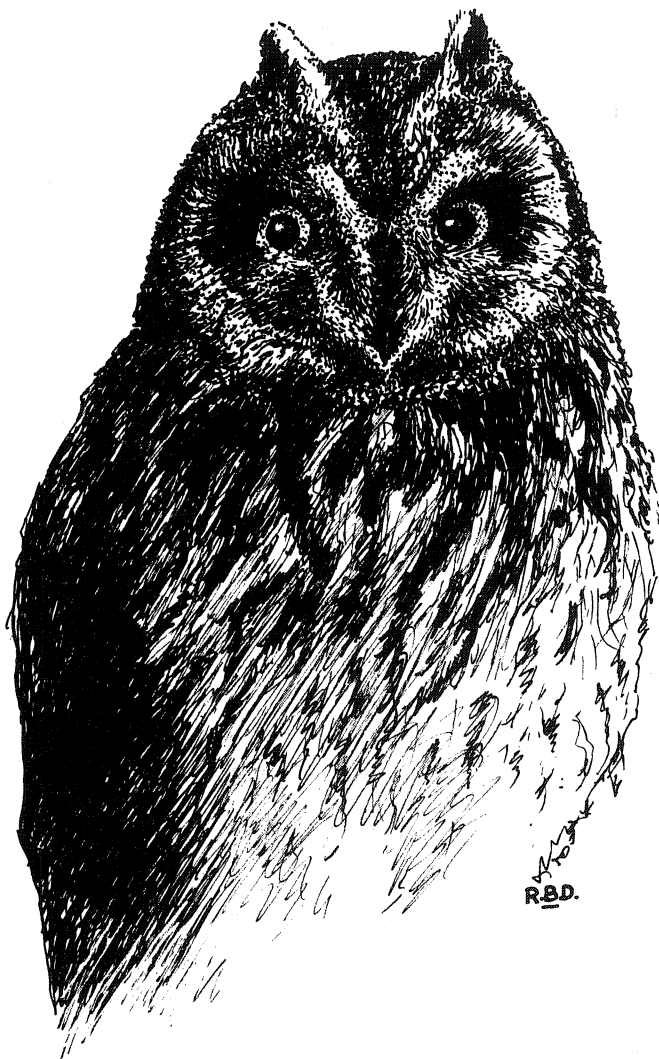


Nova Scotia Birds



January 1997

NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS
A Publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society

Volume 39 Number 1

January 1997

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

ISSN 0383-9567

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

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 1996

This year we had a very dedicated and hard working executive. Each member carried out their work with enthusiasm and promptness. John Cohrs took over the job of Slide Collection Coordinator and slides were made available to members. Again this year, I would like to emphasize that any contributions to the collection are welcome. Margaret Clarke and Margaret Slatkin went on a Birding Tour to Antarctica and I am hoping they donate some of the seabird and penguin pictures they took.

For a second year Gisele d'Entremont has done a superb job of providing our members with interesting programmes and intriguing speakers. If any members would like to present a programme at one of our meetings, please contact Gisele. Perhaps if you are going to an exotic far away place this winter, think about giving a talk on the birds you have seen when you get back.

MEMBERSHIP:

Notes: Membership is down this year by 2%, but we are being proactive in acquiring new members, and we do not feel the decrease is a repetitive trend. Thanks go out to Peter Pazant for entering all the membership information into our data base and providing mailing labels so everyone can receive their newsletter and to Christine Ross for all her hard work.

MAILING:

The mailing of **Nova Scotia Birds** was carried out by Brad Amirault in a prompt and organized manner. To enable more people to understand and carry out this job, Shirley Brothers volunteered to help Brad and learn the ropes. She took notes on the procedure so we would have a method on record to enable any volunteer member to do the mailing. Later this year, unwillingly and due to illness, Brad temporarily gave up this job and Shirley Brothers volunteered to do it. She asked for an assistant. Blake put out a request on the CHAT line and within days one was found. He is Scott Nelson.

EDITOR:

Shirley Cohrs has agreed to continue in her capacity as Editor of **Nova Scotia Birds** for the upcoming season. I think it appropriate to note that she has successfully edited 63 issues of Nova Scotia Birds and has been carrying out this job for 21 years. She is to be commended for her dedication to the Nova Scotia Bird Society.

FIELD TRIP COORDINATORS

This year Christine Cornell and Kevin Tutt took on this responsibility and lined up many interesting field trips. Their job is a difficult one and can only be made easier if members suggest ideas, or volunteer to lead field trips.

CHAT LINE

Blake Maybank has looked after our bird information line for the past season. He has obtained sponsors to help pay for the line and has updated it on a consistent basis. Many thanks, Blake.

BUSINESS OF THE EXECUTIVE IN 1996

The executive had a concern about the Hartlen's Point area since it is surplus land owned by DND and of prime real estate value. It is also a well known and important birding area. Several of our members, Ian McLaren, Blake Maybank, and Chris Field volunteered to keep on top of the issue. If members have any current information or have suggestions for this organizing committee regarding the status of Hartlen's Point,

please contact them.

This year we organized our first meeting of the seven seasonal editors of **Nova Scotia Birds**, so they could converse and exchange ideas. It was held at the Record's Editor's home and the costs were covered by the Bird Society. The meeting was extremely productive and the suggestion was made to have it annually. This is the only time that all the seasonal editors can meet with one another and discuss problems they may be experiencing.

Bill and Christine systematically and regularly sent announcements to various media of the NSBS general meetings.

In 1998 the American Bird Association will be having its annual meeting in Halifax. Chris Field advised ABA the Bird Society would like to be involved in this event.

BOAT SHOW

The 1996 Boat Show was a success again this year. Over 150 brochures were picked up, nine new memberships were received, and the Chat Line and Web site information was well received. The coordinator Doug Roy has suggested that a committee of three be appointed for next year since to make all the appropriate arrangements is far too much for one person. As a result of the Boat Show, Liscombe Lodge asked to sell **Birding Nova Scotia**. The owner of the Bird Island Tours wanted brochures to hand out and we acquired a video on Hummingbirds in the Gaspereau Valley. Ron's Army Navy store also picked up 12 copies of **Birding Nova Scotia** to sell.

Peter Pazant has done an impressive job of providing information about the NSBS on the internet. Thank you Peter.

On April 27 of this year we held a bird society meeting in Barrington. Due to my landscaping business season, Chris Field took the lead. Approximately 70 people attended, 15 of whom were from Halifax with a sizable contingent from the Valley. Joan Czapalay was the chief organizer of this event and welcomed everyone on behalf of the Southwest Birders-- a keen group of birders in the area. Ted D'Eon gave a presentation on his work with the Roseate Terns which nest on Brothers Island and his efforts to reintroduce the Gannets in Yarmouth Harbour. Many Field Trips were offered the following day, and although the weather was typical of April, it cleared and several trips took place. A good time was had by all.

Since I have named myself as one of two contact people the museum has on file, I receive many calls from bird watchers over the spring and summer. From May through late September my business takes much of my time, therefore we the executive decided that the Museum be supplied with a list of contact people for all counties of Nova Scotia. The Museum would supply the caller with the appropriate experienced birder for that area. Once completed it will be forwarded to the museum.

2000 more copies of **Birding Nova Scotia** were printed. With the upcoming ABA meeting in 1998, the demand from current buyers, and the fact that only 125 remained, the executive decided to reprint it.

Special thanks go to Bob Dickie who without fail picked up the Society's mail and kept our inventory of supplies up to date.

Thank you to Peter Pazant for being our official photographer for the evening.

It is with great sadness that I have to report the death of two of the Bird Society's members this past year. Earlier this year we saw the death of Mr. Ross Baker who brought the beauty of nature and birds to many, both young and old. Just recently, Miss Ethel Crathorne, a charter member and life member of the society, passed away. She acted as secretary and membership secretary for many years and blessed us all with her charm and warmth on many field trips. Ethel will be fondly remembered by myself and by others who were fortunate enough to have known her.

This season we will be losing a familiar face at our monthly meetings since he is off on a year's sabbatical. I would like to thank Chris Field for coordinating the monthly meetings, being on the NSBS executive, and for volunteering with Ian and Blake on the Hartlen's Point issue. We look forward to hearing your birding notes and observations from afar, Chris.

I wish to thank Inez Roberts for providing lovely refreshments at our monthly meetings.

Thank you to Brad Amirault for his work in mailing the newsletter and showing Shirley Brothers the ropes.

My sincere thank you go to our Honorary Solicitor, Mr. Tony Robinson, and our Honorary Auditor, Mr. James Morrow. This year, I have been fortunate too have a hard working executive who executed their respective jobs diligently and professionally with much effort on their part. I would like to express by gratitude to Wendie Tay, Gisele D'Entremont, Shirley Brothers, Shirley Cohrs, Christine Ross, Bill Caudle, Doug Roy, Chris Field and Bob Dickie. I would also like to thank the Sanctuary and Trust Fund Executive for their efforts. Ken Gregoire, David Currie, Shirley Cohrs and Eric Cooke.

Although he is not here this evening, I would like to send out my heartfelt thanks to Mr. C.R.K. Allen. If it were not for him, I probably would not be here tonight. Aside from my parents, it was Charlie Allen who really spurred my interest in birds. I met him on a Hants County Day when I was about 8 years old. I think it is safe to say he instilled in me the bug of birding and appreciation of birds. He took the time to show me birds and his enthusiasm made it a lifelong interest for me. As one of its founding members, Charlie started a bird club that people joined for the enthusiastic enjoyment of seeing and watching birds together. That bird club has grown and seen many changes since its inception and I hope as President I can retain its original intent. Thank you all very much for being members of such a club.

Lise (Cohrs) Bell



This is part of a flock of hundreds of Double Crested Cormorants that settled in Petite Passage, Brier Island, on April 24, 1996. A most unusual sight.

Photo--Carl Haycock

BIRD REPORTS

APOLOGIA

Although for several years the deadline for this issue has been November 15, a mistake in date was made (by me) in the July issue. This was caught and corrected in **BIG BLACK TYPE** and **ARROWS** in the **Fall Flyer**. Apparently a few reporters did not read the **Fall Flyer** and consequently their reports were late. We do value these reports and they will be included in the next issue.

JSC, ED.

Due to the indisposition of the Records Editor, Karl Tay stepped into the breach and for this edition looked after the sorting, organizing and mailing of reports to the editors. We are immensely grateful to him for this effort.-JSC, Ed.

LOONS AND GREBES

We have one Special Report: A sighting of a PACIFIC LOON by Sylvia Fullerton in Broad Cove, Lun. Co., May 29. It was bigger than, and much too 'tall' for a Red-throated Loon and its head (bill?) was not upturned. "Outstanding was the dramatic demarcation between the light and dark of the neck, a very straight line." Also seen was a "fine dark chin stripe connecting the black neck across the white throat." The bill was all black as was the back. "Head was rounded, not shaped as the Common Loon's." "The bird...called twice--a short wail not unlike a Common, but very short." "I am presuming (and the editor, who knows them well from the West Coast, agrees) this was an adult in winter plumage." Two birding friends from New Jersey, Ed Pease and Nurak Iresea, corroborated her identification at the time; they knew the species well from California.

Our RED-THROATED LOONS are winter visitors. The first reports this fall are on Oct. 18 - 1 at Seal Is. (RBS); Oct. 19 - 1 at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co. (SJF/BAH) and Oct. 25 - 1 at Hartlen's Pt. in Eastern Passage (RBS). RSD saw a single bird on Nov. 2 at Lr. W. Pubnico.

The COMMON LOON nests early in Nova Scotia. The first reports of immatures were on June 26 (1 ad., 2 im.; location? BJA) and July 17 at Drain L., Hfx. Co. (JCT). The young and adults were seen foraging on fresh and salt water throughout the province throughout the fall. Reports of 5 on Oct. 18 and 15 on Oct. 30 near Digby (BBT,JEC,BJA) indicate the migration from fresh to salt water was underway.

The first spring reports of the PIED-BILLED GREBE were of 2 on April 20 and '4' on May 11 at the duck pond in the Apple R. King's Co. (KFS). A pair raised 4 chicks on a small lake near Wallace Bay, June 20 - Aug. 20 (PRE); 20 were at Goose Creek Marsh near Glenwood on Aug. 10 (RSD). RBS saw 1-2 individuals on Oct. 5-8 on Seal Is. The latest report is of a single bird at Daniel's Head on Nov. 6 (Jon & Patricia Atkinson, Terry Crowell).

There is but one report of the HORNED GREBE: 2 at Green Bay on Sept. 30 (JSC). Can they be that scarce?

The RED-NECKED GREBE'S return from its northern nesting grounds was first reported on Oct. 3 at Green Bay, Lun. Co. (2 individuals) by LC/JSC; 2 were seen at Crescent Beach on Oct. 19 (SJF, BAH). The only other report is of one at Digby on Oct. 30 (BJA).

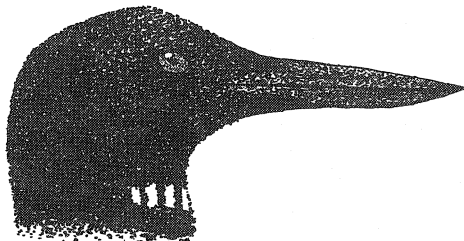
FWD, ed.

FULMARS TO CORMORANTS

Tube-noses did not seem to have been displaced by any of the hurricanes which crossed our waters this summer and fall, but of course they are accustomed to handling a lot of wind. Low temperatures and low sea surface temperatures may have been a larger factor in the comparatively low numbers reported. However, the lack of observers in the right place at the right time is still the variable which makes it impossible to compare movements and numbers from one year to the next. The earliest NORTHERN FULMARS reported were 2 seen during the last week of June on whale-watching cruises off Brier Is. On Banquereau Bank numbers grew from a few on Aug. 26 to 200 by Sept. 26 (DEF). RSD saw only a sprinkling on Georges Bank, but reports an uncommon dark morph on Oct. 28. Off Glace Bay the Murrants saw 3 on Oct. 25.

A detailed account of an all-dark petrel seen on June 23 on a whale-watching cruise off Brier Is. has come from Thomas Smythe, an experienced pelagic birder from Michigan. This report was submitted to Ian McLaren and is published separately in this issue for the record. Smythe suggests that this could have been a BULWER'S PETREL, already on the hypothetical list for Nova Scotia. We know that plumages of seabirds may appear quite different depending on the light and that dark morphs further complicate identification, particularly in underwing pattern. It was raining and viewing time only lasted about 20-25 seconds. However, relative size and flight description compared to other seabirds present make it a possible candidate.

CORY'S SHEARWATERS are warm water birds, sticking close to the Gulf Stream so it is surprising that we have even two reports: 1 was seen on Aug. 9 on a pelagic trip out of Halifax (N.S. Birdline) and another was seen off Ecum Secum on Aug. 15 by Jim Taylor during a sea voyage to Goose Bay. Hundreds of GREATER SHEARWATERS and 70-80 SOOTY SHEARWATERS were seen during a Bluenose ferry crossing on June 22 by Thomas Smythe. Small numbers of both appeared regularly in early July off Brier Is. and by July 27 numbers had grown to 500 Greaters and 40 Sooties (BLM). David Young, sailing about 10 miles off the Eastern Shore in early August, saw not a one, where they had been numerous in previous years. The usual numbers were present, however, well offshore: on Banquereau Bank 2500 Greaters were seen from July 28-Aug. 23, diminishing to 1000 by the end of Sept; only 20 Sooties were present, dropping to 5 by the end of Aug. (DES); on Georges Bank 'hundreds' of Greaters were present on Aug. 17, but had diminished to 200 by Oct. 28 (RSD). On Sept. 9, 125 Greaters were counted on a whale-watching cruise north of Long Is. (JWW); on Oct. 325 were seen from West Light, Brier Is. in NW winds (DHY et al.); out on Sable Is. 25 were moving past the west tip on Oct. 7 (ZOL); 6 were seen from Brier on Nov. 1 and 1 on Nov. 13 (ELM,IAM). There are obviously large numbers of lingering non-breeders out there as adults generally return to their colonies in Tristan da Cunha by September. Twenty MANX SHEARWATERS were seen during Thomas Smythe's Bluenose crossing on June 22. Small numbers were seen regularly throughout the summer from whale-watching cruises off Brier Is. (N.S. Birdline); 1 was seen north of Long Is. on Sept. 9 (JWW). Only one was reported on Georges Bank on June 25 (RSD), but on Sable Is. there was a bonanza: 1 on Sept. 9, feeding and resting on the water at the west tip and on Sept. 25 there was a high count of 50 at the east tip (ZOL). Perhaps these were brought in by the strong easterlies from the colony in Newfoundland.



WILSON'S STORM PETRELS are immensely abundant and large numbers 'winter' in the western Atlantic, arriving offshore by late April. We don't often have reports of such large numbers as the estimated 5000 which were seen in late June on a whale-watching cruise off Brier Is. (N.S. Birdline). These were congregated along the 50 fathom contour line which is where Wilson's prefer to feed, rather than in deeper water. The new colony of LEACH'S PETRELS which got its first toehold on Sable Is. in 1994, is thriving and we await further reports from Zoe Lucas. About 20 birds were vocalizing around the met station on June 20 and from Aug. 28 to the end of September, the chicks could be heard under the station. Other reports include: several hundred Leach's on Brown's Bank on June 28 (RSD); only 2 petrel (species), on Banquereau Bank on Aug. 12 (DEF); 2 Leach's and 2 Wilson's on Aug. 22 off Cape Breton seen by Jim Taylor on his return from Goose Bay. Two remaining reports were of storm-driven birds: 1 Leach's was found dead on Sept. 9 on a woodland path in the middle of Kentville (ELS); 1 Wilson's was watched on Sept. 21 at Scot's Bay, "battling very strong wind over beach flats" (JCT, Sylvia Amey). Alas, no one seems to have monitored the Northumberland shore following Hortense and the strong easterlies which blew there, so we don't know what might have been driven inshore.

Few observers reported on the NORTHERN GANNET migration. The Cohrs and Purchases were on Brier Is. from Sept. 4-6 and saw flock after flock going from east to west, every time they scanned from either the North or West Light. They estimate that 75% were adults and all told, there were probably thousands streaming by. JWW saw 4, 3 im. 1 ad., off Long Is. on Sept. 9; the Pictou contingent tallied 75 on Sept. 21 during NAMC; DEF counted 60, mixed adults and imm., on Banquereau Bank on Sept. 21.

GREAT CORMORANTS were doing well on Brother Is., Eastern Shore, where 200-300 were counted on July 25 and 70-80 were on the Bird Is. off Beaver Hbr. (DHY). Six, 4 imm. were noted on Brier Is. from Sept. 4-6 (Cohrs, Purchases); 20 were at Hartlen's Pt. on Sept. 8 (NSBS field trip); on Sept. 21, 1675 were counted in Pic. Co. on NAMC; 20 were at Seal Is. on Oct. 5 and 30 at Inverness on Oct. 12 (BLM); 6-7 were at Sable Is. from late Aug. to early Oct., "more than there used to be stopping in passage," (ZOL); on Oct. 5, a singleton was still at River Lake, Mooseland (KAT); from Oct. 10-12 skein after skein were seen in Green Bay heading south (Cohrs); in Mader's Cove numbers fell from 26 on Oct. 1 to none at all by Oct. 20 (JBM). Double-crests are apparently still being persecuted in this province if they happen to be anywhere near a fish hatchery or where salmon smolts have been released into our rivers. JWW sends a disquieting report stating that the King's Co. Wildlife Association shot 101 of these birds along the Gaspereau River where smolts were newly released and that 55 were similarly shot along the Clyde River. These birds are protected by Provincial Statute, but permits to shoot them were obtained from the N. S. Dept. of Natural Resources.

SJF, ed.

A Possible Bulwer's Petrel off Brier Island, Nova Scotia

Thomas O. Smythe
Allegann, Michigan

The following is an account of an all-dark petrel sighted off Brier Island, June 23, 1996. The description was written without consulting any literature, upon arrival at the dock some two hours after the event.

The bird was seen northwest of Brier Island from the **Cetacean Quest**, Of Brier Island Whale and Seabird Cruises at 3:10 p.m., A.D.T. The day was overcast, with very light rain at the time of observation. Winds were moderate, with increasing chop, but not too rough for easy binocular viewing of numerous seabirds present, including hundreds of Wilson's Storm-Petrels, Sooty and Greater Shearwaters, and tens of Leach's Storm-Petrels. The bird was observed with Zeiss armoured, 10 x 40, roof-prism binoculars.

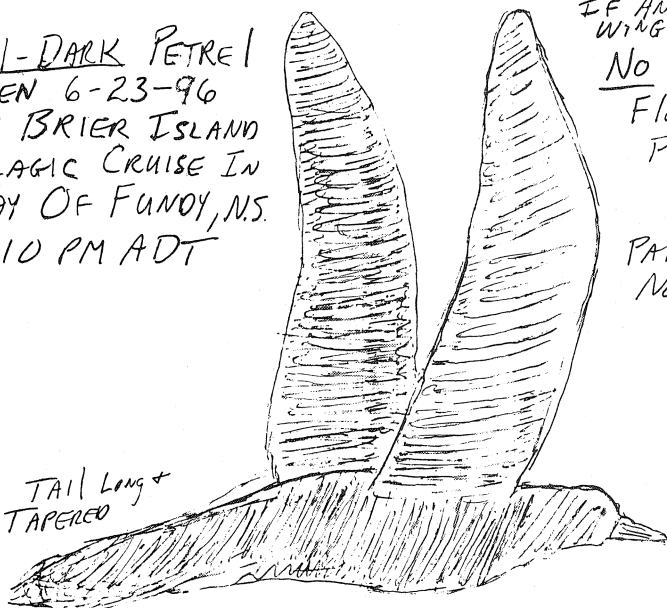
The bird was an all-dark petrel-type, observed off the starboard beam first at a range of 40-50m, and watched until it was out of viewing range, for perhaps 20-25 seconds total. I was alone on the bow viewing platform, unimpeded by any obstacles. Due to the intermittent rain, the crew and other passengers were inside, so that no one was with me to 'get on' the bird, and I didn't take my binoculars off it for fear of losing sight of it.

