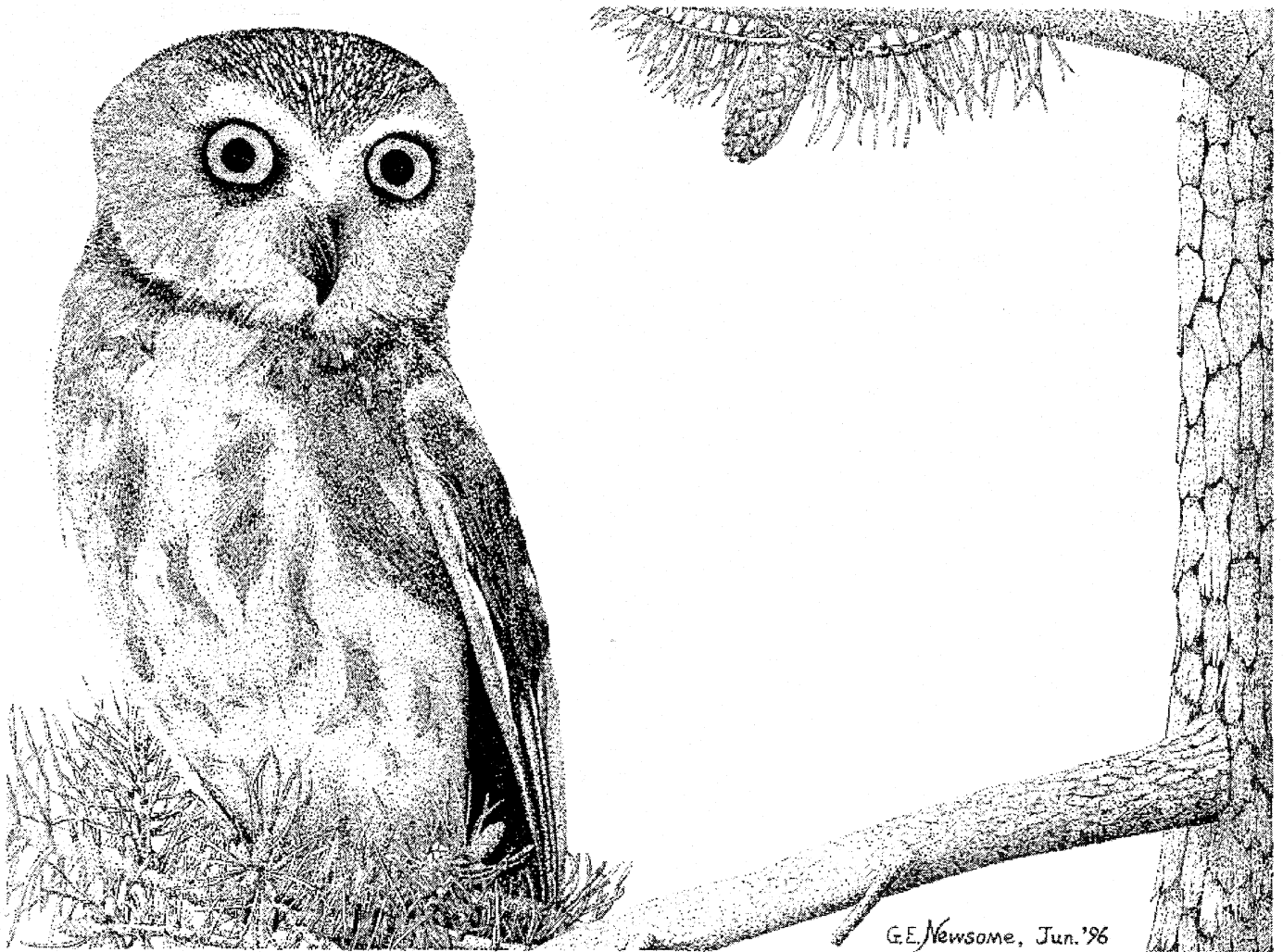


Nova Scotia Birds

A Quarterly Publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society



Winter 2000

NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS

Formed in 1955, the Nova Scotia Bird Society is directly affiliated with the Canadian Nature Federation. The activities of the Society are centered on the observation and study of the bird life of this province and the preservation of

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Winter 2000 issue:	Dec. 7, 1999
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Use of any material from NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS requires written permission from the Editor. Cost of the publication of this periodical is partially borne by the Nova Scotia Museum. ISSN 0383-9537. Publications Mail Reg. No. 09838. Published four times a year.

The Spotting Scope

If you've looked at the inside front cover, you may have noticed that there has been a changing of some of the guard, so to speak. I'd like to welcome the new recruits to the magazine, and encourage anyone else wanting to contribute to get in touch with me. Most of the "old guard" are still here, in their typical postings or, like me, in a new assignment. *Editor* ... wow! If the pen (or word processor in this case) truly is mightier than the sword, I feel extremely mighty indeed! Maybe I'll even get a new sign for my door at work...

Ok, I'm back down to earth again. You, as members may have an interest in who's editing your magazine...so, who am I and what am I doing with Nova Scotia's birds and *Nova Scotia Birds*? I arrived in Nova Scotia 10 years ago (with a name like Lauff, you didn't *really* think I was born here, did you?) to take a sessional teaching position at St. Francis Xavier University. I had been birding for a few years in Calgary prior to that, but was still a novice. Of course, at that time I thought I was pretty good, but the wisdom of hindsight now tells me that I had only begun my pursuit of birding. Birding is now a serious hobby for me, but read the *Shorebirds* Seasonal Report and you'll see that I'm still perplexed by some birds. I relish in the more casual side of birding -- I find extreme joy at watching chickadees at a feeder and hearing the morning choruses of bird song -- often arising from singers unbeknownst to me. I delve into ornithology as well, though I may write about that sometime in the future. I have co-ordinated the Antigonish

Christmas Bird Count every year I've been here, and led my first NSBS field trip last November.

Over the last few months, I have been asking birders what they think of the direction and focus of *NS Birds*. Many have said there is a lack of articles directed at novice and casual birders. A few want a more rigorous approach. One of my jobs as editor is to solicit articles that the membership wants to read (one of the reasons I've entitled the editorial as *The Spotting Scope* is to reflect the editor's role in searching for appropriate content). Back in the summer issue, we advertised for articles on birding locations within Nova Scotia. We're still looking forward to hearing from more of you on that (for both land-based and pelagic sites), though I've had articles promised to us dealing with some Pictou and Cape Breton birding locales. And I can't emphasize this enough, we want to hear from the casual birders as well as the most determined listers.

Finally, thanks to the entire team (including the past editors Marion Allsebrook and Paul Quinn) for putting this issue together, but my special thanks go out to the sage, Ian McLaren for his many words of wisdom. Until next issue, Good Birding!

Randy

North American Migration Count May 13, 2000

The **NINTH** annual spring North American Migration Count will be taking place again in only a few months. Please remember to keep May 13, the second Saturday in May, free if you wish to participate. Any amount of time 'counting' is worthwhile and productive whether as a feeder-watcher or by boat, bicycle, foot or vehicle... just as long as you are tallying birds... and **NO FEE** is required!!!

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

If you are interested in participating please contact the county coordinator or area representative in your county to prevent overlaps of areas being surveyed and to help the coverage to be as widespread and thorough as possible. Should you not know who your coordinators/area reps are, or you wish to count in other counties than the one in which you reside, please contact me. The important thing is to get outdoors and count the birds, have fun while communing with nature. What better excuse do you need for a spring day!!

Judy Tufts
NAMC Prov. Coordinator
Tel: (902) 542-7800
P.O. Box 1313 Wolfville, N.S. B0P 1X0
e-mail : tandove@ns.sympatico.ca

Letter To The Editor

Dear Ms. Allsebrook,

I am writing to alert members of the Nova Scotia Bird Society to a new and insidious threat to the recovery of the Peregrine Falcon. As you know, [the subspecies] *anatum* was recently removed from the U.S. endangered species list (Aug. 25, 1999). This action paved the way for American falconers to apply for permits to capture wild peregrines. The ink was not dry on the declaration before the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service received such an application from the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. Through this application American falconry interests are proposing to capture from 5% (first year of trapping) to 20% (target level of "harvest") of "annual production" of wild migrating juvenile peregrine falcons originating in Canada and Greenland. In addition, falconers propose to capture an unspecified number of nestling peregrines of U.S. origin.

In response to this application The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is currently designing a management plan for the peregrine, and are soliciting public comment. At the moment, they appear to be ready to grant the falconers' requests in spite of official objections by Environment Canada.

This trapping plan threatens the modest success of the Canadian Peregrine Recovery Project. In Nova Scotia, where the recovery is tenuous, (we have only three confirmed nesting pairs) it could usher in another forty years of regional extinction, and waste ten years of effort by the peregrine recovery team. The threat is real – Canadian biologists agree that Maritime falcons will probably be caught in the falconers' nets. The loss of even one juvenile migrating peregrine to trapping could have a significant impact on our small maritime population. There is, at the moment, absolutely no reasonable way to protect weak recovery areas from the possible effects of this trapping plan.

What to do?

- 1) Comment directly to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:

Ms. Jamie Rappaport Clark
(address below)

or:

George Allen
U.S. Office of Migratory Bird Management
703/358-1714

- 2) Talk or write to your MLA. They must understand that you expect the Federal Government to support its biologists and resist this trapping plan at the highest political level.
- 3) Spread the word. For more info contact:

Diane L. Amirault (506) 364-5060
Wildlife Biologist - Species at Risk fax (506) 364-5062
Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada
17 Waterfowl Lane
P.O. Box 6227
Sackville, N.B. E4L 1G6

Yours Truly,
Kip McCurdy
R.R. #2 Hampton
Anna. Co., NS
B0S 1L0 665-2435

Editor's Note : The issue of trapping Peregrines has generated quite a bit of comment from birders and the public at large. To this end, I have asked Mark Elderkin, Species at Risk Biologist, Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources to provide readers with the government's current position.

Mr. Elderkin responds:

As you are aware, the US is considering the sanctioning of a legal wild harvest of both migrating (i.e. "passage") and nestling peregrines, following their removal from the US Endangered Species List in August 1999. The request to do so was filed by the International Association of Wildlife Agencies and the North American Falconers Association to the US Fish & Wildlife Service. Up to 250 or more birds are proposed to be harvested annually. I was told by a US Fish & Wildlife Service Biologist that two separate EIA's would be commissioned to address issues surrounding (1) Wild Harvest of Nestlings and (2) Wild Harvest of migrants. Completion of the first report is anticipated by the early spring of 2000 and the second by early June. Pending favorable findings by the consultants it was suggested that both harvests maybe sanctioned as early as this year (2000).

The status of the Canadian population (*Falco peregrinus anatum*) was reviewed in April 1999 by COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada) and was down listed from "Endangered" to "Threatened." By definition, a threatened species in Canada is one that: "is at risk of becoming endangered unless factors affecting its decline are reversed." To this end, the official Canadian response to the US proposal has been one of unilateral opposition by all provinces, territories and the Federal government. A letter expressing these concerns and the objection to the harvest of migrant peregrines was forwarded by the Canadian Wildlife Directors to the US Fish & Wildlife Service in October. Key issues that have not yet received sufficient scientific address are the sustainability of a wild harvest of migrating peregrines and what proportion of these migrant birds would have originated in Canada. Moreover, the general consensus by all Endangered Species Biologists throughout Atlantic Canada is that the recovery of a breeding population here is too recent with a conspicuous absence of rigorous scientific data to objectively evaluate the merits of any wild harvest at this time.

Although we have made significant gains over the past five years in recovering a breeding population of peregrines here in Nova Scotia - we feel that application of the precautionary principle is warranted. I would appreciate hearing your comments and ideas on the merits of the US proposal to harvest migrant peregrines. Copies of your correspondence should also be mailed to the attention of:

Ms. Jamie Rappaport Clark
Director, US Fish & Wildlife Service
Arlington Square Building
4401 North Fairfax Drive
Arlington, Virginia
22202 USA.

Thank you for your interest in this important conservation issue!

Mark F. Elderkin
Species at Risk Biologist, Wildlife Division
NS Department of Natural Resources
136 Exhibition Street
Kentville, Nova Scotia B4N 4E5

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Weather Report

By Larry Bogan

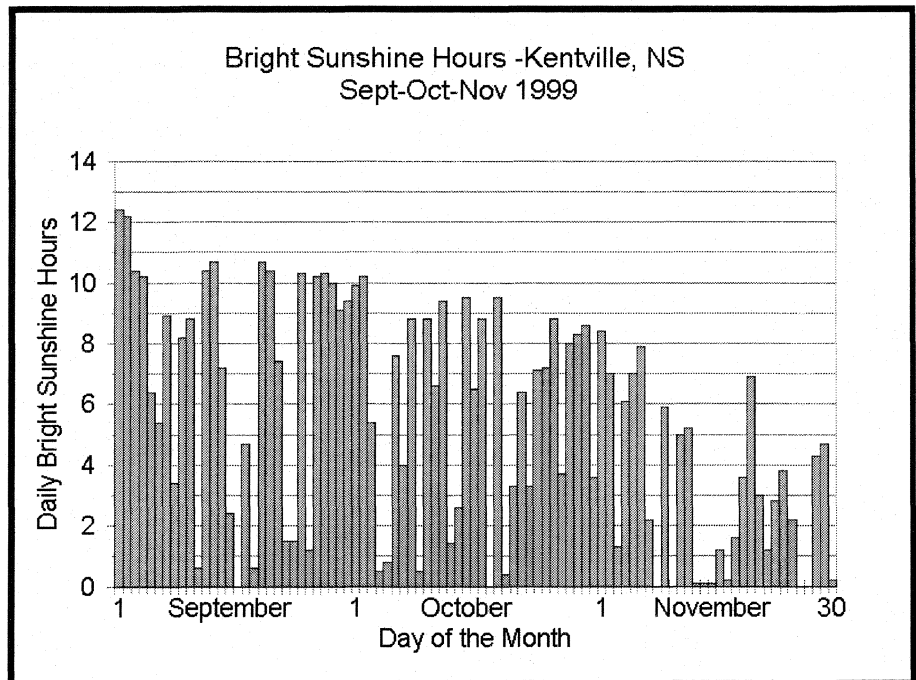
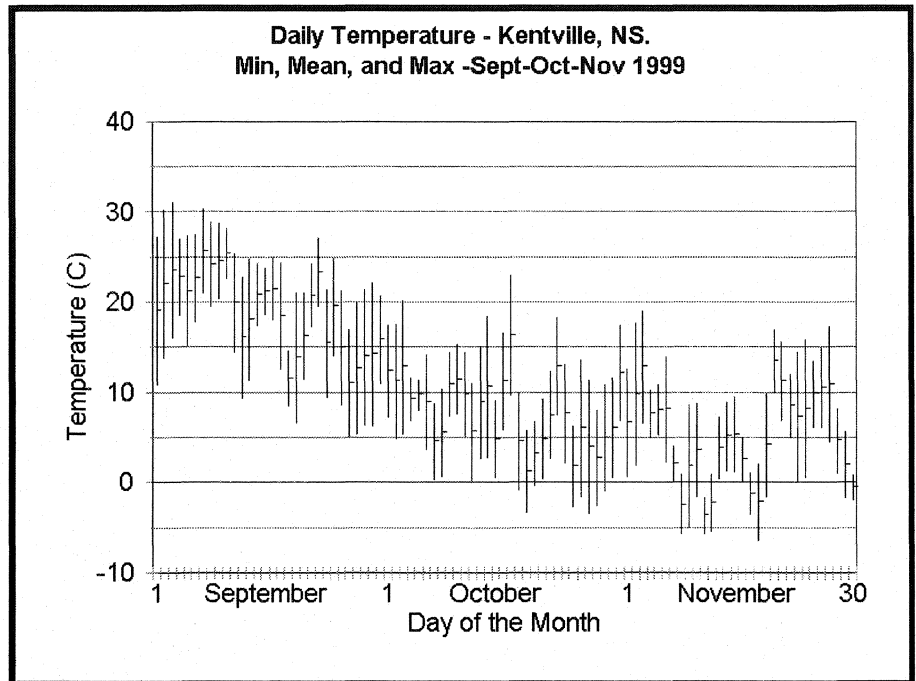
We had an abnormal autumn this year. All of the weather parameters were above the long term normals except the mean temperature in October and the rainfall in November. You will notice that I have included the averages for the last five years as well as the longer term 38 year averages. The averages of the last five years show a recent trend of drier and slightly cloudier autumns. In 1999 we dramatically reversed that trend. For the season, the mean temperature was greater by 1.6 °C, the rainfall was 16% greater and bright sunshine was 28% above the long term averages.

Temperature

September was almost unbelievably warm with two highs above 30 °C and no lows below 5 °C. Normally the first day of frost in the Valley is September 15. The mean temperature for the month was 19 °C and 4.5 °C above average. All of October, the temperatures dropped so that by the end of the month we were getting ice on the ponds. This did not last and in late November we had no ice or snow and a week of temperatures that averaged 10 °C. This was great for the waterfowl and seabirds who seem to be more abundant this autumn. The temperature graph shows the daily extremes of highs and lows for the season.

Rain and Snowfall

Although we have had very dry summers both last year and this year, the autumns in each case were wet enough to allow us to go into winter with plenty of precipitation. Both last year and this year were 40% above the five year average for the precipitation. We did get 9 cm of snow in early November but less than the normal 13 cm for the month. The distribution of heavy rainfall in September was concentrated in three storms each about a week apart; the precipitation in October and November was distributed in small amounts almost daily throughout the period. This heavy precipitation has left the woods that were dry in the summer, wet and soggy this late autumn.



Bright Sunshine Hours

I would expect that with all the rain in the autumn that the bright sunshine hours received would be down, but that was not the case. September actually had 1/3 more sunshine hours than the long term norms and almost half again as much as recent years. Even October and November with their frequent showers,

had above average sunshine. The weather systems that came by were not dry this year but dropped rain and snow then left. The second graph that I have included is the bright sunshine hours for the season because it shows the gradually decreasing daylight hours as well as the great amount of sun we had this autumn.

La Niña and Winter

Satellite images from the Jet Propulsion Laboratory of NASA (<http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/elnino>) show higher sea levels and warmer than normal temperatures off Asia and lower than normal temperatures in equatorial and eastern Pacific. This will tend to drive storms that normally cross the south west of the USA farther north. The effect on eastern North America is expected to produce a warmer than normal winter.

