. Thank you very much Shirley.

### Field Trip Coordinator

This year Angus MacLean retired as Field Trip Coordinator in June. The executive decided to ask two very keen birders and familiar faces at our monthly meetings to take over this important job. Our thanks go out to Kevin Tutt and Christine Cornell, who agreed to take on this responsibility. We all look forward to upcoming field trips, so if anyone would like to lead one or has ideas about an area for one, please feel free to suggest these ideas to our new coordinators.

### Public awareness of the Society

This year the executive worked very hard on improving public awareness of the Nova Scotia Bird Society. Bill Caudle and Christine Ross (our Treasurer and our Membership Secretary) decided it would be a good idea to have sweatshirts available promoting the Bird Society. A mock-up was made and Bob Dickie devoted his artistic talents to come up with the design. We had the sweatshirts made and had them available at our meetings and various other functions. They have been a success.

Last November, Doug Roy, one of our new directors, suggest that the Bird Society have a booth at the Boat Show. Doug volunteered his time to organize, coordinate the booth set-up and get volunteer members to man the booth.

On April 9, NSBS had a table set up at the Welcome Wagon Showcase, held for

Seniors in Halifax. Christine Ross, Bill Caudle and John Cohrs looked after this event. Some 40 people filled out ballots to win a **Birding Nova Scotia** and follow-up letters were sent out to all the names in the ballot box with the hope of gaining new members. Thanks to all these people.

Christine Ross and Bill Caudle gave a talk on birds and birding to the children of the Montessorri Children's Home which was very well received by the children and teacher. It was also rewarding to Bill and Christine.

Gisele informed the executive that there would be a Sportsman Fair at the West Pubnico School and Bill Caudle and Christine Ross set up a booth to acquaint the people of the area with the Bird Society and birding. The Society was well received and much interest generated.

So, the Bird Society got around this year. The positive response, memberships generated and the increased exposure have been good for the Society. Keep up the good work members.

#### Chat Line

This year the Chat Line was again looked after by Blake Maybank and sponsors help to pay for the cost of the line. Peter Payzant organized a new tape machine at no cost to the Society as the old one was inaudible. Thank you Blake and Peter.

#### Business of the Executive 1995

It was decided by the Executive to continue having at least one, if not two, of our monthly meetings out of the metro area. With that in mind Gisele d'Entremont contacted Joan Czapalay in Barrington to arrange for a meeting to be held there in the spring. It is a go and the date will be announced in the magazine.

Again this year we have had great success in the sale of **Birding Nova Scotia**. The Executive is considering another printing in January, since there are only about 500 copies and subsequent printings will be cheaper since everything is camera ready. Many orders were taken by ABA Birding sales and the Book Room.

Of prime interest to the Society this year was the status of Hartlen's Point owned by DND. The President sent many letters to the Rt. Hon. David Dingwall of Supply and Services. The Rt. Hon. Sheila Copps, Minister of the Environment and the Hon. David Collenette, Minister of National Defense. We have been assured by mail that the Bird Society will be kept privy to any decisions being made regarding the sale of this property by the regional officials. I would urge you as members of this Society or on your own, to write individually to the Minister of the Environment, Ms. Sheila Copps and to Minister of Supply and Services Mr. David Dingwall. Hartlen's Point is a valuable stopping station for migrants and a diverse ecosystem for both plants and animals.

Chris Field has agreed to continue as our Master of Ceremonies at our monthly meetings. Any announcements you want mentioned at our meetings may be given to him beforehand. Thanks Chris.

Thanks go to Bob Dickie, who in rain, sleet, snow and sun, went and picked up the Society's mail from the Museum. Bob also looked after our inventory of supplies.

I would like to give a special thanks to Lorne Tyler for looking after our slide collection this year. He took the job seriously and put in many hours cataloging and listing pictures required. Unfortunately, he will be stepping down from this position and as a director due to illness. Thank you Lorne for all your efforts.

I wish to thank our Secretary, Inez Roberts, who took our minutes for the past year. Inez will be retiring from our Executive this year, but we hope she will continue with the lovely refreshments she puts on at our monthly meetings. Sincere thanks also go to Tony Robinson, our Honourary Solicitor, and to James Morrow, our Honourary Auditor. My eternal thanks, gratitude and respect go to Bill Caudle, Christine Ross, Shirley Cohrs, Doug Roy, Gisele d'Entremont, Chris Field and Bob Dickie, who have all agreed to stay on the Executive for another year. I also wish to thank the new people who have volunteered their time and effort to serve on our Executive.

I have really been blessed this year to have such a keen, hard-working, enthusiastic and dependable Executive, who have made my job easier and have given invaluable input into our meetings. Thank you all very much from a fortunate President.

Lise A. Cohrs



A photo of the group on the field trip "Birds of King's County", June 10, 1995. From left to right: David Bunn, Sheila Bunn, Judy Tufts, Angus MacLean, Peter Payzant, Linda Payzant, Claire Diggins. Photo, Joan Czapalay.

## BIRD REPORTS

**Editor's Note:** Before the 1995 Fall Migration Report we bring you the information missing from Summer 1994, due to the ill health of the then Editor. Sylvia Fullerton has undertaken to put these reports together for publication. Please note that abbreviations and corresponding observer's names are listed in *Nova Scotia Birds* Vol. 38, No. 1--January 1995.

## FULMARS TO CORMORANTS

Small numbers of NORTHERN FULMARS were reported off Nova Scotia this fall. These include the 25 which David Young saw off Little Harbour, Shel. Co., on Sept. 25, attracted no doubt by the herring seiners nearby. Singles were seen on Sept. 30 and Oct. 1 off Seal Island (BLM); 1 was seen on a Brier Is. whale-watch on Oct. 6 (FLS); farther north 50 were counted off Port Morien on Oct. 25 (AMu, CM).

There were few reports of CORY'S SHEARWATERS. Several were seen on Georges Bank from Aug. 5 through October (RSD). Janos Olah and his son, marine biologists on a visit from Szarvas, Hungary, described a mixed group of 18 GREATER, 1 SOOTY and 3 CORY'S which they saw on Aug. 18, half-way between Digby and St. John, from the **Princess of Acadia** ferry. The birds were sitting on the water at a distance of 20 m from the bow and they identified the Cory's by the yellowish bills, the greyish backs merging with the white throats, the absence of black caps and the fact that they were larger than the Greaters. Cory's are more common in the warmer waters south of Fundy, but odd birds like these are often seen here in summer. Out on Sable Is. 4 Cory's were seen on Sept. 4 (ZOL). Raymond d'Entremont caught the start of the shearwater migration with 2000 GREATER SHEARWATERS on Brown's Bank on July 18. They were certainly abundant in all the usual offshore locations. For example off Brier Is., hundreds were seen on Aug. 2; 1800 on Aug. 7 and up to 1500 on Sept. 11 (JWW, BLM, AAM, SMM); 100 were counted on Oct. 6 (FLS). Off of Seal Is., there were 1500 on Sept. 30 flying in a southerly direction out of the Bay of Fundy (BLM); David Young had 40 off Little Harbour on Sept. 25; 300 were off Flint Is. on Sept. 27 (AMu). IAM went out to the edge of Brown's on Oct. 19 and Greaters were still going by after several days of NW winds. And finally, from the west tip of Sable Is. AFM counted 75 on Oct. 23, SOOTY SHEARWATERS were far fewer as is usual. Off of Brier 10 were reported on Aug. 2 (JWW); 15 on Aug. 6 (BLM) and 20+ on Sept. 11 (AAM, SMM, BLM); 3 were off Seal on Sept. 30; 1 was off Scatarie Is. on Oct. 21 (AMu). MANX SHEARWATERS were scarce: from Brier 2 were seen on July 16 by Roger and Andrew Foxall; 1 on Aug. 2 (JWW); 3 on Aug. 26, a surprising 100+ on Sept. 11 (AAM, SMM); from Sable Is. 3 very late birds were seen on Oct. 27 feeding among kittiwakes at the west tip (ZOL). Zoe Lucas, who is lucky enough to spend her summers on the beaches of Sable, did a count of the not-so-lucky oiled, mostly-long-dead, birds she found there: 261 Greaters, 12 Sooties, 1 Cory's.

The **LITTLE SHEARWATER** specimen of Sept. 1896 from Sable Is. is our only confirmed record of this species. In Sept. 1990, Dick Brown saw two 'probables', one on Georges and the other on Brown's. Now, however, we have the first satisfactory description of one in the field from two competent observers, William Townsend and Charles Whitney. The sighting, at very close range of 100 feet was made on Oct. 8 from the **Bluenose** and the observers noted that the "flight pattern, speed of wing beats and overall appearance were not in keeping with a Manx." They observed the diagnostic pattern of white on the face, together with the bird's size, dusky upper surfaces and outlined underwing surfaces. The conclude that it was the boydi subspecies although they do not mention dark undertail coverts.

If storm-petrels are as uncommon as the reports indicate their scarcity should have been noted but I suspect they're just too common to report. A LEACH'S STORM-PETREL was first reported off Brier Is. on Sept. 24 (RBS) and 5, together with 1 WILSON'S, were seen there on Oct. 18 during strong north-east winds (CGB). On the outer edge of Brown's Bank on Oct. 19, after several days of north-west wind, there were no storm-petrels at all, perhaps already long gone (IAM).

Two MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRDS were reported by Dave and Iris McCurdy (via IAM), on Sept. 14, on Brier Is., heading north past North Light. I include these for the record, although no confirming details were given, as they might have been the same two birds which were seen at Grand Manan several days later. The most recent sight record was in the fall of 1989, but this is becoming a species we should all look for after strong gales.

The NORTHERN GANNET migration was well reported beginning with 30+, mostly immatures, on Aug. 2 off of Brier Is. (JWW). From then on until mid-Oct. hundreds of birds were counted from Brier, Seal, Caribou Pt., Pt. Aconi and Green Bay. At the Canso Causeway on Nov. 15 AAM and SMM watched 30 or so Gannets feeding while at the same time 2 adult Bald Eagles tried to "pirate" their catch.

John and Shirley Cohrs watched 4 GREAT CORMORANTS flying in formation with a Double-crested at Green Bay on Oct. 29. They were able to note "not only the difference in size but in the case of the Greats to see the much larger head and heavier neck in proportion to the rest of the bird." The colony at Lingan boasted up to 98 birds this summer with 48 still present Oct. 31 (DBM). DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS seem to be thriving and southerly movements were well reported from Yarmouth to Sydney. The Cohrs counted 750 in two skeins flying off Cherry Hill on Oct. 12. From Grand Pré 65 were spotted, flying southwest on Oct. 20 (BBT).

#### PHALAROPES TO ALCIDS

We normally receive several reports of WILSON'S PHALAROPES each summer but this year we have only one, from Sable Is., a bird in residence from Aug. 25 to Sept. 2, where it was well out of its normal migratory range (ZOL). Both RED-NECKED and RED PHALAROPES were reported from Brier Is., from Aug. 2 to 26, consistent numbers of approximately 3000 Red-necked and 150 Reds were seen from whale-watching excursions (BLM, JWW, AAM, SMM). By Sept. 11, numbers were down to 250 Red-necked and 50 Reds (BLM). RSD reports that he saw very few phalaropes on Georges Bank this fall, counting only 200 Reds on Sept. 11.

We have a fair representation of jaeger sightings. No doubt a summering bird, 1 POMARINE was seen off Conrad's Beach on July 2, an adult, well described by Mike Heaney. Other reports include: 1 adult off Sable Is. on Sept. 1 (ZOL); 1 off Brier Is. on Sept. 24 (RBS); 2 off Seal Is. on Sept. 30 (BLM) and finally 2 seen 65 miles south of Cane Sable on Oct. 19 (IAM). A summering or early migrating PARASITIC JAEGER was seen from North Light, Brier Is., on Aug. 6. It was an immature, dark phase bird, seen for several minutes as it pursued Herring Gulls (BLM). JWW and Tom Herman saw 2 harassing gulls off Brier on Sept. 21 and RBS saw another on Sept. 24. Our rare jaeger, the LONG-TAILED, was reported only twice: 2 Juveniles, one light-and one dark-phase, were seen from the southern tip of Sable Is. on July 30, thoroughly documented and photographed by ZOL; DHY saw 1 adult and 1 immature on Sept. 25, 9 miles off Little Harbour, but no further details were given.

RSD reports 1 GREAT SKUA on Georges Bank on Aug. 3 and several more into Oct., the last one seen on Oct. 21. We'll have to accept these as Skua, sp., however, as no corroborative details were given. Ian McLaren reminds us that most skuas seen from spring through summer are in fact SOUTH POLAR (NSB, v. 37, no. 3, July 1995, p. 29). ZOL saw what she believes to be a GREAT SKUA from the west tip of Sable Is. on Oct. 26; she had a good view and noted the overall reddish-cinnamon colour. She saw another off the eastern tip later in the day but could not determine species.



LAUGHING GULLS were well reported: an adult and an immature were in Bedford Basin on June 2 (FLL); 2 adults were at Cape Sable Is. from June 10-12 (MUN); 1 adult was seen at River Philip, Cumberland Co., from July 14-18 (KJM et al.); 3 immatures were on Georges Bank on Aug. 31, which must have been a pleasant sight as they were resting in the rigging of RSD's fishing vessel together with 2 Arctic Terns; lastly, 1 lingered at Cape Sable Is. from late Oct. to Nov. 12 (JCZ et al.).

COMMON BLACK-HEADED GULLS were widely reported: 3 wintering birds lingered at Antigonish Landing from June 19-26 (KJM); first fall sightings was 1 at Dominion Beach on Aug. 26 (DBM) and 1 at Conrad's Beach on Aug. 27 (BLM); 2 were at Powell's Pt. on Sept. 7 (KJM); 1 immature was at Crescent Beach on Sept. 10 and an adult on Oct. 22 (JSC); numbers were increasing by Oct. 29 when RBD and HBD saw 6 at Lawrencetown. Our only LITTLE GULLS this season appeared as usual in Pictou Co.: 1 immature at Big Is. on Nov. 1 and 1 adult at Pictou Causeway on Nov. 3 (CGB). BONAPARTE'S GULLS were primarily reported from the Northumberland Strait and Cape Breton area. Early sightings were probably non-breeders; 4 were seen at Sand Pt., Colchester Co., on June 4 by BLM et al.; 1 adult and 1 immature were seen at Powell's Pt. on July 5 (KJM); 15 were tallied at Port Howe in adult plumage on July 14 (JWT). The first migrants, 8 of them in mixed plumages, were seen at Pictou Lodge, "right on schedule," on Aug. 1 by C.W. Helleiner. By Sept. 26 numbers had increased to 50 at Dominion Beach (DBM) and by Nov. 4 350 were at Powell Pt. (CGB). Ken McKenna had "good numbers" at Merigomish Harbour on Nov. 13 feeding on Atlantic saury. On the Bay of Fundy side 1 immature was seen on Digby Gut on Nov. 11 and 10 at Marshalltown Marsh, Digby Co., on Nov. 18. BJA says he had never seen that many in that area before. It is hard to know what the status of the RING-BILLED GULL is in N.S. One or 2 seem to turn up regularly in most areas of the province but they are sparsely reported: 2 adults were seen at Economy on July 16, building to 60+ by July 23 (FLS); 90 were in North Sydney on Aug. 27 (DBM); 15 were taking their rest in the Dartmouth Memorial Cemetery on Sept. 13 (DHH); 15 were unusual on Cape Sable Is. on Oct. 24 (BLM et al.).

It is perhaps too soon to determine if the numbers of HERRING and GREAT-BLACK BACKED GULLS are diminishing because we have no adequate baseline for comparison. From my observations numbers of immatures are down and numbers of Great Black-backs seem to be increasing in relation to Herrings. Blake Maybank has been doing a rough census on Seal Is. and a continuation of this will be interesting: 1000 Herrings were tallied on Sept. 3 and 600 on Sept. 25; 750 Black-backs were present on Sept. 3 and 500 on Sept. 25. For comparison, IAM's count in late Aug. of 1993 turned up 1,300 Herrings and 480 Black-backs in the Lawrencetown area. JAC noted that Herring Gulls were not as plentiful as usual in the Sydney area. Donna Crosby reports that the Lockeport LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL which had been in residence for five winters failed to show up this fall. She wonders if it fell prey to old age or shortage of fish on which to dine. A late ICELAND GULL, an immature, was seen off Sable Is. on June 13 by ZOL. First wintering reports are of 6 first-year birds on Nov. 13 in the Merigomish Harbour area (KJM). A summering GLAUCOUS GULL, unaged, was exceptional on July 19 at Clark's Harbour (RBD,HBD). A second-winter bird was present sporadically on Sullivan's Pond from Oct. 12-31 (IAM,BJA).

We have no reports of BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKES from Cape Breton so presume the colonies there are holding their own. We see few in other areas in the summer and the only report was of 1 immature on Georges Bank on Aug. 31 (RSD). Later reports include: 100+ on Sept. 16 at the east tip of Sable Is. (ZOL); 2 on Oct. 1 en route to Seal Is. (BLM); an average of 27 each day from Oct. 23-31 from the west spit of Sable Is. (AFM).

Hardly a year goes by without at least one GULL-BILLED TERN sighting and this year is no exception; Joan Czapalay saw 1 from the P.E.I. ferry near the Cape Tormentine end of the crossing on July 28. It was an adult bird consorting with Bonaparte's Gulls. CASPIAN TERNS have become regular transients, particularly on the Northumberland shore: 2 were at Antigonish Landing on June 18 (KJM); 2 adults and 1 immature were seen from Sept. 5-24 at Big Island, Pictou Co. (KJM,CGB,AJV). Unfortunately, we have no reports on breeding success, or failure for that matter, of any of our ROSEATE TERN colonies, although unofficially they are purported to be doing well on Peter's Is. and off West Pubnico. Out on Sable Is. they barely seem to be holding their own, a minimum of 3 nesting pairs were found in June, where last year there were 4 (ZOL). The only FORSTER'S TERN was a juvenile seen on Nov. 14 at Crescent Beach by the Cohrs. It was observed both perched and in flight, "upper wings were uniformly pale except for a faint darkening of the secondaries, no dark carpal bar, dark nape with outline of ear patches, black bill rusty at the base, flight unlike that of the other terns" COMMON TERNS were well reported from all around the Province: included in these were 200 on Bowen and 70 on Ballast Islands on July 7 (KJM); 100 crossing to Seal Is. (BLM). ARTIC TERNS also seem to be doing well. Among the many reports are 75 at Port Felix on June 11 (BLM); 75 juveniles and 200 adults at Simon's Pt., Louisburg on July 28, sitting on the rocks and in the water, the juveniles being fed by the adults; 15 adults were present at the Glace Bay Sanctuary from June to July, on one occasion they were seen mobbing an adult Bald Eagle (DBM,JOM); and finally, 16 were on Georges on Sept. 13 (RSD). DOM and DBM describe an immature BLACK TERN seen on Aug. 18 at Port Morien. They watched it "fly-catching" and DOM notes that the rump and tail were paler than the brownish back, thus not ruling out the possibility of a White-winged Tern. This is certainly a possibility in light of sightings further south, but unfortunately, as the bird was seen at dusk and at a minimum distance of 50m this will have to remain conjecture. The only other report was 1 on Sept. 14 on Sable Is. (ZOL).

A visitor from Maine, Don Beimer, sends a surprising report of an adult BLACK SKIMMER feeding in Lower LaHave Bay, west of Lunenburg, on June 29. The bird was watched and convincingly described and he further adds, "the skimmer snagged a small fish which could be seen wriggling in its bill. Of interest to me was the fact that it did not immediately swallow the fish but, rather, carried it toward the far side of the bay. I realize that this species is a vagrant in N.S., but thought I would mention this behavior nonetheless as a possible indication of breeding." It has been many years since we have seen these visitors, usually storm-driven, and alas, there are no other reports.

Blaine and Kathleen Spicer rescued a stranded DOVEKIE from Violet Corbin's front lawn and released it at Apple River bar. When last seen it was happily swimming and diving. No other "wrecks" were reported and the only other reports were 25 seen on Oct. 21 off Scatarie Is. (AMu) One COMMON MURRE was sighted off Brier Is. on Sept. 11 (AAM,SMM). ZOL saw our only THICK-BILLED MURRE, 1 on June 16 and 2 on June 30 on the beach on Sable Is., both in breeding plumage and seemingly in good health. RAZORBILLS were few: 1 was seen on Aug. 8 in St. Mary's Bay (AAM,SMM,BLM). BLACK GUILLEMOTS were well reported from their nesting areas and along our rocky coasts: 100+ on June 5 at Noddy and Round Islands (LID); 16 on July 31 at Lingan where they were flying into holes in the cliff and presumed to be nesting (DBM). ATLANTIC PUFFINS must be recovering if the number of reports is any indication: up to 25 were counted on June 5 on Noddy Is. (LID); "lots" were seen on our Bird Islands, one an albino, on July 2 (Mike Novak, KJM); 2 adults and 1 immature were seen near Ram Is., Shelburne Co., where DHY has seen second-year birds in other breeding seasons; and the usual scattering seen on the whale-watching trips out of Brier (var. obs.). the last being 2 on Oct. 6 (FLS).

## FALL MIGRATION 1995

## LOONS AND GREBES

The Northumberland shore was the hot spot for RED-THROATED LOONS this fall. The first fall arrivals were 20 off Amherst Shore Prov. Park, Sept. 24--all still in full breeding plumage (JWT). On Oct. 26 Calvin Brennan counted 175+ migrating past Roy Island/Melmerby Beach. He didn't say how long he was counting, but in any case it's an extremely good tally. Much smaller numbers (1-5) were in half a dozen other locations.

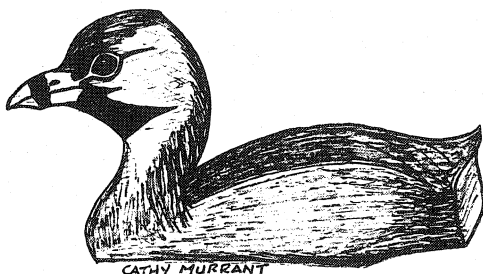
There were a number of reports of pairs of COMMON LOONS on lakes this summer but only two sightings included young. At their cottage, the Tays often saw two chicks with one or both parents. They also found that Loons were "plentiful along the Eastern Shore drive to the cottage". One chick was with several adults at Porter's Lake (Dig.) July 3 (BJA). The seasonal return to salt water went largely unnoticed and nowhere were any large concentrations recorded.

Although no reports came from the Amherst area, we still had a fairly good showing of PIED-BILLED GREBES with numerous reports of 1s and 2s from all over the province, including a couple of the off-shore islands. A flock of 15, including some juveniles with striped necks, was at Goose Creek Marsh (Yar.) on Aug. 4 (RSD) and a flock of 13+ Sept. 16 was still frequenting the dyke in Apple River where in summer, KFS often saw adults with young. An imm. bird was at Morash Park in Dartmouth on Oct. 1 (JWT).

HORNED Grebes began to trickle in during the last week of October with singletons at: Brighton, Kingsport and Cherry Hill. Four had arrived at Green Bay by Nov. 3 (LAC,JSC). Unusual for early August, a Horned Grebe was off Fort St. Louis (Shel.)--showing a drab version of breeding plumage (CGB,KJM). Equally strange was a breeding plumaged RED-NECKED GREBE on a reservoir on Wolfville Ridge from early June to the end of July (BLF,ICT). The first fall arrivals were 6 on Oct. 24 at Brighton, Dig. Co. (BJA).

We now have a confirmed record for EARED GREBE (3 previous sight records). Unfortunately I don't have the name of the person(s) who reported this grebe to the Bird Information Line on Sept. 27, when it was discovered at Taylor Head Prov. Park. I didn't see the bird myself and Richard Stern was the only observer who mentioned it. He commented on the dark, rounded head with steep forehead; all dark neck, breast and front flanks; rear flanks and undertail coverts prominently light; red eye. I know others saw it and it was both photographed and videotaped. Hopefully a photo will appear in this issue.

BDS, ed.



## FULMARS TO CORMORANTS

We seem to have fewer sightings of our NORTHERN FULMAR each year, reflecting perhaps an absence of offshore observers rather than any change in status. Carl Haycock had repeated sightings of several birds into July from whale-watching trips off Brier Is. and 2 were seen from West Light on Oct. 16 in strong SW gales (DHY,SJF).

CORY'S SHEARWATERS, as are to be expected, were few: 1 was seen within its formal range on Georges Bank on July 6, but RSD says it was the only one he has seen all summer; 1 was in the Bay of Fundy on July 22, seen by K. Tutt and C. Cornell; 1 was found dead on Sable Is. on Aug. 23 (ZOL). Our other shearwaters were thinly reported and numbers of GREATER SHEARWATERS were well below the average. Greaters were mostly seen in the Bay of Fundy: 350 off Brier Is. on Aug. 4 and Sept. 23 (BLM,MXD,IAM); 150 flying SE through the channel between Seal and Mud Islands on Sept. 2 (BLM et al.); 12 off North Light on Brier on Sept. 15 (Cohrs, Purchases); "hundreds" going by West Light on Brier on Oct. 16, heading directly into the teeth of a SW gale (DHY,SJF et al.); on the same day RBS found them flying along the shoreline just off Digby, and he notes he'd never seen them that far up the Bay of Fundy. On pelagic trips to Sambro Bank on Oct. 19 and 21, Peter MacLeod turned up 50 or so each day. SOOTY SHEARWATERS, however, were often seen in larger numbers than usual: 300 were off Brier Is. on Aug. 4 (BLM, MXD); 1 was seen off Big Is., Pic. Co., on Aug. 25 in strong NW winds (CGB); 1 was seen from Seal Is. on Sept. 4 (BLM); 2 were spotted off Brier on Sept. 23 (BLM,IAM); and hundreds were going by West Light on Oct. 16 in the SW gale (DHY et al.). MANX SHEARWATERS were about in ones and twos off Brier Is. from Aug. 1 to Sept. 30; from Seal Is. 1 was seen on Sept. 2, 5 on Sept. 4 (BLM et al.); last report is of 1 on Sambro Bank on Oct. 21 seen by P. MacLeod.

WILSON'S STORM-PETRELS, seen in greater abundance offshore than our breeding Leach's, were well reported: 1 was seen enroute to Pictou Is. on July 15 and 15+ were there from Aug. 25-26 during a strong NW gale, one of which was taken by a Merlin (KJM, CGB); from Brier Is. 6 were seen on a whale-watching trip on Aug. 4, 1 on Sept. 30 and 2 or 3 each day from Oct. 15-16 from West Light during the gales which blew there (BLM,SJF); 15 were seen on Sambro Bank on Oct. 19 (P. MacLeod); from Chebucto Head 2 were spotted on Nov. 8 (FLL) and 1 on Nov. 12 in a SE gale (BLM). Most of the LEACH'S STORM-PETRELS which were reported were storm-driven: RSD nicked 1 up, "freshly dead, on the road," in Lr. W. Pubnico on Oct. 19; 1 was found on Sinclair St. in Dartmouth and released into the harbour and 1 was found dead at Hartlen's Pt. on Oct. 23 (JWT); 30 were off Chebucto Head on Oct. 20 and 3 on Nov. 8 (P. MacLeod, FLL).