The bird flew with deep wing beats, strongly, with less than 25% gliding, within a metre of the water surface most of the time. Its wings were relatively long and slender. It appeared about 1.5+ times the size of [i.e., length of] and clearly browner, similar in color to Sooty Shearwaters. Compared to the Sooties, it was clearly smaller and flew much differently, and lacked pale wing linings.

Upon consulting my books at home (July 3), the best candidate appears to be Bulwer's Petrel (*Bulweria bulweri*), in size, jizz, and flight descriptions, although I couldn't see a paler upperwing covert bar. The uniformly dark underwing reduces possibility of dark-morph Herald Petrel (*Pterodroma armijoniana*), but doesn't rule it out completely. Bulwer's Petrel is much more likely to wander to the North Atlantic. It is also on the hypothetical list for Nova Scotia (Tufts). I am not presenting this as a Bulwer's Petrel, but as an unidentified dark petrel that I would guess is most likely that species.

ALL-DARK PETREL
SEEN 6-23-96
ON BRIER ISLAND
PELAGIC CRUISE IN
BAY OF FUNDY, N.S.
3:10 PM ADT

TAIL LONG &
TAPERED



IF ANYTHING THE
WINGS ARE TOO SHORT

NO WHITE

Flash IN
PRIMARIES

Pale Wing Linings
Not Apparent

Appeared Relatively Long Tailed & Short-Necked

HERONS AND RELATIVES

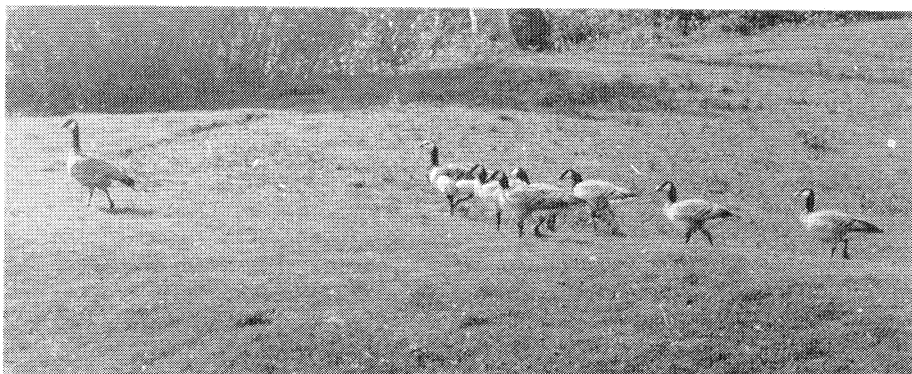
There were about ten reports of some 15 AM. BITTERNS, the latest at Freeport, Digby Co., Nov. 12 (IAM). On July 20, an ad. m. LEAST BITTERN was picked up on the beach of Sable Island (the 2nd to occur there this year), and released at a nearby freshwater pond (ZPL). GREAT BLUE HERONS, in their usual places and numbers to the end of the reporting period, were in larger gatherings of 90 at Merigomish on the NSBS field trip Aug. 10, 21 at Matthews Lake Oct. 6 (DHY), and about 55 on Cole Hbr. Oct. 23, down to 20 a week later (IAM). A tantalizing report (to DHY) of a large, nearly all-white heron, with yellow legs and bill seemed to fit the white morph ("Great White Heron"), but could not be found again. Perhaps significantly, one of these was in Massachusetts this fall. The only reported GREEN HERON was on Seal I. in late Sept. (v. obs.). Last spring's GREAT EGRET stayed around Cape Sable to June 2, and another

lingered there Aug. 7- Sept. 24 (v. obs.). One was reported from Yarmouth in late July (NSBS Birdline). The previously reported LITTLE EGRET remained at Louisbourg until at least June 2 (NSBS Birdline). A SNOWY EGRET was on Seal I. Sept. 21-Oct.5 (v. obs.), and another imm. with extensively yellowish legs appeared briefly at Hartlen's Pt. Oct. 10 (IAM). LITTLE BLUE HERONS were more frequently noted.

Individuals were on McNab's I. June 6 (A. Horne), at Pt. Edward, C.B. Co., July 12 (JAC), Conrad's Beach Aug. 28 (NSBS Birdline), W. Chezzetcook Sept. 21 (P. LeBlanc), Matthews Lake Sept. 29 (DEF et al.), and two were at Antigonish Hbr. Oct. 7 (RFL et al.). The only reported TRICOLORED HERONS were on Cape Sable I. in mid-June and (same bird?) mid to late July (fide MUN). A CATTLE EGRET was near Canning Nov. 6 (GWT).

A few BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERONS were found as usual on Cape Sable and Bon Portage islands. Two imm. birds were at L.W. Pubnico in late August (RDS), and a late ad. was at Matthews Lake Sept. 16 (DHY). An imm. YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON was on Cape Sable I. Aug. 16-18 (fide MUN) and another on Sable I. Sept. 23-26 (ZO!).

IAM, ed.



Families of Canada Geese are becoming familiar enough in Nova Scotia. But look again! Mother(?) goose, leading the bunched up goslings is a Barnacle Goose. Note the hybrid features on the young: whitish feather tips on the backs, whitish foreheads on a couple, etc. Father and mother were both escapees from nearby Oaklawn Park Zoo in Aylesford. Photo--Ian Jonsen.

SWANS, GEESE AND DUCKS

The reports in this section are, at least to this new editor, uneven and far from representative of the populations of these birds in the province. A quick browse will reveal a distinct bias for the 'glamour species': Wood Duck, Hooded Merganser, and so on. These species are sought after and (if that is possible) over-reported. Many common species are ignored by the same reporters, even though there is clear evidence they were present. Yes, it's true, we editors would find our lives too busy to

document every occurrence of the Black Duck should it be fully reported to us. I offer a compromise, that should allow us some chance to report on unusual changes in the populations of our 'regulars'. Would our regular contributors be willing to give us one slip of paper each Observation Period for each of the common species they encounter? Describe whatever details are felt worth your comment, and include rough estimates of numbers in your areas. Does this make sense? We would like feedback: how can we be more informative - and more realistic?

There is one Special Report, of SWAN SPECIES, on Oct. 21 (JCT) "flying abreast over Canard Dykes heading NE towards Minas Basin...(seen at 150-200 yds in flight - no vocalization - & in no hurry) by Hugh Fain..."

There were two reports of SNOW GOOSE: 2 with lots of Canadas at Delhaven south of Blomidon on Oct. 28 (Dan Toews, JWW), and another 2 at Medford in King's Co. (JCT for Merritt Gibson of Canning).

No BRANT were reported.

The CANADA GOOSE was reported in good numbers throughout the period and throughout the province. The first report is of 30+ along the road at Joggins, Cumb. Co. on 21 March (COS); 150+ were seen by COS flying over the Apple R., Cumb. Co. on March 25. The first young (parents with 8 young) were reported on May 21 "in the grass" at Milford Station (AEW). The "first of the geese" in Petite Rivere were 22 on Aug. 18 (JLC); 50 were seen on the Windsor Causeway by BBT & JET on Oct. 8.

WOOD DUCK reports began with a pair on the duck pond in the Apple R. from Apr. 15- May 20 (KFS). RSD saw 6 on Aug. 10 in the Goose Creek Marsh in Glenwood. Two fe., 1 young were seen on a pond near Calendonía, Queens Co. on Sept. 6 (JSC, JAP); the latest report is from Publicover Lake, Lun. Co. on Oct. 2 (Lisè Cohrs).

The GREEN-WINGED Teal was first seen on April 9 in the Apple R., Cumb. Co. (KFS); 5 male, 4 young (green-winged birdies?) were at Hartlen's Pt. Golf Course on July 20 (DHH). There were 25 at the Windsor Causeway on Sept. 17 ("eating mud for shrimp and worms: - JWW). 50+ were at Canard Pond on Nov. 11 ("making shallow dives with Black Ducks" - JWW).

The AMERICAN BLACK DUCK is too common: hardly anyone sends reports! 1 ad. 8 young were seen "one Route 103 in front of the car" (JBM); 350-400 were reported in the Cornwallis R. off the west dyke of Grand Pré on Oct. 23 (JET, JSC). The last report is of a single individual at Mooseland R. Lake on Nov. 3 (KAT).

The MALLARD is also under-reported. The first report is of 1 male on Apr. 19 on the duck pond, Apple R. (KFS). AEW and MCW saw 1 mother with 4 young at Milford Station on May 22. 24 were feeding with Black ducks on Sept. 14 at Monk's Head, Ant. Co. (RFL). The last report is of 15 at Harris' pond, Canning on Nov. 11 (JWW).

N. PINTAIL were seen on Oct. 20 at The Hawk (JON, SAN). 1 male was at Canard Pond on Oct. 25 & 27 (JCT, RBS), and another at the mouth of the Cornwallis R. on Nov. 11 (JWW).

There were only two reports of BLUE-WINGED TEAL: 12 on Sept. 9 at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co. (JBM) and 6 at Canard Pond, King's Co. on Sept. 17.

There were no reports of the NORTHERN SHOVELER.

Single GADWALLS were at the duck pond, Apple R., King's Co. on Apr. 20 (KFS), and on Sept. 4-5 at Long Is. and Brier Is. (JSC, JAP).

No EUROPEAN WIGEON were reported.

The AMERICAN WIGEON was reported often and carefully. The duck pond, Apple R. yielded 2 males on Apr. 19 and 2 males, 1 fe. on May 1 & 15 (KFS). DHY saw a pair at Round Bay on June 26. Four birds were in the Goose Creek Marsh, Glenwood"...with Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal...close to the road. You can bet

they weren't there on Oct. 8 with the start of the duck season" (RSD). Thirty were at Harris Pond, Canning on Oct. 25 (JCT). The last report is on Nov. 12 of a pair at Sullivan's Pond, Dartmouth (KAT).

There was one CANVASBACK reported: a careful documentation by JSC, JLC of one juvenile bird "among 100 Black Ducks and Mallards" at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co. on Nov. 4.

A RING-NECKED DUCK was first reported on Apr. 19: 11 male, 2 fe. at the duck pond in the Apple R., King's Co. (KFS). The last report (and the only one of young birds) was 2 males, 1 im. at Canard Pond, King's Co., on Nov. 11 (JWW).

JWW has submitted the only reports of GREATER SCAUP for the period: 2 on Oct. 30, 2 im. fe, 1 imm. m. on Nov. 5 & 11, all in the Port Williams sewage ponds, King's Co. No LESSER SCAUP were reported.

The COMMON EIDER nests along our coasts and is one of the most common of our sea ducks. 50 were in St. Mary's Bay, Dig. Co. on June 16 (BJA); 20 fe. were in Broad Cove, Lun. Co. on Aug. 5 (SLH,AGW). The last report of the period is of 20 off the tip of Cape Split (GWT,JCT). No KING EIDER were reported.

The OLDSQUAW was reported but once; 10 were seen (BJA) at Digby on Oct. 30.

Where are the reports for BLACK SCOTER? The first SURF SCOTER report is on Sept. 17, of 1 fe. at the pond on the Middle Dyke Rd., New Minas, King's Co. (JCT); 2 fe. were seen at Digby on Oct. 30 (BJA). This species is also under-reported: are they too difficult to identify, perhaps, except in full breeding plumage? The WHITE-WINGED SCOTER was reported twice: 8 off Evangeline Beach on Sept. 17 (GWT,JCT) and 15 imm. at Cherry Hill Beach, Lun. Co. on Oct. 7 (JLC,JSC).

There were only three reports of COMMON GOLDENEYE sightings: 7 on Oct. 22 in Sydney Hbr., Westmount, C.B. (JAC), 1 im., 1 fe. on Nov. 5 at the Fort Williams sewage ponds and 1 imm. male at Canard Pond, the latter 2 by JWW. No BARROW'S GOLDENEYE were reported.

The BUFFLEHEAD--a common resident throughout the province--was only reported three times as well. ALM,CAM saw 1 fe. at Tower Rd. in C.B. Co. on Oct. 16; JSC saw 1 male ("1st of winter flock") in the Petite Riviere estuary on Oct. 22, and 30 were seen at Digby (BJA) on Oct. 30.

The HOODED MERGANSER is a special bird, any place, any time, and it was heavily reported. The first birds were a courting pair "in a Wood Duck box by a lake" by PRE, seen from Apr. 15-- May 20 (location?). then, three weeks after the male had departed, Crows "got" the young during a scuffle at the box. There were numerous reports in King's Co. through June to November of flocks of up to 12 birds (BFL,PRE,GWT,JWW,JCT,MAG,BBT). Three birds were seen on Big Pond, Brier Is. on Sept. 15 (RBS).

The COMMON MERGANSER got short shrift: two reports. On Oct. 6, 2 fe. 1 m. were at River L. in Mooseland (KAT), and on Oct. 9 20 were seen at the White Rock bridge, Gaspereau, King's Co. (JCT).

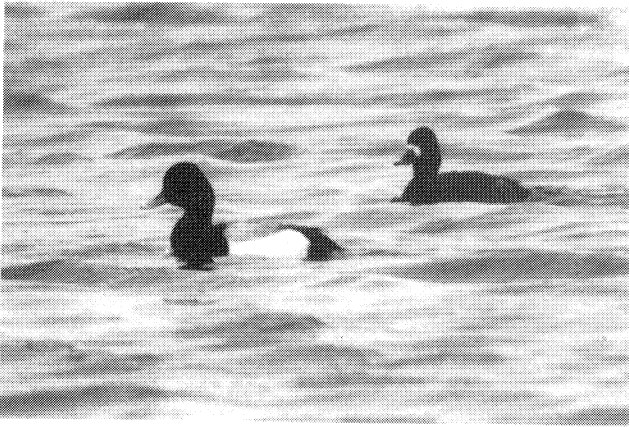
The RED-BREASTED MERGANSER was reported only once: 2 were seen by JAC at Pt. Edward, C. B. on Nov. 8.

One RUDDY DUCK was observed on the pond on Long. Is., Dig. Co. on Sept. 4 (JLC,JSC,JAP).

To end my report I give you the joke I heard at choir:

It was about the hunter who was lost in the woods, was found and when found was looking in good shape and gnawing at the bones of big Bald Eagle. The conservation officer charged him with killing a protected species, and in court he said, "I was lost, hungry and out of food; I saw the eagle struggling with a big salmon, but it got off and I managed to grab the eagle; so it was necessary to eat it". The judge said "well, it is a protected species, but I guess there were extenuating circumstances so I will drop the charge--just as a matter of curiosity, what does eagle taste like?" "Well, it's hard to describe--something between Condor and Trumpeter Swan, I would say."

FWD, ed.



This pair of Lesser Scaup, the drake easily recognized by its peaked crown and 'flat' nape, was snapped at Port Williams, King's Co., in April, 1996. They have certainly become more commonly reported in recent years.



Azor Vienneau photographed this reasonably tame adult BROAD-WINGED HAWK during the June NSBS field trip at Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary

DIURNAL RAPTORS

This fall, Mike Hawkwood spent many weeks on Brier I. tracking the hawk migration in unprecedented thoroughness. We hope later to receive a full report from him as a baseline for past and future samplings of this spectacle. Meanwhile, we include a few of his notable observations. The provinces 6th or 7th BLACK VULTURE was identified (fide MUN) at Beaver Dam, Shel. Co., Aug. 16-18. Donna Crosby submitted a convincing description of a hurricane-exposed, much-consumed corpse of one at tideline near Lockport Oct. 9, and unfortunately reburied when she went to retrieve it next day. Although only up to 3 TURKEY VULTURES were reported for Brier I. during summer, there were counts there of up to 20 by MRH and 15-17 by others Oct. 12- Nov. 14. Another was on Cape Sable I. Aug. 8 (MUN). OSPREYS seemed in the usual places and numbers during summer, although DHY thought from a cruise along the Eastern Shore that there was "a noticeable increase.. with at least one pair in every harbour and up to three pairs in larger estuaries". Of interest was a report to JWW of an ad. carrying a squawking young duck (eider?) at Crescent Beach June 30. Certainly Ospreys can at times obtain prey other than fish. One reached Sable Island Sept. 9 (ZOL), and another over-nighted on a fishing boat on Georges Bank Sept. 20, and set out to the east in morning, leaving RSD "not sure that's where it wanted to go". The latest reported was an imm. seemingly entangled in fish line on Brier I. Oct. 18. BALD EAGLES were also as expected in numbers and places, with nestings reported along the Maccan R. (KFS), near Bedford Basin (PLC), and in the Wolfville area (three successful, BLF, JWW). One pair traditionally nesting at Scotch Village raised 3 young, to which end they filched 7 domestic geese (6-8 lb. each) from Edith Zillig, and 3 ducks and a rabbit from neighbours (fide JWW)! Two adults were squabbling over a dead Great Black-back on Bush I., Lun. Co., Aug. 26 (PHB), and one was in hot aerial pursuit of two N. Pintails at White Rock Pond, Kings Co., Oct. 8 (fide JWW). As Edith Zillig wrote, comments in Tufts may underrate the predatory abilities of this eagle. Migrants included 3 imm. on Seal I. Oct. 4 (v. obs.), but at least a dozen winter harbigers were at Grand Pré Oct. 10. N. HARRIERS were as usual in summer, with a probably migrant juv. at Hartlen's Pt. Aug. 29 (DHH), and high counts of 15-25 on Brier I. Sept. 4-6 (Cohrs and Purchases), 10 on Seal I. Sept. 10 (IAM, RAF), and 10+ there Oct. 4 (v. obs.).

The mere half-dozen submitted reports of SHARP-SHINNED HAWKS are clearly unrepresentative. These were augmented by other reports of 18 on Seal I. Sept. 7-8, some 25 on Brier I. Sept. 22, up to 40 on Seal I. Oct 3-4, about 25 on Brier I. Oct. 18, and only 5 there Nov. 2, and 1-2 by Nov. 12-14 (v. obs.). Substantial prey included a Mourning Dove (KFS) and a flicker (IAM). No details were included on individual COOPER'S HAWKS spotted on Seal I. Sept. 21 (JOW et al.), Bon Portage I. on the same day (fide JCT), at Hartlen's Pt. Oct 4, and at Upper Woods Hrb. Shel. Co., Oct 19. Several were also seen by MRH during his vigil on Brier I. Perhaps, given increasing frequency of sightings and more knowledgeable observers, we should now accept unsupported records of this species, even if a few may be miscalled. At least one N. GOSHAWK fledged from a nest near Hortonville, Kings Co., by mid-July (BLF). A Semipalmated Sandpiper was an unusual kill by such a large raptor July 28 at Cherry Hill (Cohrs). Some Mourning Doves, a more common prey, showed more evasive skill at Melanson Mt. July 24, by flying straight up and fanning out, leaving the hawk with nothing to grab. Scattered reports of fall birds included up to 4 on Seal I. in early Oct. and 2-3 daily on Brier I. during November (v. obs.). A RED-SHOULDERED HAWK was observed being harassed by a Broad-wing near Harmony, Queen's Co., Sept. 5 (Cohrs and Purchases); its long, narrow wings, with "windows" were notable by comparison. Some were also seen by MRH over Brier I. (including 1 ad., 2 imm., Oct 21). There were the usual few reports of summer BROAD-WINGED HAWKS. They were "conspicuous by absence" on Brier I. Sept. 4-6 (Cohrs), but flybys and kettles of up to 125 were noted later in the month (v. obs.), with maxima around Sept. 20 (MRH). About 20 were heading up Digby Neck into NE winds and rain on Sept. 23 (IAM), yet a kettle of 100+ reappeared on Brier I. Oct. 1 (DHY,SJF). Seal I. had 18 northbound Broadwings Oct. 4, more than usual there (v. obs.). The prize migrant hawk was an ad. SWAINSON' HAWK with Broadwings over Brier I. mid-day Oct. 1. It was closely observed by MRH, who noted (verbally to IAM) its characteristic shape and manner of soaring, its reddish-brown upper breast, pale underwing coverts and darker flight feathers, and finely barred tail. It headed W with 10 Broadwings. Details on two other

sightings in the Annapolis Valley during early June were not reported prior to deadline ; hopefully later. It is interesting that there were a couple of summer sightings in the NE U.S. this summer, and that there were internet reports of more of these prairie hawks in the East this fall than ever before. The usual RED-TAILED HAWKS could be seen from roadside in summer. Migrants were probably underreported: generally only 2-3 at times in Oct.-Nov., except for 8 over Brier I. Oct. 18 (v. obs.). Among winter arrivals, the traditional white Red-tail appeared for the 8th year at Sheffield Mills (JWW). Another albino was seen mid-November along highway 104 near New Glasgow (KJM). One Red-tail carried off a still twitching Rock Dove from the Acadia campus Nov. 6 (JWW). An early ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK was seen in Queens Co. Sept. 21 (NAMC, fide JCT). Three others were noted Oct. 25 to mid-Nov. on Brier I. An unseasonal ad. GOLDEN EAGLE was sighted July 27 (BLM), and an imm. flew by Oct. 21 (MRH). There were no direct reports on AM KESTREL, but impressions of migration were gleaned elsewhere: 4 on Seal I. Sept. 4 and on Brier Sept. 23, 40 on Seal I. Oct. 4, 16 on Brier I. Oct. 17, and only 1-2 there Nov. 1-2 and Nov. 12-14 (v. obs.). Are MERLINS more glamorous? They were better reported. A late spring migrant was on Sable I. June 2 (ZOL). One again nested in westend Halifax (IAM), and presumably in Wolfville, based on summer reports from the area. Two easily snatched Chimney Swifts at the Robie Tufts Centre June 1, and three tried their luck there at dusk Aug. 19 (fide JWW). Another flying near swifts in Middleton during evening June 20 (JWW) was presumably nesting nearby. There were seven reports of migrant ones and twos from Aug. 22, larger counts on Seal I. of 10 on Sept. 6 and 15 on Oct. 4, but only 1-3 on Brier I. on various dates in October-November (v. obs.). Several reports of ad. and imm. PEREGRINE FALCONS in the Wolfville area during summer, sometimes chasing Evangeline Beach shorebirds (v. obs.), may reflect nearby nesting, but this was unlikely of a bird on Bon Portage I. early August (NSBS Birdline). An imm. bird at Wolfville Sept. 11 (JCT) could have been a migrant, and 8 singles were widely reported (v. obs.) in late Sept. and Oct., with larger counts of 3 on Brier I. Oct. 1 (SJF et al.) and 8 on Seal I. Oct 4 (v. obs.). One of two tundrius on Sable Island, Sept. 28-Oct 2, attacked a kittiwake (ZOL). We received no details on possible GYRFALCONS observed along the Northumberland Strait in late Sept. and on Seal I. Sept. 30 (v. obs.).