* 5 year average = 1994 - 1998

** 38 year average = 1961 - 1998

Agriculture Research Station, Kentville, NS Weather Summaries - September, October, November 1999

	Mean Temperature (C)	Rainfall (mm)	Bright Sunshine (hours)
September	19.0	204	215
(5 yr. avg)*	14.5	111	146
(38 yr avg)**	14.4	120	160
October	8.0	113	180
(5 yr. avg)	9.0	87	131
(38 yr. avg)	9.2	103	137
November	5.2	78	92
(5 yr. avg)	3.4	86	82
(38 yr. avg)	3.8	118	83
1999 Season	10.7	395	487
1998 Season	9.0	408	348
(5 yr. avg)	9.0	284	359
(38 yr. avg)	9.1	341	380

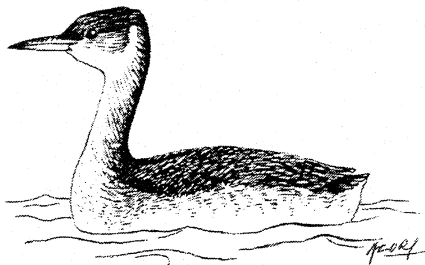
Autumn Seasonal Reports

Loons Through Grebes

RED-THROATED LOONS are always quite stunning when seen in alternate plumage, as were the first reported for the season from Big I., Pict. Co., Sept. 20 (KJM). A sense of migration can be gleaned from 25 seen at Big I., Pict. Co., Oct. 16 (KJM) and 50+ at Waterside PP on Nov. 6. By this time all were in winter garb. Sou'West birders sighted 100 from the Cape Light off CSI on Oct. 20, but groups of one to six were being reported through most of the province into late November and early December (DBM *et al.*). During the reporting period, nesting COMMON LOONS make the move from lakes to join non-breeders offshore. Eight adults, Aug. 13, were found at Johnson L., CB Co. by DBM who also reported about 30 other Common Loons in CB. PRG and Jacqueline d'Entremont reported one to two birds from each of four locations in Yar. Co. in October - November, but

by far the best day for loons seemed to be Nov. 19 when JON noted 1000+ flying past The Hawk in flocks of 40-60. An early morning seawatch from Baccaro the next day by MUN tallied 20.

Unlike other grebe sightings, PIED-BILLED GREBES were more commonly reported in September and began to dwindle as autumn progressed. At Florence, CB Co., four seen Sept. 21 had dropped to two by Oct. 20 (DBM). TEP had



four in APBS Oct. 2 and three observed by ZOL on Sable I., Sept 21, decreased to two Oct. 27.

Stragglers included one at the Antigonish Landing, Dec. 6 (RFL), three at Bissett L., HRM, in late November (IAM) and one at White Rock bridge, Kings Co., Nov. 24 (BLF). Big I., Pict. Co., provided the first autumn report of HORNED GREBE with two being seen there Sept. 20 (KJM). This number grew to 57 by Oct. 16. BLM observed 10 at Taylor Hd. PP, Oct. 9 and TEP had 100 there Nov. 20. RED-NECKED GREBES were observed first in the north with SEM reporting one Aug. 20 in breeding plumage in the Louisbourg area. KJM found one Aug 31 with a flock of Greater Scaup on the Middle R. of Pictou and two on Big I., Pict. Co., Sept 2. By Oct. 16, 19 were seen off Big I., Pict. Co. (KJM). BLM remarks that the flock of 16 he and IAM observed on Sober I. Sept.12 was the largest flock he had seen this early on the eastern shore. There were 37 at this location Oct.17 (KJM).

Tubenoses Through Cormorants

By Blake Maybank

There were more reports than expected, for which I am grateful. RWK was particularly prolific as he undertook a number of ferry crossings of the Cabot Strait between N Sydney and Port aux Basques, Newfoundland.

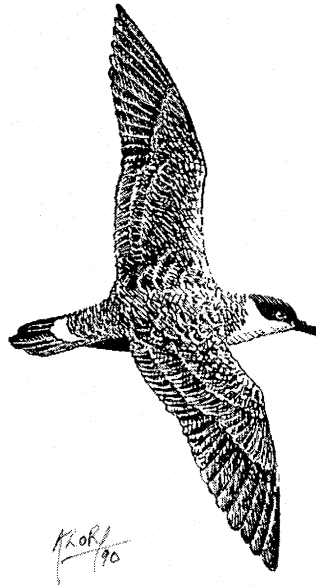
The first NORTHERN FULMAR of the autumn were three off Port Morien, Sept. 3 (RWK, SEM, CAM, ALM). Later in the same month, two were sighted off Brier I. (BLM, *et al.*). MUN had a single bird off CSI Oct. 6, while 25 off Brier I. on the Thanksgiving weekend was the largest single count this period (NSBS). RWK encountered small numbers on the Cabot Strait ferry, with 18 Oct. 3, and 10 Oct. 31.

A CORY'S SHEARWATER seen from shore is unexpected anywhere in the province, especially Cape Breton, so it's disappointing that one reported from Neils Hbr., Vic. Co. (AAM) was not accompanied by details. By contrast, Donald H. Broderick carefully described his Cory's Shearwater sighting from the Maine ferry Aug. 20, where one would be more expected. He also encountered three others on the U.S. side of the border. Cory's Shearwaters are routine on Georges Bank, and RSD had "several" there Aug. 24, and ZOL had one Oct. 3 from Sable I., another traditional location.

GREATER SHEARWATERS received much attention. While a few were seen from shore at CSI (var. obs.), more unusual were 25 seen July 30 at Neils Hbr., Vic. Co. (AAM). Elsewhere off Cape Breton, RWK *et al.* counted 30 on their boat trip from Port Morien Sept. 3, and RWK noted 17 on his Oct. 3 Cabot Strait crossing. RSD still noted hundreds on Georges Bank Oct. 27. As expected the largest numbers were in the Bay of Fundy, and submitted counts from whale-watching trips included: 500 Aug. 21 (KJM, *et al.*); 5000+ Sept. 9 (BLM, JOW, A. Thibodeau), 500 Sept. 25 (BLM, *et al.*), and 1000 on Thanksgiving weekend (NSBS). CAH still noted dozens of birds at the end of

the period. Tardy Greater Shearwaters elsewhere are more notable, as with one Nov. 14 seen from the lighthouse near Arichat, Rich. Co. (MZG, RFL).

SOOTY SHEARWATERS have been much more scarce than Greaters in Nova Scotia waters in recent years. Sightings from shore in Shel. Co. are not uncommon, and PEY had 23 from the Blanche Peninsula Aug. 12. Counts from the Bay of Fundy never reached triple digits (and, unlike last year, seemed no more common on the New Brunswick side), with 40 Aug. 8 (KJM, *et al.*), 15 Sept. 4 with the same tally Sept. 25 (BLM, *et al.*), and just one on Thanksgiving Weekend (NSBS). RWK noted only one on the Cabot Strait Oct. 31.



MANX SHEARWATERS were nearly as common as Sooties. AAM had two off Neils Hbr., Vic. Co., July 30, and MUN noted one off CSI Sept. 23, while ZOL reported 10 from Sable I. Oct. 9. The remaining sightings were all in the Bay of Fundy off Brier I., with a remarkable 70 Aug. 21 (KJM, *et al.*), 10 Sept. 4 (BLM, JOW, A. Thibodeau), and four Sept. 25 (BLM, *et al.*). CAH reported that WILSON'S

STORM-PETRELS were abundant in the deeper waters of the Bay of Fundy, usually away from the whale-feeding activity, and so were not encountered in numbers on whale-watching trips. Away from Fundy, RWK *et al.* had two off Port Morien Sept. 3, and on the same boat trip 15 LEACH'S STORM-PETRELS were tallied. The most unusual location for a Leach's sighting was Dalhousie University campus Sept 17, (IAM), while the latest sighting came from RWK, who had four on the Cabot Strait Oct. 31.

The movements of NORTHERN GANNETS in Nova Scotia waters is still largely a mystery, but an encouraging number of reports increasingly helps improve the picture. We start with several August sightings. ELM and AHM counted 100+ birds, Aug. 9 fishing off Kingsburg Beach, Lun. Co., an area where they are rarely seen; 20% were adults. Twenty-five birds were near Country Island, Guys. Co. Aug. 8 (RFL), while RFL noted a "constant stream" of birds flying past the Mabou Highlands, Inv. Co., Aug. 16, and Cape St. Lawrence, Aug. 19. On Aug. 28 a NSBS trip had 45 birds, mostly adults, at Pt. Michaud, Rich. Co., while on Aug. 29 ELM and AHM had 50+ birds off Baccaro Pt., Shel. Co. In September BLM *et al.* had 100+ birds on a Brier I. whale-watching trip. During October DBM noted as many as a few hundred gannets feeding just off Schooner Pond, CB Co., while RWK meticulously counted 327 birds on a Cabot Strait crossing Oct. 31. An impressive November movement occurred on the third, when DHY estimated 500-1200 birds per hour moving south past Little Hbr., Shel. Co. However, the most compelling gannet sighting was RFL and MZG's discovery of 200+ immature (1st summer) birds feeding "inland" on Odgens Pond, Ant. Co., in November, through to the end of the period. Odgens Pond is a barrachois pond that also hosted an impressive number and variety of gulls and ducks. This editor observed this awe-inspiring sight in early

December, and urges every Nova Scotia birder to make the pilgrimage next year if the event repeats itself.

The DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT colony on Cape Split, Kings Co., abandoned a year ago, was reestablished this year (*fide* JWW). RFL counted 250 birds Aug. 8 on Coddles I., Guys. Co., and RES watched ~200 birds following a mackerel run in Port Mouton, Queens Co., Aug. 29., indicative of the bird's resurgence as a

breeder across Nova Scotia. Recent mild autumns are apparently enticing more Double-crested to over-winter (although I still believe the actual number is less than that reported); nevertheless, almost all of Atlantic Canada's Double-crested Cormorants still migrate south. That said, their migration either went generally unwatched or unreported, as the only migrant flocks noted were: a modest 200 going by Brier I. Sept. 26; 100 past Seal I. Sept. 28 (BLM, *et al.*); 300+ over Crescent Beach, Lun. Co.

(anon); and "many, many dozens" along the shores of CB Co., Oct. 2 (DBM). DWP and JAP reported the last one for their local patch of Rainbow Haven, HRM, Oct. 13, and by Nov. 14 ELM could find but one on Brier I.

GREAT CORMORANTS were only sporadically noted, but reported concentrations included 50 on Brier I. Nov. 14 (ELM), and 55 on cliffs at Sydney Mines, CB Co., a traditional late autumn roosting site, according to DBM.

Herons Through Vultures

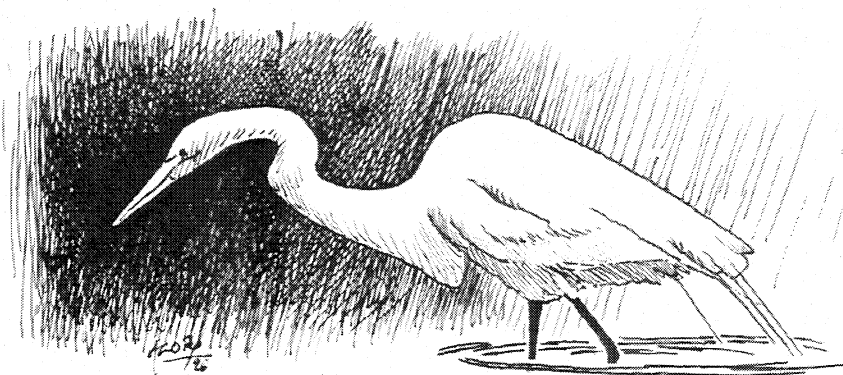
By Richard Knapton

Reports of AMERICAN BITTERNs at CSI, presumably migrants, started on Sept. 9, with three, and continued with eight sightings of single birds until Nov. 13 (MUN *et al.*). Elsewhere, there were just four records: one in a pond behind Conrads Beach, HRM, Sept. 1 (DWP, JAP), one at Settle L., Cole Hbr., HRM, Oct. 24 (PLC, JEH), an individual on Nov. 2 at Belleisle Marsh, Anna. Co. (PEH, Lorraine Hope), and a late straggler at Port Williams, Kings Co. on Nov. 23 (GWT). GREAT BLUE HERONS were reported widely throughout the province, from CB to the S Shore, with stragglers noted well into November, for example in Kings Co. (var. obs.), Rich. Co. (MZG, RFL), HRM (DWP, JAP), and Yar. Co. (PRG). Reports of birds actually migrating are always valuable; ELM's sighting of three leaving Cherry Hill Beach, Lun. Co., Nov. 7, flying SW across the sea is just such a report. An immature on Nov. 19 in Riverside Park, Canning, Kings Co., was seen to catch a fair-sized eel (JWW). Each fall, impressive gatherings occur at a few locations in the province. For example, at Big I., Pict. Co., counts ranged from 52, Aug. 3 (KJM) to a peak of 113, Sept. 7 (Don McLaughlin). KJM also counted 135 at Melmerby and Powell Point PP, Pict. Co., Sept. 21. In CB, there were 35 at Dominion Beach and 25 at Morien Bar, CB Co., Oct. 2 (DBM), and 25 at Morien Bar Oct. 31 (CAM). Elsewhere, NED reported 14 at Rainbow Haven, HRM, Oct. 3, KFS had 14 along the Apple R., Cum. Co. Sept. 13, and MUN had a maximum of 65 at

The Hawk area, CSI, Nov. 10. Are there gatherings like this elsewhere in the province?

Compared with last year's flurry of southern herons, this fall's tally was less impressive but still noteworthy. A

Aug. 2 (PER), and an adult was on CSI Sept. 18-26 (MUN *et al.*). An imm. turned up in Antigonish Landing, Ant. Co., Sept. 19 (RFL, MZG) and stayed until Sept. 24 (Anne Camozzi). After no fall records in 1998, it was quite a good autumn for TRICOLORED HERONS.



GREAT EGRET that frequented bays and barrachois in CB Co. during the summer stayed until at least Nov. 11, and was reported from Glace Bay, Dominion, and Port Morien (CAM *et al.*). One stayed in a marsh by a golf course in the Pugwash area, Cum. Co., mid-July to Aug. 15 (MEA), one on Seal I., Yar. Co., was present from Sept. 24 until at least Sept. 30 (MLH *et al.*), and one on CSI was seen from Oct. 5 until Oct. 13 (MUN *et al.*). Single SNOWY EGRETS were reported at Seal I., Sept. 24-28 (MLH *et al.*), and at CSI on Sept. 26 (MUN). An imm. LITTLE BLUE HERON was at Three Fathom Hbr. on

One was on CSI from Sept. 18-20 (MUN *et al.*) and a second at Daniels Head, CSI, on Sept. 19-26 (MUN *et al.*). The first CATTLE EGRET of the fall turned up on CSI Sept. 19 (MUN), followed by one Sept. 25 at Sable R., Shel. Co. (DHY) and one Sept. 26 in a marsh between Irishtown and Westport, Brier I., that evidently had been present for about a week (KJM *et al.*). One was at Port Clyde, Shel. Co. Nov. 3 (Sandy Hilz), another (or the same bird) there for a week up to Nov. 30 (MUN), and finally one Nov. 3 at Riverside, Col. Co. (ROH).

The only report of GREEN HERON was of a single bird Sept. 1 on Sable I. (ZOL). BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON reports came in from CSI up to early October (MUN *et al.*); numbers did not exceed two at any time, perhaps indicative of poor local reproduction. Three were found on Brier I. Aug. 30 (PRG), and an adult was reported from River Ryan, CB Co., in late August (*fide* CAM). Only two YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS were reported this autumn (compared with so many last year); an imm. was discovered on CSI on Aug. 27 (JON), and another turned up at Rainbow Haven, HRM, Oct. 3 (NED *et al.*).

Numbers of TURKEY VULTURES reported nowadays are truly amazing. Documenting the changing status of any species is always exciting, and certainly within the province the Turkey Vulture

is both increasing in numbers and expanding its range. What is particularly gratifying is that the detailed sightings allow the increase in numbers and distribution of this species to be mapped and followed with a fair degree of precision. Reports started with singles at Brier I. Aug. 1-2, at Halls Hbr., Kings Co., Aug. 7 (Mike McCall) and Sand L., CB Co., Aug. 8 (CAM). In fact, Mike McCall saw one to two individuals on a fairly regular basis over the North Mt., Halls Hbr., Kings Co., over the summer, until at least Aug. 19. Similarly, ones and twos were seen near Middleton, Anna. Co., over the summer, possibly nesting, with the last report Sept. 17 (RBS). Brier I. became the hotspot in September and October. There were 11 there on Sept. 17 (RBS), seven soaring over the island Sept. 19 (AAM), and 25 in a kettle with maybe 10 others Sept. 26 (RBS, BLM).

The numbers in October were almost staggering: 18 Oct. 10 (GWT, JCT) were followed on Oct. 11 by a grand total of 125 individuals, with 80 in one group alone (NSBS)! Four over the island Nov. 14 provided the latest report (ELM, AHM). There were two at Sandy Cove and three at Tiddville, both on Digby Neck (RBS) Sept. 17. In October and November, CSI had a steady stream of one to four Turkey Vultures (MUN). Elsewhere in Yar. and Shel. Co., there were five records of single birds in October and November with four at Barrington Head Nov. 21 visiting meat scraps put out behind the Old Mill (Grant Milroy, PRG, Jacqueline d'Entremont), and elsewhere in the province, two were seen at East LaHave, Lun. Co., Oct. 10 (Pat Watson), and one at Margaretsville, Anna. Co., Oct. 31 (PLC).

Waterfowl

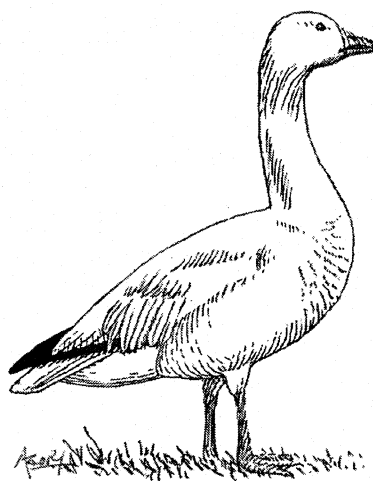
By Ken McKenna

Waterfowl were extensively reported for the autumn period and as a result, all regularly occurring species except King Eider were seen.

SNOW GEESE reports were primarily from Hants and Digby Cos. On Brier I. 17 ads. and one imm. were seen, Oct. 8-11 (NSBS). ROH observed one at the Debert Game Sanctuary, Oct. 31. On Nov. 4, J. Robertson had one at Windsor, Hants Co. and six at Berwick, Kings Co., Nov. 4. PAM and JWW report the Windsor bird late into this period.

From the many observations of CANADA GEESE, migration was very well underway. CAM reported 2000+ at the Glace Bay Sanctuary and Lingan Bay, CB Co. Oct. 31, up from 400 seen Oct. 2 (DBM). On Nov. 7, along the Colchester Northumberland shore, 1,500 were at each of Brule and Sand Pt. (KJM). Other healthy numbers were 500 at the Melbourne Game Sanctuary, Yar. Co. Oct. 23 (PRG, Jacqueline d'Entremont) and 1200 in the Centreville-Silver L. area, Kings Co. (*fide* JWW). At Lyles Bay, Shel. Co.,

MUN spotted seven small or "cackling Canada Geese not much larger than a duck". All but one sighting of BRANT were from the CSI area. Team North members of the NS Nature Trust Birdathon (KJM, FHM, MAB) saw



three fly by the tip of The Hawk, Oct. 2. MUN had three, Oct. 16, four, Nov. 27 and 17, Dec. 5 at the Cape Light. CGB

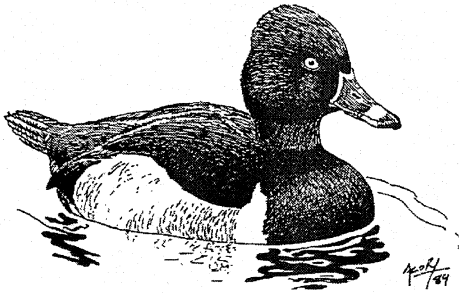
had one Brant with a flock of Canada Geese from Black Pt., Pict. Co., Dec. 3. Brant are rarely seen in Pict. Co. where most sightings are from the spring.