This was certainly a NORTHERN GANNET year, or perhaps we had more gales pushing them onshore. First reports were of 6 subadults on Sept. 10, off of Cape LaHave, fishing in the surf and 8 to 10 were close to shore at Green Bay on Oct. 7, 90% being adults (LAC,JSC). On Brier Is. 1200 per hour were counted passing North Light on Sept. 15 (Cohrs, Purchases); 1500 per hour were heading south in SW gales on Oct. 16 (DHY et al.); also on Oct. 16 RBS counted 50+ flying off Digby. Further north at Louisbourg "hundreds" were seen on Sept. 29 (ALM,CAM) and similar numbers were off Pomquet Beach on Oct. 14 (RFL); 500+ were feeding at the Canso Causeway on Nov. 17, 95% being immature (DOP, JOP). "Thousands, mostly adults" were seen on Sambro Bank on Oct. 20 (P. MacLeod). From Chebucto Head 1000 or so were tallied on Nov. 8 and 12 in strong SE winds (BJA, FLL,BLM).

Oddly enough we have no reports of GREAT CORMORANTS, at least that fall within the reporting period. Whatever happened to the "population explosion" of this species, variously reported in Cape Breton in the late eighties? DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS are still apparently thriving so they must be finding trash fish of some kind. The Directors of our Society's SSTF estimated 200+ nests on Indian Is. when they surveyed it on June 3. Numerous observers noted small numbers all along the coast. The Tays counted only 150 from Tangier to Sheet Harbour on Aug. 8, fewer than they saw a few years ago: 250 were at Isle Madame on June 29; 200 in St. Mary's Bay on Aug. 3 (BLM) and the 26 on Brier Is. on Aug. 7 were "obviously flocking, ready for migration" (RBS); last report is of 200 in Petpeswick Inlet on Sept. 16 (BLM). JWW and Dianne Thorpe send a report of 2 on Aug. 17, in Wolfville, in residence in a "long, narrow, shallow pond, stocked with goldfish." They must have been hungry as well as opportunists as they refused to take flight even when approached.

SJF, ed.

#### HERONS AND RELATIVES

We have a mere seven reports of AM. BITTERNs, the latest near Apple River on Oct. 29. (JRM,MSM). The much-more-abundant GREAT BLUE HERON was sparsely reported. A belated report at Louisbourg Jan. 1 (IAM) seems worth noting, as do two near Wolfville Mar. 21 (*vide* JCT) that match the earliest spring arrival reported in the July issue. Some 150 feeding in Pomquet Hbr. July 29 were presumably adults and young from the heronry on Pomquet I. (RFL). Autumn concentrations were 75 inside Martinique Beach Sept. 16. (NLM), 32 at L. W. Pubnico Oct 12. (RSD), and 16 off Rainbow Haven, Cole Hrb., Nov. 11. Some of course, will remain into winter. A GREAT EGRET visited Schooner Pond, C.B. Co., June 19 (J. Metcalfe, birdline). An autumn wanderer was around Lockeport from mid-Oct. to month's end (DJC), while another was in Chezzetcook Inlet from late Oct. to at least mid-Nov. (HBD,RBD, *et al.*). The LITTLE EGRET reported in the July issue remained near Louisbourg until at least July 7 (*vide* DBM). Only two SNOWY EGRETS can be added to last spring's three: on Cape Sable I. June 7-11 (MUN *et al.*) and at Lockeport Oct. 31-Nov. 2 (DJC). Single LITTLE BLUE HERONS were at W. Lawrencetown July 29 into Sept. (sev. ob.), Marshalltown March, Digby Co., July 25 (BJA), Mulgrave Aug. 11-12 and Farmville, Lun. Co., Sept. 1 (sev. ob.), and on Cape Sable I. Aug. 7 (JON,SAN). A CATTLE EGRET was at Lanark, Ant. Co., Nov. 1-5 (RFL *st al.*), an imm. reached Sable Island Nov. 16 (ZOL). The usual sightings of resident BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS came from Cape Sable I., with a maximum of 7 ad. at Dan's Head July 30 (MUN *et al.*) An imm. Aug. 4 and 2 ad. Aug. 24 at L. W. Pubnico (RSD) and an imm. and 2 ad. on Seal I. in Sept. to Oct. 9 (var. ob.) may have wandered from elsewhere. Immature YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS were on Cape Sable I. in late July (RSD; same bird through Sept? MUN), at L. W. Pubnico Aug. 4 (RSD), and another was on Seal I. mid-Aug. to at least Sept. 4 (BLM *et al.*) It seems that either "southern" herons have become scarcer in the last couple of years, or reporters are becoming blase about them.

IAM, ed.



## GEESE AND DUCKS

One or two reports of SNOW GEESE is about all we should hope for in these parts. The first sighting was of 4 flying over Brier Is., Oct. 18 (SJF,DHY *et al.*). The other involved a less fortunate individual, killed by hunters on the salt marsh at Kingsport on Nov. 4 (JWW).

Only one location had BRANT this fall--The Hawk, Cape Sable Is., where 2 were seen between Oct. 30 and Nov. 6 (JON, SAN *et al.*).

The only CANADA GEESE with goslings were at Shubenacadie on Aug. 2 - 4 adults with 8 young ones (MGW) (no comment on whether these were wild or feral geese). It was mid-October before any number of migrants appeared - 300 at the Windsor Causeway, Oct. 17 (JCT). On Nov. 2 a flock of 50 geese flew over Shubenacadie (ROM). By Nov. 11, 1500 had congregated at Martinique Beach (BLM,IAM,ALC); only 20 remained at the Windsor Causeway but 60 were at Wade's Farm pond, Canning (JCT). I suspect that some of the traditional gathering areas - eg. Port Joli, Glace Bay, Cole Harbour - had geese but no one reported them.

Not even WOOD DUCKS drew much comment from observers. Summer reports included: a drake at Twin Lakes, Col. Co. (LAC); 3 at the dyke in Apple River (KFS); 3 at Sand Lake, C.B. (ALM); and a female with a juvenile at Publicover Lake, Lun. Co. (Cohrs). Six were found in the Pomquet area Sept. 16 (RFL) and during the first week in October, 4 were on Seal Is. (BLM). During November a lone drake would be seen up close at Sullivan's Pond as he scrambled amidst the Blacks and Mallards whenever a "free lunch" was offered.

Pairs of GREEN-WINGED TEAL were at Conrad's Beach and Lr. Sackville in June but the only brood noted was in a small pond beside the 12th tee on the Hartlen's Point Golf Course on July 13--a female with 7 ducklings (DHH). Flocks in the 30-40 range were common from August and onwards throughout the fall. Hundreds could be counted along the usual circuit of Valley ponds--Harris, Canard, New Minas, etc.--200+ were at the New Minas Sewage Pond along (RBS) and 210+ lingered in that region until at least Nov. 11 when they were off Porter's Point (JCT). Another high count was 100 at Old Barns, Co. Co., Sept 29 (KJM,CGB). The final report was for Nov. 16--at least 50 on flooded marshes near Shubenacadie (ROM).

Although few broods were mentioned, the fall numbers for BLACK DUCKS seem to indicate a fairly good season: e.g. 100+, New Minas Sewage Ponds; 100+, Canard Poultry Pond; 250, Harris' Pond, Canning (JCT); and a grand assembly at Martinique Beach which grew from 300 on Sept. 16 to 1200 on Nov. 11 (BLM *et al.*).

Only a few observers took time to report MALLARDS. Two females, each with a family of 8-10 ducklings, were found near Shubenacadie on June 8. This area had attracted 80 Mallards in mid-November (ROM). Elsewhere, numbers were considerably lower. In early July 2 drakes were in Apple River (KFS). There was no further mention until Labour Day weekend when 25 were counted on Seal Is. (BLM *et al.*); 12 at Kidston Pond; 6 at Canard Pond. These numbers are fairly representative of that area's Mallard population throughout October/November (JCT,JWW).

NORTHERN PINTAILS were scarce this fall. There were no reports of breeding and the first migrants didn't turn up until Sept. 2 - 4 at Cherry Hill (SJF); down the road at Crescent Beach there was a hen with 2 immature birds Sept. 22 (Cohrs). A day later on Brier Is., 5 were spotted (BLM,IAM). All remaining reports came again from the Valley where a number of ponds--Harris', Canard, and New Minas Sewage Pond, all had a couple of Pintails each through October, while Kidston Pond managed 4 females Oct. 6 (JCT,JWW,RBS).

Small flocks of BLUE-WINGED TEAL were scattered about the province: Conrad's Beach, Apple River, Wolfville, Pictou. Even the best fall counts were still comparatively low: Sept. 3-15 at Crescent Beach (LAC,JSC); Sept. 16, 15 at W. Lawrencetown Marsh (BLM,ANF,ROF) and 10+ at New Minas Sewage Pond (RBS).

Our only NORTHERN SHOVELER came just in time for this report when a female was found at Bisset Lake near Dartmouth on Nov. 11 (BLM,IAM,ALC). GADWALL was also reported only one time. On Sept. 13 RSD found 2 individuals at Goose Creek Marsh. The lack of reports from the Amherst marshes has certainly left a gap for a number of duck species, including these last two.

A beautifully plumaged drake EURASIAN WIGEON was at Sullivan's Pond from Oct. 14 up to the deadline for these reports. Staying in the Dartmouth area, a drake was at Bisset Lake on Nov. 11 (BLM,IAM,ALC), probably the Sullivan's pond bird? However, definitely a different drake was discovered Nov. 4 at Antigonish Landing (KJM,CCB,RFL).

One brood of AMERICAN WIGEON was spotted--a female with 5 young at Merrigomish (no date) (KJM,CGB). A pair at Conrad's Beach in early June was mentioned by several observers but no evidence of breeding. This location also had the largest concentration of Wigeons this fall--40 on Sept. 16 (BLM,ANF,ROF). Seven were at Louisbourg, Sept. 29 (ALM,CAM). The Valley ponds attracted Wigeon but numbers seemed slightly lower than usual: 6 on Oct. 10 at Harris' Pond, peaking at 18+ on Oct. 29 (JCT,JWW), and 10 at Canard Poultry Pond, Nov. 2 (JCT). The Eurasian Wigeon at Sullivan's Pond had been joined by half a dozen "Americans" by the report deadline.

While waiting for the ferry at East Ferry on Digby Neck, Patricia Chalmers was fortunate to find a female CANVASBACK diving in the water below the roadway. This sighting occurred Sept. 2 under excellent viewing conditions and the full description is on file.

I don't imagine RING-NECKED DUCKS were less common than usual but few people reported them, and we received only one mention of a family group--a female with 5 young on Aug. 25 at Porter's Lake, Dig. Co. (BJA) and the only fall reports involving more than 10 birds were : 30 at Three Fathom Harbour on Sept. 16 (BLM,ANF,ROF); on the same date, 11 at Pomquet (RFL); and 20+ on Oct. 31 at Newport (JCT).

Two drake TUFTED DUCKS have shown up already. The first was with a group of scaup at Middle River, Pic. Co., Sept. 23 (CGB) and the second was discovered on Remembrance Day at Bisset Lake, Dartmouth.

August 6 seems early for 650 GREATER SCAUP but that's how many had already assembled at the Pictou Causeway (KJM) - what's in store for the winter? The Petite Riviere Estuary had a congregation of 150 scaup (fide LAC) by Nov. 13. A flock of 30 were at Bisset Lake, Nov. 11 and accompanying them were 4 LESSER SCAUP (BLM,IAM,ALC). The only other "Lessers" were a drake and 2 females at Kidston Pond, Port Williams on Oct. 29 (JCT) and 2 females at Canard Pond, Nov. 2 (JCT).

Members of the Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund visited Indian Is., Lun. Co. on June 3 and found 150+ COMMON EIDER nests. First crèche of the season was at Green Bay on June 4, 11 young with 9 adults (JLC). Thirty juveniles with 3 females were off Hartlen's Point, July 11 (anon.) and on July 17 S. Cohrs counted 104 half-grown juveniles with 6 adult females at Crescent Beach. On a down-note, however, Karl and Wendie Tay were disappointed when an August visit to Taylor Head Prov. Pk. provided no eider sightings: "used to be several hundred and young at this time of year."

The only fall reports were: Sept. 3, 500+ between Green Bay and Broad Cove (JSC,JLC); 400 off Brier Is. on Sept. 23 (BLM,IAM); and 60 on Nov. 1 at Belliveau's Cove (BJA). I'm sure more Eiders were out there, we just aren't getting the reports.

HARLEQUIN DUCKS don't always show up in time for the fall report but this year they did. A fly-by flock of 8 passed Hartlen's Point Oct. 28 (IAM et al.) and by Nov. 13, 25 had returned to the rocky shoreline off the village of Prospect (BLM,MXD).

For the second year in a row, OLDSQUAW lingered off Conrad's Beach into summer--10 on July 3 (ANF,ROF). The first lone fall migrant was 1 at Hartlen's Point Oct. 26 and several days later 6 had reached Broad Cove (SJF). The only other report was 1 at Economy Nov. 2 (FLS).

Are scoters as scarce as our reports seem to indicate? The only sizeable flocks of any scoter species were: 100± SURF SCOTERS at Taylor's Head on Sept. 30 (RBS) and 60+ Surfs on Oct. 16-18 off Brier Is. (DHY,SJF, et al.). Blake Maybank spotted 21 BLACK SCOTERS on July 1 at South Bay Ingonish and the following day North Bay Ingonish had a mixed flock comprised of 15 Black Scoters, 1 Surf, and 2 White-wingeds. The only other White-wings were 30 at Gilbert's Cove, Dig. Co. on Oct. 24 (BJA); these were with 20 each of Blacks and Surfs. Three additional reports of Black Scoters tallied only 10 individuals, while three other Surf Scoter reports add 22 birds to the overall picture.

Possibly because they breed in areas a bit isolated from most of our observers, we don't get many breeding reports for COMMON GOLDENEYE. But two of our 'roving reporters' were in Cape Breton on July 1 and were lucky to see a female with a brood of 8 at Middle River, Inv. Co (KJM,CGB). A female at Goose Creek Marsh in early August appeared to be an injured bird that had been unable to migrate (RSD). The only fall migrants appeared at Martinique Beach on Nov. 11 (BLM,IAM,ALC). No BARROWS GOLDENEYE had arrived by the reporting deadline.

Bernard Forsythe had the only breeding record of HOODED MERGANSERS. At Black River on July 6 he observed a female with 6 young. Fifty Hoodies were gathered at Goose Creek, Cumb. Co. on Sept. 24 (JWT). One at Glace Bay Sanctuary on Sept. 23 had been joined by 6 others by Oct. 6 (ALM, CAM). MacLellan Marsh on the East River of Pictou hosted 24 on Oct. 16 (KJM,CGB). Three other reports add 5 birds to the total, a bit scant for a species usually so well reported. The other mergansers didn't receive much coverage either. Four of our six reports of COMMON MERGANSERS dealt with family groups: an adult with 6 young at Apple River (MSM); 1 with 8 ducklings at Porter's Lake, Dig. Co. (BJA); while at Up. Stewiacke on July 16 the Wests had 1 adult with 5 young and on Aug. 15, 11 imm. were spotted again with 1 adult (BJA). The only concentration noted was at MacLellan Marsh, Pic. Co. of 140 on Oct. 16 (KJM, CGB). The final sighting involved only 3 birds on Nov. 11 at Petpeswick Inlet (BLM,IAM,ALC). RED-BREASTED MERGANSERS were very sparse with only 3 reported. In late June, the Cohrs found a drake on a remote pond about three miles from Green Bay: "probably one of a nesting pair?" On July 31 KJM found a female with 10 young on the Middle River of Pictou. The only other report was 2 females at the DU Pond in New Minas, Oct. 30 (JCT).

Even one RUDDY DUCK would be a treat for most of us, so 9 is a bonanza. That's how many were at Jimtown, Ant. Co., on Nov. 4-5 (KJM,CGB,RFL). A single female was found at Canard Pond on Remembrance Day (JCT).



## DIURNAL RAPTORS

A flight at 2 BLACK VULTURES with at least 4 TURKEY VULTURES was seen near Barrington, Sept. 16 (B. Doane). I understand that these birds were also seen by others in the area, but not reported, which is unfortunate. The largest numbers noted of the latter were 6 on Brier Is. on Oct. 7-9 (JCZ et al.). Ones and twos were noted around Yarmouth through summer to Oct. 27 (var. ob.), and individuals in C.B. Nat. Park on June 24 (LPP) and at Port Morien on Nov. 7 (ALM,CAM) were at the limit of their incursions. As usual, there were only a few reports of OSPREY, some laconically noting "all summer", but with no sense of local concentrations or peaks of migration. The latest reported was over Apple River on Nov. 11 (KFS). Our third (2nd confirmed) MISSISSIPPI KITE was found on Sept. 1 on Brier Is. by John Kearney, and subsequently seen there by numbers of observers through at least Sept. 24. It was a 2nd-yr. bird, much pestered by other raptors. Adequate descriptions were received (BLF,MLL), and a clinching photo will appear in the next issue. We received only a half-dozen reports on BALD EAGLE, from which one assumes that numbers were "as usual". The now traditional nest at Greenwich fledged 2 young around mid-July (vide JWW). An ad. was observed at Pomquet Beach on Aug. 16, killing and almost completely consuming, with the aid of its mate and 2 fledged young, a Great Blue Heron; the grisly business took about four hours (RFL). Judy Tufts observed a m. N. HARRIER in courting flight near Sheffield Mills Apr. 22, "quite extraordinary with its bouncy, 'u-shaped' half-loops linked by 'stalls' and 'roll-overs' across the marsh...calling 'ki-ki-ki' as it flew". There were only a few submissions for summer/autumn. The largest southward movements noted were of 10+ on Brier Is. Aug. 18 (RBS) and 6 on Seal Is., Sept. 3 (BLM et al.); undoubtedly more were seen.

A nest of SHARP-SHINNED HAWKS was found about twelve m up in a tall spruce in thick woods on Pubnico Pt. (RSE). Three young fledged on July 20. A very sharp movement occurred mid-September on Brier Is., where none were seen on the 14th, 3-500 next day, and only a few on the 16th (Cohrs, Purchases). Seal Is. boasted a modest flight of 20 on Oct. 3 (BLM), and Brier again produced on Oct. 10, when there was a "tremendous movement...all day, often up to a dozen visible at any one time" (RBS). The only COOPER'S HAWK reported was on Seal Is., Oct. 3, an imm. f., with "large head extending past bend in wing, long rounded tail" (BLM et al.). A N. GOSHAWK nested near Kentville. Otherwise, there were only five reports of 7 birds, including migrants on Brier Is., Oct. 1 and 15 (SJF,DHY). A RED-SHOULDERED HAWK soaring with Broad-wings over Brier Is., Sept. 15 was most noticeable with its "bright crescent 'windows' and plank-shaped wings" (JSC et al.). Two over Seal Is., Oct. 3 were imms., on which there were: "no petagial marks; narrow bands on white-tipped tail" (BLM et al.). There were eight reports of 10 summer BROAD-WINGED HAWKS, from Pubnico to C.B. Co. Large movements were seen as usual on Brier Is., where there were 100+, mainly imms., heading north on the afternoon of Aug. 18 (early), kettles of 25 and 60 on Sept. 15 (JSC et al.), and one of 60+ on Sept. 30 (SJF,BAH). Interestingly, none were seen there Sept. 23 (BLM,IAM). Two young RED-TAILED HAWKS, "not flying much", were seen near Shubenacadie Aug. 8 (MGW). The only migratory group was of 6 on Brier Is., Sept. 15 (JSC et al.). Seven around Windsor/Wolfville Nov. 11 (BLF,JCT) were no doubt settling in. One blessed bird on the Acadia campus Oct. 20 captured and consumed a crow (vide JWW)! The latest spring ROUTH-LEGGED HAWK was at Grand Pré, Apr. 21 (JCT). Southbound individuals appeared at Advocate Hbr., Oct. 1, and on Brier Is., Oct. 8 (JCZ et al.). An ad. GOLDEN EAGLE soared at Cape St. Lawrence, C.B., July 1; locals have seen this species there for some years, and it may nest in that wild region (BLM; rare bird report prepared).

Ten AM. KESTRELS around Moose River, Aug. 17 (KFS) may have represented a couple of families. A few were noted elsewhere in summer, and there were smallish fall movements of 7+ on Brier Is., Sept. 15 (JSC et al.), 10 there Sept. 23 (BLM, IAM), and 20 on Seal Is., Oct. 3 (BLM et al.). MERLINS have clearly increased as nesting birds in recent years, especially in urban areas, although JAC noted their absence from Westmount, C.B., for the first summer since the late 80s. Various observers reported that they nested in Kentville (3 young fledged July 22), Canning, Halifax peninsula (2 nests), Mahone Bay, and in Lr. W. and M. W. Pubnico (4 young from each). Nests or resident pairs were also noted at Arisaig, Isle Madame, Mader's Cove, and Duncan's Cove. We seem to have missed major fall movements: there were 12+ on Brier Is., Sept. 15 (Cohrs and Purchases), and a maximum of only 5 on Seal Is., Oct. 7 (BLM et al.). Can it be that even the spectacular PEREGRINE FALCON is becoming under-reported? Although I know of at least 4 other sightings, we received only 8 reports of 11 scattered migrants, plus a peak of 6 on Seal Is., Oct. 7. Dark GYRFALCONS on Seal Is., Oct. 3 (BLM et al.; imm. f., lack of hood noted) and around Cape Sable, Oct. 19-24 (J CZ, JON et al.) were almost certainly different individuals.

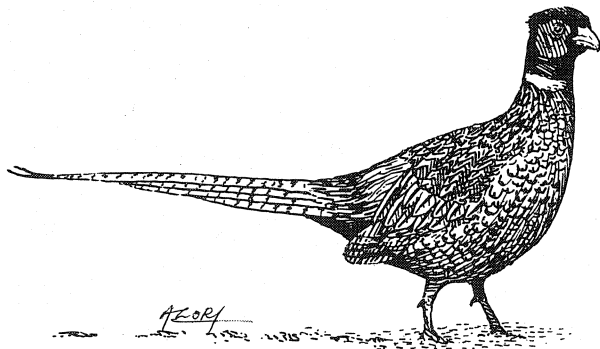
#### GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

RING-NECKED PHEASANTS are not almost anywhere, and there were only six reports of about 25 individuals, including broods. We have nothing on GRAY PARTRIDGE, and hope their status will be clearer this winter. There were nine sightings of individual SPRUCE CROUSE, plus "several families" noted on the C.B. highland barrens mid-July (RFL), a brood of fluffies in King's Co. June 25 (BLF) and a full-grown brood in Yar. Co., Aug. 7 (BLM); this is our usual paltry average. An astonishing 35 RUFFED GROUSE were noted by ALM and CAM during an evening stroll, June 11, along a 7 k stretch of road near Port Morien. Also, MSM noted as many as 7 on her walks near Apple River. These would seem to suggest a high population, yet we have only 8 other reports, 3 pertaining to broods. One "very agitated grouse almost hit me as [it] flew...across a pulp road in "Urbania" (RCM).

#### RALLIDS

There was only one report of VIRGINIA RAIL (a calling bird) in their A.P.B.S. stronghold. A migrant was on Seal Is., Sept. 2 (BLM et al.), and an injured imm. in Lockeport, Oct. 17 (DJC). A pair of SORAS evidently nested near Canning (ad. and a young still there Sept. 16; RBS) and Apple River (ad. and 1 young June 10; KFS), and 1 was calling near Shubenacadie, July 12 (RCM). COMMON MOORHENS nested at A.P.B.S., where an individual June 19 (CGB, KJM), had 4 young, July 24 (JWT). A migrant reached Sable Is., Oct. 27 (ZOL). Last spring's AM. COOT near Canning was present from Apr. 22 (fide JCT), earlier than previously noted. Another had young at A.P.B.S. June 19 (CGB, KJM). The usual migrants appeared around Metro in late fall: 1 on Albro L. Nov. 3 (JWT) and 3 on Bissett L. from Nov. 11 (var. ob.).

IAM, ed.



## FALL SHOREBIRDS

The first 2 BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS were at Cape Sable, July 8 (DHH); large numbers arrived at month's end, when 375 were at Crescent Beach (JSC). The 705 and 865 there on Aug. 9 & 16 (JSC), together with the 1900 reported from the Minas Basin within these same dates (JCT, BLM, RBS, KJM et al.) mark the migration's peak, but there were still 80 at Dominion Beach, Oct. 28 (CAM) and on Nov. 11, 12 near Halifax (BLM et al.) and 20 at Economy (FLS). LESSER GOLDEN-PLOVERS favoured Grand Pré, where there were 20 on Aug. 25, 13 on Oct. 8 (BJA, BLF) and 34 on Oct. 13 (JCT). On Seal there were 20 on Sept. 3 (BLM). The above records account for all but a few of this year's migrants, the last of which were 3 at Avonport, Nov. 1 (GWT).

Twenty or so pairs of SEMIPALMATED PLOVERS nested on Sable Is. (ZOL). First migrants were 6 at Crescent on July 23 (JSC); from July 31 through Aug. 16 almost 3000 were reported from western N.S. (JSC, BLM, JCT et al.), with the largest gathering being 865 at Crescent, Aug. 16 where numbers stayed above 100 through Sept., and where there were still 42 on Oct. 26 (JSC). A PIPING PLOVER nest with four eggs May 26 held 2 young, June 19 at Powell Pt., Pic. Co., where a second pair also nested (KJM). A pleasant surprise: Pomquet and Mahoney's beaches, Ant. Co., from which we haven't received regular summer coverage in the past, harboured 6-7 pairs that produced about 21 young (RLF). Post-breeding sightings numbered 15, including a laggard still at Crescent, Oct. 6 (JSC). The KILLDEER, lightly reported, may not have been as numerous as usual this year; still, there was a gathering of 24 at Starr's Pt., King's Co., Aug. 24 (JCT).

The AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER continues to scout out the province, but this year's visitor seems to have stayed only a day, June 22, in the extreme southwest on Cape Sable Is. (JON et al.).

Two BLACK-NECKED STILTS visited Cole Hbr. June 15-16, to be seen by many observers and photographed.

In July 30+ GREATER YELLOWLEGS were sighted, the first at Canard on the 7th (JCT); c. 170 were noted in August, 120 of them at the Melbourne Sanctuary, Yar. Co. on the 6th (BLM, et al.). Flocks of c. 35 at Canning on the 4th (JCM) and 80 at Martinique on the 16th (BLM et al.). LESSER YELLOWLEGS were, as usual, less common, although more (67) arrived in July (JAC, DBM, JON, BLM et al.); after 80 at the Melbourne Sanctuary, Yar. Co. on Aug. 6 (BLM) numbers dropped off, with 1 laggard still at Three-fathom Hbr., Nov. 11 (BLM et al.).