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

The only reported GRAY PARTRIDGE were two at Sheffield Mills, Nov. 2 (BBT). Nothing was submitted on RING-NECKED PHEASANTS in the upper Valley, but there were several reports from scattered, more recently stocked (and restocked?) areas. The only nesting season reports were of 9 chicks at S. Williamston, Anna. Co., Aug. 1 (SLH), and 8 chicks at Up. Woods Hrb. (DOC). Among fall sightings were 8-9 in Westmount, C.B. Co. (JAC), 5 at New Ross (KNK), 7 hens at Green Bay (signalling a "comeback these last 5 years"; JSC), and several between Hartlen's Pt. and Lawrencetown, which evidently stem from one major focus of release in Cole Hrb. (Rosemary Eaton). SPRUCE GROUSE were seen in ones and twos from five scattered localities, and "in numbers" along the traditional Clyde River loop, Shel. Co., Sept. 22 (BLM). Near Antigonish there were "remnants of two dead birds in the vicinity where [RFL had] called in Horned Owls". Three submissions on autumn RUFFED GROUSE - 4 near Westmount, C.B. Co. (JAC), 3 near Mooseland (KAT), and 1 at Up. Woods Hrb. (DOC) - give no hint of trends; But I have heard that hunters find them less common this fall than last

CRANE, RALLIDS

A SANDHILL CRANE was reported to be wandering in field at N. River Bridge, C.B. Co., Aug. 28 (fide D. McCorquodale). The only submitted report on rallids was a spring holdover: 2 m. and 2 f. SORAS at the Apple R. Duck Pond, May 11 (KFS). However, VIRGINIA RAILS, COM. MOORHENS, and AM. COOTS were all noted as usual during the NSBS field trip to A.P.B.S. June 22, and few rails were reported to the NSBS Birdline during summer. Up to 7 AM. COOTS appeared on Bisset L., Hfx. Co., in mid-November.

SHOREBIRDS

Fewer reports were received this fall because several contributors failed to note a change in the season's deadline. Helping to counter this shortfall are the North American Migration Count (C) totals for Sept. 21; they are included in brackets in the species accounts (with thanks to JCT for providing them). Late records of special interest will appear in the next issue.

Last northward bound BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS were 3 at Cherry Hill, June 3 (SJF). At Crescent Beach there were 29 on Aug. 5 (JSC); there and at Cherry Hill, peaks of less than 100 occurred Aug. 19 and 25 respectively (JSC,SJF). About the same time 200+ were in the Grand Pré and Starr's Pt. areas (JWW,BJA). Smaller flocks were noted throughout September and most of October, to 23 at Grand Pré, Oct. 23 (JET,JCT) and 41 at Cherry Hill, Oct. 25 (SJF). There were still 3 at Economy, Nov. 12 (FLS). The first AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER [C=0] was at Matthew's Lake, Aug. 24 (NSBS), another still in complete breeding plumage was at Cherry Hill on Aug. 26 (JSC). Most of the 85 or so seen from Sept. 1 to Oct. 13 were in a flock of 67 at Grand Pré, Sept. 17 (GW&JCT). A laggard was still at The Hawk on Nov. 2 (JON,SAN). A SEMIPALMATED PLOVER [C=196] was at Hartlen's Pt., July 20 (DHH) and 6 were at Cherry Hill next day (SJF). The species must have had a very successful breeding season as almost 4000 were reported, most in the latter half of August. On the 15th there were 467 at Cherry Hill (SJF) and on the 25th at Crescent 2700, the most ever in the period 1970-96 and topping the 2500 recorded in 1984 (JSC). Later, there were still 3-400 at Evangeline Beach, Oct. 10 (JWW), 23 at Bass River, Oct. 23 (FLS) and 1, very late, at Hirtle's Beach, Nov. 11 (LAB). The only PIPING PLOVER [C=0] reports are of 1 at Lockeport, May 31 (DJC) and 1-2 at Cherry Hill in June-July (max 4 on July 28-SJF). KILLDEER [C=18] were found breeding at the Halifax airport (2 ad. and 2 juveniles, July 14-DHH) and at Lr. W. Pubnico, where 2 fe. about 300 yards apart had nests containing 4 eggs on June 14 (RSD).

Over 250 GREATER YELLOWLEGS were reported, starting with 1 at Cherry Hill on July 11 (SJF); the only large concentration was 62 at Canning, Sept. 21 (MEG). There were few reports thereafter, but still 14 at Wolfville Oct. 26 (BBT) and one last at Economy Oct. 30 (FLS). A LESSER YELLOWLEGS at Cherry Hill July 6 (SJF) was early. Aside from the fall count, only a dozen or so were noted, the last 2 at Cherry Hill Oct. 7 (JSC).

Bernie Forsythe reports the sighting, with convincing details, of a SPOTTED REDSHANK in a salt pond near Crescent Beach on August 5. The basal half of the lower mandible was bright red, the legs bright orange, white stretched far up the back, and a white line extended from the base of the bill to above the eye. It was heard once- "a loud two-part call not at all like the 'tew' call of a yellowlegs". Credit was duly given his daughter Becky for being first to notice the bird's red bill.

Two SOLITARY SANDPIPERS were at Publico Pt. Aug. 2 (RSD). Only 4 others were seen in the first half of Sept. Summering WILLETS [C-3] were already collecting for departure in July, with 65 at Crescent Beach July 11 (SJF), 31 at Cherry Hill July 21 (JSC) the maximum gatherings seen. Virtually all were gone by the end of August. Reports of summering SPOTTED SANDPIPERS [C=9] come from only three areas: Marshaltown Marsh (BJA), Petite Riviere and Green Bay (JSC). At the last named site a pair raised 4 young, but both JSC and DJC at Lockeport comment on the scarcity of the species. Aside from the fall census there were only 2 Sept. reports.

An UPLAND SANDPIPER was at Little Hbr. May 31 (DHY). About 45 WHIMBRELS were reported this fall, 8 as early as July 22 on Inner Sambro I. (DHY), most in September. HUDSONIAN GODWIT reports ranged from 2 on July 21 at Cherry Hill (SJF) to 9 at Grand Pré Oct. 23 (JET,JCT); the largest gathering, of 16, was at Matthew's Lake, a favoured site, Aug. 16 (DHY). In all 36 were reported. A MARBLED GODWIT reported Sept. 21 (MUN) and Nov. 7 (JON,SAN, et al.) from Daniel's Head probably represents one very long-term visitor.

The only RUDDY TURNSTONE noted, other than on the census, were at Crescent Beach (max. 9 on Aug. 11-JSC), and Cherry Hill (max. 32 Aug. 32 Aug. 19- SJF).

SANDERLINGS fared only a little better; July 14 saw 8 at Cherry Hill, where the max. was 180 Sept. 7 (SJF) about which time 124 were at Crescent (JSC). There were 900 at the Hawk Oct. 18 (JON,SAN), but DJC at Lockport comments on their scarcity this fall (10's vs. 100's). At Economy the Oct. max. was the usual 200 or so, a dozen still there Nov. 12 (FLS). A spring migrant stayed at Cherry Hill until June 20 (SJF). The great migration of SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPERS through the Grand Pré area was completely missed (or reported late) except for a first 1400 at Windsor July 18 (JCT). Earliest were 2 at Cherry Hill July 11 (SJF), last were 20 on Oct. 30 in Annapolis (BJA). Except for the Maritimes Shorebird Survey data provided by SJF at Cherry Hill the migration of LEAST SANDPIPERS went largely unrecorded. There the first 3 arrived July 6, with a peak of about 135 during the last week of August and 14 still present Oct. 6. Eight at Round Bay in late June, for a second year's summer records, lead DHY and SJF to suspect they are breeding there. The first WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPERS was at Cherry Hill July 28 (SJF); there were 40-50 at Matthews Lake Aug. 24 (NSBS) and still 28 at Grand Pré Oct. 23 (JET,JCT). The max. at Cherry Hill was 36 Sept. 11 (SJF), at Crescent 16 about the same time (JSC). At least 4 BAIRD'S SANDPIPER were noted: one at Hemeon's Head Aug. 24 (NSBS), an adult at Cherry Hill Aug. 26 (JSC) and 2+ on Brier Sept. 15 (RBS). No early PECTORAL SANDPIPERS were sighted; the max. at Cherry Hill were 30 Sept. 22 (SJF) and 35 Oct. 7 (JSC), perhaps the same flock (?); there were still 9 at Lwr. Clark's Hrb. Nov. 6 (JON,SAN). The DUNLIN received better coverage than most of the common calidrids. Except for 1 still in breeding plumage at Evangeline Beach Aug. 3 (PEH,JWW) and a few early September records most showed up in October, with 52 at Cherry Hill Oct. 6 (SJF) and 150-200 at Evangeline Beach Oct. 10 (JWW). A CURLEW SANDPIPER is reported from Dominion Beach, C.B. on Sept. 20 by AL&CAM, though without the additional comment which is always welcome in the case of major rarities. Apparently only Daniel's Head harboured STILT SANDPIPERS this fall, 2 on Sept. 21 (MUN) and 1 (of them?) on Oct. 18 (JON,SAN). A BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER was at Cherry Hill Sept. 11 (SJF) and Sept. 20 (JSC).

Three SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHERS were at Cherry Hill May 27 (SJF) and 5 returning migrants were already back there June 28, ("the earliest ever"-JSC). Largest numbers were present in late July, only about 250 in all (JSC comments on their relative scarcity at Crescent Beach). One last was at Cherry Hill Sept. 27 (SJF). JSC reports a LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER from Crescent Beach Sept. 9. An adult COMMON SNIPE with 3 chicks was seen at Lt. W. Pubnico June 18 (RSD). Eighteen of this fall's 20 are reported from the Valley (JCT,BBT) 2 from Matthew's Lake (DHY). No fall AMERICAN WOODCOCK were reported after the Sept. 21 census.

FLS,ed.



PHALAROPES TO ALCIDS

The only report of WILSON'S PHALAROPE received to date is of 1 imm. on Sept. 1 at Brier Is. (NS Birdline). A RED PHALAROPE was seen on June 3 on Sable Is. (ZOL), perhaps deflected from its northward passage. Both RED-NECKED and REDS were considered "numerous" on whale/seabird cruises off Brier Is. from early July thru August and once again Red-necked outnumbered Reds by a considerable margin. Numbers peaked on July 26 when estimated numbers were 10,000 Red-necked and 2000 Reds (NS Birdline); the next day there were still 1500 Red-necked and 800 Reds to be seen (BLM). Among other reports were: 1 Red-necked on July 20 off Flint Is. and 2 Reds on July 31, 30 miles east of Port Morien (ALM,CAM); a somewhat late Red Phalarope was seen on Nov. 12 at Hartlen's Pt. (JWT,BJA).

Jaegers were present, but in small numbers. On July 2 the N.S. Birdline reported several POMARINES being seen on whale-watching trips off Brier Is. This observer had an unexpected view of a light phase, subadult on July 17 at water's edge at Cherry Hill Beach, harassing feeding Common Terns. Noted in good light were barring on the breast, pale belly, snub tail protuberances and large white areas at the base of the primaries. Its heavy chest and strong steady flight as it pursued the terns were impressive. An adult was at Sable Is. on Sept. 28 (ZOL) and 1 was seen from Brier Is. on Nov. 1 (IAM). PARASITIC JAEGERs were seen mainly offshore: 1 on Sept. 1 on Flint Is. Shoal (ALM,CAM); 1 on Sept. 25 on Georges Bank (RSD); 5 between Aug. 31 and Sept. 22 on Sable Is. (ZOL); and the one on Sept. 21, which Ian McLaren did not have to go to sea to see, as it flew over his head at West Light on Brier Is. Small numbers of jaeger sp. were seen on Aug. 12 and again in early September on Banquereau Bank but they were too far away to identify (DEF).

Thomas Smythe, a birder from Michigan, sends a model description of an adult GREAT SKUA seen from the Bluenose ferry on June 22. The only other reports of GREAT SKUAS come from Georges Bank, where RSD cornered the market: 1 on June 28; 2 on July 26; 3 on Aug. 29; 1 on Oct. 26. All these birds showed the "warm tones" of the Great Skua. SOUTH POLAR SKUAS were seen on whale/seabird cruises off Brier Is. in July and a cooperative bird was videotaped on July 25 (NS Birdline). It would be instructive if this tape and/or any photos could be shared at one of the Society's meetings. On Banquereau Bank DEF saw up to 8 skuas off and on from late July to late September, dark birds overall, which he says were probably South Polars. Finally 1 was reported on a pelagic trip out of Halifax on Aug. 9 (NS Birdline)

LAUGHING GULLS were well distributed around the province: on Sable Is. Zoe Lucas estimated a total of 4 adults seen May 24-July 1, 3 together on June 29; a subadult was in Lockeport June 6-7 and an adult on July 17, perhaps the same bird (DJC,DHY) Others reported on the N.S. Birdline were all adults: 1 on July 18 at Brier Is.; 1 July 20-21 at Lawrencetown Lake; 1 July 26 at Daniel's Head; a 2nd year bird feeding at the fish plant in Port Morien Sept. 26-Oct. 6 (ALM,CAM); 1 at Sullivan's Pond on Oct. 4. Zoe Lucas reminds me that she did describe the diagnostic tail pattern of the FRANKLIN'S GULL which she reported from Sable Is. on May 26 (NS Birds July 96) and which I must have misplaced. She completes the description, "black tail band with white outer edges." Photos are forthcoming. BLACK-HEADED GULLS were late, not appearing until Sept. 21, when 1 showed up in Donkin (NS Birdline) and 20 arrived at Cole Harbour (BLM). Other reports: an adult was on Seal Is. on Oct. 5 (BLM); 10 were in Lunenburg Hbr. on Oct. 20; 24 were at Cow Bay on Oct. 24; 1 was at Crescent Beach on Oct. 26 and another at Cherry Hill on Nov. 5 (SJF,Cohrs). Three BONAPARTE'S GULLS, probably non-breeders, were at Wallace Bay Sanctuary on June 15 (BLM) and 1 adult was at Lockeport's Crescent Beach July 14-17, accompanying the Laughing Gull which was there (DLC). The migration proceeded: 150 on Aug. 10 at Merigomish Is.; 2 adults on Aug. 17 at Cape Sable; 25 on Sept. 21 at Cole Hbr. (BLM); 1139 on Sept. 21 during NAMC, 75 from Pic. Co. and 997 from Antigonish Co.; 2, Oct. 20 in Lunenburg Hbr., and the 30 which BJA counted on Oct. 29 in Digby Gut. An Adult LITTLE GULL was reported at Dominion Beach on Oct. 27, having been in the area for some time, but no details have reached this ed. (N.S. Birdline).

Bill Taylor, an Ohio birder, has submitted a full and convincing description of the ROSS'S GULL carefully studied with Peter MacLeod on Oct. 27 at Rainbow Haven. Both Black-headed and Bonaparte's Gulls were present for comparison. They conclude that it was a 2nd winter bird. Part of his description follows, "very short, dark legs with an orange cast, no black collar, small black vertically oblong "ear", very narrow black stripe on leading edge of primaries, white edging on back edge of primaries and secondaries, small dark bill, light gray mantle and wing tops (no black), silvery-white wing linings, white tail...the bird's small size ruled out kittiwakes and Black-headed Gull. The lack of any black or dark gray on the crown and small bill ruled out Little Gull. The small bill, short legs and lack of black on trailing edges of primaries as well as complete lack of pattern in the wings eliminated Bonaparte's. Also, even though the sizes given in the National Geographic field guide are the same, Bonaparte's is stouter in build and appeared to be larger than the bird we were looking at".

RING-BILLED GULLS are locally common in winter but seem to be turning up all over the Province in small numbers. On Aug. 3, 20 mixed adults and subadults were seen on the Windsor Causeway mudflats (PEH,JWW); on Sept. 7 JWW counted 25 in Wolfville Hbr., at least 2 of which were juveniles. Three to 6 birds each turned up at Broad Cove, Cherry Hill and Lockeport from August on (JSC,DJC). NAMC tallied 1198 on Sept. 21, of which 278 were in King's Co. and 628 in Pic. Co.

BJA reports on the breeding success of GREAT BLACKED-BACKED GULLS at Porter's Lake, Digby Co. where on June 30 there were 10 adults and 5 young. Both HERRING and GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULLS were considered "very diminished in numbers" in North Sydney and Sydney Hbr. (JAC). Blm's annual count on Seal Is. on Aug. 30 showed a 50% decrease from the previous year, down to 100 Herrings and 200 Black-backed. Only about 50 Herrings and 100 Black-backed were seen on Banquereau Bank in September (DEF).

Ian McLaren has sent the following update on the Cornell's YELLOW-LEGGED GULL, described, together with photograph, in NS Birds January 96: "the description has been read by Germany's gull expert, Detlef Greber, who gives (in litt.) cogent reasons for concluding that this was not a Yellow-legged morph (so-called "omissus" gull) of the northern European Herring Gull. The case is now being argued by other experts, but I feel that Greber is probably correct. To me, an "omissus" gull would be just as interesting, even though not a separate species."

The season's first and only LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL, and adult, was seen at First Lake, in Sackville, on Sept. 20, "preening and bathing after a visit to the Sackville dump" (BLM).

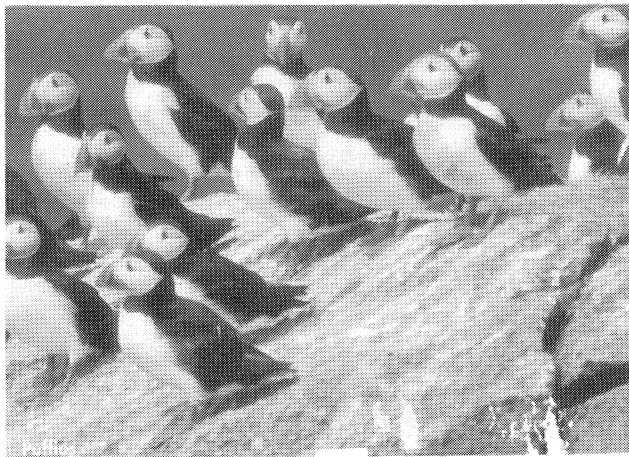
The first reports of wintering ICELAND GULLS were of 23 on Sept. 21 in Inverness Co., counted during NAMC. Among other reports were: 1 on Oct. 5 on Seal Is. (BLM); an adult in Glace Bay Hbr. on Nov. 4 (ALM,CAM); a 1st year bird at Cherry Hill on Nov. 4 (Cohrs) and 1 at the Wolfville sewage ponds on Nov. 12 (BBT). Reports of GLAUCOUS GULLS were all of 2nd year summering birds: 1 at Pubnico Pt. on June 4 and another or the same still there on Sept. 3 (RDE); 1 at Mill Cove sewer outfall on July 7; 1 in Digby on Sept. 2 (BJA).

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKES don't normally show up until late summer: 6 were seen north of Long Is. on Sept. 9 (JWW); only 10 were on Banquereau Bank on Sept. 24 (DEF); an adult was in Halibut Bay, Lun. Co. on Nov. 9 (PEB); on Nov. 9 a juvenile was seen at Hall's Hbr., flying east up the Bay of Fundy, "rare to find them that far up the Bay," says RBS. Large numbers were migrating past North Light, Brier Is., 6000 on Nov. 1 and 10,000 on Nov. 12 (ELM,IAM). BLF, also on Brier on Nov. 11, watched several groups of 15 or more fly westward during a 15 min.period.

The only CASPIAN TERN reported was 1 on Sept. 16 seen frog-catching over a small lake near Wallace Bay (PRE). Relatively rare ROYAL TERNS were recorded on the NS Birdline, but no documentation has been received. I list them for the record: 1 adult on Aug. 8 at Sober Is. and 1 imm. on Aug. 17 on a pelagic trip off Halifax. These could be confused with Caspians so notes would be appreciated. RDE counted 15 ROSEATE TERNS on June 15 at Lr. W. Pubnico, "a half mile from their breeding colony and an excellent place to watch these rare terns." I had known for some time of a colony of Roseates on Country Is., Guys. Co., so it is good news to hear from Sherman Boates (fide JWW) that on July 5 45 nesting pairs were counted there. One wonders if there aren't more of these colonies around the Province which have gone unreported. Two COMMON TERNS of unknown breeding status were at Drain Lake on July 16 (BJA). Shirley Cohrs says she has seen more COMMON and ARCTIC TERNS on Green Bay than in years, 20-50 each day, from Aug. 1 on 95% Common, 5% Arctic. Two adult Commons were watched feeding 2 young in nearby Broad Cove on Aug. 5 (SLH,AGW); 22 were at Mader's Cove on Aug. 4, having nested on Westhaver Is. and 6 were at Second Peninsula on Sept. 21 (JBM). Our uncommon winter tern, a FORSTER'S, turned up on Oct. 23 at Cole Hbr., "a 1st year winter bird with pale wings, tail, rump, dark ear-eye patch and executing its usual spiral plunges into the Hbr." (IAM). An adult LEAST TERN showed up on Aug. 8 once again at Caribou Is. causeway, "identified in part by its fluttering flight, picking up surface objects, not plunging," (CWH). Interesting enough 1 had been seen at the identical spot in 1983. A BLACK TERN, either a molting adult or a 1st summer bird, enlivened the Matthew's Lake field trip on Aug. 24 and was readily identified by RDF.