I received 13 reports of WOOD DUCK including two from Mud I., Yar. Co., Sept. 29 (BLM) and two fems. and a male from Sable I. Oct. 27 (ZOL). A whopping 225 were at Goose Creek Marsh, Yar. Co., Sept. 9. Eclipse males, like the seven seen at Canard Pond, Kings Co. (ELM), gave way to brighter late fall birds such as the long-standing male seen throughout the fall at Smelt Brook Park in North Sydney (var. obs.).

Except for the Oct. 7 observation of seven GADWALL at Goose Creek Marsh, Yar. Co. (RSD), and two at the West Lawrencetown Marsh (DWP, JAP), most of the other sightings took place during the last week of October and the first week of November. These included one fem. at Harris' Pond, Kings Co., one fem. at the New Minas sewage ponds, both Oct. 31 (JWW), three at Sherbrooke, Guys. Co., Nov. 7 (MZG, RFL) and two at Bissett L., HRM, Nov. 13-14 (PLC, JEH). A trio were noted at

Abercrombie, Pict. Co., Nov. 21 (CGB, KJM).

EURASIAN WIGEON were reported from the northern mainland at Antigonish Landing, one ad. male, Oct. 17 (RFL) and a molting male at Williams Pt., Ant. Co. (NSBS) Nov. 20. In the Abercrombie area of the East R. of Pictou, a male was seen Nov. 6 (KJM, Gary Murray) in the same area that one wintered last year. On Nov. 24, JCZ



reported one at each of Sullivans Pond and Tufts Cove, HRM and ZOL had one fem. or young male with a strongly rufous head and neck on Sable I. Oct. 3 - Nov. 3. AM. WIGEON were in good numbers in many locales. Antigonish landing had 50 during the reporting season (RFL) and 60 were at the West Marsh Lawrencetown, HRM, Oct. 19 (DWP, JAP). At the Beacon St. Dam, Glace Bay, CAM saw 36, up from the 18 observed Oct. 24 (The Tozers, DBM, RWK, SEM). On Oct. 25 JCT had 16 at Harris' Pond, Kings Co. PLC and JEH reported 30 at Bissett L. and 25 on Sullivans Pond, Nov. 14. On a trip to Bissett L., JWW noted two American Wigeon "attending" American coots - maybe they were trying to get spilled or hanging vegetation etc. brought up by the coots.

AM. BLACK DUCKS were only reported by a handful of observers, but from numbers I observed along the Northumberland shore and from the feelings expressed by DWP and JAP that "blacks appear plentiful from Dartmouth to Lawrencetown, HRM but there are more and more mallards as well". DBM tallied a couple of thousand blacks everywhere from Wentworth Park in Sydney to Louisbourg in all sizes of water bodies. JWW asks the question "Can anyone tell me why the authorities have not synonymized

(lumped) the mallards and blacks to Mack Ducks or Blallards. Is it because ducks are prone to hybridize rather freely and any lumping may open the floodgates to further lumping?"

The MALLARD appears to have a stronghold in Kings Co. with 50 at Harris' Pond, Canning, Nov. 24 (JCT), 100+ just N of Wolfville and another 100+ in the New Minas sewage lagoons Dec. 1 (JWW). Four of the latter were doing shallow dives. DBM found a few dozen Oct. 2 in Sydney and Glace Bay, but only in city parks. Bunkers I., Yar. Co. had 22 Dec. 4 (PRG). Although Fred Dobson asked for reports on hybrid Black-Mallards in the Spring issue of this magazine, the only mention of one was at Antigonish Landing, Dec. 6 (RFL).

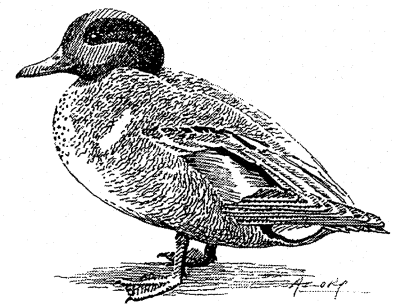
There were a sprinkling of BLUE-WINGED TEAL reports in various areas of the province tapering out in late September. TEP had 200 at Amherst Pt., Sept. 11. A group of seven seen in early October in Big Pond, Florence, CB Co. had dwindled to one late bird Oct. 23 (DBM). Other late sightings were two at Little Hbr., Shel. Co., Oct. 4 (DHY) and one at Belleisle Marsh, Anna. Co., Nov. 2 (PEH). Another spectacular sighting, this time from Daniels Hbr., CSI, was an ad. CINNAMON TEAL reported to the Bird Line Sept. 27 (MUN) and seen subsequently until the end of the first week of October (var. obs.). ELM and IAM note, "This bird appeared a little paler than a full alternate-plumaged bird and presumably had not quite completed its molt out of eclipse. Cinnamon Teal leave eclipse plumage as early as mid-summer so this bird may not have been an escape, particularly since there have been no Cinnamon Teal in local collections recently to the knowledge of MUN."

Late fall brought a few N. SHOVELER reports with JCT reporting a pair at Canard Pond, Kings Co., Oct. 22. On Nov. 1, JWW reported one male and two fems. at the same location. At Saxon Pond, Kings Co. AAM had three (one male), Oct. 27. In early December, a male was near the New Glasgow sewage plant (CGB) and later reported to be

coming to a yard duck pond of Ed Cormier until the pond froze over in mid-December

In Little Hbr., Shel. Co., a N. PINTAIL with six fledglings was seen Aug. 9 by DHY and represented the first brood he had seen in this area. The following reports give a sense of the migration period for pintail with three at Cape John, Pict. Co., Sept. 18 and 10 from Big I., Pict. Co., Sept. 20. A male in Lunenburg Hbr. was the first for the season for ELM but by late November, three pair were present. RFL and MZG had four at Port Joli, Queens Co. Oct. 14. Other sightings were from North Sydney, a male (DBM) Nov. 29 and two Nov. 11 at Sweeneys Pond, Pembroke, Yar. Co. (PRG, RSD). Reports from JWW included two fems. at Canard Pond, Kings Co. Nov. 1 & 7, two males in the river at Canning, Nov. 19 and one male in New Minas sewage ponds, Dec. 1. The summer GARGANEY at Belleisle Marsh was last seen by U.S. visitors Don and Carol Broderick Aug. 23 (*fide* IAM).

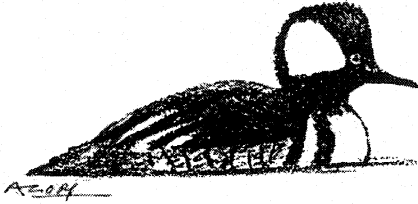
The numbers of GREEN-WINGED TEAL remained high late in the fall and I suspect some record numbers will occur on CBCs. A high of 200 were present in Canard Pond, Kings Co., Nov. 6-7 (JWW). From Mud I., Yar. Co., BLM reported 60. Both Betsey Park, Pict. Co. (KJM, CGB) and Antigonish



Landing (RFL) had numbers in the 20's up to the deadline.

A number of other western duck species appeared about the same time that the Cinnamon Teal was first noted. A fem. CANVASBACK was found at Daniels Hd., Sept. 26 (MUN) and a REDHEAD was found Sept. 23 at the Beacon St.

Dam, Glace Bay (CAM). I received about 20 reports of RING-NECKED DUCKS with noteworthy numbers of 22 Oct. 16 (DBM), at St. Josephs, CB Co, four on Sable I. Oct. 16-27 (ZOL), 21 at Masons Beach Pond, Lun. Co. Oct. 30



(ELM), and 50 at Bissett L., HRM, Nov. 14 (BLM, IAM, Mary McLaren).

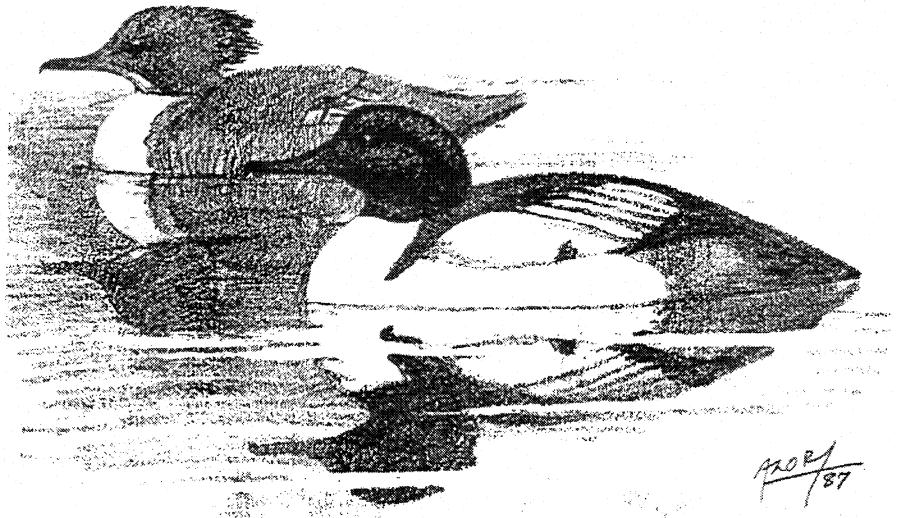
TUFTED DUCKS are becoming quite regular now with JWW reporting a fem. with no noticeable tuft and a imm. male at Canard pond, Kings Co., Nov. 1-7. Another fem. was discovered at Bissett L., HRM, Nov. 14 (IAM). CGB found an ad. male by sorting through over 2000 GREATER SCAUP in the Abercrombie Pt. area of the East R. of Pictou, Dec. 4. The Pictou Hbr. Greater Scaup numbered 900 from the Middle R. Dyke, Aug. 15 and over 1600, Sept. 1 (KJM). Other Greater Scaup reported were 35 from L. South Cove, Lun. Co., six at Back Hbr., Oct. 30 (ELM), 75 from Bissett L., HRM, Nov. 14 (BLM, IAM, Mary McLaren), and 300 from Big I., Pict. Co., Nov. 29. Large flocks of scaup often yield a few LESSER SCAUP when studied with experienced eyes. At Bissett L., 10 were seen (BLM, IAM and Mary McLaren) while from Yar. Co., PRG noted 28 at Cranberry Hd., Chegoggin Nov. 14 and MUN had 15 at Pembroke, Oct. 31. JWW observed three fems./imms. Oct. 31 and Nov. 6 at Harris' Pond, Canning and a pair Nov. 19 in Port Williams sewage lagoon Kings Co.

COMMON EIDER were likely under-reported with 60 at Short Beach Breakwater, Yar. Co., Oct. 24 (PRG and Jacqueline d'Entremont), 100 at Black Rock Nov. 24 (RBS), 70 from Mud. I., Yar. Co., Sept. 29 (BLM). I am sure many more of these birds were present along the entire coastline. Four flyby HARLEQUIN DUCKS were seen off Hartlen Pt., Oct. 9 (IAM, TIA, Mary

McLaren) and a similar number from Caribou I., Pict. Co., Dec. 4 (CGB). Other Harlequins were reported: four from Prospect Cove, Nov. 18, BLM, one at Cape Light by Sou'West birders Oct. 20, two males in Margaretsville, Anna. Co., Nov. 5, one Dec. 2 Daniels Hd. (MUN), and a fem. at Livingstone Cove, Ant. Co. Dec. 4 (KJM, CGB, IAM, BLM).

Many observers reported Scoters with some of the higher totals from CB Co. A range of 120 -175 SURF SCOTER were noted at Indian Brook, Vic. Co., Oct. 17 (DBM), Margaretsville-Parkers Cove, Nov. 24 (RBS), and Big Is., Pict. Co., Sept. 20 (KJM). DBM counted 250 WHITE-WINGED SCOTER at South Bar, Sept. 28, and a similar total at North Sydney Nov. 28. RBS had 220+ from Margaretsville- Parkers Cove, Anna. Co., Nov. 24. The largest group of BLACK SCOTER noted was 50 at Seal I., Sept. 28 (BLM).

Indian Head Park, of Black-tailed Gull fame, was the location of the first report of autumn OLDSQUAW, Oct. 22 (RWK, DBM), followed by the outer harbour of Louisbourg, Oct. 28 (SEM) and reaching Petite Riviere, Lun. Co., Oct. 30 with JAH seeing 17. On Oct. 31, PRG reported eight at Short Beach Breakwater, Yar. Co. thereafter becoming widespread. Of interest, RWK reported 24 from the NS side of a ferry trip to Nfld., Oct. 31 and he also claims the highest reporting number of 250 from Cape Percé, CB Co., Nov. 28.



The Tower Rd. settling ponds provided the first report of BUFFLEHEAD with three seen, Oct. 8 (CAM). By mid-October, reports were coming from Port Williams sewage pond (JCT) and by Oct. 23 in the Melbourne Game Sanctuary, Yar. Co. (PRG) which had 63, Oct. 30. RBS had 50 in Margaretsville, Nov. 24. By Aug. 24, six COMMON GOLDENEYE were seen with the 1700 scaup at the Pictou Causeway. This number increased to many hundreds especially in the West R. of Pictou by late fall (KJM). Elsewhere, most reports were from mid-October to early November. North Sydney had about 60, Nov. 29 (DBM) while 50 were noted from Ogdens Pond, Ant. Co., Nov. 27 (RFL). A male BARROW'S GOLDENEYE was found at the prolific Ogdens Pond, Nov. 20 (NSBS). JAC reported five males and a fem. Barrow's on the Westmount side of Sydney Hbr. on the same date. Wentworth Park, Sydney had a male, Nov. 27 and North Sydney had a pair, Nov. 29 (DBM). Also on Nov. 27, two males and a fem. were observed from Abercrombie, Pict. Co. (CGB, KJM).

HOODED MERGANSER was probably the most widely reported diving duck, likely because they are so eye-catching; however, I think they are becoming increasingly more common especially on the mainland. In CB Co., RWK reported 15 to be a maximum in the Glace Bay area by Nov. 28, but on the mainland, some impressive numbers were recorded

with 40 at Belleisle Marsh, Anna. Co., Sept. 20 (BLF), 34 at Williams Pt., Ant. Co., Nov. 6 (RFL), 100 Nov. 24 on the partially drained Saxon Pond, Kings Co. (JCT), 175 at Haliburton Gut, Pict. Co., Nov. 27, with an additional 25 at Tatamagouche (KJM, Brian Dalzell). By Dec. 6, 20 were in the Sutherlands R. just off the TCH 104 (CGB, KJM, Gary Murray). Only a few reports came in for COMMON MERGANSERS. MET reported 70 on Murphys L., Kings Co., Nov. 22 and JCT noted 20 from Drain L., HRM, Nov. 24. On Nov. 8, KJM

encountered a couple of thousand mixed Common and RED-BREASTED MERGANSERS at Chance Hbr. in Pict. Co. in a feeding frenzy with Bonaparte's Gulls. "At one point I had a Hooded, Common and Red-breasted Merganser in the same binocular field." Other Red-breasted Merganser were noted from Pt. Edward, CB Co., Sept. 29 with 10 recorded (JAC and Bruce Watson), and 100 offshore from Jimtown, Ant. Co., Nov. 20 (RFL). As well as the thousands seen Nov. 8 at Chance Hbr., KJM had another flock of 1500 flying out of

Merigomish Hbr. and on Dec. 6, 2000 were still in Merigomish Hbr. as seen from Melmerby Beach (KJM, CGB).

Given the number of western species already noted, it was no surprise to have an impressive number of RUDDY DUCKS reported. Reports started in mid-October from Canard Pond (JCT), and ended with two fems. on Sable I., Nov. 28-29 (ZOL). Others were as follows:

Ruddy Duck Sightings

Date	Number	Location	Observers
Oct. 31	seven	Pembroke, Yar. Co.	MUN
	one	First L., Lower Sackville	PEL
Nov. 8	seven	Sand Pt. Col. Co.	KJM
Nov. 7	nine	Bakers Flats, CSI	MUN
Nov. 6	two	Pembroke, Yar. Co.	MUN
Nov. 6-7	one	Donkin, CB Co.	CAM, SEM, RWK
Nov. 8-9	two	Cranberry Hd., Yar. Co.	PRG
mid-late November	two to five	Bissett L.	var. obs.

Diurnal Raptors Through Cranes

By Richard Knapton

Reports of OSPREYS were scattered throughout the province, from CB to the south shore. There were 17 reports of 25 birds, mostly of ones and twos. Don McLaughlin had five separate sightings of Ospreys Aug. 11 between Kearney L. and Fairview Cove, Kings Co., "three being carried by flying fish, as CLS would say", and five were noted on Seal I. Sept. 28 (BLM). The latest reported were two Oct. 13 on Brier I. (DOE, DHY) and one Oct. 14 at Schooner Pond, CB Co. (DBM). Hot on the heels of an AMERICAN SWALLOW-TAILED KITE report from the summer was another this fall; RFL spotted the bird while birding around Canso, Guys. Co., and scoping over to Grassy I. NHS Sept. 19.

Most reports of BALD EAGLES in August came from CB (DBM *et al.*). Migratory movements were evident in

the two imms. among a kettle of hawks on Big I. , Pict. Co., Aug. 27 (AAM), five during a hawk flight at Brier I. Sept. 4 (var. obs.), singles there up to Oct. 10 (RBS *et al.*), and one on Seal I. Oct. 19 (IAM, JOW). Pre-winter gatherings in Kings Co. included five to ten at Grand Pré, Kings Co., Sept. 18 (JWW) and 10 ad. plus 10 imm. at Canard Pond, Kings Co., Nov. 23 (JCT). In Pict. Co. seven were at Big I. Sept. 20 (KJM), and four (two ad. and two imm.) were at Ogdens Pond, Ant. Co Dec. 6 (RFL, MZG). A nest in a hardwood tree along the N. shore of Starrs Pt., Kings Co., newly-discovered by S. Bondrup-Nielsen, had an ad. sitting in it Nov. 15 (JWW). Reports of N. HARRIERS came in from throughout the province and throughout the reporting period. Most sightings involved ones and twos but some larger concentrations included seven at Prospect Pt. Aug. 31 (Dick Cannings),

25 during the hawk flight at Brier I. Sept. 4 (ELM, BLM) and eight there Sept. 26 (BLM), and 15 on CSI Sept. 18 (MUN *et al.*). One caught and ate a Least Sandpiper Aug. 29 at CSI (MUN *et al.*), and another, a fem., was the recipient of unwanted dives by a Peregrine Falcon at Amherst Pt., Cum. Co., Aug. 9 (RBS).