SPOTTED REDSHANK: three reports were received. The first refers to a bird in (unmistakable) breeding plumage at St. Mary's, Isle Madame, on July 9, but unfortunately its viewers did not send in a report and BLM, who did, could not relocate the bird. The second, in basic plumage, was discovered in the course of an N.S.B.S field-trip to the Wallace Bay Sanctuary, July 23 (JWT et al.). The third, also in basic plumage, was at the Hawk, Cape Sable Is. Oct. 7 (MUN, JON). Details, though not rare-bird forms, were submitted for both. On the basis of leg and bill colour, facial pattern, colour of upperparts, and in the case of the Hawk bird, bill shape the two identifications are very plausible. The few previous sightings have not been accepted (see Tufts, 1986), but the species should now, in this editor's opinion, be admitted to the list of N.S. species unconfirmed by photo or specimen. (Let's hope Santa has been handing out telephoto lenses and camcorders.)

Most SOLITARY SANDPIPERS passed through early, with 10 seen in the last week of July (KJN, BLF, JWT, BLM, JON) and only 5 later, the last on Mud Is., Yar. Co, Oct. 4 (BLM). This year's six reports of WILLETS feature early post-breeding flocks, 194 birds in all, from July 9 to Aug. 6 (IAM, BJA, BLM). Four pairs of SPOTTED SANDPIPERS nested on Sable Is. (ZOL), and a nest with four eggs was found at Lr. W. Pubnico, June 15 (RSD). Migration appears to have been heaviest in early September, when 10 were on Seal (BLM) and 16 near Broad Cove (JSC), but 1 was still at Pubnico on the late date of Nov. 6 (RSD). Early WHIMBRELS were on Isle Madame June 29 (BLM) and on Sable, July 7 (ZOL). The largest flock (120) was at Pubnico, July 22 (MUN); except for 25 at Pomquet, Aug. 31 (RAF) and 25-30 at Montrose, near Bass River, Sept. 3, only

1s and 2s were noted through Sept. 24 (BLM *et al.*). Almost 100 HUDSONIAN GODWITS were sighted this fall, almost all in the southwest, from July 28 to Aug. 7 (JON, BLM, KJM, CGB). A MARbled GODWIT was at The Hawk on July 28 (JO & SAN). RUDDY TURNSTONES passed by much as usual, the first 4 at Wolfville, July 18 (JCT); 600 at Cheverie, Aug. 13 represent a much larger than average gathering, the 42 at Crescent, Aug. 23 (JSC) and the 40 on Seal, Sept. 2 (BLM) being more typical. Last reported was 1 at Cherry Hill, Oct. 21 (JSC).

#### CALIDRIDS

Over 100 RED KNOTS were noted, from 20 at Fox Hbr., July 22 (JWT) to 16 still at Three Fathom Hbr., Nov. 11 (BLM *et al.*). The largest flock was of 32 at Crescent, Sept. 10 (LSC, JSC). SANDERLINGS reached Sable Is., July 16 (ZOL) and Grand Pré on July 18 (JCT). Few were reported in August and the largest September gatherings were 80 at Seal on the 2nd (BLM) and 72 at Crescent on the 8th (JSC) through mid-October and until the 23rd at the latter place (JSC). At Lockeport there were 100-150 from late summer through early fall (DJC). No early precursors announced this year's huge migration of SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPERS. 25,000 at Evangeline Beach on July 15 rose to almost 1,000,000 July 29, where there were still 40,000 on Aug. 12 (JCT), plus 10,000 at Cheverie nest day (BLM). Flocks of several hundred in early August at five localities in Yar. and Dig. Cos. (BLM) and at Crescent, Aug. 25 (JSC) pale in comparison. Last reported were 2 at Crescent Oct. 6 (JSC). Reports of WESTERN SANDPIPERS come from Big Is., Pic. Co., Aug. 26, a slide of which was forwarded to IAM and confirmed (CGB, KJM) and from Seal, Oct. 4, identified by its rufous scapulars (BLM *et al.*). Another possible, identified as a LITTLE STINT comes from Crescent, Aug. 26 (JSC & JLC). Most salient field marks (white 'v' of mantle, dark legs, bright rufous edges of brown coverts, scapulars and tertials) were noted, but the expected bright, split supercilium was seen to be merely pale).

An adult and downy young LEAST SANDPIPERS at Louisbourg, July 13 (DBM *et al.*) represent the first confirmed breeding record for C.B. Not many observers tracked the migration: 3 at Canning, July 15 (JCT) and at Brighton, Dig. Co., July 25 (BJA) were followed by 200 at Grand Pré, Aug. 3 and 50 at Pointe a Major, Dig. Co., Aug. 5 (BLM). The 10 at Crescent Aug. 16 (JSC) were surely followed by others unreported. The first WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER was at Crescent, July 31, where the maximum was 35 Aug. 25 (JSC). A like number was at Cherry Hill, Oct. 12 (JSC) and 2 were lingering at Three Fathom Hbr. on Nov. 11 (BLM *et al.*). Single BAIRD'S SANDPIPERS were on Sable Is., July 14-16 ('early') and Sept. 5 (ZOL). On Brier 4 were present on Aug. 16 (BJA) and 1 (of them?) Aug. 19 (IAM); 4 others were seen at Ann. Royal on Aug. 21 (IAM), at Cherry Hill, Sept. 1-2 (JSC), and Seal Is. Sept. 3 and Oct. 1 (BLM). Two early PECTORAL SANDPIPERS were at Marshaltown, Dig. Co. on July 25 (BJA). Largest flocks were 75 on Cape Sable on Sept. 28 (JO & SAN) and 35+ at Cherry Hill on Oct. 12 (JSC); otherwise, the species was little noted. DUNLIN, likewise, may have been under-reported: high numbers at Crescent were 17 on Sept. 30 and 22 on Oct. 23 (JSC). Elsewhere there were 10 at Dominion, C.B. on Oct. 26 (CAM), and still 55 at Meisners Hd. on Nov. 11 (BLM).

A CURLEW SANDPIPER in bright breeding plumage was on Sable Is. on Aug. 11-14 (ZOL).

All but one of this year's 16 STILT SANDPIPERS appeared in August, 10 of them at Centreville, Shel. Co. on Aug. 2 (JO & SAN, MUN *et al.*). There were 2 on Sable on Aug. 2-12 (ZOL) and singles at The Hawk (JO & SAN, MUN), Big Is., Pic. Co. (KJM), Crescent (JSC) and Canning on Sept. 10 (RBS). Only 7 BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPERS, as opposed to last fall's 30, were reported: 2 on Sept. 1 at Cherry Hill, 3 at Cape Sable on Sept. 19 (JON *et al.*) and 2, one still in breeding plumage, at Crescent, Sept. 1 (JSC).

Two very early SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHERS were at Lr. W. Pubnico, June 28 (RSD), and by July 16 there were 15,000 on Cape Sable (MUN *et al.* *vide* BLM). BLM counted 650 in Dig. Co. on Aug. 3-5, over 1400 in Shel. and Yar. Cos. on Aug. 6-7 and 1500 at Cheverie on Aug. 13. Last was 1 at Crescent on Oct. 23 (JSC). Only 3 reports of summering COMMON SNIPES were received (RBD,JCT,BJA), none for fall. Only one AMERICAN WOODCOCK was reported during the summer (BLM), also 1 on Seal on Sept. 3 (KJM) and a total of 5-6 in October (DHY,MSM,BLM).

Miscellany: JSC found Pond Cove, Brier, virtually devoid of shorebirds on Sept. 15 (as had FLS on the 6th) and remarks this dearth might be as newsworthy as a more normal count would have been. A peep found neatly beheaded, presumably by a mink, on the Economy gravel bar, revealed a body cavity encased in almost an inch of fat; perhaps it needn't have stopped at Brier for refueling.

FLS, ed.

#### PHALAROPES TO ALCIDS

WILSON'S PHALAROPES occur regularly on Sable Is., although theoretically it is out of their migratory path: 1 was seen there on Aug. 12 and another on Sept. 5 (ZOL). The only other sighting was 1 on Sept. 11 in the New Minas sewage pond, "a juvenile moulting to basic plumage, swimming and spinning with Green-winged Teal"(RGB). RED-NECKED and RED PHALAROPES were sparsely reported and one wonders if there are further shifts in populations or just absence of observers: from Brier Is. on whale-watching cruises, BLM and MXD counted 500 Red-necked and 10 Reds on Aug. 4 and SJF and BAH saw only 20 Red-Necked on Sept. 30. "Several" Red-necked were blown onshore off Big Is. on Aug. 26 during strong NW winds (KJM,CGB). The last report is of 12 Reds seen on Georges Bank on Sept. 1 (RSD).

Our only observer on the Banks these days seems to be RSD and we have no jaeger reports from him. And, alas, we've also lost our regular reports from Hubert Hall from the **Bluenose**. What is happening out there? Only two reports of POMARINE JAEGERES were received: 2 were off Brier Is. on Oct. 10, RBS comments, "visible from North Point, adults, 1 in light phase, 1 a little darker; birds did not have twisted tail feathers, but had slow, very steady wing-beats, prominent white upper-wing flashes, etc."; the other 2 were seen on Sambro Bank on Oct. 19 and 21, the first a light-phase bird (KJM, P. MacLeod). The two sightings of PARASITIC JAEGERES were 3 on Sept. 23 from Brier Is. (BLM,IAM) and 2 in light phase on Oct. 20 off Chebucto Head (P. MacLeod). We are lucky to have Zoe Lucas keeping a sharp eye on seabirds off Sable Is. LONG-TAILED JAEGERES are becoming routine out there in early summer and this year she had a bonanza: 21 were seen on the beaches between June 6 and 24, mostly subadults: 25+, all immatures, were tallied on Aug. 2, diminishing in numbers until Sept. 4. These birds have been carefully described and photographed. We have three GREAT SKUA reports: 1 on Georges Bank on July 7 and 1 on Brown's Bank on July 31 (RSD); 1 on Sambro Bank on Oct. 19 (P. MacLeod, KJM). Peter MacLeod describes the Sambro Bank Skua as being third-year, overall impression was of a chocolate-coloured bird, heavily barred on breast, mottled on lower back and white at base of primaries very accentuated. As this and South Polar Skua are not easy to separate in the field, any pointers on the identification of these difficult birds would be of interest to us all.

The usual random sightings of LAUGHING GULLS were 5 in all: an adult on Schooner Pond, C.B., on June 8 (ALM,CAM); on Sable Is., 1 adult on July 16 and 1 subadult on Aug. 17 (ZOL); 2 adults at Cherry Hill Beach on July 26 (SJF); 1 immature at Waterside (Caribou) on Sept. 9 (H. Brennan, R. Murphy). The first COMMON BLACK-HEADED GULLS were seen on Sept. 16, 1 at Conrad's Beach and 10 at Cole Hbr. (BLM,RPF). From then on small numbers of 15 or so were seen regularly around Halifax Hbr., from Hartlen's Pt. to Tufts Cove. Farther north 2 were at Dominion Beach on Sept. 28, 16 at the Antigonish sewage ponds in late September and 12 at Antigonish Landing on Oct. 14 (ALM,CAM,RFL,KJM). Early BONAPARTE'S GULLS, perhaps non-breeders. were 50 on May 28 at the Pictou Causeway (KJM); 2 at Mahoney's Beach and 9 at the Antigonish W.M.A. on June 18 (BLM,FLL). They were "numerous" from July 20 onwards at Port Howe, Pugwash and Wallace Bay area (JWT); 1 was seen on Seal Is. on

Sept 3; 11 were seen at Rainbow Haven and 4 at Three Fathom Harbour on Sept. 16 (BLM *et al.*). As usual, the Northumberland Strait area captured the bulk of the migrants: 800 at Caribou Is. and 500 at Powell Pt. Park on Oct. 1 (KJM).

From the northern part of the province, where our previous sightings have been, comes, I believe, our third report of a ROSS'S GULL. It was an immature, seen at Petite Anse, Isle Madame on July 20 by Calvin Brennan, Ken McKenna and Vivien Keerd. Their description is convincing and they are familiar with Little Gulls for comparison, as these turn up regularly in the Strait area. They write that compared to a Bonaparte's, which was present, it had a "lighter, more effortless flight, Little Gull-like, but with a different jizz." They had close looks in excellent light and noted, "the dark M on wings, paler than immature Little Gull, similar to Kittiwake; wedge-shaped tail with a trace of black terminally; uncapped head with a black mark on the neck." They do not mention how long the bird stayed nor whether anyone else saw it.

RING-BILLED BULLS are maintaining, if not increasing their numbers: JWT says up to 50 summered at Morash Park in Dartmouth; 30 or so were counted at both Petpeswick Inlet and Hartlen's Pt. on Sept. 16; 160 were at Martinique Beach on Nov. 11 (BLM *et al.*); 250 were at Eel Lake in Yar. Co. on Nov. 12, always a favourite hangout for Ring-bills (RSD).

Many more reports of GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULLS were received than of HERRING GULLS, which perhaps is an indication that the former do seem to be on the increase in relation to Herrings. On Indian Is. on June 3 the Society's STFF directors estimated 500+ Black-back nests and 400+ Herring nests; in the Petpeswicks RBD tallied 43 Herrings and 25 Black-backs; at Isle Madame there were 400 Herrings and 300 Black-backs on June 29 and 200 Black-backs in the Cape Breton Highland NP on July 1 (BLM, MXD). The annual census by BLM *et al.* on Seal Is. on Sept. 2 turned up only 400 Herring Gulls and 500 Black-backs. Another report of nesting Black-backs on the mainland comes from BJA: 6 adults and 2 chicks were found at Porter's Lake in Dig. Co. on June 30.

Four reports were received by press time for LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULLS: an adult at Hartlen's Pt. on Sept. 10 and a juvenile on Sept. 24 at Sullivan's Pond, both photographed by IAM; a subadult at John Bay, Pic. Co. on Oct. 6 and an adult at MacLellan Marsh, Pic. Co. on Oct. 27, both well described by CGB and KJM.

An ICELAND GULL lingered at the Wolfville sewage pond, together with a subadult GLAUCOUS GULL, until June 1 (JCT, JWW). The earliest fall arrival was an adult Iceland Gull at Petite Riviere on Sept. 19 (JLC). The Murrants saw the only other Iceland Gull, an immature, in Glace Bay on Oct. 8. A Glaucous Gull summered in Morash Park in Dartmouth, in fact, JWT says it has spent the entire year there.

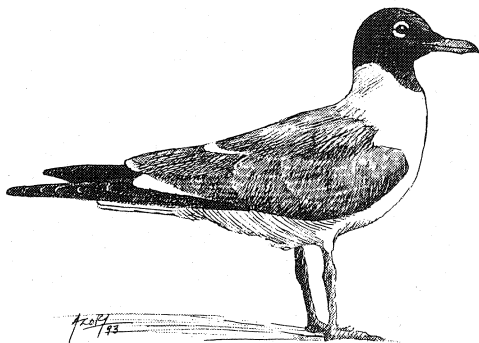
There were few reports of BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKES, perhaps considered too common to report: from North Light, Brier Is. 12+ were seen on Sept. 15 and 20+ on Sept. 30; 25+ were counted from around the Island in the gales from Oct. 16-17 (Cohrs, Purchases, SJF *et al.*); from Chebucto Head 100+ were tallied on Oct. 20 (P. MacLeod) and 30 on Nov. 8 (FLL).

The place to see CASPIAN TERNS is almost certainly along the Northumberland shore where they have become almost regular. CGB and KJM saw the first on June 19 at Wallace Bridge, identifying it by its "large size and dark primaries on underwing." One was seen on July 23 on the NSBS Field Trip in the Wallace Bay area (JWT, BLM); 2 were at Big. Is. on Aug. 26 (KJM, CGB); 1 was present at Eddy Marsh, Amherst on Aug. 30 (JWT); and finally, 2 late adults were "flying low and calling" on Sept. 16 at Hawk, Cape Sable Is., reported by Mark Libby, a visitor from Maine.

No official reports of the success of our breeding tern colonies have reached this editor, although they are reputed to be doing well. BJA saw a ROSEATE TERN on June 28, feeding with about 30 other terns in front of a fish plant in Middle East Pubnico, about three miles from Brother's Is. RSD saw 2 in Pubnico Hbr. on July 2 and notes, "although they fish mostly offshore they sometimes do fish in Pubnico Hbr." In Halifax Co. 7 were at Taylor's Head on Aug. 8, presumably migrants (KAT,WAT). The Roseates on Sable Is. are now down to 4 individuals (ZOL). COMMON and ARCTIC TERNS were thinly reported, but rumour has it that Brother's Is. had about 230 nests, proportions not known. ZOL did a census of the nesting colonies on Sable Is. in mid-July and counted approximately 2855 birds, 90% Common, 10% Arctic. BJA tallied 30 Common and 3 Arctic Terns on June 28 in M. E. Pubnico. Among other encouraging reports were : 75 Common at Isle Madam on July 30 (BLM et al.). Our breeding BLACK TERNS were well reported from Eddy Marsh and the Amherst Pt. Bird Sanctuary. Up to 12 were being seen from mid-June to late July, but none were aged. One was on Sable Is. on Aug. 2 (ZOL) and the last reported was 1 at Daniel's Head on Aug. 27 (JON et al.).

Few DOVEKIE sightings have been received to date: ALM saw two flocks of 30-40 each on Oct. 21, 10 miles off Port Morien, P. MacLeod saw a sizable group of 300+ on Sambro Bank on Oct. 21 and FLL counted 35 at Chebucto Head on Nov. 8. K TUTT and C. Cornell saw 1 COMMON MURRE off Brier Is. on July 22; off Chebucto Head FLL counted 20 on Nov. 8 and BLM counted 12 on Nov. 12 in a SE gale. An unusual report of a summering THICK-BILLED MURRE, seen in Baddeck from early June to at least July 30, comes from Dave McCorquodale. He writes that it was "comfortably at rest at the end of the government wharf - very strange time and place." Perhaps it had been storm-driven and was too weak or sick to continue to its breeding colony. RAZORBILLS were only seen at Chebucto Head: 60 on Nov. 8 and 90 on Nov. 12 (FLL BLM). BLACK GUILLEMOTS were scarcely reported. The Society's STFF directors in their census of Indian Is. on June 3 counted 40 nests. BLM and MXD saw 50 at Bay St. Lawrence on July 1. ATLANTIC PUFFINS are out there but don't seem to be reported, for example, we have no news of their breeding success on Noddy or any of the other islands. Off Brier on whale-watching trips 3 were seen on Aug. 4 and 5 on Sept. 30 (BLM,SJF et al.); on Sambro Bank on Oct. 21, P. MacLeod saw 15, still in bright breeding plumage; off Chebucto Head 40 were seen on Nov. 8 and 5 on Nov. 12 (FLL,BLM).

SJF, ed.



## DOVES THROUGH KINGFISHER

ROCK DOVES were perhaps fittingly largely unmentionable. The usual scatterings of summering MOURNING DOVES were noted. The only large flocks said to be visiting feeders before the end of the reporting period were up to 3 dozen at Pt. Edward, C.B. Co. (JAC) and 42 at Lr. W. Pubnico, Oct. 10 (JKD). As many as 6 BLACK-BILLED CUCKOOS were noted during June and July, from C.B. Co. (ALM,CAM), to Queen's Co. (BLM). Were there no later sightings of migrants? There were only three reports of vagrant YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOOS, including 5 on Seal Is., Oct. 3 (BLM, et al.), the latest at Schooner Pond, C.B. Co., Oct. 30 (ALM,CAM). However, I know of at least 3 individuals that were not reported.

A family of 5 GREAT HORNED OWLS frequented the Economy area in summer/fall (FLS), and 2 imm. were in a yard in Apple River on Aug. 24 (FKS,BAS). There were 6 reports of 8 autumn individuals, including one roosting near the Halifax Dockyards for a few days in mid-November. Bernard Forsythe reported on the BARRED OWLS around Wolfville. Of 10 clutches in his boxes, one deserted, and one predated by raccoon. The remaining ones fledged 20 young. Several of the adults had been banded in 1985 and 1986, and are now at least 12 years old. Another nest was suspected near Summerville, Yar. Co., 2 fledglings were seen at N. Alton on July 23 (both MIH), and 2 more near Cook's Br., Hfx. Co., Aug. 7 (RCM). Three were noted along Hwy. 14 between Chester and Windsor on June 4, and 3 more heard near Shubenacadie on Sept. 16 (RCM). One or 2 wandered into Halifax in early November. LONG-EARED OWLS responded to tapes near Londonderry, June 10 (BLM), and near Shubenacadie on Sept. 16 (RCM). Individual SHORT-EARED OWLS were noted at Grand Pré on Mar. 21 (JCT), and near Pomquet in late summer (RFL). SAW-WHET OWLS calling during September, included 3 near Heatherton, Ant. Co., on the 1st, 2 near Beech Hill, Ant. Co. on the 20th (RLF), and several on Brier Is. later in the month (var. ob.). Eight birds responded to tapes in the Pomquet area on Oct. 3 and 8 (RFL).

There were a few reports of COM. NIGHTHAWKS during summer, including 6 around ballfield lights in Dartmouth July 18 (JWT) and 4 at Sand L., C.B. Co., July 30 (ALM,CAM). The usual migratory flocks appeared soon after. Ten were near Bridgetown, Ann. Co., Aug. 3 (BLM), 10 more near Mooseland on Aug. 7 (WAT), 18 over Kingston on Aug. 9, 40+ at Apple River on Aug. 17 (down to 1 by Aug. 28 - KFS), 40+ at Big Is., Pic Co., Aug. 19 (KJM,CGB), 25 at Weymouth on Aug. 27 (BJA), and 40+ over Kemptville, Yar. Co., Aug. 25 (JKD), and over Coldbrook, King's Co., Aug. 28 (RBS). A few smaller flocks were seen elsewhere, and 1 reached Sable Is., Sept. 9-15 (ZOL). That remarkable island hosted CHUCK-WILL'S WIDDOW, this time 2 birds! One was observed feeding and heard calling around the Fisheries camp at the east end on the nights of June 24-25 and June 25-26 (Brian Beck and ZOL), and on the latter night another was simultaneously calling near the meteorological station. The second bird was later heard again during the nights of July 1-2 and 2-3. Both birds began calling after midnight, their calls a complete match of those available to ZOL on tape. In addition, ZOL reports that the bird, vocalizing on the roof of a house, produced, between bouts of the usual "chatter, six-seven note calls", "thrummings [that were] drawn-out, loud and resonating, each one with a sort of rising 'rrrrnnnt!' sound ending with a sound like a very quick intake of breath (giving the impression of an exclamation ending each 'rrrrnnnt!')". She has written experts to learn more about this vocalization, but it may be what Bent describes as a 'growl', and also has an "eerie, utterly indefinite sound, possessing a strange, unearthly quality"! The WHIP-POOR-WILL at Herring Cove was not reported after June 1 (BLM), although may have carried on. As usual, a thorough account of the Valley CHIMNEY SWIFTS was supplied by Jim Wolford. The spring peak number entering the chimney at the Robie Tufts Centre in Wolfville was 251 on May 20. There were still 100+ on June 14, but only 30+ by month's end, building again to ca. 75 in mid-July. After July, very few were present, which JWW thinks may be due to noise disturbance or persistent attacks by locally nesting Merlins. However, large numbers (e.g. 440 July 27, 350-360 on Aug. 10) continued to enter the chimney at the regional high school in Middleton. That old chimney was retained during renovations, thanks to intervention on behalf of the swifts by local residents, the N.S.B.S., and others. Another good swift show in Annapolis Royal has been terminated by removal of a traditional chimney. Only two other swift reports were received, the latest one on Sable Is., Sept. 9 (ZOL). There were only seven reports of ca. 20 RUBY-THROATED



HUMMINGBIRDS, the latest at Advocate Hbr., Sept. 21 (JRM, MSM). An intriguingly late hummingbird was seen from a car near Halifax in late November (birdline). The 11 reports of BELTED KINGFISHERS, including a couple of nests, embody no trends or curiosities.

#### WOODPECKERS

By now, many readers will know that RED-BELLIED WOODPECKERS were big news this fall, and we'll probably have to await winter to gain a full appreciation. The earliest was present from 'early October' to Oct. 13 at Avonport (Eva Urban). At least 3 more appeared in Oct.-Nov. in the Kentville/Wolfville area (sev. ob.), 1 in Bible Hill, Oct. 22-23 (fide FLL), 1 in Mooseland, Nov. 5 (fide WAT), 1 in Up. Sackville, Nov. 5 (BJA), and up to 6 in the metro region through mid-Nov. (many ob.). An imm. RED-HEADED WOODPECKER on Seal Is. Oct. 8 (sev. ob.) was the only one of this generally more regular stray to be reported. Seven reports of summering YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKERS were routine. Individuals at Apple River, Sept. 21 and Oct. 5 were presumably migrant, as were certainly the 4 on Oct. 4 on Mud Is. and 2 on nearby Seal Is., Oct. 7-8 (BLM et al.). Ten reports of 21 DOWNY WOODPECKERS and 8 reports of 14 HAIRY WOODPECKERS were about the same as last year's. Ten reports of 11 individual BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKERS and of 2 nesting pairs in Pic. Co. (CGB), KJM) were again about par. Among the usual reports of individuals and small groups of summering N. FLICKERS (very numerous all summer per KCM), was a note of a nest with young in Barrington, July 5 (DHH). Over 300 migrants were on Brier Is. Sept. 15, and 150 next day (Cohrs, Purchases). Numbers were more modest on Seal Is. (but not reported), and 20 were on nearby Mud Is. on Oct. 4. Six reports of 8 PILEATED WOODPECKERS were fewer than usual in recent years.

IAM, ed.

#### FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS

There were just 3 early fall reports of OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER on Aug. 8, near Shubenacadie (MGW), Aug. 27 from Brier Is. (RBS) and Quinan, Yar. Co. (RSD), but also Oct. 2 reports, on the 3rd from Seal Is. (BLM et al.), and more unusually, Schooner Pond, C.B. on the 26th (CAM). For once the species seemed positively common in the back woods of King's Co. this summer, but perhaps that is because their far-reaching and distinctive song makes them hard to overlook. The same could be said of the EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE, but there were no reports suggesting a clear-cut migration pattern this fall. Isolated individuals were noted in mid-Sept. at Hartlen's Pt. and Oct. 3 on Seal Is. (BLM et al.).

A possible imm. SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER, was all too briefly seen at the W. Village, Seal Is. in early October, before it flew off to the north, presumably towards Yarmouth! but unfortunately no description was submitted.

All three of our common breeding Empidonax flycatchers were specifically present among larger numbers of "Empid. spp." on Brier Is. Aug. 25-27, and BJA noted about 30 mixed Empidonax flycatchers there the next day. ZOL also noted a "Flycatcher peak" at around the same time on Sable Island, and these observations are "par for the course" for Empid. migration out of the province to the SW. More specifically, though, there were no reports of obvious ALDER FLYCATCHER migration per se, and various singing individuals were noted around the province during the summer. Some more useful numbers are provided by BLM, who noted the following totals in these locations on various trips around the province in June and July:

C. George to Eigg Mt., Ant. Co. (June 18 only) -100+  
Col. Co. - 35  
Isle Madame (June 29) - 20  
Port Joli area (June 24) - 30

WILLOW FLYCATCHERS are being reported with increasing frequency, but it's too soon to say whether this is really a trend or whether, for example, increased observer familiarity with the song allows more people to distinguish it from the previous species. Examples in 1995 include 1 seen and heard behind the Westport store on June 11 (KJM), 1 heard on June 17 in Port Howe (JWT) and 1 seen and heard calling and singing at Petite Riviere on June 18 (LAC, JSC). Not surprisingly, there are no fall reports, as definite identification relies almost exclusively on the song. Very few LEAST FLYCATCHERS were reported this summer/fall.