The first DOVEKIE of the season was 1 on Oct. 26 seen on a pelagic trip off Halifax (NS Birdline). Four were seen on Nov. 11 from Brier Is. (BLF). An oiled "bridled" COMMON MURRE lingered on Sable Is. from May 31-June 1 (ZOL); 2 murre, sp. were off Pearl Is. on July 19 (DHY). At least 10 THICK-BILLED MURRES were seen around Sable Is. from May 23-July 7, none obviously oiled or injured (ZOL). RAZORBILLS were regular on the whale-watching trips off Brier Is. from Sept. 9 to the end of the month. BLACK GUILLEMOTS were widely reported from Brier Is. where they were seen throughout the summer and fall (BLF,PLC). The Cohrs and Purchases counted 50 or more from Sept. 4-6, but whether these were our breeding birds or migrants from points further north is hard to say. DHY counted up to 75 on Pearl Is. on July 19 and 55 on the Bird Is. off Beaver Hbr. on July 26. ATLANTIC PUFFINS certainly seem to be thriving. They were reported regularly on whale-watching cruises off Brier Is. from late July to the end of September. Up to 12 were seen in small groups north of Long Is. on Sept. 9 (JWW). Late were 3 seen from North Light on Nov. 1 (IAM). Away from Fundy an estimated 100, including young, were seen off Pearl Is. on July 19 (DHY).

SJF,ed.



DOVES THROUGH KINGFISHERS

There was only one report of ROCK DOVES (excepting the hawk victim noted earlier). Our 13th recorded WHITE-WINGED DOVE appeared at the feeder of Meg Turner and Bobby LeTerte in Sydney, July 4-5. Their video (courtesy David McCorquodale) suggests, from the bird's rather fawn-coloured neck and chest, that it might have had a caribbean origin: more study is needed. Only one of 4 scattered reports of MOURNING DOVES reflected their fall concentration: 68 at Up. Woods Hrb. Oct. 18 (DOC). An unusual influx of 12 BLACK-BILLED CUCKOOS was found along Peskawesk L. Rd., Kejimikujik N.P., in June (fide PEH). Another was at Upper Clyde, Shel. Co., June 16 (JLC,JSC). An early migrant was on Sable I. July 24 (ZOL), and individuals were seen (IAM) on Cape Sable I. Sept. 19 (fide MUN), at Cape Perce, C.B. Co., Sept. 21 (CAM), Hartlen's Pt. Oct. 22 (IAM) and Brier I. Oct. 17 (IAM). Single YELLOW-BILLED COCKOOS were sighted on Cape Sable, Seal and Brier Islands between Sept. 15 and 18 (v. obs.), 3 more on Seal I. Oct 1 (JON), and one on Cape Sable I. Oct 27 (fide MUN).

Certainly a prize of the season was a GROOVE-BILLED ANI at White's Lake, near Halifax, Sept. 16. During the day "grunting" calls had puzzled Peter MacLeod and Bev Sarty, but only when it was fleetingly observed later in the day did Peter identify it as an ani. Although many searched, the bird was very elusive, and was seen again briefly only by Peter a few times up to Oct. 1. Most importantly, he obtained a video silhouette that clearly establishes it as an ani (we hope to have a photo copy in the next issue). Since the bills of young Smooth-billed Anis are shaped like those of groove-billed, the video may not be fully diagnostic to species. However, Peter had one view of grooves on its bill and greenish tinges on its nape. Not enough information was obtained on two previous "hypothetical" sightings of anis in Nova Scotia (see Tufts), but this was evidently the more "expected" of the two species as a vagrant.

Two GREAT HORNED OWLS were heard at Sand Lake, C.B. Co., Oct. 10 (one visiting CAM's yard in Nov.), and 2 more at the opposite end of the province, at Little Hrb., Shel. Co., Oct. 30 (DHY). Although we received no direct account of the big owl story this year, nesting by 2 and possibly 3 pairs of N. HAWK OWLS in the Cape Breton Highlands, the photos by Randy Lauff will do for now. Bernard Forsythe faithfully reported on BARRED OWLS in his Wolfville area nest box: "20 eggs laid in 8 nests; 1 nest lost to racoons; 1 nest eggs failed to hatch; 6 nests fledged 13 young". The only other report was of a bird along Morrison Rd. C.B. Co., Oct 18 (ALM); obviously more were seen or heard. A belated record of the uncommon LONG-EARED OWL comes from Broughton Rd. C.B. Co., where one was found Mar. 18 (ALM, CAM). In mid-June the SHORT-EARED OWLS mentioned in the last issue fledged 3 young on Cape Sable (fide MUN) and 5 at W. Pubnico (NSBS Birdline). The Cape Sable birds were seen through fall, but there were no reports of migrants. Up to 5 SAW-WHET OWLS near Pomquet Beach Sept. 27, and another N of Antigonish Nov. 8, responded to RFL's calls. Two migrants were heard on Brier I. 12-13 Oct. (RBS). Nova Scotia's first photograph and apparent nest site of BOREAL OWL was another bonus from this summer's expedition to the C.B. Highlands (see photos).

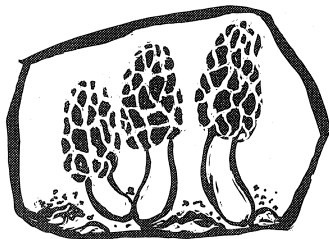
First outbound COM. NIGHTHAWKS might have been 2 at Coxheath Mt., July 10 (JAC), and there were 4 over Mader's Cove, Lun. Co., three days later (JBM). Five were near Digby July 29 and 10 near Bridgewater in mid-August (JCM). A "few dozen" were at Lockeport Aug. 14, and over E Jordan, Shel. Co., Aug. 24 (DJC). A flight of 15 was near Middleton Aug. 27 (JWT), while 10-12 were at Newburne, Lun. Co., Sept. 2 (DHY). A big group of about 30 was over Tremont, Kings Co., Sept. 10 (SLH), but thereafter most were in ones and twos, except for 13 in E. Hants Sept. 21 (RCM), the latest reported. The Herring Cove WHIP-POOR-WILL was certainly sought by several in June, but only PLC reported it as heard June 18. Is this really the only known breeding site in Nova Scotia? Reports by Jim Wolford for observers of the CHIMNEY SWIFT spectacle at the Robie Tufts Nature Centre are here summarized from June 1, when 240+ departed mid-morning, fatally for two easily grabbed by a pair of Merlins. On June 4, 62+ entered at dusk, but thereafter through June numbers were generally at most in the 20s pr 30s, with occasional exceptions, such as 74 during the cold evening June 21.

Numbers were more frequently in the 40s to 60s in July, diminishing sharply in early August, to zero after Aug. 13, except for 2 stragglers Aug. 21. Jim also included observations by others of evening concentrations elsewhere. Gini Proulx saw 250+ entering the Oakdene School chimney in early June. Some 160 entered the Middleton High School chimney June 20, and 280 there July 14 (v. obs.). About 220 entered a church chimney at S. Brookfield Aug. 2 (PEH). A sadder phone call to the Wolfville tourist bureau reported a few dead swifts in a fireplace, from as many as 80 attempting to use the chimney. Swifts again nested at E. Dalhousie in the hayloft of a small barn, where a dead adult was found July 21, but where 2 more continued attending the nest (fide JWW). A more natural, 20-year nest site at Black River L., Kings Co., inside a hollow pine stump over water, had 4 well feathered young Aug. 17 (BLF). Early migrant individuals reached Sable I. July 7 and 21 (ZOL). A very late bird was at Wolfville Oct. 18 (fide JWW). There was a big gap between a few belated submissions on springtime RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRDS and a report of a probable migrant Aug. 30; presumably they were enjoyed as usual in summer. One near Wolfville Sept. 10 was rated by JCT as the latest ever at their property, but she also passed along NAMC counts on sept. 21 of 4 in Inv. Co. and of single birds in Anna., Digby, and Kings Co. There were three other early-September sightings. We received only one record of BELTED KINGFISHER, a bird Oct. 9 near Gaspereau (JCT), although they were certainly about from spring through fall.

WOODPECKERS

A late-spring RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER frequented a feeder at Westport, Brier I., June 1-6, and a male was at DHY's feeder in Little Hrb., Shel. Co., Oct. 19-26. We can probably again expect more in late fall and winter. There were thought to be up to 15 imm. YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKERS on Seal I. Oct. 1-5 (v. obs.). Interestingly, our only other reports coincided: a male at Up. Woods Hrb., Shel. Co., Oct. 5 (DOC), and an imm. next day at Lr. W. Pubnico (RSD). Readers are reminded to look very closely at adult-plumaged Yellow-bellied in late fall for the remote possibility of Red-naped. There were four reports of 5 individuals of both DOWNY and HAIRY WOODPECKERS; the Sept. 21 NAMC totals of 171 and 62 respectively probably better reflect their ubiquity. Con Desplanque sent an amusing photo, not quite reproduceable, of a Downy Woodpecker ("downy sapsucker"?) that used their hummingbird feeder in Amherst for five days in mid-July. We await details on a THREE-TOED WOODPECKER erratically at a feeder in Aldersville, Kings Co., in late July. The Tufts discovered a nest of BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER 12 km from New Ross, Lun. Co., June 4. The young were audible June 10, were at the entrance June 19, and fledged by June 22. (See also photo). Early on, the female seemed to do more nurturing, while the male stayed more around the nest, sometimes giving a display, calling with wings fluttering when she arrived (JCT). The only other report was of one in E. Hants Sept. 21. Migration of N. FLICKERS is sketchily defined by island estimates: 2-4 on Seal I. Sept. 7-9, 30-45 on Brier I. Sept. 21-23, 125-130 on Seal I. Oct. 1-5, and on Brier I., 8 on Oct. 18, 1-2 on Nov. 1-3, and none Nov. 12-14 (v. obs.) One other report, of 12 at Pubnico Pt. Oct. 2 (RSD), fits this pattern. There were five reports of 8 PILATED WOODPECKERS, all in late summer or fall. One was a pleasure for all on the NSBS field trip at Hartlen's Pt. Oct. 6.

IAM, ed.



FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS

The Cohrs spent July 10 wandering around Queens and Shelburne Counties, and specifically noted NO Flycatchers of any kind. Some must have been around somewhere, though, as there were some presumed migrants. A few OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHERS were present in the breeding season elsewhere. (KNK,BJA,RBS). PLC and the Cohrs did note a total of 3 on Brier Is. the first week of September, and these were undoubtedly migrants. BLF had an EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE singing in his backyard on Wolfville Ridge right through till the rather late date of Sept. 27. Several others were noted during the breeding season, and although there were no large movements, 1's and 2's were seen on Brier and Seal Islands during mid to late Fall (RBS et al).

BLF found a YELLOW-BELLIED Flycatcher's nest on July 1, on W. Brooklyn Mountain, Hants Co., with 3 young. It was on a ledge of a slate wall 7 feet up from a brook in a ravine. There are 2 other reports in September (1 each, CAM,JCT). There are no other fall Emidonax reports, which would tend to support the Cohrs concerns as mentioned above. A word of caution, though, in this notoriously hard to identify group—the freshly molted juveniles of all Emidonax species have yellow bellies, while the adults all develop grayer, duller bellies as the plumage fades. Therefore migrating, non-singing birds in Fall with yellow bellies could be juveniles Least or Alder, and with grayish-white bellies could be adult Yellow-bellied! Better field marks for this species would be the yellow THROAT and greenish back, short primary extension and prominent eye-ring. Very confusing!

Of just 2 EASTERN PHOEBE reports, the latest was at White Rock, King's Co. 15 Oct. (BLF).

Although a few EASTERN KINGBIRDS were noted in the breeding season, there were no apparent migrants reported.

The latest TREE SWALLOWS reported were a group of 13, Oct. 8, flying above a farm pond at Avonport on Oct. 8 (BBT,JCT) and a single bird at Argyle, Oct. 18 (SJF,BAH). A CLIFF SWALLOW colony that may be new, or at least previously overlooked, was on the ferry terminal at Digby in late June (BJA). The Halifax airport colony hosted at least 50 nesting pairs this Summer despite the previously described attempts to discourage them, and a further 20 pairs moved from the hangar to a nearby equipment shed, 11 pairs moved to another nearby hangar, and 4 others moved to another hangar. By Aug. 26 all nests had been vacated, except one, which still had adults feeding young (DHH). 2 relatively late BARN SWALLOWS were at Broad Cove Oct. 12 (SJF,BAH).

CORVIDS THROUGH GNATCATCHERS

A family of 2 ad. and 2 juv. GRAY JAYS were at Margaretsville 27 July, and 4 were found feeding on bayberries on the shore at Green Bay Oct. 27 (J&SC). BLUE JAYS, as usual, seemed plentiful all over the place all Fall (KAT,RBS,KFS,DOC etc). Over 500 were on Brier Is. Oct. 1 (SJF,DHY et al.)— yes, lots migrate out of the Province in Fall!

200+ AMERICAN CROWS were at Orangedale, C.B. Oct. 11 (JAC), and the usual Kentville flock has been amassing as fall has progressed (RBS). JAC's Crows were also joined by 5 to 8 COMMON RAVENS in the same area during October.

As usual BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEES continue to seem abundant everywhere. RSD noted a flock of 50+ at Pubnico Pt. Oct. 7, looking as if they were ready to head across the Gulf of Maine. JCT also found about 200 attempting to migrate somewhere off the tip of Cape Split Oct. 20. JAC found "2 to 3 dozen" in Petersfield Park, Westmount, C.B. during the Fall. PLC noted them to be very common throughout Bedford. Few BOREAL CHICKADEES were mentioned in the breeding season, and PLC had 6-10 at Clam Harbour P.P. Oct. 27. RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH reports suggest ongoing stability of their status. RFL saw the first WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH that he'd ever seen in the Pomquet area, Sept. 28.

There were 4 BROWN CREEPER reports, including one from Murphy Lake, King's Co., that mentioned an adult and 2 fledged young, July 20 (Miriam Tams, via JWW).

Several HOUSE WRENS were on Seal Is. the first week of October, all well seen and easily distinguishable from the more common WINTER WRENS, which were also present (JOW,RBS et al). Several were examined in the hand, photographed, and banded, during that period. At least 2 MARSH WRENS were also present there, one of which spent a lot of time in full song, and easily visible, in the reed-bed on the edge of the West Village. Other examples of this species were 1 each, heard in the Gaspereau Valley Sept. 21 (fide JCT), and at Broad Cove on the 29th (J&SC).

Five GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLETS were at Westmount, C.B. during the Fall (JAC). It seems to have been quite a season for the BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER. 4 have been seen, on Seal Is. 21 Sept. (JOW), at the Halifax Co. Fisherman's Reserve the next day (BJA), 1 at Broad Cove Sept. 28 (SJF), and 1 at Hartlen's Pt. Nov. 12 (JWT,BJA). A N. WHEATEAR was seen by Joan Bromley (fide JCT) in the same spot on the Wolfville Dyke as a couple of years ago, on Oct. 21, but could not be relocated.

BLUEBIRDS THROUGH STARLINGS

3 EASTERN BLUEBIRDS were present in the vicinity of the cemetery on Brier Is. from Oct 12-17, although no evidence of definite breeding occurred this year. BLF found a male near Black River, King's Co., earlier, on Sept. 27.

The only mention of thrushes were those of some late-in-the-season activity by HERMIT THRUSHES. JSC heard some still singing at Pubnico Lake on Aug.13, and 1 singing on the definitely late date of Aug. 26 on Great Is. Lun. Co. BLF found a still active nest, with 3 young, at Black River Lake, King's Co., Aug. 24. It would be interesting for somebody to try and do a nocturnal survey of the calls of migrating thrushes in our area, as they are hardly ever seen by day, and apparently this is the best way to detect them on migration. Several people reported AMERICAN ROBINS, although the only really large flock was on oct. 23, where they were "everywhere-trees, shrubs,roads, fields" at Grand Pré and Wolfville (JCT,JET). Smaller movements were also noted by JBM in Mader's Cove, JAC in Westmount, and DOC at Upper Woods Hbr., all in October.

Single GRAY CATBIRDS were at Mader's Cove Sept. 21 (JBM), and Little Hbr., Shel. Co. Oct. 18 (DHY), with 2 in Medford, King's Co. Sept. 21 (fide JCT). As usual, although the NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD is not particularly numerous, this species is sufficiently showy, either visually or aurally, and sufficiently unusual, that it is reported far more frequently than some of our more common species. There were 10 reports, including what seemed to be a pair N. of Kentville July 26 (RBS), and 2 nests in Port Williams—one that fledged 2 young, in a spruce, July 6, and the other that fledged 3 young in a pear tree 100 meters away Aug. 14 (BLF). All the other reports except 2 were also from King's Co. Single BROWN Thrashers were on Seal (JOW et al.) and Brier (RBS et al.) Islands, Sept. 21 and Oct. 13 respectively, much as expected.

BOHEMIAN WAXWINGS are by now a regular, and welcome, addition to our winter avifauna, in large numbers on a regular basis. The first to arrive this Fall were during the first 2 weeks of November, with 5 in Canning (MAG) on 5th and 40+ in Westmount, C.B. on 11th- both very early dates. CEDAR WAXWINGS seem under-reported, or perhaps the numbers are down this year. The usual large flocks around some of the chokecherries in Kentville seemed less evident to RBS than usual, and the only Fall report was of 6 in Mooseland Oct. 6 (KAT).

4 NORTHERN SHRIKES have already been reported (Sand Lake, ALM,CAM), Gaspereau (fide JCT), Parker's Cove, (RBS) and Wolfville Ridge (BLF), so perhaps it is going to be a good "Shrike winter". Perhaps of more note, there are 2 reports of LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE both from earlier in the year. The first was from April 29, in Brentwood, Co. Co., (AEW and Alfred E. Wallace). They said "Have seen the Northern Shrike. The black mask was heavier and continued over the bill. It also sang and the song was confirmed on a tape." The second report is a very detailed account, with an excellent drawing and full field notes, from Brier Is. on June 15, by a visiting British birder, Mike Baldock, of Canterbury. The bird was perched in an open grassy area and

viewed with a scope. He notes the smaller size and slender appearance compared to Northern, the thick black mask covering the eye, the short stubby bill with no obvious hook on the tip, the plain breast with no barring, white tips to the scapulars, short primary projection (a not usually mentioned distinguishing field mark, but evidently a good one), gray-blue mantle, and small white area at the base of the primaries. There are of course only 2 or 3 previous records of this species for the Province, and it is thought to be in serious decline over much of its more southerly breeding range.

As usual there are a few reports of moderate flocks of EUROPEAN STARLING (JAC etc.). I wonder when they're going to follow the House sparrow and start to decline?

I should finally also note the following rare birds that have been reported, either to the various "hot lines" that currently disseminate birding information in the province, or that I have otherwise been told about, often by well-known and/or respected birders, but unfortunately with no written supporting evidence- SAY'S PHOEBE (C. BRETON), ACADIAN FLYCATCHER (S.W. Nova Scotia), VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW (S.W. Nova Scotia), NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (S.W. Nova Scotia), SEDGE WREN (several locations), WOOD THRUSH (S.W. Nova Scotia).

RBS-ed.



This moderately late--spring Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was at Back Cove, Hartlen's Point, June2. Photo by Ian McLaren.

VIREOS AND WARBLERS

Thought there was little indication of breeding numbers, three SOLITARY VIREOS were "still singing with abandon" at Green Bay on Aug. 21 (JSC), and an adult was still feeding a fledgling at Lwr. W. Pubnico on Sept. 4 (RSD). The Sept. 21 NAMC total was 48, including 27 in Hants Co. The final report was of a singleton in Bedford (PLC), on the average last date of Oct. 20. A report of a WARBLING VIREO at Milford Station, Hants Co., on June 27 was unfortunately not documented. There was one in Digby Co. on Sept. 21 (NAMC). One on Sable Is. Sept. 30 was described by RBS as "Plain, gray with yellowish tinge No border to pale supercilium. Easily distinguishable from nearby Philadelphia and Red-eyed". A PHILADELPHIA VIREO on Bon Portage Is., Shel. Co., Sept. 21 (NAMC) was banded by Acadia U. ornithology students. There were four or more on Seal Is. from Sept. 28 to Oct. 5 (RBS), described as "quite variable, but all showed small size for vireo, yellowish underparts, dark eyeline, white supercilium, etc". A report of one at Schooner Pond on Oct. 1 was not documented. JSC heard 18 RED-EYED VIREOS on her Shel. Co. BBS, her second-highest total there in 20 years, and she was also encouraged by numbers throughout Lun. Co. during the summer. A nest was observed at Cambridge and Geldert Streets, Halifax (PLC). Thirty Red-eyes were found on the Sept. 21 NAMC, half of these in Hants Co. Two rather late birds were on Bush Is., Lun. Co., Oct. 19 (SJF,BAH).

A bright male BLUE-WINGED WARBLER was observed by SJF for three or four minutes in excellent light at Broad Cove on Sept. 28. According to BAH's "Bird Watch" column in The Mail-Star on Oct. 4, another Blue-winged Warbler was found at Chebucto Head, Hfx. Co., at about the same time. A GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER at Green Bay on Sept. 17 (JSC), a "beautiful female in superb plumage" which lingered for 60-90 seconds for an excellent view", was otherwise not described. One on Bon Portage Is. Sept. 21 (NAMC) was banded by Acadia students. The only mention of a TENNESSEE WARBLER during the breeding season was at Westmount, C.B. (JAC), and the only other Tennessee reported, other than seven on the NAMC Sept. 21, was a singleton on Seal Is., Oct. 1 (RBS). Single ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLERS were found at Hartlen's Point on Sept. 27 (BJA), and on Seal Is. Oct 5 (RBS). A total of 17 NASHVILLE WARBLERS were scared up on Sept. 21 (NAMC), mainly in Hants and Kings Cos., while one held on until Oct. 12 in Little Hbr., Shel. Co. (DHY).