An early movement of SHARP-SHINNED HAWKS was recorded in late August, e.g., in the Wolfville Area, Kings Co. (JCT) and the Prospect area and Conrads Beach, HRM (Dick Cannings, DWP, JAP). September reports came in from throughout the province, from CB Co. to the S shore. Some respectable counts were made at the hawk watch at Brier I. There were over 100 Sept. 4 (ELM *et al.*), 12 Sept. 19 (AAM), 200+ Sept. 26 (NSBS), and 500+ Oct. 8-11 (NSBS). Long I. turned

up 30 Sept. 27, and Seal I. 30 the following day (BLM). A small movement on Seal I. in mid-October tallied the following: Oct. 18 - none, Oct. 19 - 20, Oct. 20 - eight, Oct. 21 - four (IAM). During October, up to four a day were noted at Schooner Pond (RWK, CAM) and up to six at CSI (MUN *et al.*). Thereafter there were scattered records of single Sharp-shins in November from CB Co. to Lun. Co., often an unwanted visitor at bird feeders. There were no less than 13 reports of COOPER'S HAWKS this fall, compared to five in fall 1998. However, several reports did not note the sex or age of the

birds; this is particularly important early in the fall when all three accipiters would be undergoing moult, especially of the tail feathers. The first report came from Three Fathom Hbr., HRM, Aug. 2 (PER), followed by one along Hwy. 101 near Middleton, Anna. Co., Aug. 9 (AAM, GWT), three (a male, a fem., and an unknown) during a hawk watch at Brier I. Sept. 4 (JOW, BLM, ELM, Angela Thibodeau), one at CSI Sept. 26 (JON *et al.*), three on Brier I. Sept. 25 - 26 (NSBS), an imm. fem. at Long I., Digby Co., Sept. 27, an ad. fem. on Seal I., Yar. Co., Sept. 28 (BLM *et al.*), and finally one at CSI Oct. 16 (MUN *et al.*).

N. GOSHAWKS were particularly well represented throughout the province. The species is classed as 'of concern' in the province so the following shows just how widespread the birds were this fall: Over thirty individuals were reported, of which 13 came from CB Co. and eight from the other extreme end of the province, Brier I. These reports spanned the entire reporting period (var. obs.). JAH watched one catch a duck on Wallace L., Lun. Co. Aug. 29 and then appear to swim ashore dragging the duck behind it. The other sightings were as follows:

Northern Goshawk Sightings

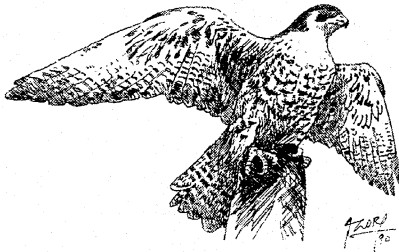
DATE	#	LOCATION	OBSERVERS
Aug. 6	ad. male	Wolfville Ridge	JCT
Sept. 5	one	Belleisle, Anna. Co.	PEH, Lorraine Hope
Sept. 19	one	Sober I. HRM	KJM
Sept. 28	one	Seal I.	BLM
Oct. 19	one	Seal I.	IAM
	one adult	L. Rose Bay, Lun. Co.	ELM
Oct. 25	female	Wolfville Ridge	JCT
Nov. 4	one imm.	Pictou Landing	RFL
Nov. 6	one imm.	West Liscomb, Guys. Co.	HHH
Nov. 7	one adult	LaHave R., Lun. Co.	ELM
Nov. 7	one imm.	Liscomb, Guys. Co.	MZG, RFL
Nov. 11	one	Melbourne, Yar. Co.	PRG, Jacqueline d'Entremont
Nov. 13	one	Hampton, Anna. Co.	RBS
Nov. 18	one imm. fem.	HRM	BLM
Nov. 20	one imm.	Bayfield, Ant. Co.	NSBS

In keeping with recent falls, there were a handful of RED-SHOULDERED HAWK reports. One was found at Southside, CSI Aug. 24 (JON), and an imm. was seen during hawk migration Sept. 26 at Brier I. (NSBS). Most reports of BROAD-WINGED HAWKS came from Brier I. (var. obs.); the first hint of migrants was on Sept. 4 when 200 in four very high kettles drifted over the island on light NE winds (ELM). Thereafter the first half of September produced a few scattered sightings, before the next major

concentration was noted, a kettle of 200 Sept. 19, to be followed Sept. 25 by two kettles, one of about 400 (that appeared to dissipate over the ocean to the south) and the other of 110, and Sept. 26 when 600 were reported (BLM), and finally Oct. 8-11 when 50 were noted. There were a few reports elsewhere, with one at Clyde R. Aug. 1 (MUN) and an imm. near New Waterford, CB Co., Oct. 22 being noteworthy (Ron and Doug Tozer), and a fairly late bird, an imm., at Brier I. Nov. 14 (ELM, AHM). RED-TAILED HAWKS were under-reported.

Possible migratory individuals were seen during hawk watches include 15+ at Brier I., Sept. 26 (NSBS), three there, Oct. 11 (RBS), and 11 from Digby Neck to Brier I. Nov. 13 (ELM, AHM). Reports of ROUGH-LEGGED HAWKS were very few: one at Hortonville, Kings Co. Oct. 13 (JCT), a dark morph individual seen over French L., CBHNP, Oct. 19 (Ron and Doug Tozer), and in Yar. Co., one at Deerfield Oct. 31 and one at Tusket Nov. 4 (PRG).

A kettle of hawks over Big I., Pict. Co. Aug. 27 contained three Red-tailed Hawks, one Sharp-shinned Hawk, a larger Accipiter, two Bald Eagles, and what appeared to be an imm. GOLDEN EAGLE (AAM). An ad. Golden Eagle over Brier I. during a major hawk migration Sept. 26 was a fine sighting



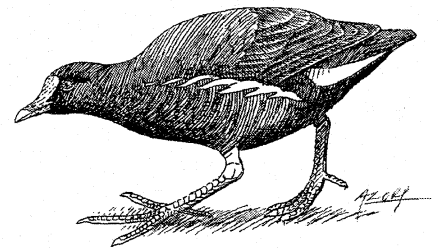
(BLM), and another was on the island Oct. 11-13 (DOE, DHY). Finally, an ad. was reported at Bear R., Anna. Co. Nov. 21 (JET).

There were a few scattered reports of A. KESTREL, from CB to the southern NS islands. Most CB records were of singles seen during August and September, after which the species was rarely reported, although a male at Schooner Pond Nov. 3 was late (CAM). On the mainland, probable family parties included groups of five, two and three in the New Salem area, Cum. Co. Aug. 19 (KFS), three at South Side Hbr., Ant. Co. Aug. 31 (MZG, RFL), six from Perch L. to Bridgeville Aug. 13 (KJM), and three at Burntcoat Head, Hants Co. Sept. 5 (JWW). The first notable concentration of the season was 15 in the Prospect area, HRM Aug. 31 (Dick Cannings), followed by 50 on Brier I. Sept. 4 (ELM, BLM). Migration was also evident in Yar. Co. with eight records, including two on CSI Sept. 12 and two at the Melbourne Game Sanctuary Oct. 23 (var. obs.). On Seal I., there were 16 found Oct. 19-21 (IAM, JOW). A fem. at Port l'Hebert, Shel. Co. Nov. 28 was late (DHY). As usual, far more MERLINS than Kestrels were reported throughout the province. Over a dozen records came from CB; among these were a family group of three at Louisbourg Aug. 13 (DBM, Eric McCorquodale, Megan McCorquodale), one chasing a Hudsonian Godwit (of all target birds!) around a Glace Bay

parking lot Oct. 26 (CAM), and one chasing Bohemian Waxwings at Sydney Mines Nov. 28 (DBM). Up to six chased shorebirds and later starlings, sometimes successfully, at Grand Pré, Kings Co., July 28 - Oct. 25 (var. obs.), and several were seen during hawk watches during August and September at Hartlen Pt., HRM (FLL). Two near Advocate, Cum. Co., Aug. 3 chased shorebirds, successfully catching one (KFS). Nova Scotia's southern islands typically produce the highest numbers of this species, although daily totals this fall were below those of last year. There were 25 on Brier I. Sept. 4 (ELM, BLM), eighteen Oct. 18-21 on Seal I. (IAM, JOW), and a maximum of three Oct. 2 on CSI (MUN). Only four reports of PEREGRINE FALCONS were received and there were no exceptional concentrations. A single bird was observed in CB Sept. 9 - Oct. 31 (CAM, SEM, RWK) and numbers on Seal I. reached a high of six on Sept. 28 (BLM). Up to two ad. and two imm. harassed shorebirds at Evangeline Beach, Kings Co., July 27 - Aug. 8 (nine reports, var. obs.), probably of local birds. Away from the southern islands, there were only four other reports, from Aug. 2, an imm. at Three Fathom Hbr., HRM (PER) to a long-staying individual at Cherry Hill Beach, Lun. Co., Sept. 6 - Oct. 10 (SJF). One was at Clyde R. Aug. 1 (MUN). CSI hosted up to four Aug. 24 - Oct. 30 (var. obs.), and Brier I. also up to four, Sept. 4 - Oct. 11 (var. obs.). The only *anatum* was a male Oct. 19 - 20 on Seal I. (IAM, JOW). On Sable I., there were two individuals Sept. 25 - Oct. 3, two Oct. 17, and the latest one Nov. 3 (ZOL). In keeping with recent years, the first GYRFALCON appeared on CSI on the relatively early date of Sept. 18 (MUN *et al.*). It, or another, was seen thereafter by var. obs. up to Oct. 30. On Oct. 16, at Cape Light, CSI, it was watched harassing a Peregrine, forcing it to let go of a prey item. The Gyrfalcon swooped down and caught the prey in mid-air. One on CSI Nov. 23 was likely a different individual (G. Milroy). A dark-phase bird was seen at Blanche, Shel. Co. Oct. 11 (MUN *et al.*), and a dark phase, probably imm. fem., on Seal I. Oct. 19 set out across the Gulf of Maine (IAM, JOW, BEM). It is likely that as many as four different

birds were involved.

There were no reports of GRAY PARTRIDGE, and only a handful of reports of RING-NECKED PHEASANTS, usually involving single birds. A fem. with two chicks, with a male nearby, were found at Grand Pré, Kings Co. Aug. 15 (Don McLaughlin), there were eight at Chezzetcook Inlet, Hfx. Co., Sept. 8 (Brian Monk), two males at Coxheath, CB Co., Oct. 16 (DBM), a male and three fems. in Wolfville, Kings Co., mid-November (BBT), and three at Hartlen Pt., HRM Nov. 22 (TEP). RUFFED GROUSE barely received a mention from most obs., with a total of six reports, and only from Kings, Cum. and CB Cos. A male was drumming at Schooner Pond at noon Oct. 2 (DBM). SPRUCE GROUSE did not receive much attention either. There were reports of single males from Bear R., Anna. Co. (T. Hall), near Canning, Kings Co. (B. and E. Mason), near New Salem, Cum. Co. (KFS), and Kennington Cove, CB Co. (RWK). WILD TURKEYS do not deserve much mention as they are probably released illegally. There were about 25 on Seal I. in late October (IAM). There was quite a bit of debate surrounding N. BOBWHITE. Eight were reported in the Belleisle area, Anna. Co. in November (PEH), and this prompted reports of released birds in the Lockeport and Baccaro areas of Yar. Co. (DHY) and in the White Rock - Kingston area, Kings Co. (AAM).



The only report of a VIRGINIA RAIL was at Daniels Head, CSI Sept. 18 (var. obs.). A handful of reports of SORAS came in, starting with an ad. and two imms. at Harris' Pond, Kings Co. Aug. 13, a product of local breeding success (JCT). There were perhaps as many as

four at Belleisle, Anna. Co. Sept. 5 (PEH, Lorraine Hope), and three at Goose Creek Marsh, Roberts I., Shel. Co. Sept. 9 (MUN).

Once again, A. COOTS put on a good show. There were a couple of September reports: one at Bisset L., Dartmouth, HRM, Sept. 24 (PLC, JEH), and one on Seal I. Sept. 28 (BLM). Most records were in late October and November (why so late?). Harris' Pond, Kings Co., was a favoured location, with six records

of single birds Oct. 22 - Nov. 23 (JCT, JWW); there were two at Amherst Pt. Oct. 22 (TEP) and one Nov. 26 at Port Williams, Kings Co. (JCT, JWW). On Bisset L., HRM, numbers built up from one Oct. 24 (PLC, JEH), to 12 Nov. 14 (IAM, Mary McLaren), and finally to 17 Nov. 22 (JWW). At Beacon St. Dam, Glace Bay, CB Co., numbers this fall did not match those of last year, with a maximum of three Nov. 7-15 (CAM, RWK, SEM). Two on Sable I. Oct. 27 - Nov. 3 provided an interesting record

(ZOL). Elsewhere in the province, there were ones and twos from Brier I. around the S Shore to HRM from Oct. 22 - Nov. 28 (var. obs.).

Similar to last year, a SANDHILL CRANE turned up and stayed for a long time, much to the satisfaction of many birders. One was located at Lanark, Ant. Co., Sept. 26 (Anne Camozzi, RFL) and was seen regularly up to the end of the season (var. obs.). One was reported in the Middleton area, Anna. Co. Nov. 3 (Robert Phinney).

Shorebirds

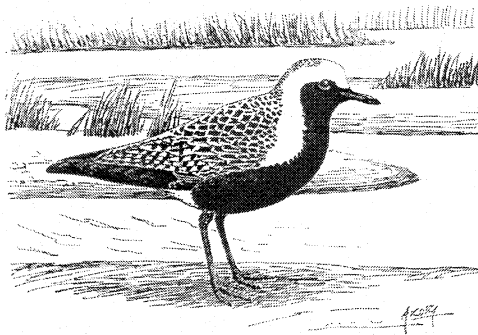
By Sylvia Fullerton

Shorebirds appeared in good numbers and many lingered to the end of the reporting period. Murray Newell and Johnny Nickerson estimated 20,000 at CSI, August 5 while Judy Tufts estimated up to 250,000, "a magnificent sight," at Evangeline Beach, August 6. Approximately 4,000 were still at CSI, November 6, dwindling to 1,000 by the end of the month.

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER continued their passage in respectable numbers, with a combined total of 300 at the Windsor Causeway, as well as Cheverie and Summerville Beaches, Hants Co., Aug. 8 & 9. In the northern part of the province where numbers are traditionally lower, a high count of 23 was achieved at Powell Pt. PP, Aug. 15 (KJM), and 63 at Dominion Beach, CB, Sept. 7 (DBM). Peaks for the major concentration points were average: 75 at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co., Aug. 23 (JSC); 200 at The Hawk, CSI, Aug. 29 (ELM, AHM); 200 at Windsor Causeway, Sept. 18 (JCT). Last seen among the declining numbers were 30 at The Hawk, CSI, Nov. 28 (MUN, JON). Although the AM. GOLDEN PLOVER was widely distributed, numbers were low. First to be seen were two at Daniels Hd., CSI, Aug. 29 (ELM, JON). Peaks were: 20 at Hartlen Pt., HRM, Sept. 21 (FLL); 28 at Sydney Airport, Sept. 5-7, 12 of which lingered until Oct. 24 (RWK, DBM, *et al.*); 20 at Grand Pré, Sept. 15 (JCT).

Although the SEMIPALMATED PLOVER was widespread and abundant

there were no major concentrations. JCT seemed to find flocks of 100 to 350 on all the Hants and Kings Co. beaches she visited Aug. 6-9. Up to 500 were counted at each of the major coastal concentration points from mid-August to early September. The peak count was 1,700 at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co., Aug. 17 (JSC). In CB 85 were tallied at Pt. Michaud, Rich. Co., Aug. 28 (NSBS *vide* DBM). Three out of the 150 birds seen during the migration at Lockeport's Crescent Beach, Shel. Co. lingered until Oct. 31 (DJC). An unusually late bird was still at Wolfville Hbr., Nov. 24



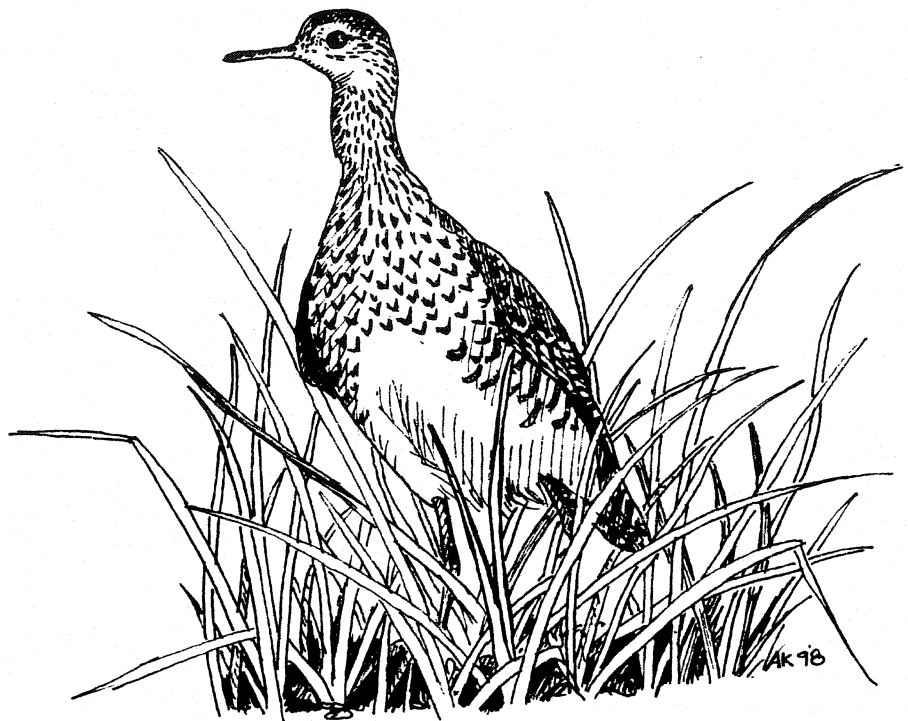
(JET). The PIPING PLOVER fared well this season, particularly in the southern part of the province. ETP, who coordinates the Piping Plover Guardian Program for NS, reported success for 1999: 49 breeding pairs, 79 fledged young. This is a significant increase over last year with only 36 breeding pairs and 64 young. Many wandering juv. were noted on our beaches in late August, some of which were banded. Last seen was a single bird on Melmerby Beach,

Pict. Co., Sept. 19 (MAB). The usual gathering of KILLDEER was at Sydney Airport, up to 22 Sept. 5 & 7 (RWK, SEM, DBM). Singles were noted from various locations and up to five were at Saxon St. Pond, Kings Co., Nov. 4 & 6 (ELM, JWW). One, perhaps hanging in for the CBC, was at Argyle, Yar. Co., Nov. 30 (MUN). Out on Sable I. two passed through Sept. 3 & Oct. 16 (ZOL).