A late EASTERN PHOEBE was present at Schooner Pond, C.B., Oct. 26 (ALM). ALM and CAM saw and photographed a SAY'S PHOEBE at Big Pond, C.B. on Sept. 11. This would be about number fifteen or twenty for the province. Five GREAT-CRESTED FLYCATCHERS were seen during the early summer, but there are no late summer/fall reports this year. Likewise, there were various isolated reports of EASTERN KINGBIRD, but only one of any large numbers was on Brier Is. on Aug. 26-27 (RBS) representing a probable migratory wave.

The first fall HORNED LARK was noted on Oct. 3, on Seal Is. (BLM *et al.*), and then a flock of 50 was at Marshalltown Marsh, Dig. Co. six days later. There are no reports of large flocks to date (mid-November).

We don't have any numbers this year for the PURPLE MARTIN nesting colonies at Oxford or Amherst--in future years it would be very useful for someone to try to record numbers of successful pairs of this species' tenuous toehold in the province. Their presence was, however, duly noted (BLM,JWT). Several people noted small numbers of TREE SWALLOWS during summer, but I cannot draw any conclusions from these reports. However, IAM noted a probable migratory flock of about 90 on Brier Is. on July 18. H and JB saw a swallow perched on a wire in Ant. Co. on Nov. 9, a very odd date for any of this family which they describe as "brown with a buffy washed upper breast", and it does raise the possibility of a NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW. BLM and MXD report 150 BANK SWALLOWS on Aug. 4 on Long Is., Dig. Co. This date suggests a migratory movement, or a nearby nesting colony. The same observers noted 30 at Chebogue Pt. two days later. JLC and JSC found a colony with 37 nests near Petite Riviere on July 6. A few CLIFF SWALLOWS were noted, and DHH tells us that the traditional colony on the Air Canada hangar at Halifax International Airport had the first birds returning on May 10, and most left on July 23. About 170 adults build 85 nests, down from 90+ in 1994 and 120+ in 1993. A late bird was at Daniel's Head, C.S.I. on Oct. 30 (KJM,CJB). There were also various isolated BARN SWALLOW reports from around the province, and KAT/WAT felt that there were more around than in the last few years. My own feeling is the opposite, and my purely subjective impression is that numbers 10+ years ago were much higher. It would be nice to have some figures to prove what is going on, with this as with so many species. The last report is of 2 birds at the New Minas sewage plant on Sept. 16 (RBS *et al.*).

#### CORVIDS THROUGH GNATCATCHERS

There were 12 scattered reports of GRAY JAY during the summer and fall throughout the province, some of the adults with young, but no large numbers or unusual trends. BLUE JAYS not surprisingly, were a little better represented with 13 reports, again mostly of scattered individuals and small family groups (JAC, MSM, KFS, NAM *et al.*). A better guide to numbers was provided by BLM, who noted 150 on Sept. 23 on Brier Is., no doubt a migratory movement. MSM and KFS had a leucistic individual visit their feeders in Apple River--all white, with grayish tinges on the back and dark eyes.

Only a few people bothered to report AMERICAN CROWS. By the second week in November, the usual Kentville flock of several thousand was amassing in the evening in the downtown area. As a result of local complaints about the mess, noise and possible health hazard, a noise-maker is now in place, broadcasting the sound of Crows in distress, and calls of predators such as Red-tailed Hawks, to try to get them to go elsewhere. At the time of writing however, this has only succeeded in moving the flock to other areas within the town and I will update you on what happens. Other

suggestions have ranged from blowing them all up with explosives to encouraging them and having an annual Crow festival! JAC noted up to 13 COMMON RAVENS daily in the Westmount, C.B. area, and RBD saw 4 along the Route 14 between Chester and Three-mile Plains on June 4. They certainly seemed to be present in the usual numbers all summer and fall in King's Co.

Only a few people bothered to report BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEES, but to me they seemed ubiquitous all over the province, in just about every backyard and woodlot. A few specific numbers were mentioned - 11 on June 4 along Hwy 14 (RBD), 20 on Aug. 5, Ellenwood Lake Prov. Park (BLM,MXD), 65 near Shubenacadie Sept. 2 (MGW,RCM), 30 on Sept. 16 along the east side of Petpeswick Inlet (BLM,RPF), and 40 at Gilbert's Cove, Dig. Co. on Oct. 24 (BJA). As expected, BOREAL CHICKADEES were more sparsely reported, with the exception of 100+ noted on Seal Is., daily in early Sept. (BLM et al.). They were present in reasonable numbers all summer at Blomidon Prov. Park (RBS).

It has been a truly bumper year for the RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH. Reports from elsewhere in North America have indicated larger numbers than usual, appearing farther south than usual. BLM and MXD saw 30 migrating along Long Is., Aug. 4, and PLC saw flocks of them heading towards North Light, Brier Is. three days later. RBS estimated 1 every second leaving North Light on Brier Is. in a continuous stream of two hours on Aug. 18, i.e. 3600 per hour, and IAM and RPF saw large numbers there the following morning. There were still large numbers all over the place in Kentville all August and September and JSC and JAP still saw 100+ on Brier Is. on Sept. 16. MGW and RCM counted 28 near Shubenacadie on Sept. 2, and they were still "everywhere" in Ant. Co., in October (RFL). In contrast there were just a few reports of WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH, including 1 in mature hemlock forest in Kentville, June 4 (JWW), not this species' usual habitat. There were 12 reports of BROWN CREEPER, mostly in 1s and 2s. There were also 4 or 5 together in the old elms along the road at Lr. Canard in mid-November.

There were 4 HOUSE WREN reports, a comparatively large number for this relative rarity in our area. These included a remarkable 12 on Seal Is. during the first week of Sept. (BLM et al.), 1 on Brier Is. Sept. 30 (SJF) and 2 on Mud Is. on Oct. 4 (BLM et al.) JLC and JSC also saw 1 earlier, June 25, and described it as being "larger than Winter Wren, pale grayish in colour, with proportionately longer bill and much longer tail than Winter Wren. When cocked the tail was as long or longer than the distance from the back of the neck to the base of the tail. Striping on the face was limited to a very faint pale line behind the eye, and there was no noticable barring on the flanks." They had good looks in sunshine from 15 feet. There were 13 reports of WINTER WREN, including a total of 8 seen or heard singing in Col. Co. during June and July trips by BLM. MARSH WRENS were present as expected in Eddy Marsh, Amherst July 24 (JWT), but also 1 on Mud Is. on Oct. 4 (BLM), 1 Machellon Marsh, Pic. Co. Oct. 27 (KJM), and 1 well seen and heard at Broad Cove, Nov. 11-12 (SJF,BJA). However, this species was also well represented on Seal Is. in early September with the BLM group finding a total of 14. An apparent SEDGE WREN was also seen by the group on Seal Is. from Oct. 3-7, but no details have been given.



The Truro CAROLINA WREN was still present, and noted to be nest-building, all last winter and spring, right through to July 8 (FLS, KJM *et al.*). a 2nd bird (unless it was the Truro bird making a reverse migration!) was seen by ALM and CAM at Sand L., C.B. on Oct. 19.

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLETS were present around the province, with reports of small numbers from various locations. BLM noted 11s and 12s in several counties during June and July. Larger numbers built up later in the summer, presumably due to feeding or migratory flocks- e.g. 55 on Aug. 4 on Long Is. (BLM,MXD), 50+ in one flock, Blomidon Prov. Park, Aug. 13. (RBS), 300 on Sept. 2 on Seal Is. (BLM *et al.*), and 100 Oct. 3 also on Seal Is. (BLM *et al.*). The numbers of RUBY-CROWNED KINGLETS noted around the province seemed much as usual. There were no large migratory movements, but 12+ were at Apple River daily in late September (MSM) and 30 were on Seal Is. on Oct. 3 (BLM *et al.*).

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHERS are normally a rare vagrant, but seemed positively commonplace this fall. There are 8 reports, from Schooner Pond, C.B. (ALM,CAM), Pictou Rotary (KJM), Mulgrave (K. MUELLER), Sable Is. (ZOL), Seal Is. (BLM *et al.*), and Kingsport (AZV *et al.*), (much to the delight of the NSBS field trip). Are they really moving into our area, or are more people noticing them?

#### WHEATEAR THROUGH STARLINGS

A NORTHERN WHEATEAR was present at The Hawk Beach, CSI, from Oct. 18-25 (MUN,JCZ, *et al.*). It was in winter plumage, and very visible, often fanning out its tail and moving rapidly.

There were just 2 distinct groups of the EASTERN BLUEBIRD this summer/fall, 1 in the Apple River area and 1 on Brier Is. Up to 6 males and 1 female were seen on and off between June and Oct. 4 in Apple River, New Salem and Fox River, all close to each other (KFS,JREM,MSM). GAB saw 15+ together at Diligent River, just a few km. east, on Sept. 24--that must have been a great sight! One could speculate just how many successful breeding pairs there were this year in W. Cumb. Co., which now seems to be the Bluebird capital, as well as the blueberry capital of Nova Scotia. The other sighting was of a family group in their other usual spot, around the cemetery in Westport, Brier Is., in August to mid-September (RBS,JSC,JAP *et al.*).

VEERY numbers continue to be low. There were just 9 scattered reports from around the province all summer, and even BLM on his June and July forays, with good counts for a variety of species, did not see/hear more than 1s and 2s. ZOL reported a late spring migratory movement on Sable Is. in June. GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH of the BICKNELL'S species/race (the taxonomy is not totally clarified yet) was seen in Cape Breton, with 2 in Richmond Co. June 29 and 2 in C.B. Highlands Nat. Park on 30th (BLM,MXD). A few days later in early July KJM and CGB also noted several in C.B., including one carrying food near Fishing Cove River. There were no comments as to whether the specific (? sub-specific) identification was by song or by bill and tail color etc. Another Gray-cheeked Thrush was seen in New Caledonia, Queen's Co. on Sept. 14 (JSC, JAP *et al.*).

SWAINSON'S THRUSH seemed to do a little better this summer, with 16 reports. These included the following numbers seen/heard by BLM *et al.* in various locations:-

- 9, Economy area June 10
- 45, Antigonish Co. between C.George and Eigg Mtn., June 18
- 14, Isle Madame, June 29
- 8, Cape St. Lawrence Trail, C.B., July 1
- 11, Victoria Co., June/July
- 12, Inverness Co., June/July
- 14, Colchester Co., June/July.

There were 19 reports of HERMIT THRUSH. Some of the more notable ones included a first date of May 2 (Wolfville Ridge-JCT), and a last date of Aug. 19 for singing heard (Green Bay, JSC), 14 counted by RBD between Chester and Three Mile Plains June 4, and 40 total in Queen's Co, in June and July on BLM's trips. RCM heard "lots" all summer near Shubenacadie.

4 WOOD THRUSH were found this summer:- 1 in Waverley June 1 (LPP), 1 seen and heard singing in Neary Pines, Greenwich on June 3 (BLF, H.Forsythe), 1 heard in Brookville, Pictou Co. (CGB,KJM- date not recorded), and 1 in Londonderry, Colchester Co. June 10 (BLM,MAA).

AMERICAN ROBINS were abundant as usual, with 11 reports, often of 29, 30 and 40 birds as well as 1s and 2s. Only three large flocks were mentioned, though-"hundreds" at Petite Riviere Oct. 8, where the sky was "full of Robins" (LAC,JSC), at Sand Lake, C.B., on 19th. (CAM,ALM) and at Lr. W Pubnico Oct. 7 where JKD estimated 2000+.

There were 15 GRAY CATBIRD reports, usually of 1s and 2s, and 8 of NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD, down a little from 1994. This species seems fairly well established these days in much of the province year round, although I suspect that summering birds do not over-winter, and over-wintering birds have bred elsewhere, by the different locations often reported for the two seasons. BLF found one in full song in Wolfville on Oct. 26. BROWN THRASHERS continue their pattern of annual vagrancy, with sightings as usual being from the "vagrant hotspots"- 1 on C.S.I Sept. 19 (JON,MUN,WAA), 1 at Pubnico Pt. Sept. 30 (RSD) and 3 on Seal Island Oct. 3 (BLM et al).

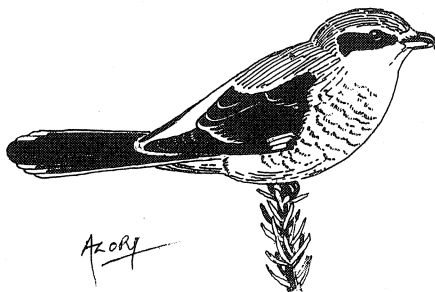
Small flocks of AMERICAN PIPIT were around the coasts as usual, with one flock of 100+ being on Seal Island Oct. 8 (BLM, et al).

BOHEMIAN WAXWINGS are stated to be an irruptive species, with flocks only reaching Nova Scotia every few winters. However the last four or five winters have proved to be good for irruptions, and perhaps the species provincial status should be revised to that of common winter visitor. So far several flocks of 30+ have appeared, from Yarmouth to Glace Bay, and CAM has so far seen the largest, 300 at Port Morien Nov. 9. CEDAR WAXWINGS also continue to be common for most of the year, with numbers dropping off somewhat in the winter. A presumably migratory flock of 100 was on Seal Island on Oct. 6 (BLM et al).

NORTHERN SHRIKES are another winter irruptive species, but these solitary birds certainly don't appear in flocks like waxwings. So far examples have appeared, singly, at Apple River (MSM), Pubnico Pt. (RSD), Pinecole, Antigonish Co., (RFL) and Brier Island (JMY,SJF et al), and 2 were at Schooner Pond on Oct. 30 (CAM,ALM).

Two huge flocks of EUROPEAN STARLING were reported, at Milford Station (MGW) and 700+ at Lr. W. Pubnico (JKD), but there are more out there!, and otherwise only reports of small numbers were sent in (RBD,JAC et al).

R.B.S. -ed.



## VIREOS AND WARBLERS

For the first autumn in five years, a WHITE-EYED VIREO was reported. CGB and KJM found it on Cape Sable Is. on Oct. 30. Both birders submitted a description of the dark-eyed immature, which included the following: thick bill, two creamy wing bars, yellow spectacles, gray nape, yellowish flanks, gray belly and white throat. SOLITARY VIREO numbers during the breeding season seemed healthy enough, with good coverage from Hfx. Co. to Cape Breton (BLM,RBD). One was heard still singing its spring song on Aug. 19 at Lake Rd., Lun. Co. (JSC). Migration coverage was spotty, with 6 at Cape d'Or, Cumb. Co., on Sept. 30 (JRM,MSM), at least 16 moving through Seal Is. Oct. 1-9 (BLM) and 1 on Brier Is. on Oct. 18 (DHY,BAH). Though a YELLOW-THROATED VIREO was seen on Brier Is. Sept. 3 (BLF), no corroborating details were received. (I remind reporters again to please see Nova Scotia Birds, Jan. 1994, p.5.) A WARBLING VIREO at Middle River, Pic. Co., on Sept. 4 (CGB) was also not described, but 2 Warbling Vireos were in this area last spring, and the observer was "familiar with this species after working in New Brunswick the last few summers". Two reported in Hfx. Co. during September and 2 on Seal Is. on Oct. 8, were also not described, though there were two or more observers in each case. Five PHILADELPHIA VIREO singletons were reported from Hfx. and Yar. Cos. in September and early October, but the only (scanty) description accompanied RSD's Pubnico Pt. bird on Sept. 9: "a Red-Eyed Vireo was close by and I was able to note the Philadelphia's slightly smaller size". I don't know the feelings of other seasonal editors, but I feel obligated to at least pay lip service to uncorroborated reports by known competent birders. This lack of documentation is quite general, so please help me; I don't want to reject your records, but we must reassure the scientific community of the validity of the data. At least three pairs of the RED-EYED VIREO nested at Mader's Cove, Lun. Co. (JBM), and substantial late spring and summer numbers were indicated throughout much of the mainland. The migration was poorly observed, with only scattered ones and twos noted, except for the 15 seen on Mud Is., Yar. Co., on Oct. 4 (BLM). A singleton at Sand Lake, C.B., on Nov. 6 (ALM,CAM) was the last Red-eyed Vireo reported.

JSC noticed that many more warblers sang much later in the year in southern Lun. Co., and thought perhaps their first nestings were unsuccessful because of the foggy July there. Alternatively, their songs may have merely been a reaction to the dry, sunny weather of August and September.

No descriptive details whatsoever were provided for reports to two September singleton BLUE-WINGED WARBLERS, though this species' plumage is distinctive. One, reported in BAH's "Bird Watch" column in The Mail-Star on Sept. 15, was at an unspecified location, while the other was in Louisbourg, C.B., on Sept. 29 (CAM). Good numbers of the TENNESSEE WARBLER were noted in June and July across much of the province. Only 2 Tennessee individuals were mentioned after July; 1 at Petpeswick Inlet, Hfx. Co., on Sept. 16, and 1 on Mud Is. Oct. 4 (both BLM). Single ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLERS were found on Mud Is. Oct. 4 (BLM), at The Hawk on Oct. 5 (MUN et al), on Brier Is. on Oct. 16 (SJF) and at New Glasgow, Pic. Co., on Oct. 21 (KJM,CGB). Two were reported in Halifax on Nov. 13, just before deadline (JSC). The NASHVILLE WARBLER was well reported during the spring migration, and had good coverage during the summer (Queens Co. to C.B.), though only ones or twos were observed. Migrants were noted in Dartmouth (1) on Sept. 8 and at Petpeswick Inlet on Sept. 16 (5). BLM counted at least 18 moving through Seal Is. Oct.1-9, and 2 on Mud Is. Oct. 4, while 2 singles were noted in mixed flocks of warblers and kinglets on Sept. 27 and 29 at Apple River, Cumb. Co. (MSM). There were two sightings during the latter half of October: 1 on Brier Is. Oct. 18 (SJF,JOY), and 1 at Sand Lake on Oct. 26 (CAM). Observers of late Nashvilles should be on guard against confusing this species with the Orange-crowned.

Observers (mainly RBD and BLM) did a good job of documenting the NORTHERN PARULA over the summer, with RBD reporting a total of 21 birds, mainly in Hfx. Co., and BLM amassing 53 in a wide-ranging effort. One in full song at Green Bay on Sept. 2 (JSC), if a migrant, was remembering earlier times. A small migration of 12+ moved through Brier Is. on Sept. 16 (Cohrs and Purchases). A male at Apple River (MSM) and 2 Parulas at Port Morien, C.B. (ALM,CAM) in late September, along with 6 on Seal Is. Oct. 1-9 (BLM), were the lot.

The Morses at Mader's Cove found several nesting YELLOW WARBLERS, and there were some good numbers during the breeding season (e.g. 45 in Antig. Co. on June 18, and 25 on Isle Madame, C.B. on June 29), though coverage was spotty. Only a few scattered reports were received from August and September from Green Bay, Mooseland (Hfx, Co.) and Westmount (C.B.). There were no Yellows reported in October, but 1 lingered at Sullivan's Pond, in Dartmouth, on Nov. 13 (RPF). One or two pairs of the CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER nested near Mader's Cove (JBM), and it seemed to be found in its usual haunts (mainly deciduous second-growth) during the summer. A pair with young were noted at Port Howe, Cumb. Co., on Aug. 6 (JWT). The only post-August report was of 1 at Petpeswick Inlet on Sept. 16 (BLM). Not too surprisingly, there was no news from Cape Breton, where the Chestnut-sided is uncommon. A late report came in for a MAGNOLIA WARBLER seen on the early date of May 1 around Wolfville (*fide* JCT). Magnolias were well reported during the breeding season right across the province, with 30 counted between Cape George and Eigg Mtn., Antig. Co., on June 18 (BLM,FLL), and a nest with 4 young found on Spencer's Is., Cumb. Co., on June 27 (JRM,MSM). A couple of August reports came in from Lake Rd. and Apple River, and the last report was of five, likely migrating, at Mooseland on Sept. 4 (KAT). Were there none on Seal Is. in October? Despite few CAPE MAY WARBLERS found during the spring migration, 20 were counted between Cape George and Eigg Mtn. on June 18. The observed migration began with 2 or 3 on Brier Is. Aug. 26-27 (RBS), and 6-8 per day on Seal Is. Sept. 2-4 (BLM *et al.*) Fourteen or more were estimated moving through Seal Is. Oct. 1-9, and 2 were found on Mud Is. Oct. 4. The BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER was scarcely mentioned over the summer. JSC, who found 1 in Queen's Co. on July 5, had none on her Shelburne BBS, and remarked that many of the suitable habitats have now disappeared. A few must still be with us, as they were observed during the fall migration, which was, for the most part, in late September and early October, with 4 at Cape d'Or on Sept. 30 (JAM,MSM), 15 or more moving through Seal Is. Oct. 1-9 (BLM) and 3 on Mud Is. Oct. 4 (BLM).

Though people tend to lose interest in the YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER during the summer, quite a few reports were still received. However, thousands were reported during the fall migration, which got under way in early September. Places and dates where 100 or more were estimated were as follows: Seal Is. on Sept. 3, Petpeswick to Chezzetcook on Sept. 16, Donkin-Morien (C.B.) on Sept. 23, Pubnico Pt. on Sept. 28, Seal Is. Oct. 1-9 (peaking at 600 per day on Oct. 3) and Mud Is. on Oct. 4.

Though an adult female and a first year male TOWNSEND'S WARBLER were identified (and one photographed) on Seal Is. Sept. 3, no documentation was sent to me.

Quite a few observers sent news of the BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER over the summer, including some reports of nesting. RSD found a nesting pair with 3 young at Pubnico Pt. on July 9. BTG's had begun to roam about by mid-August, with MSM counting 11 at Apple River on Aug. 17. Ten were on Seal Is. on Sept. 3, 17 were part of a small migration on Brier Is. on Sept. 16, and 8 were at Petpeswick Inlet on that same date. Just 9 or so were moving through Seal Is. Oct. 1-9. One lingered on Brier Is. Oct. 18. Not one was mentioned in Cape Breton. Numbers of June and July BLACKBURNIAN WARBLERS reported by county were as follows: Hfx. 2, Antig. 25, Digby 1, Col. 3, Vic. 3 and Inv. 5. There were 9 post-breeders at Apple River on Aug. 17 (JRM,MSM), and 5 in Mooseland on Sept. 4, with several still there on Sept. 10 (KAT,WAT). Five were moving across Cape d'Or on Sept. 30, and 1, the last Blackburnian reported, was on Seal Is. on Oct. 5. Good reporting for an uncommon species!

Surprisingly, no PINE WARBLERS were reported. Quite a sheaf of PRAIRIE WARBLER reports were received, however, beginning with 4 on Sable Is. between Aug. 3 and Sept. 17 (ZOL). One was at Hartlen's Pt. on Aug. 13 and again (same bird?) Sept. 13-17. Four were on Seal Is. Sept. 2-3 (BLM), with 1 on Brier Is. Sept. 4 (BLM), and the latest was an imm. at Schooner Pond, C.B., on Oct 30 (ALM,CAM). The PALM WARBLER disappeared into the bogs and barrens to nest, but June reports were still received from Hfx. Co. (RBD), Queens Co. (BLM) and Col. Co. where MSM found an adult with 4 young at Portanique (June 22). The migration was obvious in early September, with about 50 at Mooseland on Sept. 4 (KAT,WAT), and good numbers moving through Brier Is. on Sept. 8-9 (RBS). Forty on Seal Is. Oct. 2 had increased to 100 Oct. 3, while 2 of the western race were noted there on Oct. 8 (BLM). Our last report was of 3 at Apple River on Oct. 24 (MSM). The BAY-BREASTED WARBLER is not a high-profile bird in summer, but BLM managed to find 10 in Ant. Co., and 2 in Col. Co. He was also responsible for all reported migrants: 1 on Brier Is. Sept. 23, 1 at Lower Prospect, Hfx. Co., on Sept. 24, and 1 on Seal Is. Oct. 2. Fall adult and immature Bay-breasted Warblers resemble the Pine and BLACKPOLL WARBLER. A few summer Blackpolls were noted in Lun. Co. and in Cape Breton. A total of 100 were on the move in coastal Hfx. Co. (Petpeswick Inlet to Chezzetcook) on Sept. 16 (BLM). The next mention of larger numbers was of 50 on Seal Is. Oct. 1-9. One was on Brier Is. on Oct. 18, with 1 lingering at Sullivan's Pond on Nov. 13 (RPF). BAH's Oct. 13 "Bird Watch" column told of a recent CERULEAN WARBLER on Seal Is. (reported to her). However, I received no confirmation of this bird.

A pretty good summer account of the BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER was given, with reports from Queens Co. to Cape Breton. However, numbers were not particularly large. A few migrants were noted in late August, and numbers on Seal Is. built from 4 on Sept. 2 and 3, to 12 on Sept. 4. Twelve were noted at Petpeswick Inlet on Sept. 16. Only 3 were present on Seal Is. Oct 1-9, an "unexpectedly low number" (BLM), though only 3 were counted there on Oct. 1, 1994. Our final report was of 1 at Advocate Harbour, Cumb. Co., on Oct. 9. At least two pairs of AMERICAN REDSTARTS nested in Mader's Cove (JBM), and good numbers were noted from Queens Co. to Cape Breton during the breeding season, including 40 between Cape George and Eigg Mtn. on June 18 (BLM,FLL). Three were part of a post-breeding mixed warbler flock at Apple River on Aug. 14 (MSM), and 3-6 were around Mooseland in late August and early September (KAT). The 35 which BLM reported on Seal Is. Oct. 1-9 made up most of the observed migration, but there were a few later birds. Two Redstarts were on Brier Is. on Oct. 18 (SJF et al.), while a female was at Pubnico Pt. on Oct. 24 (RSD). Two stragglers, both on Nov. 6, were reported: 1 at Broad Cove (SJF) and 1 at Sand Lake (ALM,CAM).

A PROTHONOTARY WARBLER in female-type plumage was observed on Sable Is. from Sept. 3-8, but no corroborating details were received. (ZOL).

A late spring OVENBIRD migrant was found on Sable Is. on June 12 (ZOL), and breeding populations, though of course not teeming, seemed normal right across the province. The migration, unnoticed as usual, consisted of three birds; 1 at Petpeswick Inlet on Sept. 16 (BLM), 1 on Mud Is. Oct. 4 (BLM) and 1 on the Wolfville Ridge Rd., Kings Co., on Oct. 12 (GWT). A dozen spring and summer NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH were mentioned in Digby, Kings, Antig, Vic, and Inv. Cos. Single migrants were present on Boularderie Is., C.B., on Aug. 20 (ALM), at Pubnico Pt. on Aug. 22 (RSD) and on Seal Is. Sept. 3 and 4 (BLM et al.)