DOC found a June pair of NORTHERN PARULAS in Up. Wood Hbr., Shel. Co., but otherwise, Parulas were not mentioned, except for five on the Sept. NAMC.

The NAMC total of three YELLOW WARBLERS seemed low indeed, with just one additional migrant noted on Sept. 24 at Cleveland Beach, Hfx. Co. (MIL). The CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER didn't fare much better, although a half-dozen were frequently encountered during the summer at Margaretsville, Anna. Co. (PLC), the Sept. 21 NAMC provided our only migrants (5). It's hard to believe nobody reported MAGNOLIA WARBLER migrants except for the 25 on Sept. 21 (NAMC), 11 of these in Shel. Co. Not a single CAPE MAY WARBLER was reported. A few BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLERS were found in Yar. and Shel. Cos. in June; otherwise they were not mentioned until four were tallied on the Sept. NAMC--one each in C.B., Kings, Shel. and Yar. Cos. A male straggler at Roberts Is., Yar. Co. (SJF,BAH) was the last one reported.

A late report of 200+ YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLERS at Apple River, Cumb. Co., on May 11 (KFS) was received. 465 were tallied on the Sept. 21 NAMC, 181 in Hants Co. alone. There were no other reports of fall migrants, except for three at Westmount on Sept. 28 (JAC).

The BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER was regularly noted around Bedford during the summer (PLC), and 15 of the 50 found on the Sept. NAMC were in Hfx. Co. as well. Only two were noted thereafter: one at Little Hbr. on Oct. 12 (DHY), and one at Wolfville Ridge on Oct. 14 (BLF). A BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER at North Range, Digby Co., on June 14 was the only post-spring migration report until 13 were counted on the Sept. 21 NAMC, five of these in King's Co.

A YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER was found at Daniel's Head on Oct. 18 by JON-SAN, who noted its plain grey back, yellow throat and yellow lores. Half-a-dozen PINE WARBLERS were reported: a male in Bedford on Aug. 11 (PLC), one on Boularderie Is., Vic. Co., on Sept. 15 (ALM,CAM), a male at Westmount on Oct. 7 (JAC), two at Broad Cove on Oct. 10 (SJF) and one at Fairview Cemetery, Halifax, on Oct. 26 (PLC). A PRAIRIE WARBLER on Seal Is. Sept. 21 was discovered by the NAMC birding party, while another, an imm., was found the same day in Green Bay (COHRS). Six PALM WARBLERS on Wolfville Ridge, Sept. 1 (GWT), and 82 on the Sept. NAMC (including 5 of the western race in Yar. Co.) were the only reports of fall migrants. A pair of BAY-BREASTED WARBLERS was found at Great Pubnico Lake, Yar. Co., by RSD. Only two fall migrants were located, both on the Sept. 21 NAMC: one in Yar. Co. and one in Pic. Co. 118 of the 125 BLACKPOLL WARBLERS on the NAMC were Hfx. Co. birds. Richard Chalmers submitted a late report of what he believed was a male CERULEAN WARBLER at his Bedford residence on June 25. The bird landed "on a patch of newly-turned bare earth in our garden...a few yards from my feet, where it pecked away at a grup, newly exposed by my digging. I had an unobstructed view for a few minutes". The scant description consisted of the following: "A small warbler-type bird with narrow bill. Predominantly blue, with dark-blue stripes on its head and back".

After DOC and VAC found eight BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLERS moving through Up. Wood Harbour, no more were mentioned until the Sept. 21 NAMC, when 12 were listed, five of these in Hants Co. Fourteen AMERICAN REDSTARTS on the NAMC were all that were reported, with six of these in Hants Co., and four in Hfx. Co. BAH's Oct. 4 "Bird Watch" told of a recent WORM-EATING WARBLER found by banders on Seal Is., but no corroborating reports were received.

Late spring and summer OVENBIRD numbers were good in Kings and Anna. Cos. (JCT,PLC), but once again the Sept. 21 NAMC gave us the only reported fall migrants, just one in King's Co. and one in Yar. Co. JCT added four NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH to our spring total, these in the Gaspereau Valley, King's, Co., on May 29. RSD found two in August; one on Georges bank Aug. 18, an indisputable migrant, and one on Pubnico Pt. Aug. 28. Two were tallied on the NAMC, one each in Shel. and Yar. Cos.

John, Ted and Vera Sollows identified two KENTUCKY WARBLERS at Sandbeach, Yar. Co., on Aug. 15. Though no optical aids were used, the day was fair, lighting was good and the birds were "seen from a distance of about 15 feet, as [they] flitted about the bush, ground and adjacent shrubbery. Plain olive upperparts and yellow underparts, combined with yellow eye ring, and dark triangular patches below eye ring confirmed identification. Said patches were not yet black...such tends to be the case in young birds". Incidentally, JOS remarked that he saw an adult Kentucky Warbler in the same Japanese quince bush 25 to 30 years ago. Five MOURNING WARBLERS were seen and heard singing near Blomidon Prov. Park, King's Co., on July 13 (BLF). Eight on the Sept. 21 NAMC included five in Richmond Co.

The COMMON YELLOWTHROAT was abundant on Brier Is. in July, according to PLC. This observation was supported by the 152 found on the NAMC, including 38 in Hfx. Co., and also 38 in Hants Co. A male HOODED WARBLER was reported from South Side on Oct. 16, but no details were received.

The southwestern end of the province was the spot for WILSON'S WARBLERS. RSD saw a female at Pubnico Pt. on Aug. 28, and a male there on Sept. 1. The NAMC garnered 2 from Shel. Co. The CANADA WARBLER is so seldom seen these days that any report is worth mentioning. PLC found a male in wet deciduous woods in Bedford on June 30, and RSD had 1 at Pubnico Pt. on Aug. 30. Hants Co. and Yar Co. each chipped in with one on the NAMC. RBS reported our only YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT, "skulking in thick bushes" in Kentville, Nov. 8.

between these two will be in a future issue. The one that is most numerous and often found is the SALT-MARSH SHARP-TAILED SPARROW. These dull and grayish overall birds can be found both along the coastal regions of the province as well as in the dryer fields notably the border region of Amherst. This bird seemed well recorded for a change with over 17 gasping their song at Cherry Hill Beach on June 28 and then 10 were found at Crescent Beach on July 27 (Cohrs). Others included up to 10 at Marshalltown, Dig. Co. on June 28 (BJA), and 4 at Wellington Dyke, King's Co. on Aug. 5 (PLC). Later encounters were 6 still resident at Cherry Hill Beach on Aug. (SLH,AGW) and 1 was lingering at Eastern Passage Beach on Nov. 7 (KAT). The other Sharp-tail species is the NELSON'S SHARP-TAILED SPARROW that can from time to time be found here and most likely in later fall. These birds breed in the western prairie regions and as can be expected, especially in fall, migrants can be found here. These comparatively very orange birds are relatively easy (as sparrows go) to identify. Two reports describing a bird which seem to meet all the criteria of this species were received. The first one was at Crescent Beach, unusually on July 27 (LAC,JSC) and the other one on Oct. 12 at Cherry Hill Beach (SJF). Although these sightings were not far apart because of the time between sightings they could possibly be two different birds.

FOX SPARROWS seemed to go unnoticed or they avoided the province in migration this year. Apart from the few summer records received there were only two fall records. The first of a single bird seen at Pubnico Pt. on Sept. 16 (RSD) and the second was of 2 birds at Sand Lake, C.B. from Sept. 30-Nov. 3 (ALM,CAM). SONG SPARROWS were commonly found all summer and seemed fairly numerous during migration as well. Sept. 28 still found them singing at Pomquet (RLF) and there were still three coming regularly to a feeder in Dartmouth up to at least Nov. 13 (KAT).

A nest with 4 eggs of a LINCOLN'S SPARROW was discovered by BLF at Methals Lake Bog, King's Co. on June 22. He also found 6 at Blomidon on July 6, two of which were carrying food. Other fall records include several on Seal Is., Sept. 18 to Oct. 5 (RBS,JCT). SWAMP SPARROWS were virtually unreported with just one record received, this one was still singing on Aug. 13 at Publicover Lake, Lun. Co. (JLC,JSC).

WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS were quite common all year. Fall migrants seemed encouraging as well. Examples include 6 at Wolfville Ridge on Sept. 6 (GWT; 10 at Wolfville on Oct. 9-10 (BBT); 18 at Kentville on Oct. 9 (RBS) and 2 at Dartmouth on Nov. 6 (KAT). Regular spring and fall migrants are WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS and most of the fall migrants are immatures. These were found at Sand Lake, C.B. (1 only) on Sept. 18 (ALM,CAM) and Chebucto Head on Oct. 20 (3) (DAC,AJV). An ad. bird was seen at Broad Cove on Sept. 28 (SJF). DARK-EYED JUNCOS were very common all summer throughout the province. Fall migrants were numerous especially in late September and early to mid-October when flocks of 50-100 were often encountered along roadsides and feeders.

DAC, ed.

LONGSPURS TO ICTERIDS

Only two reports of LAPLAND LONGSPURS made it to the deadline--there were 10-12 at Cherry Hill on Oct. 20, (Cohrs) and 2 on Cape Sable Is., Oct. 21 (ROS). SNOW BUNTINGS, on the other hand, were early and became plentiful. The first was at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co. on Oct. 13 (JSC). There was a single bird at Port Morien Sandbar, Oct. 16, and 3 at Grand Pre, Oct. 23 (Murrants, JET,JCT). By Oct. 30 there were large concentrations with 100 at Annapolis on Oct. 30, 150+ at Cherry Hill, Nov. 6 and 50+ near Sheffield Mills, Nov. 11 (BJA,Cohrs, BBT).

ICTERIDS

The 15 or so BOBOLINKS at Oakfield Park on July 6 were still in breeding plumage. Reports of fall birds, always a happy surprise when walking by the shore, came from Westmount, C.B. (18-Aug. 21 and 28), east Grand Pré (6 Sept. 4) and Long Is., Grand Pré (12 Sept. 8) (PLC,JAC,BBT,Tufts). This is a species that continues to decline in an alarming way. All reports next spring would be very welcome, especially those of successfully nesting groups.

The Morses at Mader's Cove felt that the RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS nested early this year, and left early as well--last one there was Oct. 13. A nice fall flock of 78 (mostly juvenile) were at Upper Woods Hbr., Oct. 27 (Camerons).

There were no MEADOWLARKS (of any species) reported. KNK reported a RUSTY BLACKBIRD on territory June 7 at Muddy Lake, New Ross. Fall birds were on Brier Is., Sept. 6 when the Cohrs and Purchases saw 5 'on the wire'--1 ad. and 4 young. There were 5 at Avonport, Oct. 8 and 2-3 still around on Brier, Oct. 12-13 (BBT,JET,RBS).

Three migratory movements of COMMON GRACKLES were noted. Four hundred in one flock was at Arlington, N. Mountain, King's Co., Sept. 21 (JCT). A huge movement of 'hundreds--up to 1000+' was seen crossing Sydney Hbr on Oct. 10 by Jackie Cretien, and by Oct. 27, a flock of 150 was passing through Upper Woods Hbr. (DOC,VAC).

The enormous flocks of BROWN-HEADED COWBIRDS are no longer (some would say fortunately) with us. There were only 14 birds noted. There was a late report of 1 (fe.) at KFS's feeder in Apple R. on March 30, and 12 there (six of each sex) Apr. 19. The only other was 1 on Banquereau, Aug. 15 (DEF). They have become rare birds!

BALTIMORE ORIOLES (they used to be Baltimore, then became Northern and are now Baltimore again!?) were observed moving out on Sept. 15. DHY had 8 together in his yard at Little Hbr. and on Sept. 21, JOW had 11 on Seal Is. The first of our winter feeder Orioles was reported by Karl Tay, who had 2 eating grapes in his Dartmouth garden, Oct. 29-31. A BULLOCK'S ORIOLE (fe.) was well described by Randy Lauff, who saw it at Pomquet on Oct. 14.

FINCHES TO HOUSE SPARROW

A single PINE GROSBEAK was on Wolfville Ridge on Oct. 12 and 2 were seen in Wolfville on Oct. 22 (one a bright male) by BLF. Shirley Cohrs reported a pair calling to one another at Green Bay in the first two weeks of October. Perhaps this will be a good year for those exceptionally beautiful birds.

As is usual, almost no PURPLE FINCHES were around during the period. The exception to this was at the Tay's at Mooseland, where they were around 'all summer and fall'. Three 'waves' were noted. One was exceptionally early on July 11, when the Cohrs had a flock of 20 or more (mixed m. and fe.) together on Bell Is., Lun. Co. There had been none there previously and none since, so it would seem to have been a definite movement. On Sept. 29, the Tufts had 30 on Ridge Rd., King's Co., and on Nov. 2 the Mooseland flock increased to 12. There is a late report of HOUSE FINCHES from KFS in Apple R.: 1 male from Apr. 15-20 and 1 female on May 26. Tom Ryan had a male House Finch at Canard on Sept. 30.

Peripatetic CROSSBILLS did not wander much into our area. Nesting success of REDS was seen on Bush Is., Lun. Co. on June 22, when PHB&LAC watched a family of 5--a male, a female and three young--feeding on new growth on spruce trees, the young

begging to be fed. A few miles away at Green Bay from June 27-30, a flock of 15 fed on tiny new fir cones (JSC). Two flocks (no numbers given) were seen on Herman's Is. and First Peninsula (no date) (Morses). Three birds seen at Woods Hbr. in July complete the report (DOC).

WHITE-WINGED seem to have been almost non-existent. The exception is a late report of two flocks of about 35 each seen near Milford and Shubenacadie on Apr. 28 (RCM, Wests).

We have only one mention of late summer PINE SISKINS--they returned to the Tufts feeders on Wolfville Ridge on Oct. 31 (12 birds).

On Aug. 4, a pure white GOLDFINCH was observed at the Urban's feeder in Avonport (JWW). Most other reports were widespread and of small numbers (less than 10). A large flock of 62 was noted at Beach Meadows, Queen's Co. on Oct. 31 by ROS. Another of 30+ was seen by DOC at Upper Woods Hbr. on Nov. 13, and they were heard on all walks in Green Bay during October and early November (JSC). JSC writes of 50+ EVENING GROSBEAKS seen along the Breeding Bird Survey route, June 16. In eighteen years of doing this route, only six individuals have been seen, so this may be news of further breeding in the province.

As well as the Goldfinch, the Urbans entertained an Albino HOUSE SPARROW on Nov. 1. (Several years ago they had an albino Evening Grosbeak.) Do you suppose their feeder is haunted with ghostly birds?

JSC, ed.

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF REPORTS

for

the April 1997 issue

February 25, 1996

Bird Reports to the RECORDS EDITOR

Wendie Tay
5 Berwick Street
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Articles, sketches and letters to the EDITOR

Mrs. Shirley Cohrs,
8 Rosemount Ave.,
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Photographs to

Dr. I.A. McLaren,
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Cameron, Van	VAC
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Cohrs, John	JLC
Cohrs, Shirley	JSC
Cretien, Jacqueline	JAC
Crosby, Donna	DJC
Currie, Dave	DAC
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D'Entremont, Raymond	RSD
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Wolford, Jim	JWW
Young, David	DHY
Young, Monica	MOY

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 Pubnicos.
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, Mooseland
Colchester Co. (Col. Co.)	Economy, Glenholme
Annapolis Co. (Anna. Co.)	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.	Westport (Brier Island), Brier Island
Cape Breton (C.B.)	Big Pond, C.B. Highland National Park (C.B.H.N.P.) Westmount

*APBS-Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary
 CBC - Christmas Bird Count
 CSI - Cape Sable Island

YOUR 1996-1997 EXECUTIVE

Gisele D'Entrement, Lise Bell, Christine Cornell, Bill Caudle, Christine Ross, Shirley
Cohrs and Bob Dickie. Absent: Doug Roy, Wendie Tay
Photograph--Peter Payzant



SANCTUARY AND SCHOLARSHIP TRUST FUND

Eric Cooke, Ken Gregoire, Shirley Cohrs, Dave Currie
Photograph--Peter Payzant



BEST WISHES

go to our

PRESIDENT LISE COHRS

who was united in matrimony

to

PETER BELL

on

October 5, 1996

A SURPRISE SHOWER was held for Lise after the September Executive meeting at the home of Shirley Brothers



Watching Lisë opening her gifts are:

(top) Bob Dickie, Wendie and Karl
Tay and (bottom) Purch (Don)
Purchase



AN ANTARCTIC ADVENTURE

Margaret A. Clarke

Photography by Margaret Slatkin

The decision to visit the Last Continent was made in April 1995, after reading Stuart Tingley's article "Wings and the Antarctic". Wings, Inc., a birding company with head office in Tucson, Arizona had booked with Marine Expeditions, Inc. a Toronto based company that operates a fleet of six ships ideally suited for cruising in polar regions.

Our adventure began November 27, 1995 at the gateway city of Los Angeles, where we flew Aero Argentinas to Buenos Aires in Argentina. After a night there we flew on to Ushuaia in Tierra del Fuego, the southern most city in the world. Here we spent a day and a half identifying such birds as Black-chinned Siskin, Dark-faced Ground Tyrant, Andean Condor, White-throated Caracara, as well as geese, ducks, gulls. We boarded the "Livonia" late afternoon. The Livonia was built in Estonia by the Soviet Union in 1984 as a government oceanographic research vessel. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Marine Expeditions struck a deal to have the ship converted to a passenger ship for excursions to remote waters of the north and south.

The captain and crew were Estonian, with a Swede as the Expedition leader, Canadian and Dutch naturalists, an English manager and a Canadian chef, a total of 32. The 40 passengers, all birders, came from Canada, England and the United States including Hawaii. Our tireless, dedicated leaders, Stuart Tingley and Ned Brinkley were unrelenting in their efforts, not only identifying the pelagic birds but ensuring that the birders saw them as well.

Thus began our 12 day introduction to the "White Continent", a continent surrounded by sea, the highest, coldest, windiest continent in the world.

After sailing out of Beagle Channel we turned into Drake Passage, spending the next three days adjusting to the ship's motion, attending lectures, slide presentations, videos and films presented by the naturalists, on the history of the early explorers, pelagic birds, and the history of whaling in the Antarctic. We bundled up for protection from the winds, braced ourselves on the stern or bow searching for whales and seabirds.

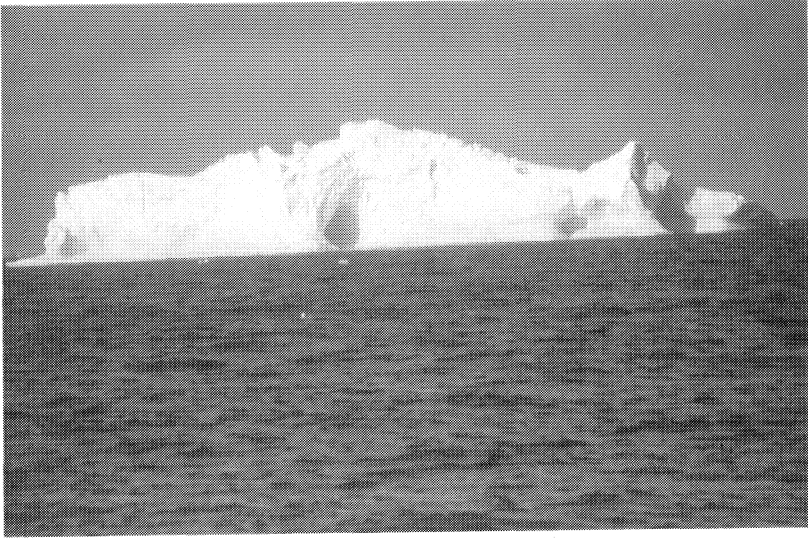
Our first landing was in Cumberland Bay in South Georgia where our Zodiacs dropped us at Gryviken, an abandoned whaling station where the remains of buildings and whaling ships with well-marked signs, gave us the history and insight into an industry that nearly brought about the extinction of whales of the south polar regions. Here we saw our first King Penguins, also Gentoo, many in their molting phase. Young elephant seals were everywhere; one truly had to be aware that these immobile mammals were not rocks on logs! There was no mistaking the impressive males as they lazed on the grassy area near the cemetery where Sir Ernest Shackleton, early explorers and whalers are buried.

The afternoon saw us anchored in Royal Bay for another zodiac landing to a King Penguin Rookery. As far as the eye could see there were penguins, standing in a massive body, decked out in their immaculate tuxedos, some marching in single file, most standing idle. We humans walked in single file also, not really as smartly dressed, in order to reach the rookery where the chicks were gathered. They look like huge brown teddy bears as big as the adults.

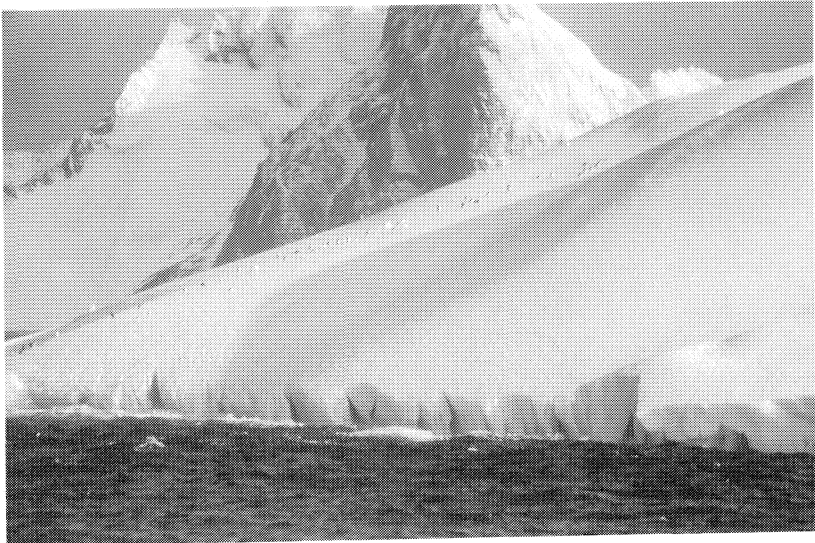
One only had to sit on a rock (not a seal) and wait; for the penguins would march up close by, have a look at the humans clicking cameras, then waddle off to answer the whistling calls of the young or give the loud trumpet sound of the adult.