The three AM. OYSTERCATCHERS on CSI, one of which was seen carrying food in mid-July, surprised the CSI birders Aug. 21 with a carefully kept secret, a handsome juvenile. The event was cause for jubilation as it was the third season the oystercatchers had attempted to nest and hope was fading. This furnishes the first successful nesting record for Canada. Thanks go to the birders of the South Shore who watched over these nesting birds. One ad. disappeared Aug. 24 but the imm. and the other two ad. stayed for all to see until Sept. 18. An exciting find for JCZ and ABM was not one but five striking BLACK-NECKED STILTS at the Windsor Causeway, Sept. 17. Good views were had in spite of the deteriorating conditions and the birds were well described. The visit was short-lived, unfortunately, as they only stayed in sight for 15 minutes and could not be relocated the following days. This constitutes the sixth record for the province. It is possible that they had been hurricane-driven, as Floyd had passed offshore earlier in the week.

A **COM. GREENSHANK** put down at Daniels Hd., CSI, but only for the afternoon of Sept. 10. It was watched as it fed with Greater Yellowlegs and all the key field marks were noted: light grey on the basal part of the bill, strikingly white-backed in flight, greenish legs (JON, MUN). It was only a matter of time before one appeared in this prime area and it provides the second record for the province. The **GREATER YELLOWLEGS** is ubiquitous and lets its presence be known so it is not surprising that reports were so numerous. Numbers were average in August: 54 at Harris' Pond, Canning, Kings Co. Aug 9 & 19 (JCT, RBS); 75+ at The Hawk, CSI, Aug. 29 (ELM, AHM); 88 at Beach Meadows, Queens Co., Aug. 29 (JAH). TEP found 100+ at the APBS, Sept. 11, but by far the largest concentration was seen Sept. 12, with 250 at Chezzetcook Inlet, HRM (BLM, IAM). As is usual, flocks of up to 50 were still being seen in early October from Pinkneys Pt., Yar. Co to Morien Bar, CB. Many reports of lingerers were received, the last being one at CSI, Nov. 28. **LESSER YELLOWLEGS** were reported in average numbers. The McCorquodales counted a mix of 50 ads. and imms. at Maccan, Cum. Co., Aug. 7. Among many high counts were: 30 at Port Morien, CB, Sept. 3 (RWK); 95 along the E. Shore, Sept. 12 (BLM, IAM); 125 at CSI, Sept. 10 (MUN, JON). Lessers are seldom seen after early October but three were at Little Hbr., Shel. Co., Oct. 25, one at Waterside PP, Pict. Co., Nov. 14, and one was lingering at CSI at the end of the report period (DHY, KJM).

SOLITARY SANDPIPERS, usually seen in freshwater habitat during migration, were scarce, only nine birds were reported. A single bird was on CSI, Aug. 3, up to four Aug. 21, and three were still there as late as Sept. 19 (MUN, JON). Two were at Upper South Cove, Lun. Co., Aug. 8 and two at Broad Cove, Lun. Co., Aug. 10 (ELM, SJF). Another was in a pond in Wolfville, Aug. 28 & Sept. 8 (JCT). **WILLET**s had almost disappeared from our shores at the beginning of the report period. However, on Aug. 1 IAM counted 90 on Brier I., which he observed has become a regular staging



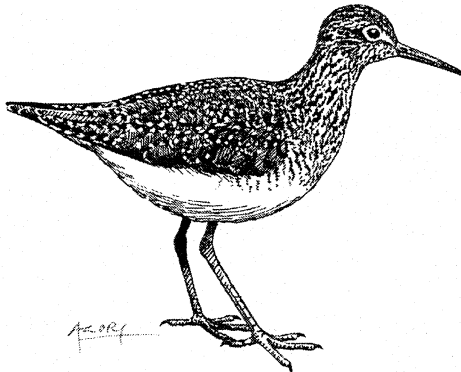
area for departing Willets. There were still 35 at Matthews L., Shel. Co., Aug. 3 and 30 at the Windsor Causeway, Aug. 8 (DHY, JCT). Delaying departure were seven at Dominion Beach, CB., Sept. 7 (DBM) and a single bird on Sable I., Sept. 9 (ZOL). FLL noted an individual of the western race at Hartlen Pt., HRM, Sept. 21. It is impossible to make any observation on the status of **SPOTTED SANDPIPERS** from the handful of reports received. To this observer they seemed in short supply. A very late migrant was on Caribou I., Pict. Co., Nov. 11, where late birds are not uncommon (KJM).

At least two scarce **UPLAND SANDPIPERS** visited this season. One was a post-hurricane bird at West Hd., Shel. Co., Sept. 18 and another, or the same, was being buffeted by wind and waves in the dunes at Lockeport's Crescent Beach, Shel. Co., Sept. 22 (DHY, DJC). A happy sight for John W. MacInnis was one he spotted on the Meadows Rd. near Sydney Forks, CB, Nov. 25 which was subsequently seen by many of the CB birders. This was a banner year for **WHIMBREL**. Good-sized flocks were seen, beginning with the 45 at Indian Pt., Prospect, HRM, Aug. 3 (BLM, Dick Cannings). Sable I.

hosted 20 Aug. 9 (ZOL). PRG and Jacqueline d'Entremont, who I hope will continue to monitor the Yar. Co. beaches, found 19 at Cheggogin Pt., Sept. 5. Hartlen Pt. Golf Course was home to 40+ juveniles Sept. 11 (IAM, ELM), "strutting around oblivious to both golfers and golf balls," says BLM, who had seen them earlier. On Sept. 6, 20 were at Dominion Beach, CB (RWK, ALM, CAM) and 30 at Conrads Beach, HRM (DWP, JAP). The last seen were two at Grand Pré, Sept. 13 and one at Cherry Hill Beach, Sept. 18 (JCT, JET, BBT).

It was an average season for **HUDSONIAN GODWIT**. Ten were at Matthews L., Shel. Co., Aug. 10, a traditional feeding area (DHY). ELM and AHM had a peak count of 35 at CSI, Aug. 29, probably assembling for the long flight to South America. Ones and twos were reported from West Apple R., Cum. Co., Brier I. and Waterside PP, Pict. Co. in mid-October. Seventeen, a high count, were at Conrads Beach, HRM, Oct. 16 (ULH). Instead of choosing mud flats, five individuals set down and hungrily probed a grassy boulevard in front of a shopping area in Glace Bay, Oct. 13, "a strange sight," say the Murrants. The last sighting was

of a single bird at CSI, Nov. 25. The sighting of the rare MARBLED GODWIT has become almost an annual occurrence in the fall. Two visited Big I., Pict. Co., Aug. 20-26 (KJM, JEM) and another was at Dominion Beach, CB, Sept. 6 & 7 (ALM, CAM). It has been reported that heavy snow



cover and a late snow melt caused delayed breeding in many shorebirds in the high Arctic and NE Greenland. Many turnstones and knots were reputed not to have bred at all. This might account in part for the few birds that reached us. RUDDY TURNSTONE numbers were very low with only a total of 100 birds being reported in August and September. On the mainland, peak counts of 15 were the average from CSI to Port Bickerton, Guys. Co. On Sable I. 15+ were tallied Aug. 8 (ZOL) and in Rich. Co. only three were counted at Pt. Michaud after a day's search on Aug. 28 (NSBS). The highest count of 30 was at CSI, Nov. 18, where two lingered until Nov. 28 (MUN, CST). With one exception, RED KNOTS were also in disappointingly low numbers. CSI had a high count of 150 Nov. 18, with 65 still present Nov. 28 (JON, MUN). Elsewhere numbers were dismal: only eight at Cherry Hill Beach, Lun. Co., Sept. 8; two at Three Fathom Hbr., HRM, Sept. 8 (BLM, Brian Monk); 12 at Dominion Beach, CB, Sept. 9 (RWK).

SANDERLING were widespread and in unprecedented numbers, with an early high of 600+ on Sable I., Aug. 10 (ZOL). Some mainland beaches reached peaks in mid-September, such as Cherry Hill Beach, Lun. Co. with 249 Sept. 12

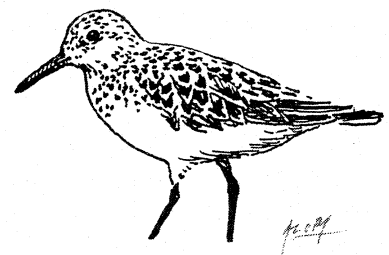
and Crescent Beach, Lun. Co. with 212 Sept. 12, but the major peak seemed to be mid-October, perhaps the result of the late breeding season mentioned above. ELM and AHM counted 1,000+ on CSI Oct. 10. In CB, where numbers are always lower, 200 were tallied at Schooner Pond, Oct. 16 (RWK). Conrads Beach, HRM hosted 1500+ Oct. 20 (DWP, JAP). Up to 50 could be found on beaches from Yar. Co. to CB to the end of November, even little Mud I., Yar. Co. was home to 40 Sept. 29 (BLM). By Nov. 13 MUN estimated 3,000 on CSI, surely the highest number on record. Paling by comparison, but perhaps significant for the area, were 18 at Powells Pt., Pict. Co., Nov. 13 (MAB *et al.*). As they always do 130+ lingered on Sable I. to Nov. 27.

Numbers of SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPERS were as high as any on record. At Pond Cove, Brier I. IAM counted 450 Aug. 1, more than he usually sees there. At their prime staging area at Evangeline Beach, Kings Co. JCT estimated up to 250,000 Aug. 6. Numbers were also impressive at Hants Co. spots, Cheverie Beach and Windsor Causeway, with 30,000-40,000 Aug. 8 & 9. Numbers peaked again in late August/early September: 500 at CSI, Aug. 29 (ELM, AHM); 250 at Three Fathom Hbr., HRM, Sept. 8 (BLM, Brian Monk); 250 at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co., Sept. 6 (JSC); 400 at Long I., Digby Co., Sept. 5 (BLM *et al.*). The highest count achieved in CB was 35 at Pt. Michaud, Rich. Co., Aug. 28 (DBM). Smaller numbers were seen at most beaches until late October and five, late-lingering Semipalmated or Westerns, were still being seen at CSI, Nov. 25 (MUN, JON). Although distinguishing W. SANDPIPERS from Semipalmated is not always certain, it is generally possible, and MUN and JON have been working on this difficult ID-problem. A convincing identification was made there of a juv. Western Aug. 14 and another was seen Oct. 2 in winter/basic plumage.

The four species of Eurasian "stints" are well known to present serious ID-challenges. There is a confirmed record for only the Little Stint in NS. The Red-

necked Stint has been confirmed in Massachusetts, whereas to my knowledge, neither Temminck's nor Long-toed has made it to the Atlantic Coast. When they do, observers would be advised to have a camera in hand. RFL described a "mystery shorebird" he stumbled upon at Cape St. Lawrence, Vic. Co., "the northern-most land (save for some islands) in the province", Aug. 26. His description included: "clean, white outer tail feathers," which is unique to Temminck's. Also suggestive was the behaviour and habitat: "foraging on top of the headlands in a berry-rich area," and later "relocated in a fast stream, often getting its belly feathers wet." DHY submitted a description of what he believed to be a Long-toed Stint at Hemeons Hd., Shel. Co., Aug. 8 and the next day AAM and RBS described another possible sighting at Belleisle Marsh, Anna. Co. Both descriptions are intriguing and plausible, but without photos they will have to remain only suggestive, as the observers agree. I think the lesson here is to be ever vigilant, as these observers were, and of course to carry a camera at all times.

The world's smallest sandpiper, the LEAST SANDPIPER, was present in low numbers. Highest count was at Kempt Shore, Hants Co. where JCT estimated 300. Peaks at other concentration areas were: 92 at Cherry Hill Beach, Lun. Co., Aug. 16; 120 at Rainbow Haven, HRM (Purchases); 95 at Pt. Michaud, Rich. Co., Aug. 28



(DBM). No significant counts were received from CSI. Last seen were eight at Cherry Hill Beach Oct. 6.

Late migrants, the WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER did not appear in sizable flocks until Aug. 27 when 200 were tallied at Grand Pré, Kings Co. (JCT).

By Sept. 3 there were 200 at Port Morien, CB (RWK) and 400+ at CSI (JON, MUN). Crescent Beach, Lun. Co. hosted 108 Sept. 12, a high number for this area (JSC). A single group of 200 was seen on Sable I., Oct. 13 (ZOL). Small flocks of up to 50 were noted at many of our beaches into November. Four lingered at Caribou I., Pict. Co. until Nov. 14 and a late bird was at Little Hbr., Shel. Co., Nov. 22 (KJM, DHY). Thirteen BAIRD'S SANDPIPER, an average number, appeared within their usual short-time frame from mid-August to mid-September. First was one at Matthews L., Shel. Co., Aug. 16 (DHY). Three arrived at CSI, Aug. 21 and were still being seen Sept. 23 (JON, MUN). Two were at Livingstone Cove, Ant. Co., Aug. 27 (AAM). Up to four were at Pond Cove, Brier I. Sept. 1 & 2 (ELM, LAL). Single birds were on Sable I. Sept. 6 and at Hartlen Pt., HRM Sept. 15 (ZOL, BLM). Unprecedented numbers of PECTORAL SANDPIPERS were found on select beaches. Three early birds were at Cherry Hill Beach, Lun. Co., Aug. 16 but numbers did not peak until Oct. 17 when 150+ were counted there, not an easy task with heads popping up and down from the mounds of storm-tossed seaweed (SJF). The Purchases had a similar experience at Conrads Beach, HRM Oct. 20 when they estimated 1,000+ feeding in the kelp. On CSI there were 150 Oct. 20 and at Grand Pré 50+ Oct. 25 (RBS). Smaller numbers of 10 or so were noted at several Yar. Co. beaches (PRG, RSD) but only ones and twos were reported elsewhere. Last to be seen were two at Saxon St. Pond, Kings Co., Nov. 4 (ELM).

Unusual, but not unprecedented, a lone PURPLE SANDPIPER, in breeding/alternate plumage, was spotted at N. Light, Brier I., Aug. 22 (KJM *et al.*). Eight wintering birds first appeared at Pt. George and Parkers Cove, Anna. Co., Nov. 14 (RBS, JCT). A sizable flock of 42 was at Hartlen Pt., HRM, Nov. 28 (JCZ). With one exception, DUNLIN numbers were average. Earliest to appear were 10 at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co., Sept. 6 (JSC). Peaks were: 50 at Conrads Beach, HRM, Oct. 26 & Nov. 22 (Purchases); 14 at Cooks

Beach, Yar. Co., Oct. 31 (PRG, RSD); 150 at CSI, Nov. 11 (MUN). Ten reached Sable I., Oct. 13 and Port Morien, CB Co., Oct. 23 (ZOL, RWK). An unusually high count was attained at Windsor Causeway with 230 Nov. 4 (ELM). Up to seven were at Lockeport's Crescent Beach, Shel. Co., Oct. 12-23, where they are seldom seen (DJC). Otherwise smaller numbers were observed throughout.

Three fine CURLEW SANDPIPERS graced the region. The first, which had still retained some of its red breeding/alternate plumage, was sighted at Port Morien, CB Co., Aug. 8 (ALM, CAM). Another, discovered at Hartlen Pt., HRM, Sept. 6 by the Allison's, was well described in winter/basic plumage. It lingered until at least Sept. 11, was seen by var. obs., and photographed by IAM. The third was at CSI, Sept. 6-26 and was described as being very pale-breasted, perhaps also in winter/basic plumage (MUN, JON). Scarce migrants, only eight STILT SANDPIPERS appeared on a few select beaches. One was at Freeport Cove, Digby Co., Sept. 6 and one at Hartlen Pt., HRM, Sept. 11 (ELM, IAM). Up to six were at CSI, Sept. 8-Oct. 10, with a lingering bird still to be seen Nov. 11 (JON, MUN).

At least 16 BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPERS were reported at their favourite haunts: three at The Cape, CSI, Aug. 29 (MUN); up to three at Hartlen Pt., HRM, Sept. 5-8 (IAM, BLM); four at the Sydney Airport, Sept. 6 (RWK *et al.*). Two were on Sable I., Sept. 12 (ZOL). All others were singles at Cherry Hill Beach, Lun. Co., Grand Pré, Kings Co., and Pt. Michaud, Rich. Co. seen from Aug. 28 - Sept. 15. A very late bird was on McNabs I., HRM, Oct. 17 (JCZ). There was only one sighting of the Eurasian RUFF, at the Sydney Airport, Sept. 5-6. It was found by RWK and SEM, and seen by var. obs., but no details were given.

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHERS were in short supply. Only 100 were at the Windsor sewage ponds Aug. 8 (JCT). The peak count was the 500+ at CSI, Aug. 29 (ELM, AHM). A high count for CB was 50 at Port Morien, Sept. 3 (RWK). Average numbers of 75-90 were

found at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co., Three Fathom Hbr., HRM and Chezzetcook Inlet, HRM in early September; at other beaches only small numbers of up to 20 were noted. Only two LONG-BILLED DOWITCHERS were identified. One, a moulting juv., was at Freeport HBR., Digby Co., Sept. 5 and was identified by its "keek" call (BLM, JOW, Angela Thibodeau). FLL had heard one the previous day on Brier I., possibly the same bird. Another found on CSI Oct. 27 was identified by its call (MUN).

Six COM. SNIPE on Sable I., Sept. 22 were the first migrants reported (ZOL). A single, tired bird came aboard the ferry from Sydney to Port-aux-Basques in mid-channel Oct. 3, perhaps unaware it had taken the wrong ferry (RWK). All other concentrations were in CB, leaving one to speculate whether snipe gather there before migrating: ten were at Schooner Pond, Oct. 16; seven at the Donkin Mine site, Oct. 10-17 (RWK, CAM); three at Westmount, Oct. 27 (JAC). The only AM. WOODCOCK reported was at Gillis L., CB, Oct. 3 (David L. Harris).

Three separate WILSON'S PHALAROPE were reported, perhaps resting for their long flight to Argentina. An individual loitered at Pond Cove, Brier I., Aug. 24-26 (LAL, PAC, ADL). One was produced at Pt. Michaud, Rich. Co., Aug. 28 (NSBS). The third was at Pinkneys Pt., Yar. Co., Sept. 1 (PRG, Jacqueline d'Entremont). "Thousands" of RED-NECKED PHALAROPE were tallied on pelagic trips in the Bay of Fundy in August, and 1,000 were still to be seen Sept. 4 (KJM, BLM). Three or four were spotted off Cape Percé and ten miles beyond Flint I., CB, Sept. 2-3 (RWK, CAM, ALM). Probably storm-driven, one was on the beach at Schooner Pond, CB, Oct. 15 (George Crowell). BAH was delighted at the sight of three feeding close to shore at Hartlen Pt., HRM, Oct. 24. The much less common RED PHALAROPE was not reported from the Bay of Fundy, but up to 12 were seen off Cape Percé and another six were 30 miles offshore from Port Morien, CB Co., Sept. 3. Two were off N. Sydney, Oct. 3 (RWK *et al.*).