A KENTUCKY WARBLER on Sable Is. Sept. 8 (ZOL), and another reported (in the Oct. 13 "Bird Watch") on Seal Is. in early October, had no supporting documentation, nor was any received for 2 CONNECTICUT WARBLERS reported at Daniel's Head, Cape Sable Is., on Aug. 26 (JON et al.) No reports were received at all for an early September Connecticut at Auld Cove, Antig. Co., which was reported in "Bird Watch". Though there were no MOURNING WARBLERS reported to the end of May (see July '95 issue), BLM and RBD found, in June and July, a total of 66 individuals of this late-arriving, uncommon and elusive species, mostly in the northern mainland and in Cape Breton. The fall migration wasn't much though, with 1 or 2 on Seal Is. Sept. 2-3, an imm. male at Pubnico Pt. on Sept. 30, which RSD identified "after much deliberation", and 1 on Mud Is. Oct. 4.

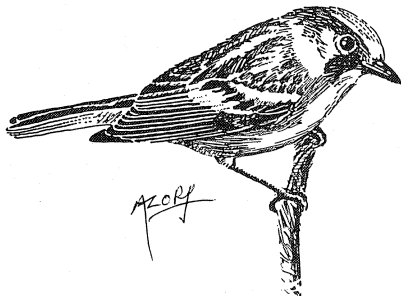


The COMMON YELLOWTHROAT seemed common indeed during the breeding season, in contrast to '94, with reports from all over the province, and its status was described as "abundant" in some remote parts of Cape Breton (RFL). JSC described a male's unusual behaviour on Aug. 10, when she "swished" it up, and it "cast itself down onto the path almost at my feet... and proceeded to roll about the road, ending up in the bushes on the far side". Recognizing this as a diversionary tactic, she "cooperated by following it to the verge- hope it felt better!". By mid-September, the migration had begun, with 20 at Petpeswick Inlet on Sept.16 (BLM,RPF). Sixty or more moved through Seal Is. Oct. 1-9. The honour of the latest Yellowthroat went to Cape Breton, with 1 at Sand Lake on Nov. 6 (ALM,CAM). Two HOODED WARBLERS were seen on Sable Is. on Sept. 3 (ZOL), with a female on Sand Lake Rd., C.B., on Sept. 23 (CAM). The timing was typical of reverse fall migrants, but the latter record is unusual in that it is both a non-island, and a Cape Breton, occurrence.

RSD found a pair of WILSON'S WARBLERS at Pubnico Pt. on June 28 attending a nest of 5 well-fledged young. The nest was located at the base of a clump of alders. Only one other summer report was received of 1 at Isle Madame, Rich. Co., on June 29 (MXD). Wilson's weren't too abundant during migration, with 1 on Seal Is. Sept. 3 (AAM), 4 at Petpeswick Inlet, and 1 at Hartlen's Pt., on Sept. 16, 1 at Apple River on Sept. 27, and finally 2 on Seal Is. Oct. 1-9. Only one summer (C.B.) report was received of the CANADA WARBLER, and only 5 migrants were noted. One on Brier Is. on Aug. 26 was part of a mixed warbler flock (RBS). There were also singletons at Apple River and Sand Lake in September, and 2 on Seal Is. Oct. 1-9. It was the best autumn for YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT occurrences in the eight years I have been writing this report, with about 17 individuals accounted for: 6 on Seal Is., 1 on Sable Is., 2 on Cape Sable Is., 3 on Brier Is., 1 on Mud Is.; also 2 in Hfx. Co., 1 in Pictou Co. and 1 in Lun. Co. Ten were found in September, 6 in October and 1 in November. The last one reported was at St. Mary's University in Halifax Nov. 5-11 (IAM).

Thanks to JCT for passing on her compilation of the May 13 North American Migration Count for N.S. Some of our breeding species showed higher totals for this one-day count than were reported to me for the whole spring '95 migration in the July issue; namely Solitary Vireo, Northern Parula, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Palm and Black-and-white Warblers, Ovenbird and Northern Waterthrush. In addition, the count date of May 13 was earlier than earliest spring '95 dates reported in the July issue for the Tennessee, Black-throated Blue and Blackpoll Warblers, the Common Yellowthroat and Canada Warbler.

--KNK, ed.



## TANAGERS TO TOWHEES

Few tanagers of any description were among the fall migrants. Just one record of SCARLET Tanager was submitted for the period. That was 1 on Seal Is. on Oct. 9 (BLM *et al.*). A notable C.B. sighting was of a male seen at Glace Bay on June 8 (ALM,CAM). A tanager species was found, but briefly, near Sullivan's Pond, Dartmouth in early November.

Where there was a shortage in tanagers there was an unprecedented abundance of NORTHERN CARDINALS. There were no less than 40 individuals counted from almost anywhere on the mainland. This number doesn't include the conservative dozen or so that have been in the metro Halifax/Dartmouth/Bedford/Sackville areas. I will start with 1 female with 2 fledged young seen by Louise Garron along Pond Cove Lane, Brier Is. on July 29 (*vide* RBS). The fall onslaught began in mid-October with records from Brier Is., Pubnico Pt. and Yar. Co., Clark's Hbr. and The Hawk. November sightings were even more impressive with examples like 4 within a few city blocks in Dartmouth and 4 seen at Stoney Is., Shel Co. (MUN).

ROSE-BREADED GROSEBEAKS numbered 7 in total which is normal for fall. The earliest was 1 at Apple River on Sept. 7 (MSM). Next were 2 at Brier (Cohrs, Purchases) and 1 at Up. Sackville on Sept. 16 (BJA). During October there were single birds at Seal Is., Sand Lake, C.B. and the latest record of 1 at Coldbrook on Oct. 30-31 (AAM,RBS). BLUE GROSEBEAKS were quite evident in the southerly parts of the province. The first sighting was 1 found at Seal Is. on Sept. 3 (JOW). During the week of Oct. 1-9 no less than 15 were discovered on Seal Is. (BLM). Others were 1 at Elgin, Pic. Co. on Oct. 10 (CGB); 1 at Brier on Oct. 16 (SJF,DHY,BAH) and 1 at Pubnico Pt. on Oct. 19 (RSD). Fall always brings at least a few INDIGO BUNTINGS and this year was no exception. There were submissions which totaled 21 individual birds. Seal Is. held 18 of those birds during Oct. 1-9; a single bird was observed on Mud Is. on Oct. 4; a male found at Sand Lake, C.B., Oct. 26 (ALM,CAM) and a male was lingering at Hartlen's Pt. on Oct. 23 (BJA).

Seven DICKCISSELS were identified. The first was seen on Sable Is. on Sept. 16 (IAM). This was followed by 1 on Brier Is. on Sept. 29 (CGB,FLL). There were 4 found during Oct. 1-9 on Seal Is. (BLM) and 1 was confirmed on Mud Is. on Oct. 4.

A single RUFIOUS-SIDED TOWHEE was all that birders could find this fall. The bird, a female, was watched on Seal Is. on Oct. 5.

## SPARROWS TO SNOW BUNTING

Few TREE SPARROWS made the deadline for reporting but the earliest sighting was 3 seen at MacLellan Marsh, Pic. Co. on Oct. 21. A few others were discovered at Kentville, and Apple River by Oct. 27 (RBS,KFS,CDS,MSM). CHIPPING SPARROWS were fairly well reported in both summer and fall. Fall had 40 individuals target Seal Is. as a stop-over during Oct. 1-9 (BLM). Others were at least 10 at Greenwich on Oct. 27 and 2 lingering at Apple River on Nov. 13 (KFS,MSM). The close relative and much less common, CLAY-COLOURED SPARROW was noted on Seal Is. on Oct. 8 (BLM *et al.*).

There were 2 FIELD SPARROWS feeding at Pubnico Pt. on Sept. 28 (RSD) then single birds were found at The Hawk on Oct. 15 (MUN *et al.*) and at Waterside Park, Pic. Co., (KJM,CGB). Out of the ordinary was a single bird discovered on Sable Is. by ZOL on June 5. There are only two sightings of VESPER SPARROW to pass along for fall. The first was 1 found at Sunken Lake, King's Co. on Sept. 15 (BLF) and the second was 1 at Port Howe on Sept. 21-22 (JWT). Summer records included 1 at Exit 17 on HWY 101 on June 1 (JWT) and 1 discovered at Barrington Passage on June 24 (JCZ). In keeping with the rarer sparrows, a LARK SPARROW was observed at Schooner Pond, C.B. on Sept. 23 (ALM,CAM) and 2 were found on Seal Is. during Oct. 1-9.

Over 40 SAVANNAH SPARROWS were found at Martinique Beach on Sept. 16 (ANF,RPF,BLM) and several of the "IPSWICH" race were found at Conrad's Beach on Oct. 14 (RBS). GRASSHOPPER SPARROWS were found at Stoney Is., Shel. Co. on Sept. 16 (JCZ) and 2 different birds, one each day at Oct. 2 and 3 on Seal Is. (BLM). SHARP-TAILED SPARROWS can be found in proper seaside areas and agricultural pasture lands nearer the coast throughout the summer. Their numbers seem to have diminished in recent years. Just a few sightings of this sparrow were submitted. Fall records included 5 at Seal Is. on Oct. 3 and 1 on Oct. 4 at Mud Is. Just a single bird was lingering at Cherry Hill Beach on Oct. 19 (SJF).

FOX SPARROWS were found with fledged young on John's Is. at the mouth of Pubnico Hbr. on Aug. 1 (DA,RSD). Fall records include a single bird at Sand Lake, C.B. on Oct. 8 (CAM,ALM); 4-5 at Coldbrook on Oct. 30-31 (RBS,AAM) and 2 at Apple River on Nov. 2 (KFS). SONG SPARROWS are by far our most common sparrow occurring throughout the province. Reports were many but notable were hundreds seen in Kentville and New Minas along the old railway in mid-Sept. (RBS).

One of the most reported sparrows was LINCOLN'S SPARROW with close to 100 individuals identified. Significant numbers were found at Port Morien (10) on Sept. 9 and from 3-19 individuals in various parts of Cape Breton throughout the summer and early fall (BLM,MXD). Breeding records include an adult feeding young at Lr. W. Pubnico on July 13 (MLL) and a pair found nesting at Economy on June 17 (FLS). SWAMP SPARROWS were intermittently reported during summer in the diminishing suitable habitat. Especially worthy of note were 50 seen on one day at Seal Is. on Oct. 3 (BLM et al.).

WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS were exceptionally well reported throughout the year. Particularly noteworthy were over 50 seen at Port Morien on Sept. 27 (ALM,CAM). Later 800 were estimated at Seal Is. through the week of Oct. 1-9. Another 100 were counted at Pubnico Point on Oct. 18 (RSD). The highlight of the fall so far for many people was the GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW first seen by Azor Vienneau on Oct. 29 near Chebucto Head, Hfx. Co. This bird was well seen and subsequently photographed by dozens of birders thanks to a generous supply of bird feed left on the shoulder of the road. It is still being seen regularly there up to the time of writing Nov. 26. This is the fifth Nova Scotia record but only the second time its occurrence has been supported with photographs. There were still scattered sightings of WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS during late spring. Fall records included several imm. birds at Broad Cove, Greenwich, Apple River, Sand Lake, C.B. and Seal Is. and Antigonish. Adult birds were found at Antigonish on Sept. 27 (RFL), Advocate on Nov. 1 (JRM) and Kentville on Oct. 12 (GWT). The latest record was the imm. at Broad Cove on Nov. 11 (SJF). Impressive were 60 seen during the week of Oct. 1-9 on Seal Is.

DARK-EYED JUNCOS have been found abundantly in many parts of the province. Flocks began forming by early September and it was common to find groups of 15-30 along roadsides, at feeders and in hedgerows by mid-October. There seem to be several reports to date of individuals exhibiting "OREGON" characteristics. These more western forms appear to be with us in greater numbers this fall.

The first LAPLAND LONGSPURS landed on Sable Is. on Sept. 17 (ZOL). Single birds were seen at Brier Is. and Cherry Hill on Sept. 23, 28, and 30. The largest group so far was about 12 at Cherry Hill on Oct. 21 (Cohrs). A very tired SNOW BUNTING was discovered wind-tossed on Lawrencetown Beach on Oct. 16 (KAT,WAT). By the last few days of October observers began to find small flocks at Grand Pré and Apple River. The largest number was a flock of 100+ at Saulnierville, Dig. Co on Nov. 3 (BJA).

## ICTERIDS

BOBOLINKS were fairly well reported during the summer months and noted throughout Col. and Cumb. Cos. There were 6-11 individuals counted in Westmount, C.B. during June and July (JAC). Fall sightings were noted especially in September and early October. The latest was 1 at Cape Sable Is. on Oct. 31 (SJF). RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS were noted widely across the province. Most sightings were of colonies of several pairs in prime habitat. Fall records included several with young at Mader's Cove on Sept. 25 (JBM) and 40+ at Apple River on Nov. 3-12 (KFS). Roslyn MacPhee wrote to say that as the farmers began reaping the corn in the Shubenacadie area toward the last week of October, huge flocks of blackbirds including about 300 Red-wings could be found in the fields. EASTERN MEADOWLARKS seemed almost plentiful with 6 individuals reported. The first was seen on Seal Is. on Oct. 5 (BLM); one was found at Cherry Hill Beach on Nov. 5 (SJF); one was discovered at Hartlen's Pt. on Nov. 13 (RPF) and there were three at Conrad's Beach on Nov. 20 (many obs.).

RUSTY BLACKBIRDS were observed during summer at West Petpeswick, Old Barns and Port Joli in June and July. Five birds arrived in Clayton Park, Hfx on Oct. 5 (RBD) and 1 bird visited a feeder in Apple River on Sept. 22 and Oct. 19 (JRM,MSM). There were no reports of any significant numbers moving through. COMMON GRACKLES were especially well reported in great flocks of from 200 to 1600 until early November. There were a few "hangers-on" (single birds) noted on Nov. 12-13. A large flock of 1600 was seen in Halifax on Sept. 27 (JLC). BROWN-HEADED COWBIRDS are quite uncommon in recent years and this "trend" seems to be continuing. There were only a few sightings sent in--most were of 1-4 individuals. The very notable exception to this was 300 seen at Porter's Point, King's Co. on Oct. 8. Bernard Forsythe says that this was the largest flock he has seen for several years. They must have come from another province! (ed).

NORTHERN ORIOLES could be found anywhere in the province. There were sightings from areas in Cape Breton, North and Central Nova Scotia, Southern areas and almost all points between. There were nests found at Middle River, Pic. Co. (KJM,CGB) and Lr. W. Pubnico on June 13 (RSD). The largest concentration was of an estimated 50 at Seal Is. during Oct. 1-9 (BLM).

## FINCHES TO HOUSE SPARROW

It is nice to have a few reports submitted of PINE GROSBEAKS for a change. They have been quite rare in the last couple of years. However, there is a marked increase in 1995 of these large silent finches. There were several summer records of one or two individuals from scattered locations around the province. Fifteen were found at Brentwood, Cumb. Co. on Oct. 27 (AEW) and 4 were counted at Newtonville on Nov. 5 (BLF). PURPLE FINCHES were quite common late into summer in many areas. They dropped off in late August and returned in modest numbers by the end of September as migrants replaced the residents. Flocks during the fall amounted to 6 or less on average, with exception of 20 at Seal Is. in October and 20 at Apple River on Nov. 9 (KFS). It is still a novelty to have HOUSE FINCHES. However, the day is approaching when there will be debates about their effects on other species in the province. There was a pair at Westmount, C.B. on July 21 (JAC), a female at Port Williams on Sept. 25 (JWW), and at least 1 male at Apple River until Nov. 3 (KFS,MSM).

RED CROSSBILLS as usual are fewer than WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILLS. The Reds were most numerous in Cape Breton with one flock of 40 that stands out, witnessed at Sand Lake (ALM,CAM). Other sightings were of 1-4 from scattered locations. White-wings were reported with much more frequency and average flocks were of 15-20 individuals. Most sightings in the fall are from Cape Breton where the cone crop has been described as exceptional. As winter approaches these birds may continue to build and disperse throughout the province.

COMMON REDPOLL has thus far been recorded twice. Six were found at Sand Lake, C.B. on Nov. 6 (ALM,CAM) and on the same date 1 was seen at Advocate Hbr (JRM). There were scattered reports of PINE SISKINS. These birds were common at feeders in some places and non-existent in others. They were fewer in number during summer but increasing as fall approached. Unusual was a flock of 60 spotted at Wolfville Ridge on Oct. 25-26 (JCT) as most reports were of 1-15 individuals. One observation from Roslyn MacPhee was of a Pine Siskin feeding a fledgling White-winged crossbill at a feeder near Shubenacadie on July 11. I've never before heard of this behaviour in this species but considering their sociability, it isn't surprising. AMERICAN GOLDFINCHES were well reported. They were common all summer and while some observed flocks increasing, others noted they decreased at feeders during October and November. Fall records include flocks of 12-60 in many parts of Brier Is. on Sept. 16 (JLC,JSC,DOP,JAP) and 80 were seen at Prospect on Nov. 13 (BLM).

There were a few summer accounts of EVENING GROSBEAKS feeding young or in small flocks in northern parts of the province. Fall brought numbers of 20-60 per flock by Oct. 31. These birds seem to be moving around and staying for only short periods in any one area. As the winter sets in we should expect a good year for them at feeders.

Last and usually least is the HOUSE SPARROW. Small localized flocks of 6-12 are holding. This trend of either decreasing numbers or at best stable numbers in any area seems difficult to reason. Roslyn MacPhee described two pairs nesting this past summer within 200 feet of each other having one pair produce two broods of 4-5 young and the other pair produce three broods of 4-5 young. The local flock, if all survived, would have increased by at most, 25 birds from those two pairs alone!

DAC, ed.

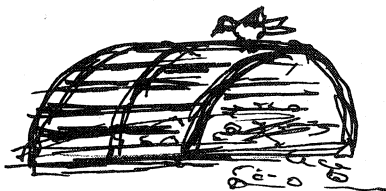
### RARE BIRDS

Reading these reports, you may have noticed the many editorial comments to the effect that "no documentation has been received", when rare or "tricky" species have been reported. In order to preserve the validity of the data the editors need these corroborative details. If the bird has been "seen by many", we still need details--perhaps from the discoverer. If a "photograph has been taken" we would like a copy.

The fact that the observer is "well-known, "competent" or "experienced" does not excuse the omission--in fact, several editors have mentioned to me that those are the worst offenders. Now that **Nova Scotia Birds** is part of the London Zoological Record, it behooves us to be as precise and accurate as possible in keeping our records.

So--please co-operate and take a few minutes to write up the rarities.

Thank you.JSC, Ed.



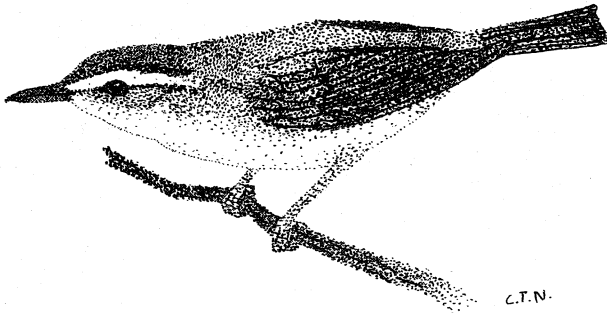
## BIRD REPORTS -- CONTRIBUTOR LIST

Amirault, Bradford	BJA
Austin, M.	MAA
Boland, Gale	GAB
Brennan, Calvin	CGB
Chalmers, Patricia L.	PLC
Cohrs, John	JLC
Cohrs, Lise	LAC
Cohrs, Shirley	JSC
Cooke, Eric	ERC
Covert, Allan	ALC
Cretien, Jacqueline	JAC
Crosby, Donna	DJC
Czapalay, Joan	JCZ
D'Entrement, Ray	RSD
D'Eon, Jerome	JKD
Dickie, Robert	RBD
Dickie, Helen	HBD
Dufresne, M.	MXD
Ellis, Margaret	MEE
Field, Chris	CHF
Forsythe, Bernard	BLF
Foxall, Andrew	ANF
Foxall, Roger	RPF
Fullerton, Sylvia	SJF
Graham, Judith	JIG
Hawkswood, Mike	MIH
Hinds, Barbara	BAH
Hippern, Dennis	D:HH
Kernohan, Molly	MOK
Keddy, Keith	KNK
Lauff, Randolph	RFL
Lavender, Fulton	FLL
Libby, Mark	MLL
Lucas, Zoe	ZOL
MacLean, Angus	AAM
MacKinnon, Walter	WAM
Maybank, Blake	BLM
McLaren, Ian	IAM
McCorquodale, D.B.	DBM
McKenna, Ken	KJM
Mills, Jane	JRM
Mills, Maureen	MSM
Moores, Bernice	ABM
More, Nancy	NAM
More, Robert	ROM
Morrow, James	JCM
Morse, Jean and Bill	JBM
Murrant, Allan	ALM
Murrant, Cathy	CAM

Newell, Murray	MUN
Nickerson, John	JON
Nickerson, Sandra	SAN
Payzant, Linda and Peter	LPP
Purchase, Don	DOP
Purchase, Joyce	JOP
Spalding, Francis	FLS
Spicer, Blaine	BAS
Spicer, Kathleen	KFS
Stern, Richard	RBS
Tay, Karl	KAT
Tay, Wendie	WAT
Taylor, J. W.	JWT
Timpa, Jean	JET
Tufts, Gordon	GWT
Tufts, Judy	JCT
Waldron, Joan	JOW
West, Arthur E.	AEW
West, Myrna G.	MGW
Wolford, Jim	JWW
Young, David	DHY
Young, Joan	JOY

Due to the high price of postage these days, we no longer send out 'Thank you' notes to individual reporters. So, here is a heartfelt THANK YOU to all of you who make the effort to keep us up to date with the world of birds.

Shirley Cohrs, Editor.



## PICS OF THE YEAR

We have not presented a series of portrait-class photos by members since the July 1994 issue. The following are some that fill the bill; furthermore some have interest as documenting rarities, or have stories attached to them.

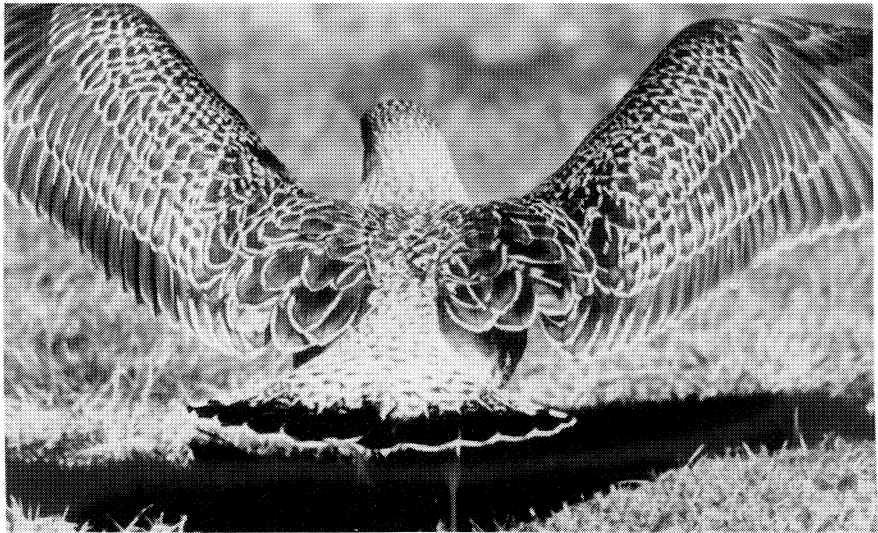
The YELLOW-LEGGED GULL was possibly the most exciting Nova Scotia find of 1995. It was discovered on February 11, 1995, by Christine Cornell and Kevin Tutt in the midst of a bunch of Herring Gulls, Am. Black Ducks, and a lone Canada Goose, all scrambling for bread handouts at the Dingle on the Northwest Arm in Halifax. They immediately recognized it as distinctive from its heavy head and bill, full-chested stance, and almost immaculate plumage amongst the typically grubby-headed Herring Gulls of this season. Then they noted its dull yellowish legs. They were alert to the possibility of this southern European species, which has occurred once on the Magdalen Islands, twice in Newfoundland, and repeatedly near Washington, D.C., in recent years. So, they studied it carefully and Christine used the last five frames of her film to obtain this photo, among others. Then all the birds were flushed by a dog, and they were unable to find the gull during subsequent visits. Hesitant to launch a rare bird alert, they waited until their colour prints were available. As soon as I saw these, I was convinced that they had indeed chanced on a Yellow-legged Gull. In addition to the above field marks noted by them, the orbital ring appears deep brick-red; those of full-breeding Herring Gulls become at most orange-yellow. However, its bright-red bill spot (orange-red at this season in Herring Gulls) seemed uncharacteristically small, and its back was not noticeably darker than a Herring Gull's. Photos were sent to Pierre Yésou of Nantes, France, an expert on this species, that was only recently "split" as a full species from the Herring Gull complex. M. Yésou responded (*in litt.*, August 28, 1995) that "both the jizz and colours (as they show in print) are correct for a mid-winter *michahellis* Yellow-legged Gull . . .", and also supplied many useful comments on identification. The full story of this gull, along with a colour picture, will appear in a forthcoming issue of *Birders Journal*, a new Canadian enterprise that among other things documents extreme rarities for Canada.

The LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL is not nearly so rare, but this picture does confirm a first-winter individual; this plumage has only been reported here once or twice, and not hitherto documented. This young gull, seemed rather "floppy" and gave frequent begging calls when discovered and photographed at Sullivan's Pond, Sept. 24, 1995. Could it have been raised in, say, southwest Newfoundland, where some of this species were reported to have summered in 1995? The photograph shows that this species is not difficult to distinguish from our very variable young Herring Gulls. Its very "checkered" appearance, with whitish margins on its very dark back and wing feathers, first draws attention. Then notice that the tertials (those large feathers on the inner hind-margins of the wings) are neatly pale-edged; those of young Herring Gulls have scalloped margins, and generally have inner spots and bars. Note also that, in addition to the dark secondaries, the outer feathers of the greater coverts are also quite dark. The effect in flight is of two dark bars along the hind edge of the wing, quite different from the single dark (secondaries) bar in young Herring Gulls. Finally, the dark terminal band of the tail contrasts with the paler upper tail coverts and lower back. The tail of our young Herring Gulls is more extensively dark and does not stand out so sharply from the uniformly dusky rump and back. (This last feature is not true, however, of first winter Herring Gulls of western Europe. These might be looked for here; they have occurred in Newfoundland. They appear





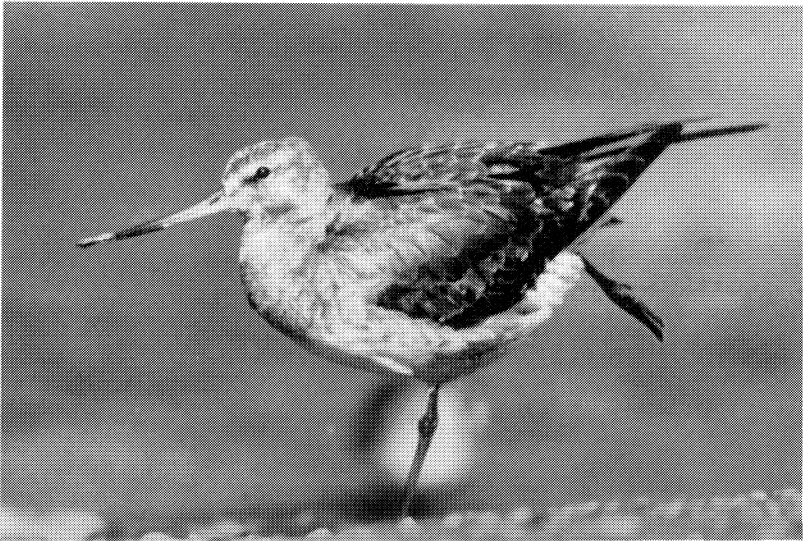
Yellow-legged Gull - Christine Cornell



Lesser Black-backed Gull - Ian McLaren



Black-necked Stilt - Blake Maybank



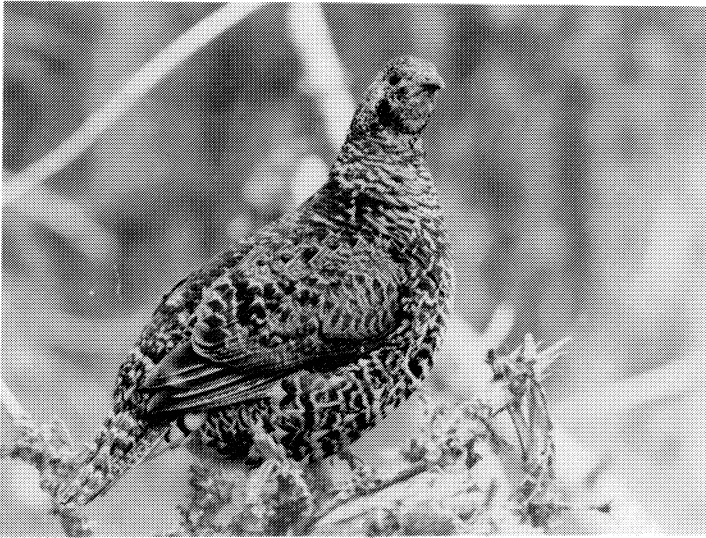
Hudsonian Godwit - Francis Spalding



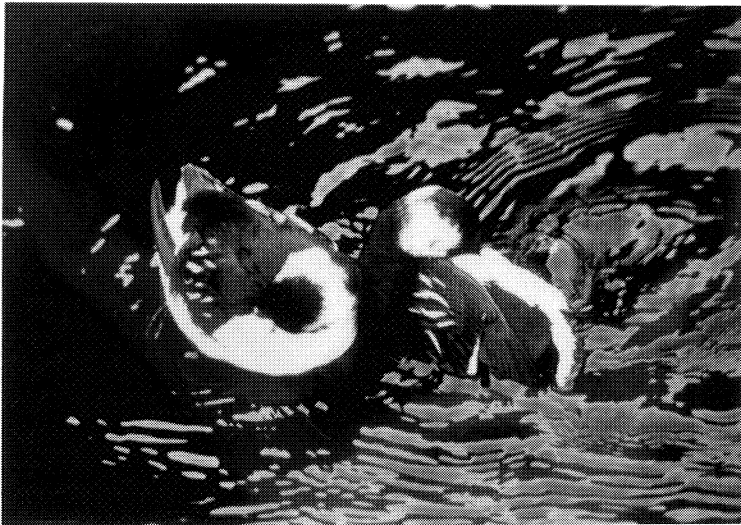
Red-breasted Merganser - Ian McLaren



Red-necked Phalarope - Ian McLaren



Spruce Grouse - Randy Lauff



Dovekie - Blake Maybank

"checkered", like young Lesser Black-backs, but the feather centres are not so dark, and they appear paler overall than our birds.)

Continuing with rarities, we present a fine portrait of the province's first really cooperative BLACK-NECKED STILTS, of which there have been five previous occurrences in the province, only one of which was fully confirmed (see Tufts; those birds were just distinguishable on a movie film). This elegant twosome appeared June 14, 1995, behind Rainbow Haven Beach, Cole Harbour, and the birding community was alerted by a local observer next day. A number of us got to see and photograph the birds that day. Alas, they departed on the following day, leaving many others unhappy.

The slide of the elegantly stretching HUDSONIAN GODWIT was sent to us by Francis Spalding. Did you know that there is a quite extensive literature of stretching and head-scratching motions of birds? Some do it over the wing, and some under the wing, and the detailed movements supply clues on evolutionary relationships among various species and higher groups. There is no end of things to be discovered about birds!

Two very different waterbirds were photographed on the big pond of Seal Island in mid-May 1995. Such closeups of either species can result from good luck or good planning, but I confess to taking advantage of unpleasant circumstances. The yearling male RED-BREASTED MERGANSER, with its decidedly punk hairdo, was actually much weakened by some sort of net entanglement. The nature and extent of its difficulties were unclear until my daughter and I finally cornered on land and removed a large piece of herring net from its neck. We hope it made it. It was not until I got my slides that I realized why the RED-NECKED PHALAROPE was so gracefully spinning around the pond's surface, jabbing at hatching midges, when it should have been snatching small zooplankton far out to sea. The photos showed that the poor creature's right eye seemed all but obliterated by an apparent head wound. We can only hope that its island sojourn helped it to recover.

During his rambles on the Plateau of Cape Breton National Park in mid-July, 1995, Randy Lauf came across a hen SPRUCE GROUSE with several young. Some of the latter actually began to display in a very adult-like manner. All of them, including the hen shown here, were as usual quite tame. Nevertheless, I don't believe that we have ever published on these pages such a nice portrait of this grouse, with its wonderfully complicated plumage patterns.

In late fall and early winter DOVEKIES are often driven inshore by fierce nor'easters. Sometimes we find them scrambling for meagre fare along the shores, easily approached, but constantly swimming and diving, and thwarting easy photography. Blake Maybank came across this twosome, fast asleep off a dock on Cape Sable Island. So here we have them in black-and-white, ying and yang, heads tucked under their wings, oblivious to the delighted observers overhead.

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, Paradise, Annapolis Royal, Clementsport.
Kings Co.	Wolfville, Greenfield, Canard, Black River Lake, Gaspereau, Grand Pre, 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  
 CSI - Cape Sable Island

**DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF REPORTS**

for  
the April 1996 issue

**FEBRUARY 28, 1996**

**Bird Reports to the RECORDS EDITOR**

Wendie Tay \*  
5 Berwick Street  
Dartmouth, N.S. B2Y 3B6

**Articles, sketches and letters to the EDITOR**

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

**Photographs to**

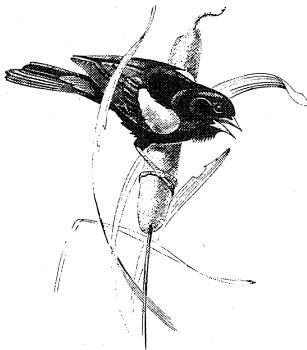
Dr. I.A. McLaren,  
1755 Cambridge Street,  
Halifax, N.S. B3H 4A8

**\* A Message from your Records Editor:**

By the time this issue of **Nova Scotia Birds** reaches you, you will have **4 - 5 weeks** to go to the next deadline for the April issue--lots of advance notice. In order for me to do my job efficiently and for the Seasonal Editors to do theirs' in time for the next issue to come out on time (not annoyingly a month or two late) I must have your reports by the deadline date. We are all volunteers and ask for your co-operation.

In future, late reports will be accepted but will not be included in the current issue. They will be kept for future inclusion. THINK FEBRUARY 28th!!!

Thank you  
Wendie Tay



## BIRDSTRIKE!

Peter Serwylo

Exactly what does the term "birdstrike" mean? Perhaps to those in the birding community, it refers to a day's outing when the species tally is so low that one would think that the birds are in opposition to being viewed, and therefore "striking" against being added to the check list. Within the aviation community however, the term "birdstrike" is a serious and potentially life-threatening situation. "Birdstrike" simply refers to the collision between aircraft and birds.

On a worldwide basis, there are thousands of birdstrikes to aircraft annually. In Canada, hundreds of strikes are recorded each year. In many cases, when these bird/aircraft collisions occur, flights are continued uneventfully with, or only minor damage having been sustained by the aircraft. There are however, a number of instances annually where birdstrikes have caused substantial damage to aircraft, and a single strike can cost more than a million dollars in repair costs and downtime alone. In some cases, aircraft have crashed and passengers have been injured or killed because of collisions with birds.



Roy O'Brien (left) with Hybrid (Gyr, Prairie, Saker) and Peter Serwylo  
(right) with Saker female



An incident in which a birdstrike is believed to be a possible factor of a crash, is the loss of a British Nimrod aircraft at the Toronto Air Show earlier this summer. That same aircraft was performing at the Shearwater International Airshow just a few days prior to the unfortunate accident in Ontario. All crew members were killed in that crash. Many air travellers are not aware of the hazards that wildlife populations near or within airports can pose to aircraft operations. I hope this article will provide some insight into this very serious problem and perhaps offer a remedy to the problem that numerous airfields in Canada, and worldwide, are facing. In Canada, airport managers must provide control measures to reduce the hazards of wildlife to aircraft and passengers, in order to provide a safe environment in which aircraft can operate. Many different methods of bird control have been used on airfields, and some of the methods include, but are not limited to, shooting, habitat management, the use of pyrotechnical devices, use of bird distress call recordings, poisoning and trapping, to name a few.

In 1989 at 12 Wing Shearwater, (a Canadian Military airfield close to Halifax, Nova Scotia) my company was awarded a contract to provide wildlife control services on the aerodrome. At that time, increasing wildlife populations were compromising aircraft operations, and 12 Wing Shearwater deemed it necessary to contract out services for professional wildlife controllers. The objective of the program was to minimize the risk to the bases valuable aircrew and aircraft from wildlife on or about the aerodrome. My company had already been involved in Aerodrome wildlife control for a number of years at various locations in Canada, and welcomed the opportunity to provide its services to 12 Wing Shearwater. The main reason for the high rate of birdstrike reduction at locations where I have done contract work, is the primary method of control in which I specialize; that is, the use of trained falcons, hawks and other birds of prey that have been trained for "Airport Falconry".



*The Cessna Conquest after an encounter with seagulls during take-off from Fort Frances, Ontario.*

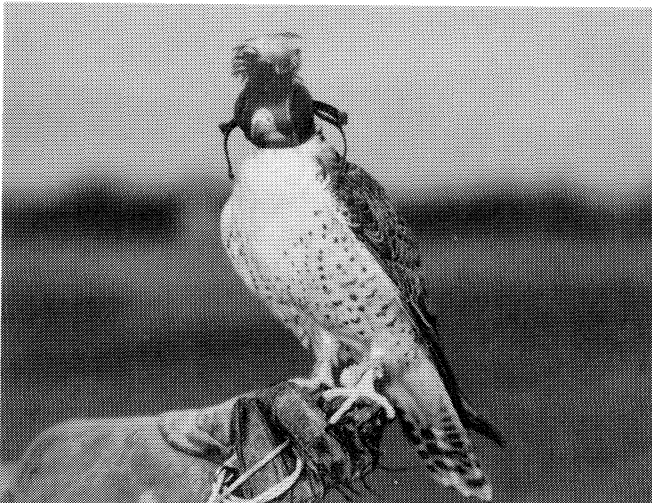
Photograph courtesy of the Transportation Safety Board of Canada.

Airport Falconry is the term that I use with respect to the use of trained raptors on airfields and it differs greatly from Sport Falconry. In an airfield environment, birds must be dispersed effectively and expeditiously without interference to aircraft operations, whereas Sport Falconry is a recreational pastime use of trained raptors. The types of raptors that I have trained over the years for use on airports are numerous. Some of the species include Peregrine Falcon, Merlin, Goshawk, Saker Falcon, Prairie Falcon, Gyrfalcon, Lanner Falcon, Hybrid Falcons, Golden Eagle, Ferruginous Hawk and Harris Hawk. These birds generally have their limitations in the wild when capturing quarry. Raptors do not normally seek out quarry larger than themselves.

The captive-bred raptors that I use for Airport Falconry are trained to pursue quarry that their wild counterparts would not normally attempt to capture. For example, the large Herring Gull would not normally be preyed upon by Peregrines. However, I have trained relatively small female Peregrines to pursue and attack not only the Herring Gulls, but also the Greater Black-backed Gulls without hesitation or reservation.

The intent of my control program is to educate and disperse the problem birds rather than to dispatch or cull the populations. This method and approach to control is not only biologically and environmentally sound, but is accepted much more readily by the public than many of the other methods of control. By applying this technique I have the best achievement record within the Canadian Forces and my level of success has not been duplicated by any other wildlife control contractor. At the time of writing, 12 Wing Shearwater is rapidly approaching the milestone of not having any birdstrikes on base for a period of two and one-half years, and during that time there have been more than 100,000 air movements.

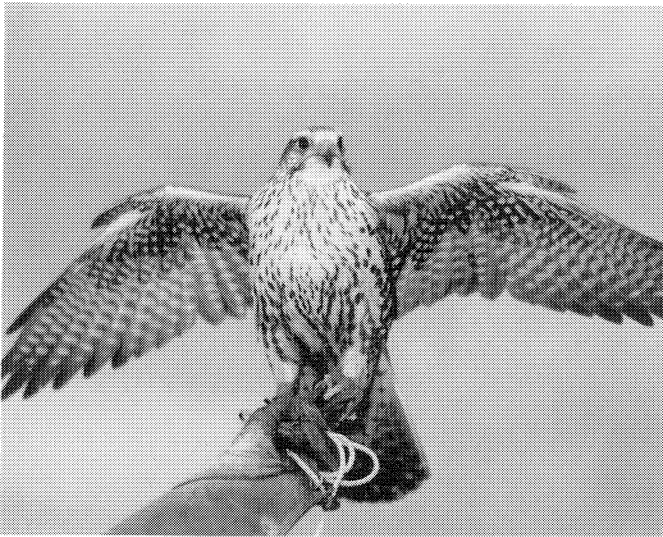
The raptors are usually used in two ways on the aerodrome. After being trained to pursue the most common problem birds found at the particular airfield, they can be carried about either on the glove while on foot or at the ready in the back of a vehicle. Should birds be encountered during the numerous airfield checks performed daily, they can be flown directly against the problem species. This method is most effective and has the longest lasting dispersal result. Another method of dispersal and education is what is termed as "lure flying", particularly when it involves the flight of falcons. Lure flying the falcon causes the falcon to attack the lure, (to which the falcon has been trained to return for re-call) thus sending the raptor into a series of hunting stoops and dives. Birds on the aerodrome or those transiting the area take warning and remain clear of the area when they see a falcon in hunting flight.



Lanner female with hood

One method of control that I have developed for airport use is flying the small falcons directly at quarries from inside a vehicle while driving down the runway. This method has been extremely effective against smaller birds such as Starlings, larks, Snow Buntings and Robins that tend to habituate the grassy areas found along the runway edge. This method has also been most effective for structural bird control, (hangers, etc.) particularly during the breeding season when bird infestation can be quite severe. The number of birds that are dispatched annually at 12 Wing Shearwater remains quite low in comparison to other airfields.

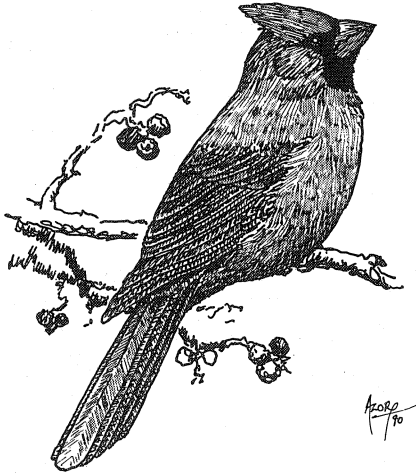
On average and depending on the particular raptor being flown on the airport, a capture is made approximately 10% of the time. Should the captured quarry be relatively unharmed, the raptor can be rewarded in order to release the captured prey, and that quarry can in turn, be released. The captured and released prey, once free, quickly communicates to others of its own kind the threat that will be encountered should they stray into the control area. This method works particularly well with the Gulls and corvids. Because of the tremendous number of variables and factors that influence wildlife populations on or around airfield, it is simply not possible to describe all of the work done over the course of the year in this brief overview. Suffice it to say that wildlife controllers must be fully conversant with the habits of problem bird species and must be able to react to any situation or influx in those populations immediately, and be able to properly administer dispersal techniques in order to maintain a safe operating environment for aircraft.



Gyr/Prairie/Shaker Hybrid "Baby Huey"

In ending, the next time you plan to travel by air and have the opportunity to gaze out over the airfield, check for birds that may present a hazard to aircraft. If you do see birds on the aerodrome, make your observations known to airport authorities. In the interests of flight and passenger safety, I'm sure that any airfield wildlife observations that you could provide would be most welcomed by airport authorities and will contribute to the overall effectiveness of the airfield's wildlife control program as well as enhance airport safety.

# The Feeder Page.



Carlene Adams of Shag Harbour has hosted nesting Cardinals again this year. Here are some excerpts from her letters:

June 27--Just a quick note to say my Cardinals are parents again. So far I see one female chick, quite big, flying around expecting to be fed. The male does most of the feeding. He was also feeding the mother Cardinal. They produced early this year, maybe due to the mild winter or perhaps because I wasn't expecting to see a baby this soon. I fed the birds a second helping before supper and I went to the bedroom window after supper and there they were!! The baby sat on a branch a few feet from the window. The grown ups are quite tame--I can go out early in the morning to feed them and they will almost come to me.

July 21--Just another quick note today. My male and female Cardinals produced four little ones. I believe a male has been produced! It is an orange colour now, quite different from the others. I certainly hope so. I haven't seen the mother lately and wonder if she is nesting again. The father is around--eats and takes off.

A woman who lives about four miles from me said she sees a red bird out behind her house on the ground. She wondered if it was a Cardinal and I told her about my Cardinals and now she plans to spy on them some more. I told her to look for a female and what color. I bet more Cardinals are around and nobody pays much attention to them, other than talking about the pretty red birds they see.

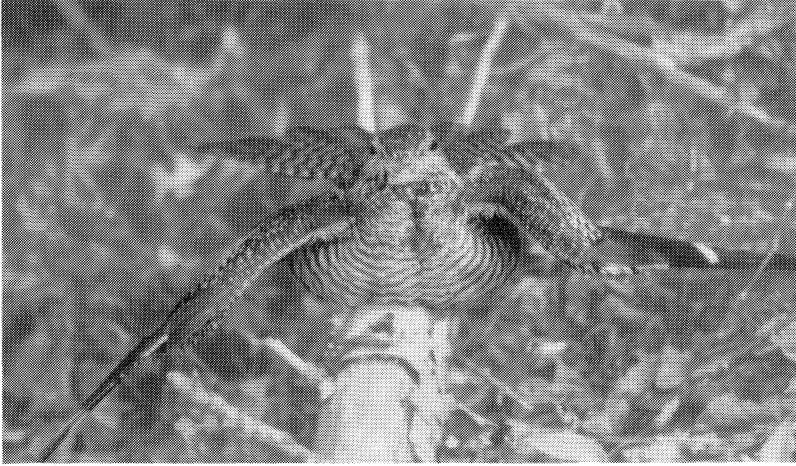
## THE NIGHTHAWK'S NEST

by Francis Spalding

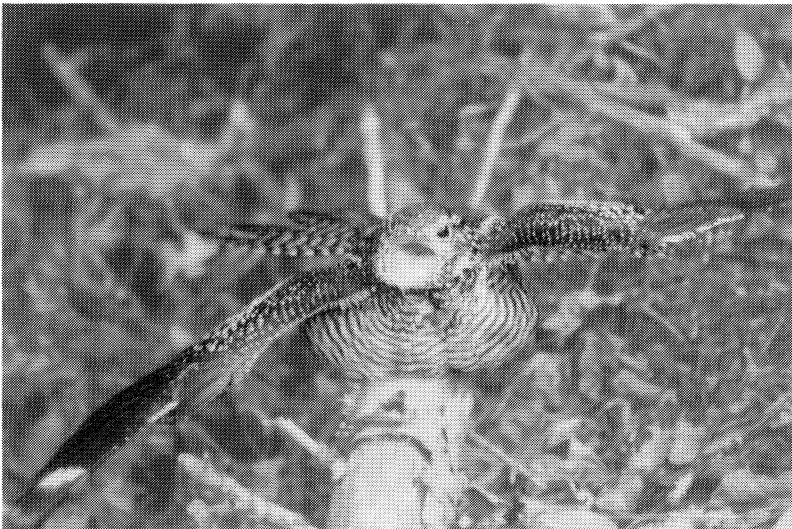
The forests of the Cobequids are all owned of course, and for their owners, the trees are viewed as a harvestable crop. For the province, companies and some individuals the acreages held are large and great machines sometimes convert whole landscapes into wood chips on the spot. Hereabouts, however, local contractors are more often hired to cut tracts of modest size. Where a scrap of orange tape marks a woodlot's boundary somewhere in the maze of backwoods roads, a crew of three will arrive with a skidder (to haul out the logs), a loader (first to pile them, eventually to load them onto trucks) and chainsaws. When once a trail wide enough for the skidder is cut and cleared of its delimbed trees, the sawman, still called a chopper, supplies the skidder with logs to take to the roadside landing where, if destined for pulp, they are cut to length and in any case, piled.

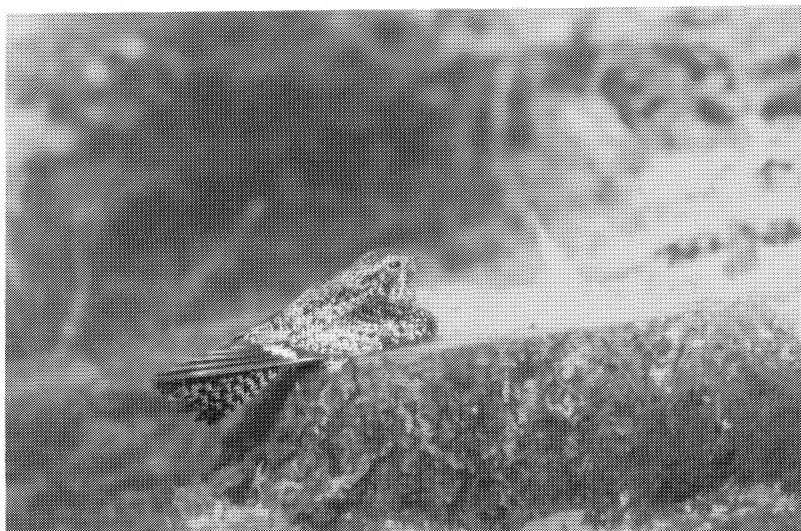


In the present instance, the clearing of the trail was well underway—chainsaw shrilling, trees crashing to the ground, the skidder roaring in to fetch them—when Keith Chisolm, the skidder driver and a neighbour of mine, noticed a bird fluttering about on the ground, seemingly intent on persuading him to call the whole thing off. Investigating, he found a nest with two eggs in a mossy depression not thirty feet from his skidder's trail. Above it, widely spaced spruce some forty feet high, made of the area an idyllic glade, now abruptly reduced and threatened with extinction. That night, July 4, he consulted his bird book and called me to say he'd seen either a Chuck-will's-Widow or a Nighthawk and found its nest. Yes, the wings had been pointed, the range was right and the bird, we agreed, was a Nighthawk. Next day he showed me, after a few moment's pointing, the setting hen. Despite being the better part of a foot from the nearest gray twig, she was to all intents and purposes invisible, having put herself just where the next twig should have been. Fifty yards away the loader was busy with Keith's most recent delivery of logs, so I left, planning to return on a weekend day.



Rain and circumstance put that off until July 21. The logging operation had ended, but since mother Nighthawk was still protecting her half-dozen trees, Logan Elliott, the contractor, had decided they had best be spared. So far as I could see, she wasn't on her nest and so I gradually approached the spot. The depression in the moss was visible and next to it half an egg shell, matte white and blotched brown. Many birds, I knew, whisked their egg shells away--was this fragment perhaps a bad omen? The glade seemed deserted, but when I took a couple of hesitant steps the nighthawk materialized to lure me away. A couple of minutes search produced two downy chicks, eyes tightly closed, about twenty feet from the nest in an equally exposed mossy area, littered with twigs. Withdrawing to convenient stump, I sat a few minutes in a portable blind. A foraging Junco approached to within a foot of the chicks, then suddenly departed. Next a squirrel appeared; its course was taking it right to them, but as I thought of rising up as a sort of *deus ex machina* in reverse, I heard a rush of wings and saw the squirrel quickly alter course and depart. Supposing that she, a crepuscular bird, wouldn't feed her chicks before dusk, that they wouldn't move a muscle in the intervening hours and that she had the situation well in hand, I left. Next week's visit found the, still motionless, out in the cut-over area, their mother as watchful as ever. Finally, a week later, my approach caused two bodies to hurtle out of the slash and, flying strongly, head for the edge of the clearing. Unnecessarily, I thought, mother Nighthawk limped away in the opposite direction.





This is the meagre sum of my observations. As I left, I thought about the odds of stumbling across a Nighthawk's nest in these woods (less even than a winning in the lottery), of how differently the chicks, who looked very much like baby Killdeer, planned to survive their first month. They couldn't run, and never would, so until they could take to the sky, best to seem a bit of the earth. The periodic migration of a few feet perhaps served to reduce the risk of their scent building up at their resting place. As for mother, her name seems as much due to her resemblance to a hawk as to her skill at hawking after moths (ask a squirrel). The vulnerable pink of her open mouth, revealed when she confronts large intruders, belies her fierceness but perhaps appeals to hungry predators. Now, thanks to the consideration of a logging crew, there are four Nighthawks (I saw the presumed male once, flying high above the cuttings) sweeping moths a pedestrian lepidopterist will rarely see.



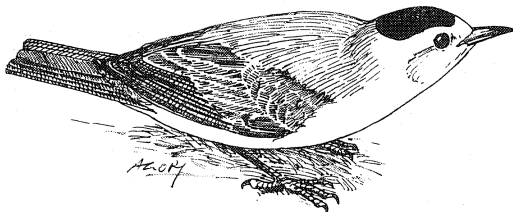
#### STRANGE BEHAVIOR OF A GREATER YELLOWLEGS.

While walking up Crescent Beach, Lun. Co., viewing the nice selection of shorebirds (Sept. 21), I happened to be gazing at a Greater Yellowlegs, wading in shallow water, admiring the fine streaking of its winter plumage. Suddenly it seemed to collapse, as if its legs had given way. Suddenly it was sitting in the water and then subsided into and under the water altogether--no bird to be seen at all. At this point, all the other shorebirds put up in a panic and a large dark female Merlin flew amongst them. When the hawk left the beach was bare except for the Yellowlegs which arose from the depths, stood up on its long yellow legs and resumed its foraging.

--JSC.

## ENCOUNTER WITH A RARE NESTER

Raymond S. d'Entremont



Most birders start off rather casually and then progress as more knowledge is gained. After a few years of watching birds, it occurs to you that you should write something down and you begin keeping records, making your hobby more interesting. I began keeping records in 1979. Through the years I have had lots of fun recording spring arrivals, nesting birds, the fall migration, stragglers and many more interesting things.

Prior to this year I had recorded Wilson's Warbler seventeen times. Fourteen of those were for fall, earliest being July 4, 1992, and latest, November 27, 1988. Of those, four were recorded aboard our boat on George's Bank. The remaining three records were for spring, seen on May 19, 1984; May 27, 1987; and May 24, 1993. Only the one on May 27, 1987 was singing.