Thus the days drifted by as life on the Livonia centered around excellent meals, pleasant company, continuing lectures on the Antarctic and anticipated zodiac landings. One was on Albatross Island where there were more King Penguins, fur seals, nesting Wandering Albatross and Giant Petrels to add to our lists. Birders eagerly checked the South Georgia pipit, a small bird endemic to South Georgia.

ANTARCTIC ICEBERG



ICEBERG WITH PENGUINS



GENTOOS NESTING

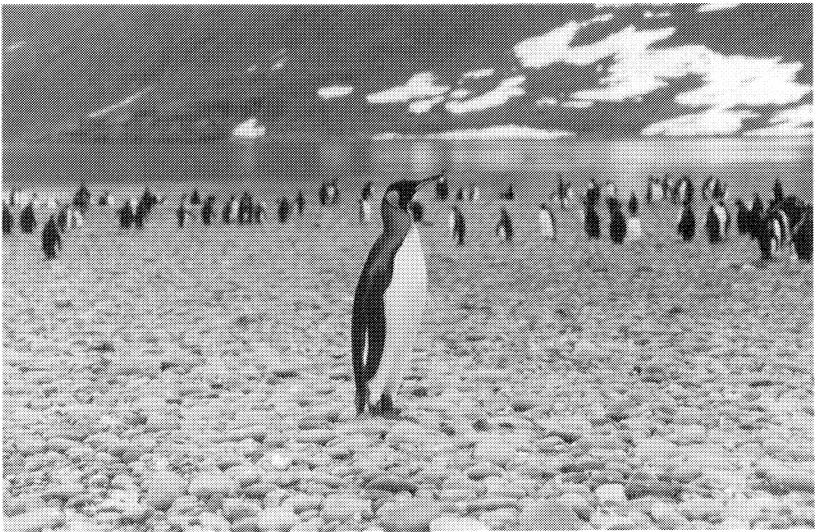


ADÉLIE PENGUINS





MARCO MACARONI
PENGUIN



KING PENGUIN

CHINSTRAP PENGUINS

ON THE NEST



TURNING HER EGG



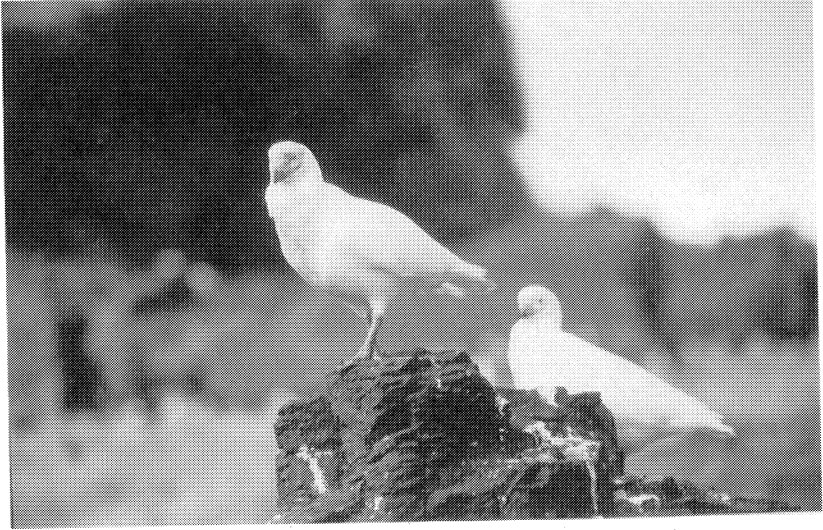
WANDERING ALBATROSS



ANTARCTIC FULMAR, CAPE PETREL AND LIGHT-MANTLED SOOTY ALBATROSS



SNOWY SHEATHBILLS



RUFOUS HORNERO—THE ARGENTINIAN NATIONAL BIRD



The landing on Salisbury Plain brought an unexpected experience. Our goal was to visit a Gentoo Penguin rookery where we could watch pairs taking turns incubating the egg and warding off Skuas who stole any egg left unattended. Cameras continued to click as we watched a Gentoo bring a pebble to the mate on the nest, even stealing pebbles from neighbouring Gentoos! Then the weather changed.

Katabatic winds sprang up, as they do, without warning and roared down the glacier valley with the force of a hurricane. The wind picked up sand from the beach mixing it with dry snow so that we try to protect our faces, cameras and stay on our feet. We huddled together, all 27 of us, backs to the wind, then found limited shelter sitting or standing on tussocks or between them sharing the space with penguins and seals. No longer could the Livonia be seen as the waves and foam from the sea reduced visibility. For about three hours we kept together until finally the wind abated, the air pressure rose and one zodiac was able to ferry us, 10 at a time, back to the ship where hot showers and hot chocolate awaited. Of the three zodiacs, one flipped over when being lowered into the water, another drifted away before being tied up, so only one came to the rescue. The lost zodiac was spotted from the bridge and retrieved without further mishap.

For two days we sailed for the Antarctic Peninsula, keeping watch for sightings of sea birds: Cape Petrels, Black-browed Albatross, Sooty Light-mantled Albatross, Giant Petrels, Prions, Blue Petrels, Kelp Gulls, Shearwaters, Gray-headed Albatross, and more. Fin, Minke and Humpback Whales were also seen, the latter giving us a magnificent display of their flukes.

For three days we cruised in and among the South Shetland Islands, the bays and channels of the Antarctic Peninsula. One landing was at Esperanza (Hope Bay) where we walked through the Adélie Penguin rookery watching grubby, grimy penguins leaving their nests to walk down, in single file, to the seas, being met by other penguins returning to take over nesting duties. These had gleaming white chests after days spent in the water, feeding, cleaning and preening. We visited an Argentinian base where seven families, including nine children lived. The Argentinian teacher, who was the only English speaking resident met us, explained some of the history and invited us for coffee in the lodge.

When we returned at noon to the Livonia, the chef and his staff had set up a Bar-B-Q on the stern of the ship, 10°C under clear blue skies. What a feast! That evening before dinner our first landing on the Antarctic Peninsula was toasted with champagne!

The seas were full of icebergs- every shape and size imaginable especially tabular bergs several miles long with flat tops and up to three hundred feet above water, all in various shades of blue, aqua and white. Pack ice prevented a landing on Paulet Island even though the Livonia made three attempts at ice breaking. Thus we missed the Emperor Penguins.

Three landings were made on our last day in the Antarctic. The first was at 6:30 a.m. at Whaler's Bay on Deception Island. In 1979 a volcano erupted leaving only derelict buildings protruding out of the volcanic sand. Here too were whaling boats as well as rows of pressure boilers littering the shores.

The second landing, after breakfast, was at Bailey's Cove also on Deception Island to watch Chinstrap penguins in their rookeries. There were hundreds of thousands of Chinstraps nesting. Chicks could be seen nestled under a parent's down, and the typical line of dirty fronted adults marched to the sea passing a line of glistening white and black chinstraps returning from the sea to relieve the faithful, patient and hungry mate.

Our third and final zodiac landing was at Hannak Point on Livingstone Island, a "real zoo of nesting birds". There we spent the afternoon watching nesting Antarctic Shags, Kelp Gulls, Petrels (Antarctic Giant and Cape), Snowy Sheathbills, and penguins, Gentoo, Chinstrap and the unusual looking Macaroni. Eggs and chicks could be spotted while nearby molting elephant seals lazed on the shore.

There followed two days crossing Drake Passage, rounding Cape Horn with rough seas forcing about half of the passengers to miss meals and keep to their cabins. The captain set the Livonia "Full Speed Ahead" to keep us ahead of the storm that pounded the Molomovsky (a sister ship with Elderhostel passengers).

Back in the sheltered waters of Beagle Channel we sailed into Ushuaia, bade fond farewells to the crew, then flew to Buenos Aires where we spent a day birding Costa Nero Park. There we saw many land birds and water birds such as the Red-crested Cardinals, the yellow-billed Cardinal, Green-barred Woodpecker, masked Gnatcatcher and on, and on. After seven flight changes we arrived back in Tuscon, Arizona on December 15.

There seemed to be a compulsion to take pictures! They will only add to the memories that will never diminish- the images of ice-capped mountains and glaciers, sailing through some of the richest waters in the world, watching seabirds, penguins, seals, and whales feeding on krill and sailing through the massive, spectacular display of icebergs. One can only hope that this land will remain as it is with nations agreeing to protect rather than exploit this beautiful yet hostile continent known as Antarctica.



WINTER AND SPRING MEETINGS
at the

N. S. MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
1747 Summer St.
Halifax

8:00 p.m.

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| January 23, 1997 | Member's Slide Night |
| February 27, 1997 | "Life and Death of Seabirds"
Tony Lock |
| March 27, 1997 | "Joan Waldron's Birding Travels"
Joan Waldron |
| April 24, 1997 | "How to Photograph Birds"
Fred Greene |

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

June 8 - Warbler Walk C.B.

On June 8, 1996, eight people met at the former C.B. Heavy Water Plant for the annual Warbler Walk. The day started off warm and overcast, eventually getting sunny. We went from fall the day before to summer overnight, no winter in Cape Breton. At first it seemed that the birds were there, we saw 68 species in total, but only 12 of those were warblers. Everyone seemed to have the same story, where are the warblers, they just weren't there in any numbers. The warblers weren't singing, maybe nesting? or is it Silent Spring for the warblers? The highlights of the trip were a beautiful Mourning Warbler, which only a few people saw, a Sora, American Bittern and a non-breeding Little Blue Heron which left everyone going away happy.

P.S. On the Cumberland County trip June 22, birds were singing everywhere but it seemed to me, no great amount of warblers. Even reading the newspaper columns, all spring and early summer it seems, nobody wants to touch the subject, not just yet anyway. Maybe all will turn out well in time, hopefully for the warblers.

Hugh Metcalfe, Jr.

June 22 - Cumberland County

Saturday, June 22. On a cold June morning 15 participants met at Wentworth Park in the hope that, despite a temp. of only 2°C, the birds would greet us in song. They did, in fact bobbling Bobolinks and a Rose-breasted Grosbeak were the first main attractions to start the day. It was a sign of many good things to come. Almost every stop had a special highlight.

Most memorable of all were the hawks. Lots of them. At least six Broad-Wings, Five Red-tails, two Merlins and a Goshawk. Great looks at Vesper Sparrow, Black Tern, Moorhen, American Bittern, Virginia Rail, Purple Martin; Stunning Warblers such as Mourning, Cape May and Black-Throated Blue. Plus a steady diet of singing Coots, Pied-Billed Grebes, Sora and Marsh Wrens made for an almost perfect day. We will aim at that next year! Come out and join us, it will be loads of fun.

Fulton Lavender

July 27 - Crescent Beach - President's Field Trip

July 27, 1996. As I stood in the rain and mist one July morning at 8:35 a.m. I was wondering if it would be a lone bird walk to scout for hungry shorebirds. At 8:40 my first birder arrived followed shortly by several more enthusiasts. Birders arrived just the way shorebirds arrive as the mudflats unveil themselves. We started our walk up the beach under a threatening sky. Large crèches of Eiders, a few loons and Ruddy Turnstones were observed on the sandy beach side. Semi-palmated Sandpipers and Plovers, as well as Black-bellied Plovers and Short-billed Dowitchers arrived in groups as each flat uncovered. Leasts scuttled about the grass edges while Willets waded in the deeper water.

As we approached the salt ponds at the top end of the mud flats a Nelson's Sharp Tailed Sparrow was seen by many. Robyn Rymer and Nellie Snyder walked and leapfrogged with the car and spotted an immature Bald Eagle roosting in a large spruce tree. Several mature and immature Gannets were seen by all reeling overhead very close in the Bay. A large number of Great Blue Herons were seen (at least 50 plus). It's been a big year in this area for these birds. The group birded in the trees at the end of the beach and swished out Parula, Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Yellowthroats and Black-throated Green Warblers. All 12 birders finished the morning by lunching at Risser's Beach and added Solitary and Red-eyed Vireos to the list.

Lisè Cohrs

PARTICIPANTS: Robyn Rymer, Nellie Snyder, John Cohrs, Lise Cohrs, Shirley Cohrs, Steve and Sharon Hawboldt, Inez and Harry Roberts, Jean and Bill Morse, Robert Radford.

August 10 - Yarmouth County Shorebird Walk

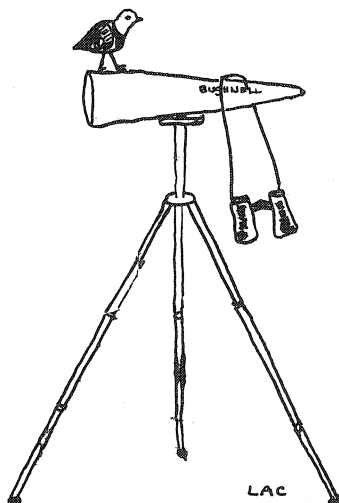
Saturday, August 10, 1996. The day started out foggy with a slight breeze and a temperature of 16°C with the promise of a sunny day- it did improve. We had a small group of six: Nellie Snyder, Robyn Rymer, Helen and Hubert Hall and Barb and Eric Ruff- all faithfuls on this trip.

Given the state of the tide and the necessity of arriving at the Cooks Beach roost at high tide we headed directly for that location. There were birds on the roost, some two or three thousand of them- Semi-palmated Plovers, Semi-palmated Sandpipers and we picked out an occasional White-rumped Sandpiper. Along the shore we saw several other species including Ruddy Turnstones, Least Sandpipers, Lesser Yellowlegs and Terns of indeterminate species. Plovers and various other shorebirds already noted did not include the three Whimbrel that Barb and I had spotted only days before on our reconnaissance trip. At this location on the 1995 field trip (which we didn't manage to write up- shame!) we had been treated to a starling wheeling and turning in perfect synchronization with a flock of shorebirds. The ponds along the road on the marsh produced numbers of Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Short-billed Dowitchers, Willets and Great Blue Herons. The Melbourne Sanctuary offered nothing new in the way of shorebirds and no Osprey or Kingfisher as had often been spotted there in previous years. Double-crested Cormorants and Black Ducks were there as usual.

Lunch was back in town at the Ruff's house, then back out in the other direction, we visited Chebogue Point where we added only a Common Snipe to our list; then on to Sunday Point where we were greeted by the always-present-for-this-walk Sharp-tailed Sparrow. The group broke up from there.

There were not a very large number of shorebird species- only twelve- we did pick up a couple of Killdeer along the way. Total species for the day was only 33 with Bobolinks being the "best" bird- no unusual or exciting birds and nothing like the seven Turkey Vultures that had been our last birds of the day on the 1995 trip.

Eric Ruff



August 10 - Pictou Co.

Organizing a field trip in August when most birds are fallen somewhat silent as far as songs are concerned and the foliage is so thick that getting more than a glimpse of anything is quite a challenge. Why did I chose this date I thought, as I waited for the 14 or so participants who arrived at the Blue Acres Esso at 8:30 a.m.? My scouting the day before caused me to deviate slightly from my plan but I hoped to do Powell Pt. and the Middle R. Dyke in the afternoon.

By the time we left the service station, acute ears and sight had checked off 12 of the more common species.

From Blue Acres we moved via Plymouth to a roadside beaver dam in Churchville. The pond area was alive with birds and we managed to identify a further 13 species here including Belted Kingfisher, Red-eyed Vireos, Yellow and Yellow-rumped Warbler, Swamp Sparrow and a family of Eastern Kingbirds. Both Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers were picked out of the tops of trees that has been flooded by the beaver. Some members had their first good looks at Wood Duck and American Bittern.

Several stops along a dirt road linking MacLellan's Brook to Churchville produced an additional 22 species; 5 warblers, (Parula, Black-throated Green, Magnolia, Chestnut-sided and Black and White), Swainson and Hermit Thrush, Gray Catbird, White-winged Crossbill and Ruby-throated Hummingbird to name a few, as well as Olive-sided and Peewee flycatchers.

A duo of Virginia Rails responded to a tape, but we did not press much to get them out of the cattails where they remained hidden out of sight. At another beaver dam in the beautiful valley of the MacLellan's Brook a Least Sandpiper had replaced the Solitary Sandpiper I saw the previous day. An adult Red-tailed Hawk was spotted soaring against the clear blue sky.

On the way to the next stop, the caravan quickly halted to view a Pileated Woodpecker on a telephone pole. "Where is Pat Chambers," everyone thought as this was the bird Pat wanted to see the most. Her car was the last to arrive and before she could get a good look, the "pileatus" had taken off. We did our best Pat!

On the way to Big Is. (Merogomish Is.) a stop was made at a Ducks Unlimited pond at Eyerton where a large number of Wood Ducks and a few Ring-necked Ducks and Piedbilled Grebes were present. A second American Bittern was seen at Lower Barney's River. At Big Is., the lunches were brought out and a picnic was held on the beach. The beach area had a lot of hazards which the group encountered--these included mosquitoes and Poison Ivy, but despite this, the group charged right through an area marked BEWARE Nude Bathers but were very disappointed to find only a peopleless beach. Highlights of Big. Is. included about 85 Great Blue Heron, 60 Green-Winged Teal, all Scoter species, immature Gannets, about 60 Lesser Yellowlegs, and large groups of Bonaparte's Gulls. As the group was leaving Big. Is., a Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow was heard singing. The group elected at that time to call it a day as many had distances to travel to get home. A respectable 83 species were totalled. Harry and Jean Brennon noted that on the way home they had 9 Common Nighthawks at Lower Barney's River to bring the total to 84. Mid Summer birding can be quite productive after all.

Ken McKenna

August 24 - Point Michaud Field Trip

Saturday, August 24. A local wedding and a poor weather forecast seemed to doom our field trip to low numbers. However, the four birders on the trip stayed dry for a couple of hours and had a successful, though uneventful day. A pair of Whimbrels were quite tame, and another 10 species of shorebirds flitted about at various distances. Three very hard-to-identify ducks landed inside the beach in a pond, and after refusing to flush, were determined (maybe) to be immature B.W. Teal.

Three Harriers flitted about the dunes, a Merlin flew by without any attempt to stop, and a Sharp-shinned Hawk attempted to "make friends" with a B.B. Plover, but was chased off by a couple of Herring Gulls. In all, we identified about 30 species before the rain came, and one very large grebe which we could not positively identify.

Although we became a little damp before we got back to the vehicles, we agreed that it had been quite enjoyable, and we'd do it again next year.

Bill Digout

August 24 - Matthew's Lake

August 24, 1996. Eight enthusiastic birders started off on the long trek to Matthews Lake in the usual fog and showers, expecting the worse, but the weather did improve, as forecast, and we ended up with a near one-day record of seventeen species of shorebirds. The number of individuals was low, as it has been for two years now and the reason is unclear. The lake is gradually filling in and more extensive total flats are available but clamming is also more intensive and may be having an effect.

Jerome D'Eon started the day with two Solitary Sandpipers before the rest of us arrived. Then we all saw a Bairds Sandpiper and a Lapland Longspur. Seven Hudsonian Godwits, ten Red Knots, six Whimbrel and a beautiful Golden Plover in near-breeding plumage, spotted by Sylvia Fullerton, filled out the list of better birds. Dowitchers at nine individuals and Sanderlings at nineteen continue to lead the list of recently scarce species. White rumps seem to be doing better, and 40-50 were seen.

Barbara Hinds made a memorable query when a bird was spotted and described as being "straight out". Barbara asked "which way are your feet heading when you say 'straight out'?"

I believe a "mostly good time" was had by all.

David Young

September 18 - Hartlen's Point

Over twenty people, including a visiting birder from Atlanta, Georgia, showed upon a fine September morning to explore Halifax's premiere migrant trip. While we waited at the golf club parking lot for everyone, we scoped the nearby fairways, and entertained ourselves with picking out two distant Pectoral Sandpipers among a scattered flock of 18 American Golden Plovers. Each species was a life bird for some of the participants. While we enjoyed the plovers, three Whimbrel flew overhead, heading south.

Once everyone gathered, we walked to Back Cove, pausing en route to witness several flocks of cormorants migrating by, and we counted 20 Great Cormorants among the 120 or so Double-crested. An American Kestrel and a Northern Harrier also cruised by. Back Cove was not especially active, and we didn't locate any great rarities, but there was one lively group of warblers and vireos moving through, and we had a hectic time trying to get everyone on each bird. Typically, we didn't completely succeed. Among the ten species of warbler seen, a Nashville, Northern Parula, and a Wilson's were the most welcome, although the male American Redstart was as flashy as ever.

As we began our return to the main road, we heard a loud familiar call, which I told the others was a Northern Flicker. Someone else suggested a Whimbrel. We were both wrong. A Pileated Woodpecker suddenly appeared, and gave the assembled group a fine show as it posed obligingly on various telephone poles. This was our rarest bird of the day, and may represent the first record of this species for Hartlen's Point. Noone enjoyed the spectacle more than Patricia Chalmers, for whom the pileated was a life bird. It's always a special moment when a long-standing jinx-bird finally appears.

By the time we reached the shoreline opposite Devil's Island, the tide was wrong for shorebirds, but we did manage to find a few Semipalmated Plovers, Ruddy Turnstones, and a Sanderling, along with a tardy Willet (eastern race). We finished the outing around noon, with 48 species on our list. Once again, Hartlen Point didn't disappoint. Let's just hope we can keep the developers' hands off this special place, so it can continue to remain the purview of birders and golfers.

Blake Maybank

September 14 - Minas Basin

September 14, 1996. The day dawned with heavy rain and thick fog, and hurricane Hortense forecast to hit the province later in the day. The intrepid leader showed up anyway at the appointed time and place, but nobody else did! After 20 minutes a Goldfinch flew by. The leader then left and went back home to bed.

Richard B. Stern

October 11-14 - Brier Island

October 11-14, 1996. The Thanksgiving weekend of 1996 produced a mixed bag of weather a great group of birding friends and a list of 104 species of birds. Ten participants were able to enjoy a major flight of small passerines, a small hawk flight, a sea watch and great local hospitality.