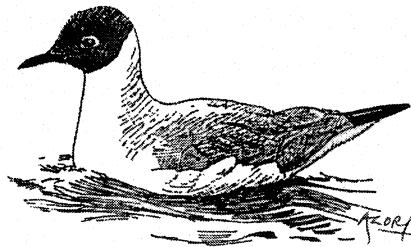
Skuas Through Alcids

By Blake Maybank

Skua sightings were refreshingly common, and some were conservatively reported, which means the particular species was not indicated. JET reported a GREAT SKUA off Brier I. on the early date of Sept. 6, but provided no details, so the sighting is best put down to skua sp. By contrast, RWK's detailed report of a skua seen from the Cabot Strait ferry Oct. 31 leaves no doubt that the bird was a Great. Unspecified skuas were as follows: one off Brier I. Sept. 9 (BLM); another off Brier I. Oct. 10 (CAH); and one off CSI Oct. 18 (var. obs.). CAH spends more time on the waters of the Bay of Fundy than any other birder, and he noted at least five different SOUTH POLAR SKUAS (and as many as eight), during his various whale-watching trips this summer and early autumn. POMARINE JAEGERs were reported from just two locations, Brier I., and the Cabot Strait. Off Brier I. (on whale-watching trips) there was one Sept. 25 (BLM, et al.), one Thanksgiving weekend (NSBS), and five Oct. 16 (MLH). From the Cabot Strait ferry RWK had one light phase Oct. 3, and nine birds Oct. 31, seven of them light phase. There were fewer PARASITIC JAEGERs reported overall, but they were seen in more locations. AAM had a light phase and a dark phase off Neils Hbr., Vic. Co., July 30-31, while a NSBS field trip sighted one off Baccaro, Aug. 22. Three were seen on the NSBS whale-watching trip from Brier I. over Thanksgiving, and RWK had one of each phase on his Oct. 31 crossing of the Cabot Strait.

It continues to be a slow year for LAUGHING GULLS, with just two reports this period; MUN, et al., had one on CSI Sept. 18-19, while ZOL had an immature on Sable I. Oct. 9. Remarkably, LITTLE GULLS outnumbered Laughing Gulls, as at least two adults and an immature were picked out from thousands of Bonaparte's Gulls in the Ogdens Pond feeding frenzy (var. obs.). The birds were first noted Nov. 20, and were present thereafter. The winter season typically reveals the

distribution and numbers of BLACK-HEADED GULL, but birds return to their winter haunts all through the autumn. The first reported were six at Rainbow Haven, HRM, Aug. 23 (DWP, JAP), followed by six at the Antigonish Sewage Plant, Aug. 28 (RFL). ELM noted the first in Lunenburg Hbr., Oct. 11. Arrival dates for other traditional locations were not noted. The only other revelatory sighting was up to seven birds in with the gull mob in Ogdens Pond, Ant. Co., Oct. 30 (RFL). There are far too many BONAPARTE'S GULL reports to list individually, and it seems on the



evidence they are increasing in our waters in summer and autumn. The more noteworthy sightings include: a belated report of a "lost" adult in the New Minas Ducks Unlimited pond, July 23 (GWT); 1000+ birds (half in full breeding plumage) on Big Island, Pict. Co., Aug. 3 (KJM); 25 birds at Lawrencetown Lake, HRM, Sept. 8 (BLM); 40 birds in two groups along the eastern shore of CB Co., Oct. 2 (DBM); 20 on I. Madame, Rich. Co., Nov 14 (MZG, RFL); and large numbers along the western shore of St. Georges Bay, Ant. Co., culminating in an estimated 2000+ at the now famous Ogdens Pond Nov. 30, including an albino individual, looking ever so much like an Ivory Gull when perched on the water. Away from these impressive numbers were up to five birds in the Lockeport, Shel. Co. area Oct. 24-Nov. 22 (DJC), and a lone immature in Johns Cove, Yar. Co., Nov. 29 (JOS, et al.).

The gull of the period (and the year) was an adult BLACK-TAILED GULL found by visiting Ontario birder Ron Tozer and his family at Indian Head Park, N Sydney, CB Co., Oct. 21. The bird was seen and photographed by others on Oct. 21-22, and then to the frustration of many the bird skipped an appearance on Sunday, Oct. 23, only to reappear on Oct. 24. The last sighting was Oct. 26. It is interesting to speculate, but impossible to confirm, that this was the same individual that has spent the past three summers around Sable Island (the last sighting this past summer was late July/early August). Gulls are often creatures of habit, so this bird should be looked for next early autumn in Sydney Hbr. Nova Scotia birders owe a debt to Ron Tozer, and should repay it by visiting his home patch of Algonquin PP, and finding an Elegant Tern. A MEW (COMMON) GULL report from CSI Aug. 19-29 did not mention age or other details, but an adult was carefully noted from Glace Bay, CB Co., Nov. 6-13 (RWK, ALM, CAM). A 2nd winter bird reported from the same area by these observers has, through careful study of photos, subsequently been determined by them to be a Ring-billed Gull, which highlights the need for care when reporting Mew Gulls. The RING-BILLED GULL increase marches on, and still we haven't found them breeding in the province. Two hundred were observed hawking flying ants in the air above a North Sydney mall Aug. 21 (DBM), while numbers in nearby Wentworth Park dwindled from 100 Sept. 26 to 40 Oct. 23, to two Nov. 28 (DBM). KFS reported an impressive concentration of 300+ at the mouth of Apple River, Cum. Co., Aug. 21, while DWP and JAP had ~100 at Conrads Beach, HRM, Oct. 3. Numbers increased in the south as well, with RSD counting 300 at Eel Brook, Yar. Co., Oct. 28. Ring-bills are still uncommon on islands, but there were two 1st winters on Brier I. Sept. 25 (BLM), and three 1st winters on Sable Oct. 2 (ZOL).

I have nothing concrete to say regarding HERRING and GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULLS, except that JAC considered their numbers around Sydney Hbr. to be "down". BLM counted 600 Great Black-backed on Seal I. Sept. 26, beside 300 Herring Gulls, both typical autumn numbers. The first ICELAND GULL was not reported until Oct. 25, in North Sydney (DBM), with the first mainland bird Oct. 31 at Cherry Hill (JAH). ELM had the first inland bird at Canard Pond, Kings Co., Nov. 4, and he noted that by the end of the period there were but two in Lunenburg Hbr. Period high counts were from Cape Breton, with 300+ in Louisbourg Nov. 27 (RWK), and 100 at North Sydney Nov. 29 (DBM). There used to be a time when LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULLS were most commonly found in Halifax Hbr. -- those days are past. None were in HRM this period, but the species certainly turned up elsewhere. The first (and most intriguing) report was of a 1st winter-2nd summer bird north of Canard Pond, Kings Co., Aug. 1 (ELM), who described its unusual plumage as follows:

This unusual bird (in both season and plumage) showed only a few signs of 2nd summer plumage. It differed from the usual L. f. graellsii: it had the sides of its neck and upper breast with regular dark streaks (reminiscent of Great Black-backed Gull) rather than the usual smeary streaking of graellsii; the bill was stouter than usual graellsii and all dark; the head was more rounded and eye more centrally-placed than in graellsii; the mantle and coverts, where they were not occluded by incoming blackish feathers, had a regular checkered pattern, more reminiscent of immature Great Black-backed Gulls (which were nearby for comparison), than of graellsii. Maybe this was just an individual variant, but it may have been an immature L. f. intermedius, a sub-species which has not been noted here before.

Several of the four immature (two 1st summer, two 3rd summer) birds noted at Big (Merigomish) Island in the summer report were seen through part of the autumn period, with one 3rd summer still present Oct. 17 (KJM, CGB). An adult was on the same island Nov. 7-29

(KJM, CGB). Unaged birds were reported from CSI Sept. 24 (MUN), Brier I. on Thanksgiving weekend (NSBS), and at the Digby ferry terminal Oct. 11 (JAH). Between Sept. 28 and Nov. 11 there were five sightings of an adult Lesser Black-backed in Kings Co. (RBS, JWW), and given the huge numbers of gulls in the area, and the dispersed nature of the sightings (Canard Pond, Grand Pré, New Minas sewage ponds), it is likely that more than one bird was involved. The only GLAUCOUS GULLS were reported from Cape Breton, single birds Oct. 30 & 31 in Sydney Hbr. (DBM, CAM, ALM). An unseasonable and out-of-place immature BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE was carefully watched from Pond Road, Lower W Pubnico, Yar. Co., Aug. 31 (PRG). The other sightings were all pelagic, with 20 off Brier I. Sept. 25 (BLM), increasing to 3000+ on the Thanksgiving weekend NSBS whale-watching trip. RWK counted 174 from the Cabot Strait ferry Oct. 31.

There were quite a few CASPIAN TERN sightings, so I've tabulated them,

Caspian Tern Sightings

DATE	#	LOCATION	OBSERVERS
Aug. 6	1	Englishtown Ferry, Vic. Co.	Glenys Gibson & Ian Patterson
Aug. 8	1	Cherry Hill, Lun. Co.	PLC, JEH, SJF
Aug. 19	1	Boot Island, Kings Co.	RBS
Aug. 24	2	Big Island, Pict. Co.	HAB, JEB
Sept. 9	1	APBS	TEP
Sept. 24	1	Brier I.	SJF, BAH
Sept. 26	5	Southside Beach, CSI	ELM, IAM
Sept. 26	3 (2a/1i)	Brier I.	BLM, <i>et al.</i>
Oct. 2	2	APBS	TEP

as this is a species that bears watching. There were, remarkably, two ROYAL TERN sightings, within a day of each other, and at the same time as the numerous Caspian Tern sightings. JON photographed one on CSI Sept. 23 (photos pending), while ZOL carefully described one on Sable I. Sept. 24,

noting its "unmarked pale orange bill; all white forehead & crown; black on back of head". ROSEATE TERNS were noted only early in the period, with all sightings from Shel. Co. Up to nine birds were seen at Sand Hills Beach PP, Villagedale, between July 28 - Aug. 13 (MUN; PEY), while PEY also noted one

off Blanche Aug. 8. The last COMMON TERNS were reported (single immatures, except as noted) as follows: Taylors Head PP HRM, Oct. 10 (BLM, JOW, Alan Covert); CSI, Oct. 10 (NSBS); two, Big I., Pict. Co., Oct. 17 (KJM); N Sydney, Oct. 23 - Nov 2 (BLM, IAM, ELM, DBM); and

Lunenburg Hbr., Nov. 6 (ELM). ZOL described a 1st winter FORSTER'S TERN, Oct. 28, on Sable I., as having "a black eye patch & darkish grey patch on nape, otherwise head & face all-white; longish black bill; longish orange legs" standing with several other terns, presumably late Commons. I've tabulated the BLACK TERN sightings:

Black Tern Sightings

DATE	#	LOCATION	OBSERVERS
Aug. 13	1	Maple Lake, HRM	KJM
Aug. 14	1	Blanche, Shel. Co.	PEY
Aug. 14	1	Sable I.	ZOL
Aug. 27-28	3	Pt. Michaud, Rich. Co.	BID, <i>et al.</i>

DOVEKIES arrived early and often. I can't recall when I've seen so many autumn sightings, so here is another table to make sense of them, both chronologically and geographically. The August sighting is rare and unusual, but not unprecedented, and Mr. Broderick provided excellent details of a bird seen close to the boat, sufficient to rule out some exotic species of murrelet.

COMMON MURRE are decidedly uncommon in Nova Scotian waters, and should be discriminated from Thick-billed Murres with care. No notes accompanied any of the following sightings, including singles at Brier I. over Thanksgiving, CSI Nov. 13, and Black Rock, Kings Co. Nov. 26. Reports by AAM of 15 birds at Black Rock, Kings Co. Nov. 5, and an astounding 100+ between Parkers Cove and Black Rock, Kings Co. Nov. 21, should have been documented, as these numbers are unprecedented.

Dovekie Sightings

DATE	#	LOCATION	OBSERVERS
Aug. 20	1	Ferry to Maine (not "The Cat")	Donald H. Broderick
Oct. 23	7	Chebucto Head, HRM	PEL
Oct. 24	4	Louisbourg Hbr.	SEM, Doug Pearl
Oct. 27	1	Baccaro, Shel. Co.	Grant Milroy
Oct. 28	12	Sable I.	ZOL
Oct. 31	169	Cabot Strait Ferry	RWK
Nov. 3	85	Little Hbr., Shel. Co.	DHY
Nov. 3	1	CSI	MUN
Nov. 5	4	Black Rock, Kings Co.	AAM
Nov. 21	10	Parkers Cove, Anna. Co.	AAM
Nov. 27	14	CSI	MUN

Razorbill Sightings

In light of the foregoing it is odd that so few THICK-BILLED MURRES were found, with singles off Story Head, Chezzetcook Inlet, HRM, Oct. 24 (PER), and Baccaro Pt. Nov. 21 (MUN). Considering the recent discovery of tens of thousands of RAZORBILL that winter in waters off Grand Manan, it is not surprising that there were several sightings in Nova Scotia waters of birds perhaps en route. Herewith the Razorbill sightings table:

BLACK GUILLEMOT were apparently ignored, with the only submitted

DATE	#	LOCATION	OBSERVERS
Oct. 10	3	Brier I.	NSBS
Nov. 14	35	Anna. Co.	RBS, GWT, JCT
Nov. 21	25	Baccaro Pt., Shel. Co.	MUN
Nov. 22	9	Port George, Ant. Co.	R. Phinney
Nov. 26	6	Black Rock, Kings Co.	RBS
Nov. 27	40	CSI	MUN

sightings being nine off Seal I., Sept 28 (BLM, *et al.*), and 18 in Louisbourg Hbr. Oct. 2 (DBM). ATLANTIC PUFFINS were encountered daily

during Bay of Fundy whale-watching trips, with a high count of 100 Sept. 25 (BLM, *et al.*). RWK had eight on his Oct. 3 Cabot Strait Crossing and 13 on his Oct. 31 outing.

Doves Through Woodpeckers

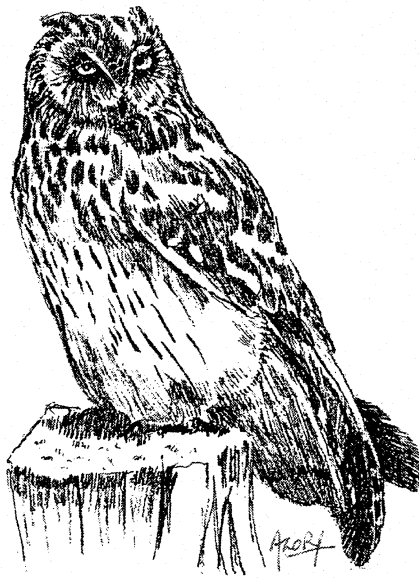
By Ian McLaren

In Westmount, CB Co., JAC had to stop feeding birds in the fall when 8-12 ROCK DOVES took over. By contrast, a "wild" one was at the tip of Cape St. Lawrence, Inv. Co., Aug. 19 (RFL). **WHITE-WINGED DOVES** are almost annual. This year's turned up Oct. 19 on inaccessible Sable I. where it was well photographed by ZOL. It appeared to be of the more grayish SW race *mearnsi*. However, this race may have invaded or been introduced into Florida in recent years, so origins are clouded. Scattered **MOURNING DOVES** were noted throughout the province, even in downtown Halifax and Dartmouth. Up to six migrants were on Seal I. Oct. 17-21 (IAM *et al.*), and more than 15 on Sable I., Oct. 16 - Nov. 3 (ZOL). Feeder reports for October - November noted no trends, although the hundred or so at JON's feeder Oct. 29 must have been impressive.

Individual **BLACK-BILLED CUCKOOS** turned up on CSI, Aug. 29 (JON, MUN, CLS) and Sept. 4 (PRG, RSD), and on Wolfville Ridge, Sept. 4 (JCT; possibly the same one heard in the wee hours by BLF). There were later reports of one Oct. 4 at Louisbourg (Gwen Lunn) and Oct. 10 on CSI (NSBS). More could have been misidentified among the next species; they're are not always easily discriminated when they slip furtively away. By my sums, trying to avoid repeats, a record 61 **YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOOS** were reported this fall. The first appeared Sept. 12 at CSI - two at Daniels Hd. and one at Cape Sable (MUN, WIA). Another 21 were noted from 19 Sept. to month's end; another 26 by mid-October, and six more thereafter, the latest at Rissers Beach, Lun. Co., Oct. 30 (JAH). This invasion was widespread; Brian Dalzell estimated that there were 25+ on Grand Manan I., NB, Sept. 26-27.

Two young **GREAT-HORNED OWLS** near Baddeck were still begging loudly Aug. 19 (RFL). Other presumed residents were reported from four

scattered localities. Were the three on BPI, Sept. 3-4 (var. obs.) also residents? One on CSI, Nov. 14 (MUN) was evidently on the move. The first **SNOWY OWL** appeared at Blanche, Oct. 29 (JON). Then at least two occurred at Daniels Hd., CSI, and on Cape Sable itself, from 24 Nov. (var. obs.). Indications are that this will be a big year for these arctic nesters, with



reports from as far S as Florida. Adding to the summer issue's report on **BARRED OWLS**, BLF found that 23 young fledged after some losses to racoons, etc., from 15 of his nest boxes. Presumably most of the 10 reported from Ant. and CB Cos. during September-October (RFL, DBM) were resident. Wanderers were in Halifax, Oct. 28 (E. Hippern), and roosting Nov. 18-19 outside Canso High School, where it caused some excitement among the teenagers. A **LONG-EARED OWL** joined two **SHORT-EARED OWLS** at the Cape Sable Light, Oct. 16 (MUN *et al.*). The latter had been present since at least Oct. 2. Another migrant Short-eared Owl was noted on Brier I., Oct. 11-12 (NSBS). A slightly injured **N. SAW-WHET OWL** Oct. 28 on CSI was taken by MUN to the local DNR office for rehabilitation elsewhere. Another

perched for MUN on a wire near Clarks Hbr. at dusk Nov. 14.

The only reported summer flocks of **COM. NIGHTHAWKS** were 25+ Aug. 17 along Hwy 101 near Kingston (JCT) and 10 at Georges R., CB Co., Aug. 19 (DBM). There were also three scattered fall individuals, including a very late one at Echo L., Yar. Co., Nov. 6 (MUN). It is important that we continue to report this troubled species.