On May 23, 1995, as I neared the end of Pubnico Point, I heard this warbler singing. At that moment I remembered thinking, 'if it is a Yellow-rumped Warbler, it is not a typical one.' I then recalled the one Wilson's Warbler I had heard before. It was indeed a brilliant male Wilson's Warbler.

On May 31, I again passed through the area. This time I saw both the male and female. As I walked by the area every day, it offered an excellent opportunity to check for breeding evidence. On many days after that, when I neared the area, I could always entice the male out by 'spishing'. If nothing else, I was getting acquainted with its song. It is a pleasing little chatter, dropping slightly at the end. Sometimes the female would come out too.

On June 28, I witnessed the male with food in its bill. The female was flitting about nervously and scolding. When I left I didn't feel I had made any progress in pinpointing the nest area.

After lunch I went again. This time the female promptly arrived with food in her bill. Again she was flitting nervously and scolding. By now I could recognize the scolding note which is slightly different from the other warblers I know.

I knew this bird nested on the ground, so I was watching for her to go down. She would not do it so I figured I might be too close to the nest. I backed off a few yards and that did the trick. She went down, the scolding stopped and she reappeared with her bill empty. I immediately move in. I soon found the nest. It was neatly embedded at the base of a clump of alders. It was built entirely of grass and held five young.

I visited the nest again the next day and I was surprised to find it empty. Everything was alright, although as I watched, both parents came with food and fed the young which I could hear hidden in the alders. I also saw the male singing about three hundred yards from the nest area, it is hoped that he is staking out another territory to nest again.



## PUFFIN OF THE YEAR AWARD

Once upon a time, a long, long time ago, there was a Bird Society trip to a far away place call Brier Island. At the end of the trip, at a spot called Peajack Cemetary, Lo, a Puffin appeared. This Puffin was cradled in the arms of a birder named Eric Cooke, who made a small speech and gave the Puffin to another birder call Phyllis Dobson in appreciation of her years as Editor of the Society's Newsletter. After this ceremony, the Puffin laid an egg so that next year there would be another Puffin for a deserving member of our society. From that day to this, every year, a new Puffin appears to be presented at the AGM. So, the Puffin you see here tonight is a great, great, great, (many greats) grandson of the first Puffin. Like his forebears, he will carry on the tradition.

Traditionally, the Puffin of the Year Award is given to a member for outstanding effort achieved for the Bird Society. This year is no exception. This year's recipient became interested in birding in 1971. His interest was sparked when he was a scout leader, by helping scouts earn their birding badges. He took a bird identification course and was an active member of the Ottawa Field Naturalists. In 1977, he moved to Nova Scotia and joined the Nova Scotia Bird Society. Since then he has been in executive positions with the Bird Society as President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. He started the winter Sewer Stroll field trips, which have been a resounding success. In conjunction with others, he has been a lecturer and leader of the Youth Field Trip for a number of years. Recently, he had begun a new field trip in Lunenburg County, which he leads each spring. There are very few monthly meetings where one does not spot him. Just this past year he has been involved in bird education with the Boat Show, West Pubnico Fair, Kentville Montessori School, and the Senior Citizens Welcome Wagon event. This birder is also a member of the South Shore Naturalist Club and the President of the Provincial Society for the Prevention of Cruelty. He is the type of individual who gives unselfishly of his time and energy with little thought to recognition or thanks.

For his devotion to the birds and the Bird Society, I present the 1995 Puffin of the Year Award to Mr. Bill Caudle.

Bill, please come and receive your Puffin.



Lisë presents Bill with his Puffin

Photo-Peter Payzant

## 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.

Leaders are asked to submit a field trip report to the editor. Please send the reports to:

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

## FEBRUARY

- Sat. 3 Harbour Hop, C.B.: Cathy Murrant (737-2684).  
Meet at 8:00 am at Renwick Park (Brookside & Commercial St.), Glace Bay.
- Sat. 17 Sewer Stroll II: Fulton Lavender (455-4966).  
Meet at Hartlen's Point at 8:00 am. This is an all-day outing and ends at Herring Cove via Bedford (Storm day, Sun., Feb. 18).

## MARCH

- Sun. 3 Prospect, Terence Bay: Peter MacLeod and/or Bev Sarty (852-5209). Meet at the Royal Canadian Legion in White's Lake at 8:30 am. Enjoy Harlequin Ducks, alcids, and other winter birds. Bring a lunch.
- Fri. 22 Owl Prowl, C.B.: Allen Murrant (737-2684).  
Meet at 6:00 pm at Morrison Rd. & Broughton Rd. (Storm day, Sat., Mar. 23).

## APRIL

- Sat. 13 Eastern Shore, Martinique Beach: Ian McLaren (429-7024). Meet at 8:00 am at the Scotia Bank parking lot, Bridge Plaza, Dartmouth.
- Sun. 14 Wolfville Area: Judy Tufts (542-7800).  
Meet at 9:00 am at the Robie Tufts Nature Centre, Front Street, Wolfville. We will be pond hopping for ducks and early migrants.
- Sat. 27 Cape Sable Island, the Hawk, and others: Contact person: Joan Czupalay (Home: 637-2402, messages at work: 637-2116). An assortment of field trips will be sponsored by the Southwestern Nova Scotia Bird Watchers. Possible trips include Baccaro and Blanche Peninsula, Bon Portage Island, and Cape Sable. Listen to the CHAT line (852-2428) for more details closer to the event or call for information.

## MAY

- Sun. 5 Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary: Alan Smith (H 506-536-0164 or W 506-364-5038). Meet at 9:30 am 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.
- Sat. 11 Spring Arrivals, Point Edward area, Cape Breton: Jackie Chretien (564-4640). Meet at 8:00 am at the Walmart parking lot in Sydney River.
- Sun. 12 Spring Arrivals, Prospect Area: Peter MacLeod and/or Bev Sarty (852-5209). Meet at the Royal Canadian Legion in White's Lake at 7:30 am. Bring a lunch.
- Wed. 15 Halifax County Warbler Walk: Fred Dobson (852-3042). Meet at 6:00 am at the parking lot at the junction of the Prospect Rd., Rte. 333 and the St. Margaret's Bay Rd., 2-3 hrs. duration.
- Fri. 17 Bon Portage Island. To be confirmed. If anyone is to  
 Mon. 20 willing to lead this trip please contact the Field Trip Coordinators at the number or address listed below.
- Sat. 18 Lunenburg County: Bill Caudle (766-4465). Meet at Exit 11 off Hwy. 103, at 7:30 am. Munch a lunch near New Germany. Trip ends near Bridgewater. Slow-paced introduction to birding for beginners. Find new birding spots.
- Sun. 19 Hopewell Area, Pictou County: Harry Brennan (923-2780). Meet at 8:00 am at St. Columbia Churchyard, about 1 mile south of Hopewell. Northern Saw-whet and Barred Owls possible. General birding--excellent for beginners.
- Sat. 25 Hants County Day: Margaret Clark (443-3993). Meet at 8:00 am at the railway crossing in Mt. Uniacke. Observe abundant birdlife in a variety of habitats. This trip extends into the early afternoon.
- Sun. 26 Shubenacadie Area: Roslyn McPhee (758-3265). Meet at 7:00 am in front of Scott's Restaurant in Shubenacadie.

Any questions or suggestions should be directed to the Field Trip Coordinators, Christine Cornell and Kevin Tutt (479-7667), 232 Purcell's Cove Road, Halifax, NS B3P 1C1.

## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

June 10--Birds of Kings County

It was encouraging to the leader to find people from New Glasgow to Barrington Passage and parts in between, turn up to discover a portion of the varied birdlife of Kings County. Warm, sunny weather greeted the nine of us and the birds did not disappoint. The abilities of the group ranged from the novice to the experienced so this made for a more varied outing.

Along Butler Road, which is near the southern edge of Kings County, there were plenty of singing flycatchers and warblers to enable the group to hone their identification skills. Several families of Gray Jays made a noisy appearance, a welcome sight for all of us. Locating Canada and Tennessee Warblers was a bonus as both are uncommon to rare in the area. A long trek was necessary to view the Tennessee at close range.

Later we visited the site of a Goshawk nest and were treated to one of the adults, likely the female, flying above us. Luckily, she was not in a grumpy mood and did not attack. Nevertheless, we retreated quickly to the vehicles. Following that, we checked out a nesting pair of Northern Orioles, but they were not very co-operative with only one making a brief appearance.

Since the purpose of the field trip was to learn the songs of common species and to be made aware of the differences between the songs of certain species, no attempt was made to keep a total count. However, it was a most enjoyable morning to which the weather, birds and participants all contributed.

Angus MacLean

June 21 - Warbler Walk, Birch Grove, C.B.

This was the first trip that I have ever led and it was an interesting event to say the least. It should have been done a few weeks earlier because all the leaves are out now, birds are hard to see and most are in the middle of nesting and keep relatively quiet.

Six birdwatchers and six hours proved to be an adventure and challenge on this day that went from warm to extremely hot. All the odds were against us; there was heat, sun, dust, you name it, but nobody gave up. Everyone wanted a good list and in the end it turned out very well considering the odds. Trying to keep everyone cool and collected was a real challenge; I didn't want my first trip to be a flop. The final count was 61 species and a few surprises.

We had to fight for every warbler we saw and got a good look at a Bonus Bird on the way back--an ALBINO Grackle at Donkin. It was perched on a lawn with another Grackle, it had no black on it at all; it was milk white and look very healthy. Northern Parulas in general are way down in our area and no one warbler has been seen in great numbers, except for the Tennessee Warbler.

[Hugh goes on to list all the species seen, but lack of space precludes inclusion here. Highlights were eleven species of warbler, Broad-winged Hawk and Merlin, Swainson's and Hermit Thrush, Alder Flycatcher and a large raft of guillemots.--Ed.]

Hugh Metcalf

### July 23 - Wallace Bay

Last year's summation of the Field Trip closed with the hope and prediction of more people and a few Northumberland Strait surprises. Well it all came true. We had a beautiful sunny day and birders from the South Shore, Halifax, Truro, New Brunswick, Ontario and Liverpool, England--23 in all.

We set out towards Fox Point for shorebirds as the tide was due to start falling. On the way we checked various sections of woods for passeriformes and got more than our fair share, even some Sharp-tailed sparrows in a salt marsh beyond the church. Perhaps we tarried a bit too long, as our shorebirds were farther out than we had planned, but a pond at the base of the point held a Solitary Sandpiper, which returned before we left and was enjoyed by all. The point held its usual Red Knot, Short-billed Dowitcher, Willet, Semipalmated Plover and Sandpiper, Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs, Ruddy Turnstone, Spotted Sandpiper and Least Sandpiper. Some excellent summer plumage Bonaparte's Gull were on the sandbars. Another sandbar in the distance was loaded with Harbour Seal.

After a nice lunch at the Fox Harbour Provincial Park, we went clockwise around Wallace Bay and got ourselves a Caspian Tern going back and forth right in front of us. We then headed for the Wallace Bay Wildlife Refuge, hearing Hermit Thrush, Ovenbird and Tennessee Warblers on the way. Our group split up at the parking lot and the group who went up the river enjoyed Swamp Sparrow, Pied-billed Grebe still on nest and one with young, one little one getting up under the wing of mother. When we almost got to the blind shelter built on the dike, there is a little inlet off the river, therein were Semipalmated Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper and Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs and on the far shore of this inlet I noticed a bird of Greater Yellowlegs size but with red legs--that got everyone looking and we enjoyed four minutes of a winter plumage Spotted Redshank before it flew off across the river. On our way back down the dike Henri Selles of Ontario, saw it fly again with its red legs extending well out beyond the tail. Needless to say when we rejoined the other group, they immediately went in search of the Spotted Redshank,--alas--no luck.

The remainder of us went on to Rivendell Farm where Mr. and Mrs. Bidwell had a nesting Bald Eagle with one young. We also had the use of much needed facilities--thanks folks. We closed out the trip with Nellie Snyder taking us to see (the only place in Nova Scotia I have ever seen) a cluster of blooming Canada Lily. Ross Baker took photos and then we all returned home.

The Northumberland Strait had indeed some treasures to give and they were enjoyed by all, see you next year.

James Taylor

### July 29 - North River, C.B.

It looked like a rather hot and humid day, but better than rain for our Field trip. A group of twelve birders met at the Sydney River parking lot, including two visitors, Rachel Smith from Truro and her friend Simone from Port Hood, Ontario.

At the parking lot we were also greeted by 'the locals'. These included House Sparrow, Herring Gull, Rock Dove and European Starling. As we crossed the Sydney River Bridge, we could hear Song Sparrows, American Goldfinch and the continuous melody of the Red-eyed Vireo. Some of the common birds encountered on our outing included: Cedar Waxwing (very numerous), Robin, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Kingfisher, White-throated Sparrow, Great Blue Heron and both chickadee species. The insect eaters were less conspicuous and probably for a couple of reasons--the heat of the day and time of year. A few, however, were observed or heard. These included: Alder Flycatcher, Magnolia Warbler, Tennessee Warbler and Blackpoll Warbler.

A bird trip would not be complete without its highlights, the most memorable being the performance of two adult Eagles and a pair of eaglets in North Sydney. No matter how many times this species is encountered, it is one that will always hold high regard

and admiration. This scene was even more enhanced by the yodelling of a lark as it flew overhead.

A few species of shorebirds were spotted near the Englishtown ferry. They were Greater Yellowlegs, Semipalmated Sandpiper and Semipalmated Plover.

All in all the total number of species seemed a little low (48), but the scenery and the outing in general was enjoyed by all.

John McKay

#### August 7 - President's Field Trip, Crescent Beach

The 7th of August was, without doubt, one of God's most beautiful days. At 8:15 in the morning, thirty participants enjoyed the wonderful sunshine, and began their trek up Crescent Beach in search of shorebirds.

The northeast wind kept the mudflats from uncovering on schedule, so there was a fifteen minute delay. Under the clear skies and 21° temperature, many of the birders got acquainted. Two girls had come from New York state, and one woman, all the way from Naples, Florida--she found it chilly! It was truly an international group, having a chap joining us from Cologne, Germany.

The first arrivals to the salt marsh were the Willets, Black-bellied Plovers and Short-billed Dowitchers--of course they have longer legs and can handle deeper water. Several new birders from the South Shore Naturalist Club took the opportunity to view these birds through the telescope, and they were astonished at the differences between each bird. Next, the 'peeps' arrived. Semipalmated Sandpipers and Least Sandpipers were sorted out and everyone had a good close view to confirm the nuances of difference between each. Common Terns and two Ospreys reeled over our heads along the walk.



Birders viewing shorebirds at Crescent Beach

About 1100 Semipalmated Plovers were in attendance and many new birders learned to identify these well. As we strolled up the beach to more uncovered flats, the sheer numbers of shorebirds were increasing. Estimated numbers of Short-billed Dowitchers, Black-bellied Plovers and Willets were 106, 52 and 46 respectively. Great Blue Herons stood along the far edges of the flats watching the procession of birders advance up the beach. As we approached the top end of the beach, Greater Yellowlegs and Sharp-tailed Sparrows were calling. Several birders had good views through the telescope of Sharp-tailed Sparrows. Nellie Snyder got a couple of Solitary Vireos and Bernie Forsythe swished out a Yellow-rumped Warbler. Ruddy Turnstones and Red Knot showed their bright plumages to many. Several pushy adult Willets put on a loud show to lead us away from their young. A couple of White-rumped Sandpipers were spotted and shown to the Americans, who were thrilled to see them. Several beginning birders added the White-rumps to their life lists.

On our return trip, we switched over to the sandy-beach side of Crescent Beach and viewed Common and Surf Scoters, Ruddy Turnstones and a confusing female Oldsquaw who was sunning herself on the follies.

Again, Common Terns fished along the edges of the surf below a cerulean sky. Once back at the start, we drove to Risser's Provincial Park for lunch and tallied up the list. Although no real rarities were seen, the chance to view a variety of shorebirds at close range and the experience of identification through observation, comparison and deduction was truly rewarding to many. Upon calling out the list, we were joined by a family of Black-capped Chickadees which made the total for the day 45 species.

Lise A. Cohrs

August 12 - Yarmouth Area - no report received

August 19 - Matthew's Lake

I am pleased to report that our annual trip experienced one of the "typical" Nova Scotia days that we get three times a year--no fog, bright sun, great temperatures and just enough breeze to keep most of the greenheads away.

A happy group of thirteen good birders kept smiling as we waded in knee deep water and managed to see approximately 6-700 individual shorebirds of sixteen species. Many Semipalmated Plovers were seen along with good numbers of Ruddy Turnstones, Semipalmated Sandpipers, Sanderlings, White-rumped Sandpipers, Lesser Yellowlegs and Least Sandpipers. Approximately 28 Hudsonian Godwits were present and 8-10 Red Knots, but the "Bird-of-the-Day" award went to Hubert Hall who spotted a lonely Buff-breasted Sandpiper sitting rather hunched over in a patch of grass, providing good looks.

The trip ended with a late lunch, due to a leader who was unwilling to stop, and this was followed by three Whimbrel and two Common Snipe to finish out the list of shorebirds. Our only other noteworthy bird was a Merlin--possibly one of a pair that nested nearby and raised two fledglings.

David H. Young

August 19 - Economy

Twelve signed up for the outing, twenty-four appeared, but nothing daunted, our caravan departed for the shore where a puny low tide yielded a most unspectacular collection of sandpipers and poor viewing conditions. After a brief delay, while the leader, having locked himself out of his vehicle, was driven home for a second set of keys, we went on to Economy Point where a pleasant woodland walk to the point itself yielded little (highlight a Wood Pewee). Thomas Cove, also on the Point, provided an idyllic spot for a luncheon break, and its trails a smattering of briefly seen warblers. In the afternoon we wound our way along the Economy River (Osprey, Bald Eagle), with stops to check the two-year old eagle nest (its lazy nestlings finally gone), and the bridge where a few small eels, but no mergansers, could be seen. Farther on the junior members of a family of Red-tailed Hawks, (the parents soon departing) soared, dived and generally diverted us. After another stop, rife with butterflies but no identified birds, we regained the highway and the trip was over (4:30). Few people saw more than a small fraction of the warblers (12 spp) and other species ticked, so no totals are offered. As a day afield however, in fine weather, it probably rates as a success.

Francis Spalding

August 26 - Hartlen's Point - no report receivedAugust 26 - Point Michaud, C. B. - no report receivedSeptember 1-4 Bon Portage

The Labour Day weekend trip to Bon Portage gave us a total of 90 species and a variety of weather. It was foggy to start, then overcast, clear and sunny, cold enough to need warm jackets then warm enough for a swim at the slip.

Our group of fifteen were pleased to see a female Indigo Bunting near the slip and a Field Sparrow on the path. The evening was quite unproductive in the fog, but Saturday brought us some great warblers including the Blue-winged which is becoming quite dependable on Bon Portage, and a Prairie Warbler (the first on I had observed in fall colour). At the beginning of the savannah two of us observed for some time a Western Kingbird and in the same area the next day there were many flycatchers.

Hawks, which were to be so plentiful on October 1, were rather scarce. We counted 1 Osprey, 3 N. Harriers, 2 Sharp-shinned, 2 Kestrel and 4 Merlin.

At Saltwater Pond on Saturday, most of us saw the Great Egret, a truly beautiful bird. No other egrets were recorded but we saw 2 Black-crowned Night Herons and 10 Great Blue Herons.

The shorebirds were a great boost to our species totals with 6 Lesser Golden Plover on the west side of the island.

(Alain Clavette and I had seen one early Friday at Maivellette Beach, and several had been seen at the Hawk. Was this the year of the Less. Golden in N.S.?). We had Semipalmated and Black-bellied Plover, Killdeer, both Yellowlegs, Willets, Spotted Sandpipers, 1 Whimbrel, 40 Ruddy Turnstones, 6 Sanderlings and many sandpipers. The sandpipers were mainly Semipalmated (about 200) but we found 2 Pectoral at Kelp Cove and 3 Baird's, 9 White-rumped and 20 Least as well as 6 Short-billed Dowitchers were counted.

Some of our group travelled far for the weekend. Francis Xavier Couze from France came to BPI with Liz and Harry Townsend. Junior and Geraldine Metcalf and Kathy and Alan Murrant came from Cape Breton, Clair Diggins from Middleton, Jean Morse with David and Linda Morse and young son Cameron from the Valley, Rachel Smith from Truro, Alain Clavette from Moncton, N.B. and the compiler from Barrington Passage. It was an interesting weekend.

Joan Czapalay.



### September 16 - Fuller's Bridge

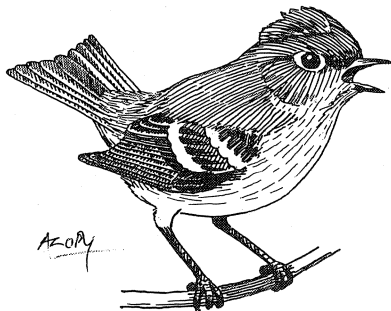
Nova Scotia Bird Society outings are usually apolitical and participants are usually law-abiding, apart from the odd speeding or parking ticket. This outing had the potential to change all that. The destination was Fuller's Bridge over the Framboise River and a part of the politically controversial Fleur-de-lys Trail.

The goals were to see what shorebirds were lingering and to avoid the political controversy. The group was carefully scanning through the Ring-necked Ducks, Short-billed Dowitchers and yellowlegs at Fuller's Bridge near Framboise when reality invaded. A car stopped, two young men stepped out and asked what we were doing. We told them we were looking for birds and asked if they were as well. They said they were, specifically jailbirds and yes, those were guns, not compact binoculars on their hips. The recent finding of a Zodiac full of drugs just to the east and the grounding of the presumed mother ship just to the west had RCMP, search and rescue and coast guard personnel out in full force. Unfortunately we had not been out earlier in the week to see if there had been a Baird's or a Buff-breasted Sandpiper around, so we could not help the officers with their questions about happenings earlier in the week. I guess our group, ranging in age from four to many years more than four, did not look like drug-running suspects because the officers did not ask us if we had been involved. We lingered by the bridge to watch an Osprey fishing, a Northern Harrier hunting, Semipalmated Plovers picking up worms and a Bald Eagle spooking the gulls. Several people were pleased to see a Lesser Golden Plover among the Black-bellieds and a White-rumped Sandpiper among the Semipalmateds, even if they did not come closer for a better view. Three Pectoral Sandpipers and a small group of Sandpeeps did cooperate, at least for those who were not being distracted by the wildflowers.

Morrison's Beach was the next stop. A short walk through the spruce revealed two birds that have been abundant in the area for the past couple of months. A few Red-breasted Nuthatches responded to the spishing. Later two male White-winged Crossbills obligingly perched in a spruce while we viewed them through the scope. During lunch we scanned the ocean, the beach and the barrachois. A group of Common (and a few unidentified) Terns, Double-crested Cormorants and a few Common Loons were all fishing. On the barrachois a Group of Common Mergansers were doing the same. There were few birds exploring the beach wrack, probably because of the attention search and rescue personnel were paying to the wrack.

On the drive to Framboise, from River Bourgeois for some and from the Sydney area for others, a variety of woodland birds were spotted. The group from River Bourgeois were fortunate to see a few Wood Ducks at Ferguson Lake. Perhaps, with the recent publicity for the area, more birders will explore this area of the Cape Breton Coast.

David McCorquodale



September 16 - Minas Basin

I had decided to make this an afternoon trip, to accommodate the tides and maximise the number of shorebirds seen, but as it turned out, shorebirds were the least numerous group around that afternoon. The weather was perfect, so at least the large crowd of 30+ birders and 10+ cars, had an enjoyable outing. There were also some good birds.

We spent the first hour looking around Blomidon Provincial Park, where we were followed by some hungry Gray Jays, and heard some Boreal Chickadees, and saw a few Red-breasted Nuthatches, and enjoyed good overlooks of the tide coming in towards the base of the cliffs below. There were no shorebirds at Medford Beach, so we went on to the Kingsport overlook, where a few White-winged and Surf Scoters and Common Loons could be seen through 'scopes a long way out. However, as we were about to leave, a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, a real rarity in King's Co., appeared in some alders, and put on a great show for the assembled crowd.

The next stop, Harris' Pond, revealed a Sora with a chick, some Greater Yellowlegs, and several 'puddle ducks', and after that, the New Minas Sewage plant had hundreds of Green-winged, and a few Blue-winged Teal and large numbers of Song and Savannah Sparrows and Yellow-rumped Warblers in the bushes along the side. One observer also had a brief, but definite, glimpse of another rarity, a Lark Sparrow, but sadly it could not be relocated. Several raptors, including Sharp-shinned Hawk, N. Harrier and Red-tailed Hawk also appeared here. Everyone also had a good opportunity to study different gull plumages, and to separate Ring-billed from Herring Gulls.

We had a picnic supper in the picnic area at Grand Pré, and then went looking for shorebirds at Avonport Beach. Some small flocks were around but very 'spooky', and the reason been became apparent--a Peregrine Falcon was chasing them around. It was now getting dark at 7:00 p.m., so the trip finished with an enjoyable, day and small numbers but high quality of birds.

Richard Stern.

September 24 - Northumberland Shore - no report received

September 30 - Hartlen's Point - no report received

October 6 - 9 - Bon Portage Island - no report received

October 14 - The Changing of the Yard - Cape Breton

This was the first trip in October in recent memory for those in the group. The day started off right with Jackie Cretien bringing coffee for the leader. We made the rounds from the Glace Bay Heavy Water Plant to Mira Gut. This included the Glace Bay Bird Sanctuary and Schooner Pond. Our group saw 47 species, feeder birds, shorebirds, gulls, eagles and sea ducks. No one bird really stood out, but the sheer numbers going through were staggering. Most notable birds were literally hundreds of Robins and Red-breasted Nuthatches, 5 (imm.) Northern Orioles and 6 American Wigeon. The trip ended at noon with everyone still talking about the numbers of birds and the variety encountered. The weather on this day was cool, overcast with a light breeze.

Those in attendance were Bev Sarty, George Crowell, Jackie Cretien, Hugh and Geraldine Metcalf.

Hugh Metcalf.

November 11 - Northern Head C. B. - No report received.

## SANCTUARY AND SCHOLARSHIP TRUST FUND



Our President, Lise Cohrs presenting the SSTF Puffin Trophy to Lorris Keizer of the Photographic Guild of Nova Scotia. The winning Photograph (of a Bald Eagle) will appear in the April 1996 issue

Photo Hubert Boudreau

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor, *Nova Scotia Birds*:

I realize that editors of publications such as *Nova Scotia Birds* are in a constant search for articles. I do also realize that editors are busy people. This does not, however, excuse allowing articles such as that by D. Roy ("An Eagle Affair", Vol. 37, #3, July 1995) into publication.