The birding highlights included 17 Turkey Vultures, 4 Peregrines, 3 Goshawks, 2 Indigo Buntings, 3 Eastern Bluebirds, Scarlet Tanager, Dickcissel, Brown Thrasher and Wilson's Storm Petrel.

My personal favorite memories of the weekend were two Fin Whales playing at the West light and a Peregrine eating a freshly killed Sharp-shinned Hawk. All in all it was one of the most relaxing bird trips I have ever taken and I hope to do it again next year. Come and join us, why don't you!

Fulton Lavender

October 12 - Changing of the Yard C.B.

October 12, 1996. The day started off cloudy, +4 with a light breeze. By 9 a.m. the sun broke out and 11 people who showed up were not to be disappointed. Our first stop of the day was a complete surprise to almost everyone on the trip. We went to Cathy Murrant's place on Sand Lake Rd. where she was entertaining a Clay-colored Sparrow and a female Rose-breasted Grosbeak along with the regular feeder birds. Our next stop was at the Glace Bay Bird Sanctuary where we had wonderful looks at Hooded Mergansers among other ducks and a raft of 200 Canada Geese. The best was yet to come on our 3rd stop at Schooner Pond where we saw an adult Turkey Vulture hovering over our heads and putting on a brilliant display for $\frac{1}{2}$ hour. We also saw a Philadelphia Vireo, an Orange-crowned Warbler, and a Mockingbird but missed the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher seen the previous day. As usual Schooner Pond never lets anyone down during Migration.

Our final stop of the day was at Port Morien where we saw an immature Red-necked Grebe swimming in the harbour among Gulls and Cormorants. Everyone departed after lunch, still talking about the 48 species we had seen including the handful of lifers we all got.

Jackie Cretien

FORTHCOMING FIELD TRIPS



Please phone the trip leader ahead of time to register for the trip. In this way no trip is oversubscribed and you can be contacted in the event of cancellation.

Trip leaders are encouraged to submit a field trip report to: Shirley Cohrs, Editor
Nova Scotia Birds
8 Rosemount Avenue
Halifax, NS, B3N 1X8

FEBRUARY

- Sat. 1 Harbour Hop, Cape Breton: Cathy Murrant (737-2684).
Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Renwick Park (Brookside & Commercial St.), Glace Bay.
- Sat. 15 Sewer Stroll II: Fulton Lavender (455-4966).
Meet at Hartlen's Point at 8:00 a.m. This is an all-day outing and ends at Herring Cove via Bedford (Storm day, Sun., Feb. 16).

MARCH

- Fri. 21 Owl Prowl, Cape Breton: Allen Murrant (737-2684).
Meet at 6:00 p.m. at Morrison Rd. & Broughton Rd. (Storm day, Sat., Mar. 22).

APRIL

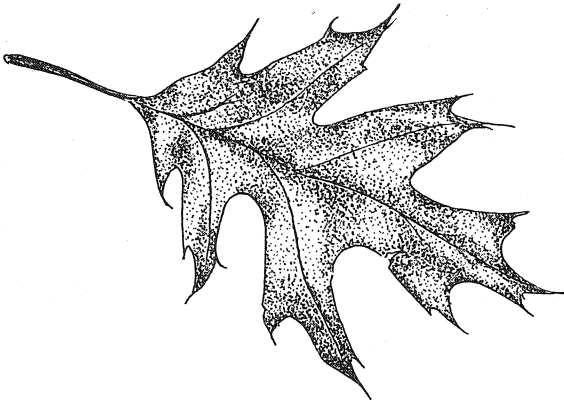
- Sat. 12 Eastern Shore, Martinique Beach: Ian McLaren (429-7024). Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Scotia Bank parking lot, Bridge Plaza, Dartmouth.
- T.B.A. Wolfville Area:
Date, time, leader, and meeting place to be publicized on the NSBS Bird Information line (852-CHAT) early in April. This trip will include pond hopping for ducks and early migrants.

MAY

- Sun. 4 Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary: Alan Smith (H 506-536-0164 or W 506-364-5038). Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the APBS parking lot. Take Exit 3 from the TCH 104 at the Wandlyn Inn and proceed a few km. toward Nappan; the entrance is on the left. Wear appropriate footwear for wet conditions and bring a lunch. Enjoy a day of observing waterfowl, shorebirds, and early migrants.
- Wed. 21 Halifax County Warbler Walk: Fred Dobson (852-3042). Meet at 6:00 a.m. 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. 16 Bon Portage Island: Fulton Lavender (455-4966).
to Check with the trip leader for departure times. There
- Mon. 19 is a fee for the boat trip and accommodations on the
island. Bring food, sleeping gear, drinking water,
appropriate clothing and footwear, a flashlight and a
sheet to cover the mattress. Pre-registration is
necessary.
- Sat. 10 Lunenburg County: Bill Caudle (766-4465).
Meet at Exit 11 off Hwy. 103, at 7:30 a.m. Munch a
lunch near New Germany. Trip ends near Bridgewater.
Slow-paced introduction to birding for beginners.
Find new birding spots.
- Sun. 18 Hopewell Area, Pictou County: Harry Brennan (923-
2780). Meet at 8:00 a.m. at St. Columbia Churchyard,
about 1 mile south of Hopewell. Northern Saw-whet and
Barred Owls possible. General birding--excellent for
beginners.
- Sat. 24 Hants County Day: Margaret Clark (443-3993).
Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the railway crossing in Mt.
Uniacke. Observe abundant birdlife in a variety of
habitats. This trip extends into the early afternoon.
- Sun. 25 Shubenacadie Area: Roslyn MacPhee (758-3265).
Meet at 7:00 a.m. in the Pharmasave parking lot in
Shubenacadie to search for warblers and woodpeckers.
- T.B.A. Spring Arrivals, Point Edward area, Cape Breton:
Jackie Chretien (564-4640). Date, time, and meeting
place to be published in the April issue of Nova
Scotia Birds. Alternatively, you may call the NSBS
Bird Information line (852-CHAT) early in May.

New or returning trip leaders, ideas for trips, and excursions
in new areas of the province are always welcome. You do not
need to be an expert to lead a field trip; you simply need to be
willing to share a favourite birding route in your area. 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.



ETHEL CRATHORNE



We were saddened to hear of the death in late summer of Charter member Ethel Crathorne, who will be well remembered by longtime members of our society. One of her closest friends, Margaret Kenney has written the following Tribute to Ethel.

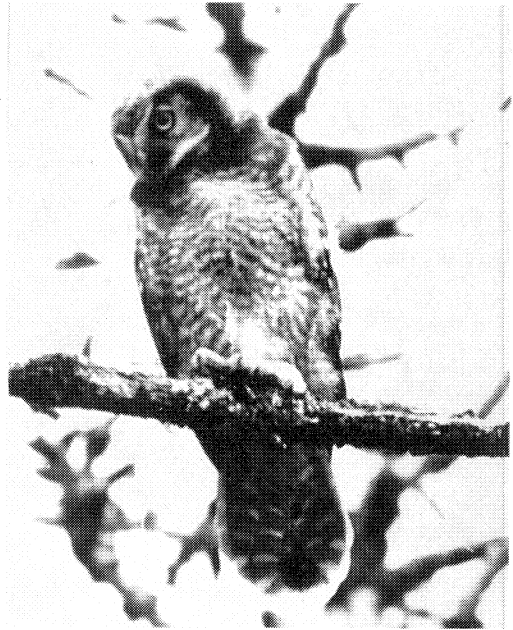
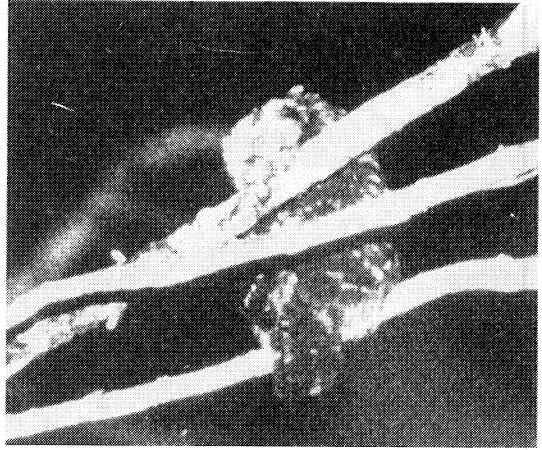
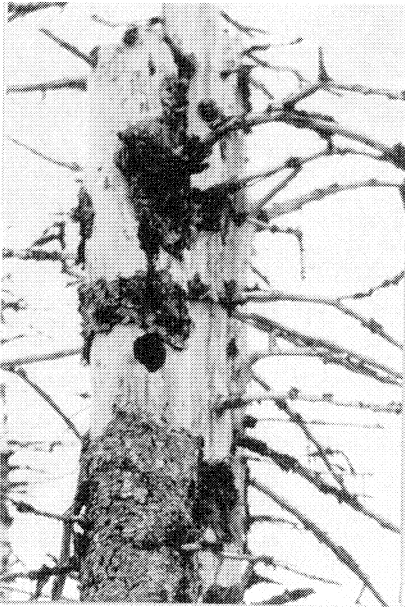
" With with death of Ethel Crathorne in September, the Nova Scotia Bird Society has lost a loyal member and a good friend.

Ethel had many interests: travelling, geneology, cultures and traditions of the past, historical buildings whose architecture intrigued her. I believe birding was her favourite hobby. She was seen birding at Sullivan's Pond a matter of days before her last illness.

She was a charter member of the Nova Scotia Bird Society and for many years she served as Membership Secretary. In 1976, she resigned that office after twenty-one years and was given the Puffin of the Year Award. She organized Christmas Counts for years, and enjoyed the counts and field trips.

For fifteen years we got up at 3:00 a.m., on one designated morning in the spring, and travelled to a certain mail-box in Antigonish County to do the Breeding Survey. On one of these counts we saw the first Killdeer we had ever seen in Nova Scotia. She knew the wildflowers and always knew the ones that were introduced by the pioneers. I will sincerely miss her."

Margaret Kenney



Two palpable results of this summer's survey by Randy Lauff and others of the Cape Breton Highlands, were the first confirmed nestings of two northern owls in Nova Scotia. The BOREAL OWL photo is hardly a portrait, (have you tried focussing a camera by flashlight?), but is good enough as a first of its kind to be photographed in the province. Its apparent nest hole is also shown. The fully fledged young HAWK OWL is an even greater surprise, although we have had earlier summer sightings of the species in the Highlands. The three photos are by Randy Lauff.



This quartet illustrates two kinds of albinos. The totally white GREATER SHEARWATER was photographed by Robin Baird at The Gully, north of Sable Island. Such a bird would probably be a genetic mutant. The more common partial albinos may be genetically determined, or may result from a mutation during early development in a single cell, that after many divisions gives rise to extensive tissue. The BOHEMIAN WAXWING gave pleasure to several observers last April near Greenwich, and the very odd BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE was found at Melanson Mt., King's Co., on March 5; both were photographed by Bernard Forsythe. The rather handsome male PURPLE FINCH, with unruly white head feathers, was photographed at his feeder in Westport, Brier Is., by Carl Haycock.

A GUIDE TO AVIAN NOMENCLATURE
or
What d'you call that bird?

Not long ago one could be delighted, on a salt marsh walk in early fall, to identify a GOLDEN PLOVER amongst the Black-billed. Things are not so easy today. You may not be sure just what bird you have, or at least what to call it! The Golden Plover has had its name changed, not once but twice and furthermore it has been "split". First, the powers that be decided to call it LESSER GOLDEN PLOVER (there was then a GREATER GOLDEN PLOVER in Europe). Then they decided to split it! That is they decided to have two birds where one had been before. The two species were the PACIFIC GOLDEN PLOVER and the AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER (at this point the European species changed too- from GREATER to EUROPEAN G.-P!) So now you have three choices- AMERICAN, PACIFIC or EUROPEAN- (forget LESSER and GREATER altogether.) In Nova Scotia your bird is probably AMERICAN, but both the other two have been seen here so you never know. (Actually the AGP is not so different from the G.P. but think of the confusion the poor bird has gone through to get there.

Who are these "powers that be"? They are committee members of the American Ornithologist's Union (AOU for short) and are in cahoots with their British counterparts who do a lot of the same sort of thing. When not too busy with other avian matters they play around with the birds, splitting and lumping as they go (Lumping is obviously the opposite of splitting- two into one so to speak). Whether to split or lump is supposed to depend upon whether the birds in question can breed with one another and produce fertile young. If they can they are the same species and if they can't they're not.

Like Appolusa X palomino = fertile foal
(Therefore both horses)

and

Appolusa X donkey = mule (non fertile)
(Two separate species)

This strict requisite seems to have gone by the board lately, to be replaced by something called "the degree of hybridization"- surely somewhat scientifically inexact.

Whether to lump a split seems really to be a question of fashion (like taking out tonsils or not, or white vs brown bread). Sometime ago the fashion was to lump whereas lately it has been to split. Take, for example the ORIOLE case. A while ago BULLOCK'S ORIOLES and BALTIMORE ORIOLES were lumped to become NORTHERN ORIOLES. Quite recently they were split again, mercifully into the same old BULLOCK'S and BALTIMORES. Wrens, however fared worse. When I began birding there were two kinds of marsh wrens, the LONG-BILLED MARSH WREN and the SHORT-BILLED MARSH WREN, fairly easy to distinguish. Nevertheless they were caught in the then lumping frenzy and became MARSH WREN. However, this was only for a short while, before being fashionably split again--but not into the old LBMW and SBMW--oh no, they became MARSH WREN and SEDGE WREN--or is it SEDGE WREN and MARSH WREN? (I am not making this up, you know).

Splitting is definitely "in" at the moment, in fact it has become rampant. Any (what used to be) SHARP-TAILED SPARROW you may see now could be a SALT MARSH SHARP-TAILED SPARROW or a NELSON'S SHARP-TAILED SPARROW (blind in one eye?).

No longer will a RUFUS-SIDED TOWHEE scratch about under your hedge- it will be either a SPOTTED TOWHEE or an EASTERN TOWHEE. The SWAINSON'S THRUSH (which not so long ago was called an OLIVE-BACKED THRUSH) has been split into SWAINSON'S and BICKNELL'S THRUSH. We are supposed to be getting Bicknell's in Nova Scotia, but the difference between the two is rumoured to be very slight and identification therefore very tricky unless the bird is dead.

The COMMON FLICKER situation is intriguing, involving a sort of 1/3--2/3 split.

It used to be that there were three birds: RED-SHAFTED FLICKER, YELLOW-SHAFTED FLICKER and GILDED FLICKER. All were lumped into NORTHERN FLICKER

in a kind of three way gluing. Now a split has been announced . The red shafted and yellow shafted continue to be one species (NORTHERN) but GUILDED is off on its own as a single (new) species.

The aforementioned splittings are just a few that have taken place lately and rumour has it that there are more to come. Consequently it is possible these days to add to ones life list whilst doing no birding at all- confined to a wheelchair or totally blind.

When they can't think of anything else to lump or split (temporarily of course) these AOU people spend time messing around with birds names. They even change the Latin names which before were a kind of anchor which we could depend on to hold fast in the storm of changes. The English names are fair game and the changes sometimes quite incomprehensible. That sea duck with all black plumage has in my birding days been called COMMON SCOTER, BLACK SCOTER and AMERICAN SCOTER- I can't quite remember which it is at present. BLACK seems the most sensible, or perhaps 'Orange-billed Scoter' since it is the only scoter with an orange bill.

Such common sense was not applied when MYRTLE WARBLER (quite a euphonious name really) was changed to the crude YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER. As there are two other warblers with yellow rumps which arrive here (Cape May and Magnolia) the name seems somewhat inappropriate and very confusing.

When the three falcons were called SPARROW HAWKS, PIGEON HAWKS and DUCK HAWKS it was easy for beginners to sort them out by relative size- KESTREL MERLIN and PEREGRINE give no clue at all. MARSH HAWKS (a name which described handily the places where they are found most of the time) became HARRIERS which name conveys nothing.

The most recent change is that of the COMMON BLACK-HEADED GULL which has chopped the COMMON. What a wasted opportunity- if "they" were itching for a change why not make it a BROWN-HEADED GULL (which it is).

I could go on and on, but I'm sure that you get my drift. I have a sneaking feeling that perhaps the whole thing is a plot hatched by publishers of bird books and field guides so that they can keep doing "a new up-to-date version" and sell more books. Another possibility is that it is a ploy of those writers of long, erudite, (boring?) hair-splitting (or should it be feather-splitting) articles pertaining to impossible identifications and relationships.

The pundits say that there is more to come- something to do with DNA I believe- and that things will become even more confusing.

Personally the thought of years of whirling bird names leaves me cold and even the strong possibility that my life list may increase after I am dead does not attract.

I wish they would just leave things alone and let bird watching revert to being simple and enjoyable. Maybe it can and will if we just forget about it all.

Anonymous

changed to

Undeclared

changed to

Nameless

changed to

Unacknowledged

changed to

Authorship Unknown



This male BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER was attending its nest, some 10 km from New Ross, Hants Co., in June 1996. Photo by Judy Tufts.



The Eastern Towhee (note its new name) and House Finch were photographed by Jane Mills at her feeder in Apple River this year.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor,
Nova Scotia Birds:

I am writing this letter in an effort to determine the current opinion other birders hold concerning the practice of banding. I have been questioning the practice for some years now as being counterproductive, and an incident recently on Brier Island, Nova Scotia has triggered this letter.

Four of us, all active, competent birders, awoke one morning to near gale force winds from the northwest and single digit (C) temperatures.. Many small migrants were dropping onto the Island and numerous Sharp-shins and Kestrels were passing overhead. A two-man banding team, led by Lance Laviolette and sponsored by Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, had many hundreds of feet of net strung, and they were attempting to process all the many trapped birds. However, at one point, I came upon seven birds in less than 20' of net and observed them being blown around and struggling for 42 minutes when two of our party members finally went for help - this eventually came. There were also over 30 paper bags containing birds at the collection station at this time, while many more birds waited, trapped helplessly in the nets in the cold wind. The migration period of a bird's life is obviously one of the most stressful, and it has always appeared to me that banding could be the final stress that could very well terminate that journey.

In consideration of the declining numbers of many of our migrants and the miniscule number of returned bands, along with the apparent lack of new knowledge attained from these operations (judging by the dearth of articles published), is banding in the best interest of birders--and birds??

Most of us who have been birding very long (over 50 years myself) realize the current pressures of too many humans on the habitat of birds. We do not need a handful of bands returned each year to tell us that the birds are in deep trouble. Banding is NOT the solution!

I would like to hear from other birders about their feelings on this subject to see if there is enough sentiment to have our organization pass resolutions condemning the practice and also attempt to curtail it. Maybe this would be one way to remedy the current decline of some species.

Please feel free to contact me at the address below with your thoughts and possible solutions.

David H. Young
RR#1
Sable River, Nova Scotia B0T 1V0

E-mail; dyoung@atcon.com
Tel: 1-902-6562225
Fax; 1-902-656-2561

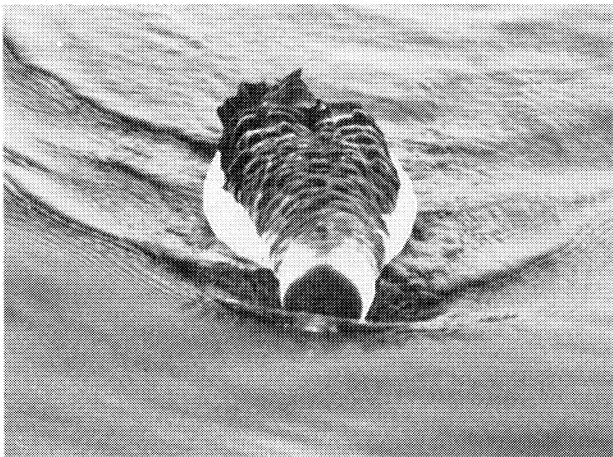
The Editor,
Nova Scotia Birds:

On Tuesday, July 30th, we were paddling into Sperry's Cove from the channel between Dublin Bay and Dublin Shore, Lunenburg County. It was sunny with a little wind from the south. As we entered the sheltered cove we saw a Blue Heron standing on the point of rocks on the east side of the cove. We were about 50 feet from it when it flew up and started to cross the cove. About half way across it dropped into the water and cupped its wings and proceeded to the other shore, (about 50 feet). I checked the depth and the water was about 3-4 feet. The heron walked ashore and held its left wing up as though it was injured. It walked along the shore about 25 feet and came to a fallen tree which it climbed over and continued on its way holding up the right wing. When it did this I guessed it was pulling the "broken wing trick" to lead us away from the chicks. Brian, my son, returned to the original point where we had first observed the bird, and from the water he could see heads and movement in the grass. We do not approach birds or animals in these conditions so he returned to the group where the adult bird, after leading us about 150 feet entered the spruce trees. We left the area at this point. I have seen many Blue Herons but this is the first time I have ever seen one land in "deep" water. It was hard to say if it swam or allowed the wind to take it across the bay.

I hope this is of interest.

Joe Laird
Crescent Beach, Lunenburg County.

We would be interested in hearing of any similar experiences. Ed.



Some of you may recognize this species; others may not. Try guessing. Photo by Blake Maybank

PUFFIN OF THE YEAR AWARD

Over the years, the Puffin of the Year Award has been given to a member for outstanding efforts, either for the Bird Society or for the birds. This year's recipient is recognized for his contributions to the well-being and preservation of birds. He is a pharmacist by profession and a crusader for the birds by hobby. Since 1983, he has been instrumental in bringing back tern colonies on the Brother's Islands, located off the south western coast of Nova Scotia. He monitors and observes the progress and/or demise of Common, Arctic and Roseate Tern species on these islands. He has encouraged their nesting by deterring their predators, and by providing suitable nesting boxes. Since 1989, he has collected extensive data on the tern colonies in the Lobster Bay area and reported the data to the Canadian Wildlife division. He is an active member of the Canadian Roseate Tern Recovery Plan and helps to monitor the aquaculture operations in the area and their effect on the tern colonies. Since 1994, he has attempted to recolonize Gannet Rock with gannets (20 km south of Cape Forchu and 30 km west of Abbott's Harbour, Middle West Pubnico.) This past April he gave a wonderful and comprehensive talk to the group at our meeting in Barrington. He does his work selflessly, and with love for the birds. His energy and effort is to be commended.