Spring-summer updates (per JWW) on our **CHIMNEY SWIFT** roosts are always worth recording for future analysis. The peak for Wolfville was merely 160 May 26; numbers fluctuated around 75 through June and most of July, then fewer were noted until observations ceased about Aug. 21. Spring counts at the Middleton High School chimney peaked at 541 May 24 (BBT, JET), and 400 entered the chimney of Oakdene School, Digby Co., May 21 (JET). There were no summer reports from these sites. One was at Schooner Pond, CB Co., Sept. 24 (GEM, JUM), and a straggler was found freshly dead on Sable I. Oct. 24 (ZOL). AAM helped track e-mail hummingbirds, usually reported as **RUBY-THROATEDS**. Males were mostly gone by mid-August. Here's the pattern of reports: Sept 1-5 (nine); Sept. 6-10 (eight, plus "sev." in Liverpool); Sept. 11-15 (seven); Sept. 16-20 (four); Sept. 21- 25 (three, including one seen from a whale-watching boat by AAM). Late individuals appeared Oct. 2 in Liverpool (HAD), on CSI (JCZ), and in Yarmouth (HHH). A curiosity was a partial albino Ruby-throated (judging from size and structure), described in detail, and as "almost 'ghostly' in flight" by JCT, who observed it Aug. 29 at the Ross residence in Kentville. JCT had the impression that while green was lacking, there remained a wash of brownish (melanin) in places. This is most interesting, as green is a structural colour in these mites, so a fairly profound mutation might have been involved. A similar bird (the same one?)

had been reported in Port Williams several weeks earlier. This year's **RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD** was a male at Barrington, Aug. 23 (no details, *fide* MUN), the usual time of year for these rare westerners. A very late hummingbird was reported by a deer hunter to MUN to be working at



pinecones (for insects?) near Caledonia, Queens Co., Nov. 30. Of course at that season, exotics are possible. Bear in mind that Elgin, NB, hosted a Broad-billed Hummingbird from Mexico or Arizona from mid to late October.

The Purchases write that BELTED KINGFISHERS seemed scarce along the Eastern Shore this year, but reports of a dozen birds from another half dozen observers embodied no trends. As usual, individuals hung back; e.g. at Saxon Pond, Kings Co., Nov. 24 (JCT), and Cole Hbr., HRM, Nov. 28 (IAM).

At least five RED-BELLIED WOODPECKERS turned up this autumn. The first was a male on Seal I., Sept. 28 (BLM *et al.*) It was followed by singles at DHY's feeders in Little Hbr., Shel. Co. next day; at Doctors Cove, Shel. Co., Oct. 24 (*fide* MUN); in Smileys PP, Hants Co., Nov. 5. (J. McGovern); and finally from about mid-November at Newburne, Lun. Co. (*fide* JSC, JAH). Were there really no Red-headed Woodpeckers? Six YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKERS were found on Brier I., Sept. 26 (KJM). and singles at Port La Tour, Shel Co. Oct. 15 (MZG,

RFL), CSI, Oct. 17 (MUN), and Seal I., Oct. 19 (IAM) suggest another small movement at that time. A late one was at Pubnico Pt., Nov. 6. I again remind observers that apparent adults need to be closely scrutinized, as the western Red-naped Sapsucker loses more juv. plumage in fall. The commoner woodpeckers are slipping from our interest; surely more were seen than the 13 DOWNY WOODPECKERS and the nine HAIRY WOODPECKERS each reported by six observers. A pair of the former nested near the Purchase property in Dartmouth, and brought two young to the suet in late August. That inveterate bushwhacker, BLF, was the only one to report BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER: a fem. at Sunken L., July 25 and another at Black River L., Aug. 2, both in Kings Co. Scattered reports of N. FLICKERS from late October through November suggest that more are going to try to winter here, some at feeders. The only movements of note were 50 on Brier I., Sept. 26 (KJM) and 25 on Seal I., Oct. 19, reduced to 12 Oct. 21 (IAM, JOW). Records of 10 PILEATED WOODPECKERS submitted by seven observers were about as usual for this season.

Flycatchers Through Vireos

By Eric L. Mills

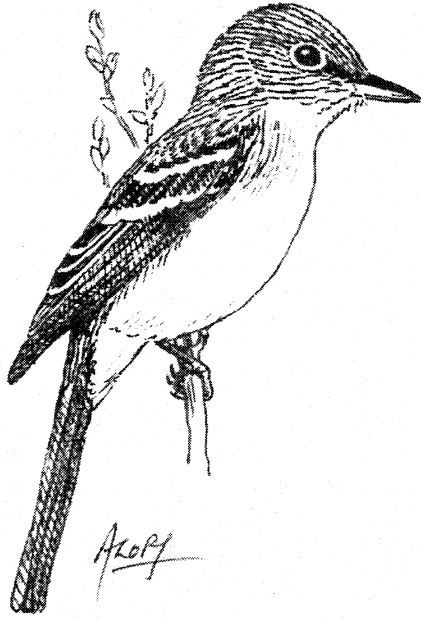
To my surprise, reports in this category were scanty, despite the potential of the fall season in Nova Scotia. However, the quality of the species was outstanding: two new provincial records of birds that would be exceptional rarities anywhere in Canada, Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher and Bell's Vireo. Here's a tip of my birding hat to the perceptive and very fortunate observers of both.

A large arrival of warblers and Red-breasted Nuthatches at Northern Pt., Brier I., Sept. 4 contained at least 10 E. WOOD-PEWEES, the only ones reported (ELM, BLM, JOW, Angela Thibodeau). All the YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHERS were reported within three days: four at Northern Pt., Brier I., Aug. 30 (LAL, PAC, ADL); one the same day on Long

I., Digby Co. (PRG, JKD); another on Sable I. Sept. 1 (ZOL); and four at Northern Pt., Brier I., Sept. 4 (ELM, BLM, JOW). ALDER FLYCATCHERS followed the same pattern around the end of August and were unreported thereafter: six (reported as Alder/Willow) at Northern Pt., Brier I., Aug. 30 (LAL, PAC, ADL), followed by at least six there Sept. 4 (ELM, BLM, JOW, Angela Thibodeau). Among the other empids at the Brier I. location Aug. 30 were 10 LEAST FLYCATCHERS (LAL, PAC). The first E. PHOEBES of the fall were at Brier I. Sept. 4 (ELM, BLM, JOW, Angela Thibodeau) and Pubnico Pt., Yar. Co., Sept. 26 (PRG). Later records were of three on Brier I. Oct. 8-11 (NSBS), a further two there Oct. 13-15 (SJF, JUG), one at Pubnico Pt., Yar. Co., Oct. 16

(RSD), and a very late individual at Hawk Beach, CSI, Nov. 28 (CST).

Truly outstanding, a **SULPHUR-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** was found, described, and photographed by ZOL on Sable I., Sept. 21. This is the first for Nova Scotia and probably the fourth for Canada. It is a great rarity away from its normal range, extending from Mexico into extreme SE Arizona. ZOL's notes mentioned size (significantly larger than a nearby Ipswich Sparrow), bright rufous tail contrasting with black-brown streaked upperparts, yellowish breast with heavy dark streaks, yellowish belly, dark mask through the eye with pale yellowish above and below, and stout, straight bill (see the full account later in this issue).



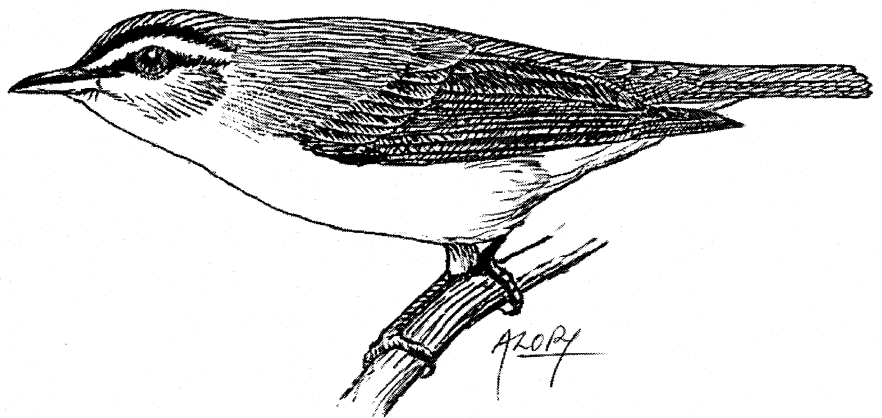
Pretty much on schedule was the first W. KINGBIRD at The Hawk, CSI, Sept. 27 (var. obs.). Another at Coxheath, CB Co., Oct. 15 (Terry Powers) was there through the end of the month and thereafter seems to have moved a few km to Boularderie I., CB Co., where it stayed through November and was still present Dec. 7 (DBM). Lone W. Kingbirds were on The Hawk, CSI, Oct. 30 and Nov. 1 (JON, MUN) and at Green Bay, Lun. Co., Nov. 20 (JSC, *fide* JAH). Low numbers of E. KINGBIRDS were reported, beginning Aug. 22 at Port Clyde, Shel. Co., and Aug. 30 at Tiverton, Digby Co., (PRG, JKD). All were in SW NS except one in Tor Bay, Guys. Co., Sept. 18 (MZG, RFL) and two in Glenholme, Col. Co., Oct. 10 (TOB).

Beginning in mid-October in S New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, N. SHRIKES arrived in good numbers and were widely recorded, although the bellwether was at Petersfield PP, CB Co., Sept. 20-22 (JAC). Five individuals appeared on Sable I. Oct. 16-Nov. 2 (ZOL). Elsewhere, representative records include one on Seal I., Yar. Co., Oct. 20 (IAM, JOW); one at Schooner Pond, CB Co., Oct. 22 (DBM *et al.*); one near Apple River, Cum. Co., Oct. 25 (others later, KFS); one in Lockeport, Shel. Co., Nov. 15 (DJC); one at White

Rock, Kings Co., Nov. 16 (BLF); three at Pict. and Ant. Co. locations Nov. 20-21 (NSBS, MAB); one at Antigonish Nov. 20-28 (RFL); and a scattering in the Halifax - Dartmouth area into early December (IAM, E. Black).

A **WHITE-EYED VIREO** found in S end Halifax by DAC and AZV Oct. 31 was seen by several during the next few days. Another, probably not by coincidence, was on Sable I., Nov. 1 (ZOL). Worthy of separate note is another of Autumn 1999's mega-rarities, the **BELL'S VIREO** found and photographed by DAC and AZV in Duncans Cove, Hfx. Co., Sept. 18. It provided Nova Scotia's first provincial record and the only Canadian record E of SE Ontario (all previous records have been in Ontario). The photograph and description of this reclusive little bird suggest that it belonged to one of the SW United States races. A report of three **YELLOW-THROATED VIREOS** at E Berlin, Queens Co., Aug. 21 (JAH), unusual in date and numbers, was not accompanied by notes. **BLUE-HEADED VIREO** records begin with one in Georges River, CB Co., Aug. 14 (DBM), and obvious migrants at Northern Pt., Brier I., Aug. 27 (LAL, PAC, ADL), on Long I., Digby Co., Aug. 30 (PRG, JKD), and among "mixed species" on the Wolfville Ridge, Sept. 5 (JCT). Later, one was recorded in Halifax Oct. 18, one at Schooner Pond, CB Co., Oct. 28, and the last in Lower W Pubnico, Yar. Co., Nov. 8 (RSD). IAM's report from Seal I., contains this account: "among four 'Solitary' Vireos on Seal I., 19 Oct., three were clearly

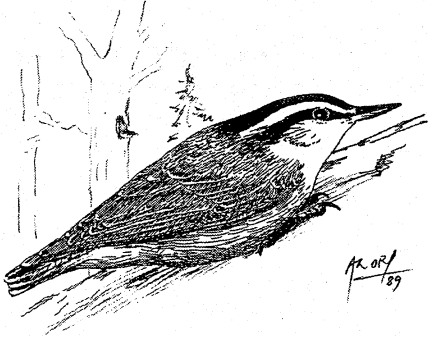
Blue-headed. One, seen much too briefly by IAM, BEM and JOW had field marks of Cassin's Vireo; its head showed the same greyish olive colour as back, with no clear demarcation between sides of head and throat, slight wash of dirty olive-yellow on sides. It appeared smaller and "chunkier" than other Blue-headed seen during that day. The sighting was too frustratingly brief for certainty, about 30 s in the clear. It's not on my "list," but obviously we should be alert for this western bird." With the taxonomic split of the former Solitary Vireo into Blue-headed, Cassin's and Plumbeous Vireos we have lots to keep us interested here on the rarity coast of Canada. The autumn yielded only two **WARBLING VIREOS**, the first reported in Clayton Park, Halifax Aug. 11 (RES) and the second on The Hawk, CSI, Oct. 10 (MUN, NSBS). Only two **PHILADELPHIA VIREOS** were reported. The first on Brier I., Sept. 4 (BLM, ELM, JOW, Angela Thibodeau) and the last at N Alton, Kings Co., Sept. 11 (MLH). Migrant **RED-EYED VIREOS** included one at E Berlin, Queens Co., Aug. 21 (JAH); 8 on Northern Pt., Brier I., Aug. 30 (LAL, PAC, ADL); and a further 10 there Sept. 4 (ELM, BLM, JOW, Angela Thibodeau). Thereafter, individuals were on Sable I., Sept. 13 (ZOL); Georges River, CB Co., late September (DBM); South Bar and Schooner Pond, CB Co., Oct. 2 (DBM); and very late, in Lower Sackville, Hfx. Co., Nov. 5 (PEL).



Corvids Through Thrushes

By Ian McLaren

In October and November GRAY JAYS continued to frequent their traditional areas in Apple River, Cum. Co. (KFS) and Black Rock, Kings Co. (BLF). Like



many other of our breeding resident species this summer, BLUE JAYS did very well. Their numbers were overwhelming in the early autumn. DBM noted "lots around through September" at Georges River, CB Co. and "individuals and small flocks seen everywhere through the day" in the same area of CBI Oct. 2. No doubt at least some were migrants, which became fewer by the end of the month. This pattern was similar also in the Apple River area, Cum. Co. (KFS) and along the South Shore, where Blue Jays were exceptionally abundant until late November (ELM). Two hundred on Brier I. Sept. 26 (BLM *et al.*) indicated the peak of migration. Five hundred AM. CROWS leaving a roost at Florence, CB Co., Aug. 26 (DBM) and about 100 foraging on Conrads Beach, Hfx. Co., Oct. 22 (DWP, JAP) were indices of another abundant semi-migratory but under-reported species. JAC reported COM. RAVENS increasing throughout the Pt. Edward area, CB Co., in September-October.

Small numbers of HORNED LARKS became evident in mid-October, beginning with one on Brier I. Oct. 8-11 (NSBS) and 10 at Glenholme, Col. Co., Oct. 10 (TOB). Through November, small numbers were present in the SW, e.g. 15 on Brier I. Nov. 14 (ELM, AHM). They were also associated with enormous numbers of Snow Buntings that arrived in early November,

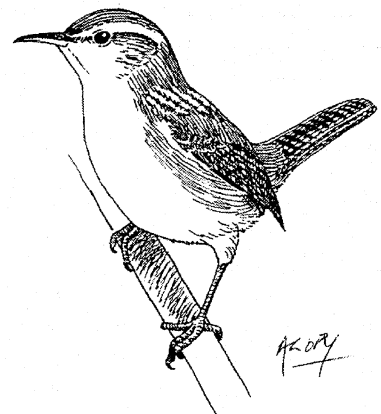
including 20 at Grand Pré, Kings Co., Nov. 4 (ELM).

The last PURPLE MARTIN of the year arrived on Sable I. Sept. 8, where there were TREE SWALLOWS on Aug. 10 (nine), Aug. 18 (six) and Sept. 9 (three, all ZOL). Not unusually late were Tree Swallows at Yarmouth, Oct. 8 (JCT) and Blanche, Shel. Co., Oct. 11 (MUN, JON, CST). The last reported BANK SWALLOWS were on Sable I. Aug. 18 (ZOL) and at Carters Beach, Queens Co., Sept. 25 (JAH). Often late migrants here, 25 CLIFF SWALLOWS were at Schooner Pond, CB Co., Sept 26, where there were two immatures (carefully distinguished from Cave Swallow) Oct. 13-14 (DBM, ALM, CAM). Two individuals of the very pale-rumped Great Basin race were on Seal I., Yar. Co., Oct. 19 (IAM). The only others were three at the Cape Light, CSI, Oct. 20 (SW Birders) and four at Little Pond, Sydney Mines, CB Co., Oct. 26 (ALM, CAM). JWW observed five hundred marshalling BARN SWALLOWS at Kingsport, Kings Co., Aug. 15. Other late August records included one on Sable I. on the 19th (ZOL) and 15 at the Fortress of Louisbourg, on the 22nd. Twenty-five at Schooner Pond, CB Co., Sept. 26 were the latest reported (ALM, CAM).

Although sparsely reported, BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEES had a good breeding season and remained remarkably abundant at and away from feeders throughout the autumn. Eight in the treeless waste of Baccaro Pt., Shel. Co., Oct 16 may well have been migrants (MZG, RFL). And after their near absence last fall and winter (even into August-October 1999 on CBI *fide* DBM), RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES came back gangbusters: 50+ on Northern Pt., Brier I. Aug. 30 (LAL, PAC, ADL), followed by 300+ there Sept. 4, with a fine arrival of warblers and flycatchers (ELM, BLM, JOW, Angela Thibodeau). Since then, they have been a constant presence at feeders, at least in the SW (ELM) and in

industrial CBI (JAC). A WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH took up residence on the Wolfville Ridge, Sept. 28 and was still there in early December (JCT). Others included two on Long I., Digby Co., Sept. 27 (BLM); one in Cole Harbour, Hfx. Co., Oct. 19 (DWP, JAP); two in the Westmount area, CB Co., Oct. 20-21 (JAC); two at feeders in Avonport, Nov. 2, one in Grand Pré, Kings Co., Nov. 14 (JWW); and three in Halifax-Dartmouth Nov. 7 - early December (PLC). Sparse reports of BROWN CREEPERS from late August through November from the Annapolis Valley and CBI indicate normal numbers (DBM, JCT, EVU).

One of the SW Birders' forays to the Cape Light, off CSI., Sept. 24 yielded a HOUSE WREN, following the same group's observation of one on Seal I., Yar. Co., two days earlier. A lone WINTER WREN, perhaps a migrant, was on the campus of the University College of Cape Breton Sept. 11 (DBM, RWK); two were at APBS Oct. 2 (TEP); and one in Wolfville, Nov. 14 (BLF). Observations of migrant MARSH WRENS were perhaps a little below average: one on Seal I., Yar. Co., Sept. 24 & 28 (PHT, BLM *et al.*); one at the Cape Light, CSI, Oct. 3 (SW Birders); and one in Cole Harbour, Hfx. Co., Oct. 22 (TOB). The only indications of GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLETS on the move were reports of 15 with an arrival of warblers and Red-breasted Nuthatches on Brier I., Sept 4 (ELM,



BLM, JOW, Angela Thibodeau), and on Sable I. three were present Sept. 21 and one Oct. 9 (ZOL). Often regularly seen, even in very late fall, BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHERS were few: one at The Hawk, CSI, Aug. 21 (JON, MUN); two at Schooner Pond, CB Co., Sept. 24 (ALM, CAM); and one in New Minas, Kings Co., Nov. 5 (AAM).