The author describes the attack on a Great Blue Heron by a Bald Eagle. Upon successfully killing its prey in the air (as described), the eagle would have then undoubtedly proceeded to pluck the bird, then eat it or deliver it to its chicks (based on personal observation of an eagle kill, pluck, and partially eat a Great Blue Heron on August 16, 1995). Was this natural activity allowed to proceed? No, because the two men in the article immediately went from their observation area to the kill site. Is it any wonder that "the eagle quickly arose in flight...[away from the] untouched Great Blue Heron"!! To add insult to this perfectly natural event, the author refers to it as "the crime". Exactly what "crime" was committed? **Harassment** of birds of prey, by people, is a crime. The eagle at the kill I observed was briefly harassed by terns, but was not phased by this at all--it just continued plucking.

"What was behind...[the] eagle's behavior?" the author asks. I say it was trying to secure a meal for itself and/or its family. "Was he psychopathic?" I really don't think this warrants to be asked, let alone answered, but in the closing paragraph, the author hopes that the eagle was! "One shouldn't be upset by the action of a single bird." True, it doesn't upset me at all. "We can't chastise a single *Haliaeetus leucocephalus* [sic] too severely for this action..."--on whose authority can we chastise a bird? I am not superior to that bird or any other. The author continues, "...when the morning paper is full of felonies carried out by members of *Homo sapiens* [sic]!" This was not a felony!

The author concludes, "When I have occasion to contemplate the Bald Eagle, I will see the still body of a beautiful Great Blue Heron, lying in the tall grass." Perhaps the letter should end, "When I have occasion to contemplate the Bald Eagle, I will see the meal that we deprived it and its young, lying in the tall grass."

This article, in the form presented, did not belong in *Nova Scotia Birds*. It was a blemish on the issue, and on the publication as a whole.

R. F. Lauff  
Antigonish, N.S.

P.S. I do realize this letter is somewhat long for publication. Sorry about that. I really do like *Nova Scotia Birds* and will hopefully be contributing to it in the future. I was (and still am) very upset by this article.

The Editor, *Nova Scotia Birds*

I thought the following might be of interest to the Bird Society, as it seems to represent atypical chickadee behavior, going by what is written about them in *Birds of Nova Scotia*.

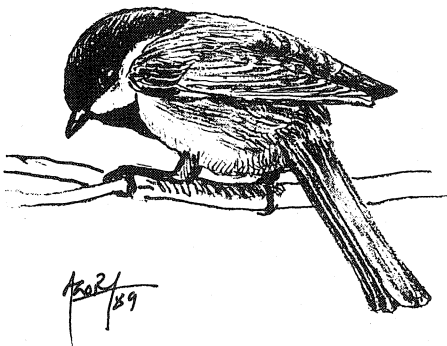
In early July, I observed chickadees carrying nesting materials to one of my birdhouses. Not only did this seem abnormally late for chickadees to be nesting (about two months late, according to the books!), but this particular house was designed with tree swallows in mind: 5" square floor, 8" high walls, 1½" entrance hole, no wood shavings or anything else inside, and mounted about 6' high on a fencepost, in full sun, facing northeast over an open field, some 400' from my home. It didn't seem the sort of thing that would attract chickadees, going by what I've read, but they apparently hadn't read the same books I had, because by late July they were carrying insects into the birdhouse. One of the birds, however, appeared to be immature, possibly from an earlier brood (another contradiction to the books) because, when it wasn't taking food into the birdhouse, it was begging food from the mother, who obliged it. No earlier brood had been raised in any of my birdhouses though; in fact this was the first time I'd ever had chickadees use any of them.

The young began looking out the door of the birdhouse on August 10, and flew the next day. I know there were at least four, because that's how many were following the mother around in the trees the following day. Upon disassembling the birdhouse, I found a lovely, soft, spotlessly clean, 2" thick mat of moss and dog hair (I have a border collie whose winter coat I had been combing out about the time the chickadees were building the nest—they made good use of her fur!) that must have made a very luxurious bed for the young. This contrasted with the hard, dirty tree swallow nest (of straw and gull feathers) in one of my other birdhouses; a house that, incidentally, I had designed for chickadees or Downy Woodpeckers! (They hadn't read the books either, I guess.)

One other odd facet of all this was provided by a red-breasted nuthatch which landed atop the chickadees' birdhouse while the mother was inside feeding the young. When she emerged, it attacked her and chased her into the trees. I never saw it bother her again though.

Anyway, I hope some of this might be usefully informative. I wish you happy birding.

Christopher R. Hover  
River John, N. S.



## TWO GUARDIANS

Don Keith

Time: 2:30 p.m., I arrive at Conrad's BeachDuty: Protect Piping Plovers

It's a foggy, drizzly afternoon. Very few people around as I take over from Neil who has been here nearly every day and really knows these little birds. I'm only an occasional "guardian" and marvel at the dedication he has shown.

As we exchange pleasantries and updates and he turns to leave, we notice an adult bird standing a scant seven or eight metres away facing us, head down, in a guard position. He wasn't there before, didn't fly in, didn't run in, just materialized out of thin air, I believe. I say 'he', but I really don't know the gender and I can't just refer to this beautiful little creature as an 'it', so with some reservation I'll use the generic 'he'.

As I take my walk along the low tide level, discreetly away from the posted area, several small white shapes can be detected gliding among the cobbles of the upper beach. From this distance they appear not so much to be birds as to be shapes being pulled on invisible strings, no leg motion visible, no head bobbing, just ghostly white forms that disappear when the motion ceases.

A party of four people and a dog are heading toward the posted area so I stroll to meet them. Innocuous looking group--two adults in slickers, two kids in bathing suits and a poodle on a leash--**as the sign indicates it should be**. They respond to my greeting, have heard of the Piping Plovers, but really know nothing about them, as I explain their endangered status and hand out an information brochure. "We saw dozens of them last week at Green Bay", comments the mother, and I attempt to sound patient and not condescending as I explain that not all 'peeps' are the same species. A lecture on biodiversity is on the tip of my tongue but I decide against it.

One nice aspect of a drizzly day is the lack of visitors, so while a few isolated pairs or singles arrive with dogs (off their leashes) they stay at the other end of the beach and I wonder whether this would be the case if I were not here. On my previous stand of duty, a tour group of nine people from Carolina and New York had arrived to see the birds, and respectfully (and appreciatively) viewed the birds from a distance with scopes and binoculars. As they prepared to leave a second group of fifteen from Texas and Arizona arrived. In groups of three or four, we took them closer to the protected area and they thanked us for the attention given them and the plovers. All were sensitive to the situation and satisfied to view from a distance; all except one of the tour guides, who would obviously have had his group up to or perhaps over, the staked area for a 'good' look.

Heading back to my posted station, I notice my little ghostly sentry sitting among the pebbles in front of the sign, so I seat myself on the sand eight or ten metres away. As we acknowledge each other it strikes me that he and I are here for the same purpose--guardians of the little clan of five or six chicks in the sanctuary behind the line. During the next half hour he behaves as any sentry on duty; he scratches his head (but with his FOOT), shifts from one foot to the other, snacks on an occasional morsel that ventures too close, and watches me as I watch him, both of us very relaxed.

I begin watching for Neil up the beach as my shift nears its end but, before he arrives, my little plover counterpart is relieved of his duty as another one (to me identical) glides in and lands and he immediately flies off for his break. Within minutes, responding to some stimulus known only to them, three little chicks come scurrying from the upper beach where only pebbles and cobbles had been apparent and scatter purposefully near the waterline. Their tiny bills stab at the even tinier flying creatures which will be converted to the fat, muscle and other tissues enabling these fragile members of the ecosystem to fly to another continent in a few weeks. Tears

well up in my eyes as I comprehend the enormity of their journey and the odds against their arrival back at this little patch of cobbled beach next spring.

Neil is arriving again for the the last three hours before dusk and I cannot help but think, "are there not other people who could also be sharing this responsibility and this opportunity to participate in the life of these little fellow planetary inhabitants?"

I walk back to my van, my life again changed just a bit, my dedication to environmental preservation just a little bit stronger.



SANCTUARY AND SCHOLARSHIP TRUST FUND  
1995-1996 Directors



Eric Cooke, Dave Currie (Treasurer), Shirley Cohrs, Ken Gregoire (Chairman)  
Photo-- Peter Payzant

FORTHCOMING MONTHLY PROGRAMS

January 25, 1996  
8:00 p.m. N. S. Museum

Members' Slide Night

February 22, 1995  
8:00 p.m. N. S. Museum

"Rare and Interesting Bird Sightings in  
Nova Scotia"--Peter MacLeod

March 23, 1996  
8:00 N. S. Museum

"Better Birding Made Easy"--Fulton Lavender

April 26, 1996  
8:00 p.m. **Barrington High School\***

"Update on Roseate Terns and the Gannet  
Recolonization Project"--Ted D'Eon.

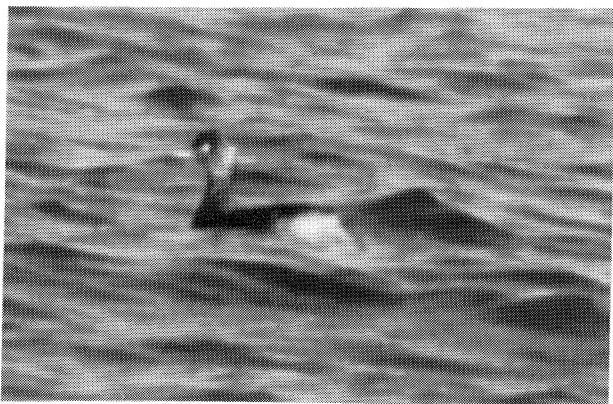
\*The April Meeting of the Nova Scotia Bird Society will be sponsored by the South Western Nova Scotia Bird Watchers. The meeting will be held on **Friday, April 26, 1996, at 8:00 p.m. at the Barrington Municipal High School in Barrington Passage, Shel. Co.** As above, Ted D'Eon will talk about "Update on Roseate Terns and the Gannet Recolonization Project". **Park in the Teachers' Parking Lot on the west side of the school.**

For more information contact Joan Czapalay (902)637-2402 (H) or leave a message at school (902) 637-2116 (W). Please check the Bird Information Line for more information a week or two prior to the event.

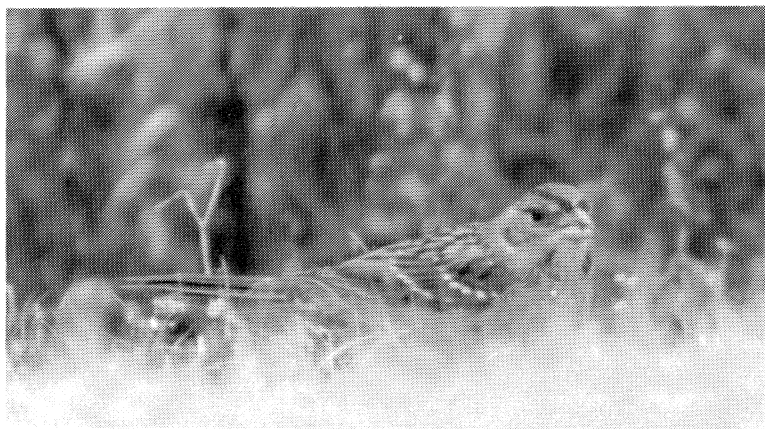


## RARITIES PAGE

The most gratifying rarities are those seen by many.  
These two certainly qualified.



The adult Eared Grebe, slipping out of breeding plumage, was reported at Taylor's Head Provincial Park by visiting U. S. birders in late September and found by many in the next week or so. Note the dark neck, peaked head, and large fluffy, light-coloured rear flanks (often evident on photos, but seldom noted in field guides). Photo, Sept. 28, 1995, Ian McLaren.



The GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW discovered by Azor Vienneau on the Chebucto Head Road obligingly stayed through November to be 'ticked' by many birders. By crouching carefully on the far side of the road, Peter MacLeod was able to take this documentary shot. Can you picture the golden crown?

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

October, 1995

The 1995 Annual General Meeting was held on Thursday, October 26 at 8:00 p.m. in the auditorium of the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History, Halifax, Nova Scotia. The President Lise Cohrs chaired the meeting.

Lise Cohrs called for the adoption of the minutes of the 1994 Annual General Meeting which had been distributed to members. Moved by John Cohrs and seconded by Bill Caudle--carried.

Business Arising from the minutes: none

Reports:

1. Financial. The treasurer, Bill Caudle presented the Treasurers report.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Receipts

Membership...The amount is up a little, I am not sure why. If it was down while membership was up, I would worry, but both figures have moved in the same direction.

Museum Grant...The \$2000.00 reported here is the 1994 grant which arrived during the '94-'95 fiscal year. The grant for 1995 has not yet materialised.

GIC's...We now have three GIC'S. Last year I told you that we had \$1154.00 in a savings account, the interest rate was only about 1/4%, therefore the money has been put into a GIC, which has an interest rate of 8%. As the others mature they are reinvested at the maturing amount. What you see here is the interest they generated last year.

Miscellaneous income... This looks much lower than last year, I have been more diligent and have shown it where it belonged.

Disbursements

**Nova Scotia Birds** and the **Fall Flyer**...This figure covers the printing of these publications. It is higher than last year, we can only grin and bear inflation. Typing of **Nova Scotia Birds** is on a separate line in order to better show you how the money is spent.

Printing and stationery...This includes membership forms, envelopes, letterheads, etc.

Postage...We prepay the post office to mail the **Nova Scotia Birds** and **Fall Flyer**. They have about \$200.00 still on their books toward next year. The rest is for stamps.

Register of Joint Stocks...This invoice has been received for 1996, but has not been paid yet since copies of the reports presented at this meeting must accompany the cheque.

Cost of publications, etc...This year we tried something new. We went into the sweatshirt business--we bought 100 and sales are going well.

AGM...The figure shown for 1994 was for the 1993 meeting. The figure shown here is for 1994, plus the advance to cover purchase of the wine and cheese in the next room.

Telephone...Up from last year. I think the actual time spent on the phone is about the same; it just costs more.

Monthly meeting expenses...Up from last year, at most meetings we were able to have refreshments.

Miscellaneous expenses...This is much smaller than last year. Again, I have gone into more detail in other parts of my report.

Now looking at the Balance Sheet, there is not much change. The Total Assets and Members Equity is within \$200.00 of last year. Since the turnover was about \$17000 last year, I think a 1% change to be insignificant.

Respectfully submitted,  
William Caudle

Bill Caudle moved the adoption of the report. Seconded by Eric Cooke. Carried.

### FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended September 30, 1995

(With comparative figures for the year ended September 30, 1994)

#### STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

Receipts	1994	1995
Membership dues	\$9197.00	\$10709.00
Sale of publications, etc.	\$2684.00	\$3482.35
Nova Scotia Museum Grant	\$1000.00	\$2000.00
Interest, G.I.C.'s Net	\$ 512.85	\$ 626.42
Bank	\$ 5.47	\$ 10.08
Miscellaneous income	\$ 171.17	\$ 36.19
Chat line adverts	\$ 80.00	\$ 230.00
Exchange on US funds	\$ 70.24	\$ 161.75
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>\$13720.73</b>	<b>\$17255.79</b>
<b>Disbursements</b>		
Nova Scotia Birds and Fall Flyer	\$7944.49	\$7844.17
Typing N.S.birds		\$ 906.50
Printing and stationary	\$1059.40	\$1760.74
Postage	\$1134.21	\$1416.00
Bird information line	\$ 311.70	\$ 404.14
Register of Joint Stocks	\$ 10.00	\$
Editor's expenses	\$ 133.19	\$ 202.04
Insurance		\$ 350.00
Cost of publications, crests, shirts, pins, etc for sale	\$ 479.00	\$1401.00
Slide Collection		\$ 17.82
Field trip coordinators expenses		\$ 29.27
Exhibition Expenses		\$ 265.86
CNF Membership		\$ 35.00
Bank charges		\$ 43.00
Puffin & other awards		\$ 169.37
Money for SSTF		\$1560.20
Annual General Meeting expenses	\$ 362.81	\$ 653.00
Telephone	\$ 89.60	\$ 136.77
Monthly meeting expenses	\$ 85.40	\$ 125.43
Miscellaneous expenses	\$ 405.07	\$ 33.52
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$12014.87</b>	<b>\$17353.83</b>
<b>Excess receipts over disbursements</b>	<b>\$1705.86</b>	<b>\$ (98.04)</b>

**BALANCE SHEET**

<b>Assets</b>		
Electric Typewriter (cost \$296.45)	\$ 1.00	\$ 1.00
Steel filing cabinet (cost \$ 99.96)	\$ 1.00	\$ 1.00
Steel filing cabinet (cost \$ 98.99)	\$ 1.00	\$ 1.00
Computer and printer (cost \$1034.22)	\$249.00	\$ 175.00
Sub total		\$ 178.00
Savings account	\$1154.89	
Guaranteed Investment certificates	\$10190.50	\$11971.81
Bank balance	\$ 4063.06	\$3338.6
Total Assets and members equity	\$15660.45	\$15488.41

**STATEMENT OF MEMBERS' EQUITY**

Opening balance	\$14060.59	\$15660.45
Excess receipts over disbursements	\$ 1705.86	\$ (98.04)
Less: depreciation	\$ (106.00)	\$ (74.00)
Closing balance	\$15660.45	\$15488.41

*Lise A. Cohrs*.....

Lise Cohrs, President

*W G Caudle*.....

W G Caudle, Treasurer

*J. Morrow*.....  
J. Morrow, Auditor

Audited and found correct  
according to the books.

2. Membership. The Membership Report was read by Bill Caudle for Christine Ross as follows:

#### MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Membership for 1995 was 561. For 1994 it was 552, we have therefore had a slight increase of 1.63%. 1995 details are:

Year	Single	Family	Institutional	Exchange	Other	Total
1995	311	149	16	7	0	483
1996	30	10	1	0	0	41
1997	8	3	0	0	0	11
1998	3	1	0	0	0	4
1999	2	0	0	0	0	2
2000	1	0	0	0	0	1
Life	19					
Total	374	163	17	7	0	561

During the past year we have attempted to increase membership by making ourselves more visible.

In February we had a booth at the Boat Show, this attracted a great deal of interest, and about 15 new members. Arrangements are underway to attend next year's show in February.

We had a booth at the Welcome Wagon reception at the Holiday Inn, Halifax in March. This was well attended and a few new members were signed up.

A class of children at the Montessori school gave us a great welcome, asked many questions, and no doubt dominated the conversation at supper.

We wrote to all the 1994 members who did not renew for 1995, to enquire as to the reason. Members had moved out of the region, died, or had other reasons, however, quite a number had just plain forgotten and sent in their renewals.

September 24, saw us in West Pubnico, where we set up our booth at the local Biannual Sportmen's show. We had much help at the booth from local members of the society and a constant stream of visitors.

We now have an easily set-up display, using a 4x8 sheet of blue peg board. We display feeders and different types of bird feed. We take field guides and photographs of some easily identified birds. This attracts the passers-by to stop and talk to us about their bird watching experiences. At the Pubnico show, the local members supplemented our display with bird's nests, salvaged before the winter's storms had a chance to destroy them. They were mounted for use in the display.

Thanks to all those who turned out to help. A special thanks to Bill Caudle and Lisette d'Entremont, for the 'extra efforts'.

Respectfully submitted  
Christine Ross.

Christine moved the adoption of her report. Seconded by Karl Tay. Carried.

3a. Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund. The report was given by Chairman Ken Gregoire.

#### SANCTUARY AND SCHOLARSHIP TRUST FUND REPORT

With great pleasure one can report that 1995 was a very encouraging year for the Fund.

The weather and food supply cooperated to provide ideal breeding conditions for terns in Nova Scotia. Ted D'Eon thought this was the best year ever for Westhaver's Island. In the first week of June 1994, there were 64 nests, in 1995 there were 153 and the number reached 230+ nests. The overflow from these colonies are reestablishing former tern nesting sites.

Peter Island did better in 1995 with 350+ terns and the great help provided by island resident Robert MacDormand. One worthy note was the return of the terns to a much more hospitable terrain of the flat rock surfaces exposed during the fire in 1993. Previously, the terns were driven to the cliffs on the southern tip of the island. It is our hope that this colony is where many of the 1995 terns will return to build the Peter Island colony. The majority of the increase in this colony is from other crowded colonies.

The Indian Island survey trip produced a surprisingly large breeding population of Common Eider ducks along with a small colony of Black Guillemots. I would like to thank Captain Peter Bell for providing transportation to the island.

Hertford Island, with our local contacts, Vincent and Sheila Van Schaick reported increases in all species. Of interest was the presence of 15 new Puffins to the colony, distinguishing themselves by standing very erect on the edge of the cliff, also a Common Murre which stayed for three weeks. I would also like to thank the Van Schaick's for their contribution for 50% of the taxes on Hertford Island.

Our Raptor Rehabilitation program continues, thanks to the hard work of Elaine and Mike Kew. In a recent survey of 152 reaching the facility, 114 were released for a most commendable 75% success rate. Interestingly, the most common species was the Great Horned Owl with 28 treated and 23 released.

The youth field trip with 25 students from the Parkview Education Centre's Baccalaureate Biology class was held again this year. I would like to thank Shirley and John Cohrs, Sylvia Fullerton, Eric Cooke, and Bill Caudle for their efforts which is a two-day job for John Cohrs, who attends the school the day before to brief the students.

Our plans for 1996 include a replacement for the flight cage at the Raptor Rehab Centre at Mason's Point. We shall continue with the enhancement of our islands with help from local participation. We would greatly appreciate members suggestions, especially how we could get more youth involved in conservation, as conservation should not be spectator activity.

In closing, I would like to thank our directors for their support during the year and Shirley Cohrs for providing the hospitality for our meetings. A special acknowledgement to David Currie for his dedicated support, and to Robert MacDormand for his work on Peter Island.

Now I will call our Treasurer, David Currie, for our financial report.

Respectfully submitted  
Ken Gregoire, Chairman

Ken moved the adoption of this report. Seconded by Don MacNeill. Carried.

3b. Financial Report of the Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund presented by David Currie.

FINANCIAL REPORT OF THE SANCTUARY AND SCHOLARSHIP TRUST FUND

Nova Scotia Bird Society Sanctuary and Scholarship  
Trust Fund

Financial Statements  
to Sep. 30, 1995

(With comparison for the 12 months ended Sept. 30, 1994)

Statement of Receipts and Disbursements

	CURRENT YEAR	PREVIOUS YEAR
<b>Receipts</b>		
Contributions	3,482.20	686.50
G.I.C. Interest	827.58	1,343.75
Bank Interest	54.02	44.28
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>4,363.80</b>	<b>2,074.53</b>
<b>Disbursements</b>		
Bank Charges	63.56	63.56
Taxes	894.17	1,116.61
Raptor Rehab. Project	521.40	237.45
Youth Field Trip	115.60	317.43
Photo Guild Annual Competition	.00	8.55
Christmas Bird Count Project	28.83	39.13
Miscellaneous Expenses	306.56	.00
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>1,930.12</b>	<b>1,782.73</b>
<b>Excess of Receipts over Disbursements</b>	<b>2,433.68</b>	<b>291.80</b>
<b>Opening Bank Balance</b>	<b>5,281.79</b>	<b>4,989.99</b>
<b>Closing Bank Balance</b>	<b>7,715.47</b>	<b>5,281.79</b>

**Balance Sheet****Assets**

Guaranteed Investment Cert.	21,400.00	21,400.00
Outer, Middle, Little Half and Mossy Bald Islands	.00 1,000.00	.00 1,000.00
Hertford Island	160.00	160.00
Indian Island	12,000.00	12,000.00
North Kemptville Property	1,500.00	1,500.00
Peter Island	20,000.00	20,000.00
Kelsey Property, Port Joli	13,000.00	13,000.00
Bank Balance	7,715.47	5,281.79
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>76,775.47</b>	<b>74,341.79</b>

**Statement of Surplus**

Opening Balance	74,341.79	74,049.99
Excess of receipts over Disbursements	2,433.68 .00	291.80 .00
Inc/Dec in G.I.C.	.00	.00
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>76,775.47</b>	<b>74,341.79</b>

Dave moved the adoption of his report. Seconded by Bill Caudle. Carried.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT (please see page 1)

The President moved the adoption of the report. Seconded by Joyce Purchase. Carried.

The President then presented the PUFFIN OF THE YEAR AWARD. Please see page 49.

4. Nominating Committee Report presented by Bob Dickie.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The following members have agreed to act as executive members of the Nova Scotia Bird Society for 1996.

President	Lise Cohrs
Vice President	Chris Field
Secretary	Wendie Tay
Treasurer	Bill Caudle
Membership Secretary	Christine Ross
Directors	Gisele d'Entremont Douglas Roy Shirley Brothers
Solicitor	Tony Robinson
Auditor	James C. Morrow.
	Respectfully submitted Margaret Clark Bob Dickie Nominating Committee

The President called thrice for further nominations from the floor. Ethel Crathorne moved that nominations cease. Seconded by John Cohrs. Carried. The President declared the slate elected.

The new Secretary, Wendie Tay then took over her duties.

NEW BUSINESS

1. A Birdwatchers Code of Ethics was printed in the Fall Flyer and read by President Lise Cohrs. The discussion which followed included the suggestion that we wait for the ABA Code, which is being developed by birders all over North America and is soon to be released. The final motion by Chris Field was to adopt the Code as read, but to empower the executive to seek ideas from members and make changes as required, both now and after the ABA Code is released. It was seconded by John Cohrs. Motion carried.

2. Chris Field reported that a meeting is to be held at his home on Nov 1, at 7:30 p.m. regarding Hartlen's Point. There is a strong possibility that DND may sell this important ecological area. All people concerned are invited to attend.

3. John Cohrs introduced the new book by Linda Johnson, entitled **In the Company of Birds**, published by Nimbus Publishing Limited. Nimbus is a supporter of the Nova Scotia Bird Society and has made a donation to the Sanctuary Fund.

4. Clarence Stevens introduced the idea that the Canadian Endangered Species Association wants us to convince the government that we care, by each of us giving \$.25 (or more). He has a collection box. Peter Payzant also has boxes which we can pick up and place anywhere that would prove beneficial.
5. Joan Czapalay issued a special invitation to all of us to attend our meeting in April, which is being held in Barrington Passage. A local B & B is offering good rates.
6. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

A delicious wine and cheese party followed. It was tastefully prepared and elegantly presented by Doug and Jean Roy, assisted by Gisele d'Entremont.



COMMON SNIPES are hardly rare, but rarely sit to be photographed. Photo, Ian McLaren, late August 1995.



This young male (from its modest bill length) WESTERN SANDPIPER is readily confirmed by its reddish scapulars on the original slide. The photo, by Ken McKenna, serves to document the first record known to him for Pictou Co.

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

Executive 1994-1995

President - Lisë Cohrs  
Vice President - Chris Field  
Past President - Bob Dickie  
Treasurer - Bill Caudle  
Secretary - Wendie Tay  
Membership Secretary - Christine Ross  
Editor - Shirley Cohrs  
Director - Gisele d'Entremont  
Director - Shirley Brothers  
Director - Douglas Roy  
Solicitor - Tony Robinson  
Auditor - James C. Morrow

Membership Fees

Life Membership	\$375.00
Single Membership	\$ 15.00
Family Membership	\$ 18.00
Institutional Membership	\$ 25.00

Note: Outside Canada please add \$2.00

Web Site <http://cfn.cs.dal.ca/Recreation/NS-BirdSoc/nsbsmain.html>

NSBS Bird Information line: 1-902-852-CHAT (2428)

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