Lise and Ted
Photograph by Peter Payzant

North American Migration Count N.S. Sept. 21, 1996

Efforts by those participating in the NAMC counting of birds on Sept. 21, 1996 paid off with a final count of 187 species for a total of 59,480 birds tallied. Thirteen counties participated in this Fall count with C.B., Cumb., Guys., Lun. and Victoria counties not reporting any results. 120 parties took part with 214 observers -including 59 feeder-watchers at 53 feeder stations. 3200 kms were covered by foot, car or bike; 522 hrs were involved (10.5 hrs owling and 125 hrs at feeder stations). The weather: Strong, gusty ocean winds plagued many, temps. of 4 -14 °C., partially cloudy with isolated showers affected others - but at least it was not the heavy rain of previous counts...

A summary follows:

Pied-billed Grebes passing through the province were in evidence with 20 recorded. A single Wilson's Storm-Petrel probably affected by recent hurricane winds in the Caribbean was off-course in Scott's Bay, fighting those strong winds to stay airborne over the low-tide beach, while 5 Leach's S.-Petrels lingered on Bon Portage Is. (BP). The 1675 D.c-Cormorants recorded in Pictou Co. represented 2/3 of those tallied in the province, A. Bitterns were found in Hants-east (Shuben-acadie and Stewiacke areas), and Shelburne. In the heron department GBH concentrations were noted in Halifax (92) and Pictou(83) counties, while the more exotic members of this family appeared elsewhere...Gt. Egret on Cape Sable Is. (CSI), Little Blue Heron in Chezzetcook, Snowy Egret on Seal Is., and Blk.-crowned Night-Herons on Seal (1) and BP (4) islands. Among the 15 species of ducks seen, build-ups of numbers were observed in Pictou with Gtr. Scaup (2050) and C. Mergansers (79); Halifax-eastern shore - A. Blk. Duck (1414), Grn.-wing. Teal (644) and Blue-w. Teal(192); and in the area A. Blk. Ducks(715) and Grn. w. Teal(205) were added. It was interesting to note that Hants-east recorded 152 Mallards with their 395 A. Blk. Ducks.

Among the 12 raptor species observed 127 falcons led the way. 30 Merlins, 9 A. Kestrels and 4 Peregrines were migrating through Seal Is., a Turkey Vulture flew over Brier, 4 Goshawks and a Broadwinged Hawk were found in Hants-east, while a Cooper's Hawk was registered on both Seal and BP islands- could this have been the same bird 'island-hopping' in migration? A Virginia Rail lingered in Pictou Co., and among the 28 species of shorebirds the largest concentrations and variety occurred as expected along the eastern shore of Halifax Co. and in the Minas Basin near

Summerville Beach, Queens. Blk.-bellied Plovers(218) and Semi-p. Plovers(270) gathered in substantial numbers around Avonport and Grand Pre while good numbers were also seen in Hants and Halifax counties. (Around 100 Am. Golden Plovers seen for several days previously on Grand Pre had dropped to a meagre 15 on count day). Six Whimbrels were noted mostly along eastern shore Halifax Co. (one appeared on Grand Pre to be counted), a lonely Purple Sandpiper turned up along the Fundy shore (Kings) and a Marbled Godwit showed up on CSI again adding more variety to the list of shorebirds. Harris' pond in Canning yielded the best tally of Yellowlegs with 62 Gtr., 4 Lsr. keeping company with 8C. Snipe almost hidden in the grasses.

The gulls and terns gathering around Pictou included 997 Bonaparte's and 628 Ring-billed Gulls and 104 C. Terns; two Blk. -billed Cuckoos were spotted in C.B., while 4 Saw-whet Owls were found by Randy Lauff and party in Antigonish Co. Twelve of the 19 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds observed that day were noted in the Hants-east search while they also spotted 13 Nighthawks. Y.-shafted Flickers were widespread with large concentrations occurring in Hants (80) and Kings (45). Marsh Wrens were located on South Mtn. near Gaspereau, and Brier Is., 3 Winter Wrens turned up in Hants, Winter and House Wrens popped up on BP and Seal; a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and Brown Thrasher were also on Seal. Eva Urban, Avonport, had a Bohemian Waxwing in with her small flock of Cedar Waxwings. Solitary (48) and Red-eyed (30) Vireos were widely scattered through the province with a bonus Warbling Vireo on Brier and a Philadelphia Vireo on BP. The variety of warblers (representing 23 species in all) - mostly seen in ones and twos - appeared around the province with Myrtles (465) leading the way, followed by C. Yellowthroats (152), and Blackpolls (125 - with most of them migrating through Halifax Co.) and Palms (82). Of special note among the warblers were one Golden-winged on BP and a Prairie on Seal. Bringing up the rear were 12 sparrow species and included a Lark Sparrow at Donkin, C.B., 335 Song Sparrows were noted in Kings and finally eleven of the 24 Baltimore Orioles registered in the count belonged to Seal Island.

The next NAMC Spring count will be held on Sat., May 17/97 - Come out and help count !!

Judy Tufts - N.S. Coordinator for NAMC



SHUBENACADIE AREA TRIP

Rene and Rachelle Smith and John Cohrs enjoy lunch somewhere in eastern Hants County. Two other participants commune with nature in the background

HANTS COUNTY DAY

Marg Clark "does the list"
in the spring-like setting
of Smiley's Park.



NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

OCTOBER 24, 1996

With about 45 members present, the President Mrs. Lisé Bell, opened the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

1. APPROVAL OF LAST YEAR'S MINUTES.

These minutes had been published in the January 1996 issue of **Nova Scotia Birds** and together with copies of all other reports, had been distributed around the room.

There being no errors or omissions, approval of the minutes was moved by Chris Field and seconded by Bob Dickie. Motion CARRIED.

2. BUSINESS ARISING.

2.1 Code of Ethics. The ABA code of ethics was not available for distribution to the members 30 days prior to the meeting as required by the Bylaws. There is no copyright, we are at liberty to copy or modify it to suit our needs. John Cohrs moved and Eric Cooke seconded: That the matter be dealt with by the executive and published in **Nova Scotia Birds**, for members comments. Motion CARRIED.

2.2 Hartlen's Point. As Chris Field will be away for the best part of next year, he has asked Ian McLaren to keep in contact with the matter and report to the President. At this point in time there has been no formal announcement by DND that they intend to sell any of the property.

3. REPORTS

3.1 Treasurer's Report. We have fared better this year than last year. We had an excess of receipts over disbursements of \$731.80 compared to a loss last year of \$98.04.

I have distributed copies of the Financial Statement around the room, if you did not get a copy please share with your neighbour.

I will go over the significant points and then try to answer any questions. Last June the hard disc on my computer crashed and I lost all the data. I had put some of it on paper, so I have been able to put together this report.

Membership...The money is down but that does not mean that membership is down. Last year many people paid for more than one year.

Sales are down, last year we had larger sales of the shirts, this year's figure is more normal.

Chat line advertisements have not been too good this year, but every little bit helps defray the cost.

At the boat show in February we made \$258.25 and it cost us \$251.38. A very minor profit but we are not in it to make money but to make ourselves known to the public. A very commendable effort.

Exchange in US funds is a result of the low Canadian dollar compared to the American dollar.

Printing N.S. Birds is up but that is only inflation. Typing the magazine is also up.

Other printing is down, we just print less.

Postage is about the same, I prepay a large sum to the post office for mailing N.S. Birds and when their accounts show a low balance I send them another cheque. They may owe us money but that will go towards mailing the January issue.

The editors expenses look to be higher but I think that there may be a photographic award buried in there.

The cost of things is really a refund on the sale of three shirts, we had run out of stock and I had to refund the money.

Records editor's expenses are high. When Wendie Tay took over she hosted a get-together of all the editors. It was the first time they had all been in one room and a lot of work was accomplished.

The \$55.94 for the puffin of the year award may look high, but John Cohrs our wood carver has bought enough wood to last him 5 years. He donates his time.

Acceptance was moved by Bill Caudle and seconded by Jim Taylor. Motion CARRIED.

NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY

(Incorporated 1957)

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended September 30, 1996

(With comparative figures for the year ended September 30, 1995)

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

Receipts	1996	1995
Membership dues	\$8373.40	\$10709.00
Sale of publications, etc.	\$2465.80	\$3482.35
Nova Scotia Museum Grant	\$2000.00	\$2000.00
Interest, G.I.C.'s Net	\$ 710.03	\$ 626.42
Bank	\$ 8.14	\$ 10.08
Miscellaneous income	\$ 31.77	\$ 36.19
Chat line adverts	\$ 50.00	\$ 230.00
Boat Show	\$ 258.25	
Exchange on US funds	\$ 190.13	\$ 161.75
Total receipts	\$14087.52	\$17255.79
Disbursements		
Nova Scotia Birds and Fall Flyer	\$8551.55	\$7844.17
Typing N.S. Birds	\$ 961.60	\$ 906.50
Printing and stationary	\$ 330.14	\$1760.74
Postage	\$1375.20	\$1416.00
Bird information line	\$ 434.54	\$ 404.14
Editor's expenses	\$ 377.70	\$ 202.04
Insurance	\$ 368.00	\$ 350.00
Cost of things, etc. for sale	\$ 75.00	\$1401.00
Slide Collection		\$ 17.82
Environmental network	\$ 10.00	
Records editor's expenses	\$ 281.33	
Honorariums	\$ 50.00	
Field trip co-ordinators expenses	\$ 22.20	\$ 29.27
Exhibition Expenses	\$ 251.38	\$ 265.86
CNF Membership	\$ 40.00	\$ 35.00
Bank charges		\$ 43.00
Puffin wood & other awards	\$ 55.94	\$ 169.37
Money for SSTF		\$1560.20
Annual General Meeting expenses	\$ 59.49	\$ 653.00
Telephone	\$ 38.83	\$ 136.77
Monthly meeting expenses	\$ 72.82	\$ 125.43
Miscellaneous expenses		\$ 33.52
Total Disbursements	\$ 13355.72	\$17353.83
Excess receipts over disbursements	\$ 731.80	\$ (98.04)

BALANCE SHEET

Assets

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)	\$122.50	\$ 175.00
Sub total	\$125.50	\$ 178.00
Guaranteed Investment certificates	\$12681.84	\$11971.81
Bank balance	\$ 3465.37	\$3338.60
 Total Assets and members equity	 \$16272.71	 \$15488.41

STATEMENT OF MEMBERS' EQUITY

Opening balance	\$15488.41	\$15660.45
Excess receipts over disbursements	\$ 731.80	\$ (98.04)
Less: depreciation	\$ (52.50)	\$ (74.00)
Closing balance	\$16272.71	\$15488.41

Lise A. Bell

Lise Bell, President

W G Caudle

W G Caudle, Treasurer

J. Morrow

J. Morrow, Auditor

Audited and found correct
according to the books.

3.2 Membership Report

During the past year no special effort was undertaken to increase the membership. The previous year I had written to all those 1994 members who had not renewed for 1995. This year, the 1996 membership shows a decrease of 2.9%, therefore the extra effort in 1995 could be construed as being worthwhile. Given some available time in the upcoming year I will attempt to return the membership to at least its previous levels.

Sadly, our membership list has been decreased with the death of Ethel Crathorne.

The statistics are as follows:

Single 352 family 151 institutional 16 exchange 7 life 19 TOTAL 545

Acceptance was moved by Christine Ross, seconded by Peter Payzant. Motion CARRIED.

3.3 Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund (SSTF) Report

The year started with our attendance at the Atlantic Tern Working Group meeting held at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. During the meeting we witnessed an impressive display of Electronic Gull Deterrence by Bruce Blacklock of Phoenix Agritech. This led to a visit to the plant in Debert and we decided to rent a unit for Peter's Island. Robert MacDormand installed the unit and observed 70-80% reduction in the gull population. The terns returned, the unit was removed and things seemed fine until early July when the colony was abandoned. The poor weather made visiting the Island difficult and Robert was not able to spend much time on Brier which greatly reduced our presence on Peter's Island. Tony Locke reported that many of the Maine Coast Tern colonies experienced abandonment, possibly due to food shortage.

After observing a declining colony in 1995 on Grassy Island, a request was made to the Department of Natural Resources to clean up the island and repair the Roseate shelters. This request was denied and so we moved on to Westhaver's Island in Mahone Bay. A quick count showed 176 nests in a colony with a very high percentage of experienced breeders, great Sand Lance food supply and warm, rather fog free weather. Other than a predatory Great Blue Heron the colony again had a tremendous season.

Hertford Island maintained a steady population of 150 pairs of Puffins, 150 pairs of Razorbills, and 2000 Kittewakes. This summer 20 Eagles arrived a month early and this may explain the end of August departure of the Alcids. The Eagles prey mainly on gull chicks and leave the island at the end of September.

This year saw the departure of the Raptor Rehabilitation Centre at Mason's Point. Elaine and Mike Kew have formed The Atlantic Raptor Rehabilitation Society. This will enable them to attract additional funding to enlarge their facility and we wish them great success.

A very successful Youth Field Trip was held with 16 students from Parkview Education Center. Many thanks to our leaders, John and Shirley Cohrs, Bill Caudle and Eric Cooke who braved bad weather to make it a great day for the students.

We had a great visit to Indian Island where the Black Guillemot numbers have risen to 75+ and the island is heavily populated with Common Eiders. This island is one of the best offshore islands in the Province when it comes to breeding habitat. I would like to thank Peter Bell who has donated his boat and time to take us to Indian Island.

In 1997 we plan to continue to enhance our islands which are becoming very precious as many of them are being purchased. Few will be left as wildlife habitat for future generations to enjoy. One of the great events for 1996 was Lisé Cohrs' marriage to Peter Bell. They are residing on Bush Island and therefore we have a local presence to represent our interest in Indian Island. Without this support it is impossible to achieve any meaningful results.

In closing I would like to thank our directors for their support and Shirley Cohrs generous hospitality for our meetings.

I would now like to call our treasurer, David Currie for our financial support.

Respectfully submitted,
Ken Gregoire

3.4 Financial Report of Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund.

NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY SANCTUARY AND SCHOLARSHIP TRUST
FUND

Financial Statements to September 30, 1996
(with comparison for the 12 months ended Sept. 30, 1995)

Receipts	CURRENT YEAR	PREVIOUS YEAR
Contributions	1,226.30	3,482.20
G.I.C. Interest	1,437.81	827.58
Bank Interest	40.50	54.02
Total receipts	2,704.61	4,363.80

Disbursements

Bank Charges	118.04	63.56
Taxes	611.64	894.17
Raptor Rehabilitation Programme	.00	521.40
Youth Field Trip	135.52	115.60
Photo Guild Competition	34.29	.00
Tern Project	650.75	.00
Christmas Bird Counts	42.69	28.83
G.I.C. Purchase	5,000.00	.00
Miscellaneous	300.00	306.56
Total Disbursements	6,892.93	1,930.12

Excess of receipts over Disbursements	-4,188.32	2,433.68
Opening Bank Balance	7,715.47	5,281.79
Closing Bank Balance	3,527.15	7,715.47

BALANCE SHEET

Assets

Guaranteed Investment Cert.	26,400.00	21,400.00
Bald Islands	1,000.00	1,000.00
Hertford Island	160.00	160.00
Indian Island	12,000.00	12,000.00
N. Kemptville Property	1,500.00	1,500.00
Peter Island	20,000.00	20,000.00
Port Joli Property	13,000.00	13,000.00
Bank Balance	3,527.15	7,715.47
Total Assets	77,587.15	76,775.47

Statement of Surplus

Opening Balance	76,775.47	74,341.79
Excess of Receipts over Disbursements	-4,188.32	2,433.68
Inc./Dec. in G.I.C.	5,000.00	.00
Closing Balance	77,587.15	76,775.47

Acceptance of this report moved by David Currie and seconded by Eric Cooke.
MOTION CARRIED.

3.5 President's Report (please see page 1)

Puffin of the Year Award (please see page 59)

3.6 Report of the Nomination Committee

Bob Dickie gave the report of the Nominating Committee which consisted of himself and Karl Tay.

After calling for further nominations 3 times the President moved its adoption, the motion was seconded by Clarence Stevens Snr. Motion CARRIED.

The Executive for 1996/7 is:

President	Mrs. Lise Bell (nee Cohrs)
Vice President	Ms. Gisele d'Entremont
Past President	Mr. Bob Dickie
Editor	Mrs. Shirley Cohrs
Secretary	Mrs. Wendie Tay
Membership	Mrs. Christine Ross
Treasurer	Mr. William Caudle
Directors	Ms. Shirley Brothers
	Ms. Christine Cornell
	Dr. Douglas Roy
Solicitor	Mr. Tony Robinson
Auditor	Mr. James C. Morrow

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Note was made with regret of the passing of Ethel Crathorne, Ross Baker, Bernice Taylor, and Ward Hemeon. The secretary asked that any one knowing of the passing of a member, to please advise us.

4.2 Indian Island. Each spring a working party is required as a clean up detail, volunteers should contact the President or any member of the executive or of the Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund.

4.3 Blake Maybank advised that listeners to the CHAT line; if they wish to record a sighting, and not listen to the reports, should press * on a push button phone to skip through to the end.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

A wine and cheese party followed.

Respectfully submitted,
W.G. Caudle
Acting secretary

As agreed at the A.G.M. consideration is to be made of amending our adopted Code of Ethics (AGM Oct. 1995)

- We here print 1. Our Code as it has been adopted
and
2. The new American Birding Association
code.

Should we amend, adopt, or change, in part??

It is up to you members to give us your opinions and ideas.

The executive wish to hear your opinions.

Please address any correspondance to the President

Lise Cohrs Bell
P.O.Box 6
Petite Riviere, Lunenburg Co., N.S.
B0J 2P0

Submissions will be forwarded to a committee yet to be established.

A Birdwatcher's Code of Ethics

General guidelines for good birding behaviour

-A combination of common sense and courtesy.

1. Pertaining to the birds we watch. To safeguard their welfare:

- Avoid chasing or repeatedly flushing birds.
- Keep away from nesting birds not only to prevent disturbance but also to prevent exposing them to danger.
- Play recordings of bird song sparingly at any time and never during nesting season.
- Do not photograph nesting birds except from a distance. Re-arranging or removing branches near a nest for a better view is unacceptable.

2. Pertaining to non-birders and their property

- Permission to bird on private property should be sought whenever possible and efforts made to leave it in the condition in which it was found.
- Do not drive on soft driveways or walk on lawns during spring or during winter thaws.

Do not report the presence of any bird at a private feeder or on private property to other birders or to a bird line without first obtaining the permission of the householder.

3. Pertaining to other birders

-When the view of a bird is restricted, i.e. from a small area or through a telescope, each person should take one quick look and then relinquish his/her place to another.

-Do not swish, pish or approach a bird being viewed by a group without the agreement of all others.

-If you have seen the bird make every effort to ensure that others may see it also.

-When telephoning for information about a bird restrict calling times to reasonable hours of the day.

AMERICAN BIRDING ASSOCIATION

PRINCIPLES OF BIRDING ETHICS

Everyone who enjoys birds and birding must always respect wildlife, its environment, and the rights of others.

In any conflict of interest between birds and birders, the welfare of the birds and their environment comes first.

CODE OF BIRDING ETHICS

1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.

1(a) Support the protection of important bird habitat.

1(b) To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming.

⇒ Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas, or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area;

⇒ Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, photography, filming, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover.

⇒ Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.

1(c) Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance minimised, and permission has been obtained from private land-owners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.

1(d) Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.

2. Respect the law, and the rights of others.

2(a) Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.

2(b) Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas, both at home and abroad.

2(c) Practise common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behaviour will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.

3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.

- 3(a) Keep dispensers, water, and food clean, and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.
- 3(b) Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.
- 3(c) If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure the birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals, or dangers posed by artificial hazards.

4. Group birding, whether organised or impromptu, requires special care.

Each individual in the group, in addition to the obligations spelled out in Items #1 and #2, has responsibilities as a Group Member.

- 4(a) Respect the interests, rights, and skills of fellow birders, as well as people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities. Freely share your knowledge and experience, except where code 1(c) applies. Be especially helpful to beginning birders.
- 4(b) If you witness unethical birding behaviour, assess the situation, and intervene if you think it prudent. When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action, and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behaviour continues, document it, and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.

Group Leader Responsibilities [amateur and professional trips and tours].

- 4(d) Be an exemplary ethical role model for the group. Teach through word and example.
- 4(e) Keep groups to a size that limits impact on the environment, and does not interfere with others using the same area.
- 4(f) Ensure everyone in the group knows of and practises this code.
- 4(g) Learn and inform the group of any special circumstances applicable to the areas being visited (eg., no tape recorders allowed).
- 4(h) Acknowledge that professional tour companies bear a special responsibility to place the welfare of birds and the benefits of public knowledge ahead of the company's commercial interests. Ideally, leaders should keep track of tour sightings, document unusual occurrences, and submit records to appropriate organisations.



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

Executive 1996-1997

President - Lisë (Cohrs) Bell
Vice President - Gisele D'Entrement
Past President - Bob Dickie
Treasurer - Bill Caudle
Secretary - Wendie Tay
Membership Secretary - Christine Ross
Editor - Shirley Cohrs
Director - Shirley Brothers
Director - Christine Cornell
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://ccn.cs.dal.ca/Recreation/NS-BirdSoc/nsbsmain.html>

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

NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS
A Publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society

Volume 39 Number 1

January 1997

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Christmas Counts	David Currie Francis Spalding
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Cover: Short-eared Owl by Bob Dickie	Ian McLaren Fred Dobson Francis Spalding Richard Stern

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

ISSN 0383-9567

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