E. BLUEBIRDS, observed for several years summering in the Port Greville, Cum. Co., area, nested successfully in

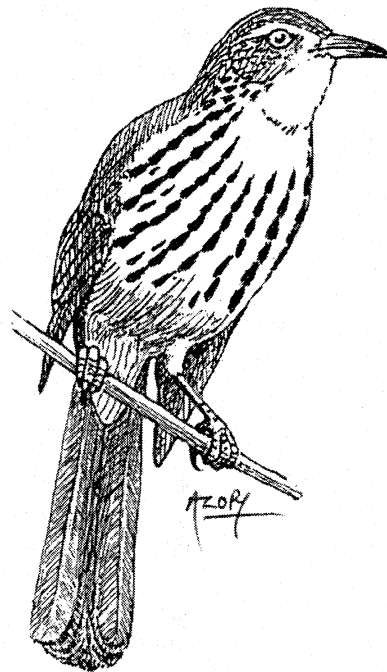
some unknown location, producing two young still in the area with their parents Aug. 14 (JCZ). Two late migrant E. Bluebirds, both males, were in Lower West Pubnico, Yar. Co., Nov. 14-18 (PRG, RSD). Only HERMIT THRUSHES, of the regular breeding and migrant thrushes, were noted this fall, mainly from mid-September through late October. One arrived on Sable I. Oct. 20 (ZOL) and another was at Hemeons Head, Shel. Co. Nov. 20 (DHY). Scarce at any time, but

especially rare in fall, was the WOOD THRUSH found by ZOL on Sable I. Sept. 19. The big arrivals of AM. ROBINS began in mid-October, judging by occurrences in CB Co., Inv. Co., Sable I., Cum. Co., and Yar. Co. Oct. 16-31 (var. obs.). More than 200 in Lilydale, Lun. Co., Nov. 7 (ELM) and 400 in the Prospect area, Hfx. Co., Nov. 18 (BLM), although not really unusual, indicate that Robins have been settling on schedule into their wintering areas in rose thickets and on barrens.

Mimics Through Waxwings

By Andy Horn

GRAY CATBIRDS had their usual movement, starting early and peaking late in September, with the relatively few reports probably reflecting their secretiveness more than their rarity. A wealth of NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRDS suggest a real increase in their numbers, with at least six individuals in late September or early October from Yar. Co. to CB Co. (ALM, CAM, BLM), plus a bumper crop in Kings Co. during October and November. The latter included at least three near Wolfville (DIT, AGH), a newly fledged family in Port Williams (HAF), three individuals in Kentville (RBS) and three pairs in Canning. Even as late as Oct. 10, these last birds cavorted with "much singing and chasing around field and garden in afternoon/evening. Their melodic songs could still be heard into the night." (MAG). At least some of the Kings Co. birds lingered to deadline in Wolfville (BLF) and Canning (Ian Paterson). BROWN THRASHERS were found at two locations, about average for most years: the first location was CSI where two were found Sept. 26 and one



on Oct. 17 (var. obs.); the second location was Sand L., CB Co., where one was seen for at least a week, beginning Oct. 8 (ALM, CAM).

EUROPEAN STARLINGS had large flocks throughout October, the largest being 3000 Oct. 2 in Donkin, CB Co. (DBM) and thousands in the Port Williams, Kings Co. area through late November that gathered under the Cornwallis Bridge to roost (JWW). Even taciturn comments spoke volumes about reaction to these high fall numbers: "not as large as in other years = good" (JAC, Westmount, CB Co.), but "too many" (RFL, Antigonish).

AMERICAN PIPITS appeared in small flocks at various locations throughout the province in early September, with their numbers peaking soon after and then, as usual, trailing off into small flocks at the usual wintering locations. BOHEMIAN WAXWINGS started with small groups in late October from CB Co. to Yar. Co., building up to flocks of up to 200 as far south as Shel. and Kings Co. by mid-November (JWW, DHY). CEDAR WAXWINGS moved through the province in average numbers throughout September and early October, after which they were replaced by their hardier relatives.

Warblers

By Andy Horn

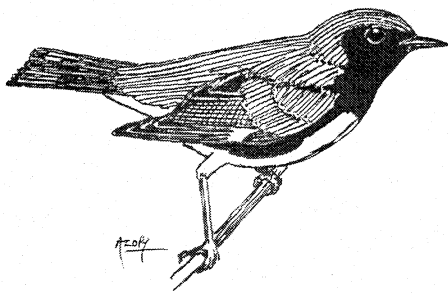
Perhaps strong weather from the south held warblers back intermittently, so many passed through in well-defined waves. As reflected in the reports, the migration began with a trickle that

nevertheless had representative individuals of most species, Aug. 30 on Brier I. (LAL, PAC, ADL), then built to a "mini-migration", Sept. 5 in Wolfville, Kings Co. (GWT, JCT), and then

peaked in impressive movements at hot spots like Brier I. Sept. 4 (ELM, BLM) and Hunts Pt., Queens Co., Sept. 13 (JCT). Mild weather thereafter resulted in "lots of late migrants this fall" (RSD).

One **BLUE-WINGED WARBLER** is all that can be expected in some falls; this year it came from Baccaro, Shel. Co., Aug. 22 (NSBS). **TENNESSEE WARBLERS** were sparsely reported through September as usual, the latest seen Oct. 2 on Sable I. (ZOL). **ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLERS** had a good fall movement, with over a dozen reports beginning Oct. 3 at CSI (MUN), and peaking with four individuals at Donkin Mine, CB Co., Oct. 13-17 (ALM, CAM). Six late fall and winter reports in HRM alone (var. obs.) are consistent with the overall increase in reports of this species over the last few years. Characteristically, **NASHVILLE WARBLERS** yielded more reports over the same period, although in their case several lingered as late as Oct. 30 in Halifax (IAM), Nov. 9 at Pubnico Pt., Yar. Co. (RSD), and Nov. 21-28 in Halifax (AGH).

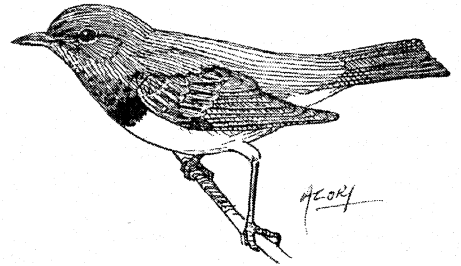
The trickle of **NORTHERN PARULA** reports throughout September came mainly from observers whose species lists were particularly complete (DBM, RWK, BLM). **YELLOW WARBLERS** outnumbered all other species in a good wave of 20 individuals (mostly imm.) on Brier I. Aug. 2 (IAM), but already by Sept. 4 their total of 15 was exceeded by later migrants there (ELM, BLM). The latest report was Oct. 11 in Digby Co. (JAH). **CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLERS** yielded surprisingly few



reports with unsurprising dates, but **MAGNOLIA WARBLERS**, in contrast, had an impressive movement of 50+ Brier I. Sept. 4, and very late records of Nov. 8 in Dartmouth (TIA) and Nov. 20 in Halifax (TIA). **CAPE MAY WARBLER** slipped through quietly as usual, from Aug. 30 at Brier I. (LAL, PAC, ADL) to Sept. 12, also at Brier I. (BLM, IAM).

BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLERS made up for their poor showing in the breeding season, with numerous September-early October sightings throughout the province, with the earliest being three on Brier I. Sept. 4 (ELM, BLM), and stragglers appearing at Sable I. Oct. 20 (ZOL), Avonport, Kings Co., Oct. 28 (URB), and Dartmouth Nov. 7-14 (PLC, TIA). At one location, the bumper crop of **YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLERS** this fall "cleaned the fruit off the bayberry bushes that I had hoped would be used by flickers as in past winters" (BLF). High numbers included 170 on Seal I., Yar. Co., Oct. 19 (IAM), 300 around Lunenburg Bay, Lun. Co. (BLM, ELM), and over 100 on Sable I. Oct. 20 after hurricane Irene (ZOL). Several observers commented on particularly high numbers this fall, as they were seen "in every shrub" at various locations in Shel. Co. in October (MZG, RFL), and in strong movements everywhere in CB Co., Oct. 2 (DBM). A horde of 100+ **BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLERS** on Brier I. Sept. 4 (ELM, BLM) led the vanguard of a large movement of other warblers that day, and reports continued throughout September, a late outlier being one from Sable I. Oct. 20 (ZOL). Twenty **BLACKBURNIAN WARBLERS** on Brier I. Sept. 4 (ELM, BLM) must have been an impressive sight, compared to the more usual singletons reported through that month.

Two fall reports of **YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER** are about average; this year they came from Sable I. Sept. 1 (ZOL) and Kingston, Anna. Co. Nov. 29 (PBG). **PINE WARBLERS**, however, seemed more in evidence during this fall migration than in other years, with reports beginning Sept. 25 at Port Mouton, Queens Co. (RES) and continuing throughout October, until probable winter residents appeared in the form of three individuals in HRM in November (var. obs.). **PRAIRIE WARBLERS** also appeared in good numbers, with over fifteen reports in September, starting Sept. 2 on CSI (MUN). Two individuals lingered: one for the first 20 days of September on Sable I. (ZOL), and another for least a week at Donkin Mine, CB Co., to Oct.



16 (ALM, CAM). An impressive total of 14 was found Sept. 27 between Three Fathom Hbr. and Hartlen Pt., Hfx. Co. (TEP). Late stragglers were seen Oct. 15 at Hebbs Cross, Lun. Co. (JAH) and Oct. 24 in Halifax (TIA). A **PALM WARBLER** was already visiting a feeder Sept. 22 in Apple R., Cum. Co. (KFS). The September migration, which

peaked with 20 individuals on Long I., Digby Co., Sept. 27 (BLM) trailed off as usual into single reports throughout October. November stragglers appeared at Bear Pt., Shel. Co. Nov. 6 (Grant Milroy), CSI Nov. 19 (*fide* MUN), and Pict. Co. Nov. 29 (KJM).

BAY-BREASTED WARBLERS passed through in the first week and a half of September, vastly outnumber as usual by their close relatives, **BLACKPOLL WARBLERS**, whose spectacular flocks included 600 on Sober I., Hfx. Co., Sept. 12 (BLM, IAM) and 150-200 at Hunts Pt., Queens Co., Sept. 13 (JCT). One observer commented "I can't recall an autumn with more blackpolls," a remark echoed by a good number of late fall records, including Oct. 18 in Bridgewater, Lun. Co. (JAH), Nov. 27 in Dartmouth (NSBS), and Nov. 28 on CSI (MUN). A photograph confirmed the prize find of the fall's only reported **CERULEAN WARBLER**, an imm. fem. at Brier I. Aug. 30 (LAL, PAC, ADL).

The **BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER** movement began Aug. 18 on Sable I. (ZOL) and Aug. 21 for the mainland, in West Berlin, Queens Co. (JAH). It peaked at 10 on Brier I. Sept. 4 (BLM), with late stragglers appearing Oct. 1 on CSI (BLM), and Nov. 6 in Dartmouth (CLS). **AMERICAN REDSTARTS** were seen from Aug. 10 on Sable I. (ZOL) to Oct. 27 CSI (MUN), with a high of ten on Brier I. Sept. 4 (BLM).

Not every fall yields **PROTHONOTARY WARBLERS**, so one at Sable I. Sept. 15 (ZOL) and another at Rainbow Haven, Hfx. Co., Oct. 2 (CAS, Mary McLaren) were much appreciated. The same could be said for two **WORM-EATING WARBLERS** at CSI Sept. 12 (MUN). The *Seiurus* warblers, characteristically, slipped through the province virtually unnoticed. The latest **OVENBIRD** report, Oct. 6 on Sable I. (ZOL) wasn't as late as in most years, and **NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH** reports began and ended on Sable I., from Aug. 18 to Sept. 19 (ZOL).

Only two **MOURNING WARBLERS** were reported, the only likely migrant appearing on Sober I., Hfx. Co., Sept. 12 (BLM, IAM). The **COM. YELLOWTHROAT** migration in September was followed by reports at CSI Nov. 3 (MUN), Dartmouth Nov. 8 (TIA), and Broad Cove, Lun. Co., Nov. 24-29 (SJF). Female **HOODED WARBLERS** at Pubnico Pt., Yar. Co., Sept. 6 (RSD) and Sable I. Sept. 15 (ZOL) contributed to the list of rarities this fall. Thirty **WILSON'S WARBLER** on Brier I. Sept. 4 (ELM, BLM) capped off the September migration; late birds were seen in Louisbourg, CB Co., Oct. 20 (P. Magee), Dartmouth Nov. 12 (*vide*

JOW), and Wolfville, Kings Co., Dec. 5 (BLF). **CANADA WARBLER** sightings trickled in beginning Sept. 4 at Brier I. (ELM, BLM) and ending Sept. 13 at Port Mouton, Queens Co. (RES).

YELLOW-BREASTED CHATS first appeared Sept. 1 at Brier I. (LAL, PAC, ADL), and then appeared, coincidentally perhaps, at three disparate locations Sept. 12: Sable I. (ZOL), Dartmouth (TIA) and CSI, where three were seen (MUN). By the first week in November, the usual winter residents began skulking in preparation for the Christmas Count, but that is a tale for the next issue.

Tanagers Through House Sparrow

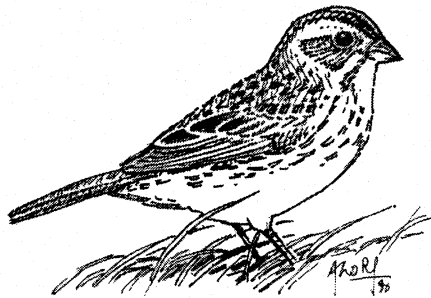
By David McCorquodale

Major irruptions by two winter visitors were highlights this fall. The invasions, combined with much better reporting than in past falls, allowed us to follow the influx of Snow Buntings and Common Redpolls into the province. As expected, there were a number of interesting vagrants, but many fewer than in the spectacular fallouts of last year.

In the past twenty years there have been far more **SUMMER TANAGERS** in the spring than in the fall. In the past two years there have been a few more in the fall, especially mid-October, than in the spring. This fall there was at least one young bird on Brier I. from Oct. 13-16 and two young males on Seal I. Oct. 20 & 21 (var. obs. SJF, JUG, MLH, IAM, JOW). **SCARLET TANAGERS** are as likely to occur here in the fall as the spring, however this fall we had only two, one male and one fem., both on Seal I. in mid-October (IAM, JOW, BEM).

The first two **E. TOWHEES** of the fall showed up in early October on CSI and in Dartmouth (MUN, TOB, BLM). There were at least three more, one in Shel. Co., another in Yar. Co., which lingered until mid-November (DHY) and one near Schooner Pond in CB Co. which paid a short visit in mid-October (ALM, CAM).

The first fall **AM. TREE SPARROWS** were two Sept. 30 at Ogdens Pond, Ant. Co. (RFL). Through October there were scattered reports, but it wasn't until early November that they were widespread across the province. **CHIPPING SPARROWS** lingered in the areas in which they bred until late September. Noticeable influxes of migrants from CB to the southern islands were noticed in late September and especially in the first



two weeks of October. In November there were only three lingering birds, on Sable I., Brier I. and at Lyons Brook, Pict. Co. (ZOL, ELM, KJM, CGB). **CLAY-COLORED SPARROWS**, especially the imms. can test the skill of any observer. Useful characters used to exclude Chipping include the light lores, gray nape and distinct malar stripe. Last year was a good year for Clay-colored with four reports, this year there were even more, a total of at least nine from

six different counties. In September there were two on islands in Yar. Co and one near Halifax. The latest was one at a feeder in Apple R., Cum. Co. Nov. 24 (BLM, KFS).

Between Oct. 1 and 13 four **FIELD SPARROWS** were found. Three of them were on the southern coast between Port Joli and Brier I. (BLM, JCZ, GDE). The other was at the other end of the province, in the vagrant hotspot of CB, Schooner Pond (ALM, CAM), where it lingered from Oct. 4 -13. There were at least four reports each of **VESPER SPARROW** and **LARK SPARROW**. Vespers were on CSI in late August and again in mid-September (JCZ, MUN). Others were on Brier I. Oct. 10, at a feeder in Little Hbr., Shel. Co. Oct. 27-29 and the latest was near Sunken L., Kings Co., where one was found dead on the road last October (DHY, BLF). An early Lark Sparrow was on Brier I. Aug. 23 and another (or the same one) was there Sept. 4 (KJM, BLM, ELM, Angela Thibodeau). Others in September were in Lunenburg and Seal I. (BLM, PRG). The latest of the fall was at another CB vagrant hotspot, Louisbourg, Oct. 4-5 (SEM, Pearl Magee, Gwen Lunn).

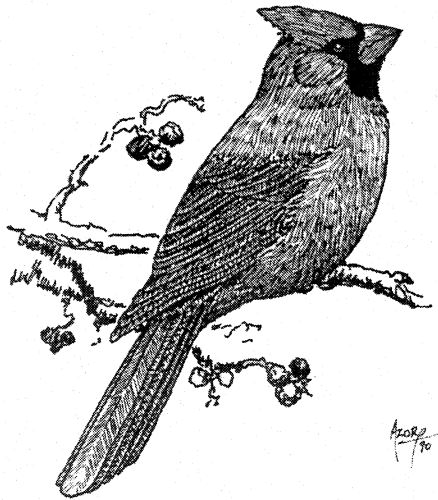
In suitable habitat there were good numbers of **SAVANNAH SPARROWS** into early October. By the end of

November there were still many reports from the grassy areas they prefer in the early part of the winter, from CB to the valley to the S shore of the province. An early "Ipswich Sparrow" was at Cherry Hill Beach Aug. 9. From late September into mid-November there were individuals and small groups on beaches from Brier I. through to Halifax. A good record for CB was of two at Schooner Pond Oct. 22-24 (var. obs.).

Only one **GRASSHOPPER SPARROW** was found, on CSI Sept. 27 (MUN). In mid-August there was still a singing **NELSON'S SHARP-TAILED SPARROW** in Pict. Co. (KJM). Through September and until the last few days of October individuals were found along the coast from Halifax to CSI. In August **FOX SPARROWS** were still on their nesting grounds. By late September the first migrants were noted, including a couple at feeders. Through October and November there were numerous reports from around the province of individuals or small groups, many more than have been reported for the past few years. **SONG SPARROWS** were widespread and common into October and small groups were still widely reported until late November. In late September a minor migration wave was noted from Queens Co. to CB. During the first few days of October many males started to sing again, some were accomplished singers and others were young males just learning the repertoire.

LINCOLN'S SPARROWS quietly slip out of the province after nesting. Through September individuals were found throughout the province, numbers dwindled in October and the last one seen was on Sable I., Oct. 27 (ZOL). **SWAMP SPARROWS** are hardy and often linger late into the fall. In late November there were still birds from Wolfville to Little Hbr., Shel. Co to Plymouth, Pict. Co. (BLF, DHY, KJM). **WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS** are also hardy. Feeders in Apple R., Cum. Co., Antigonish and Wolfville, for example, hosted three to five individuals during the last few days of November. Distinct pulses of migrants were widespread during the first few days of October. In mid-October about 200,

including one singing male, were passing through Coldbrook, Kings Co. (AAM). The first fall migrant **WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW** was on Sable I. Sept. 14 (ZOL). Only two more were seen by the end of the month. However during the first few days of October they were found from CB to CSI. A notable concentration of 30 on Brier I. Oct. 8 was a good find (NSBS). As expected, numbers dwindled in late October. There was still at least one bird lingering at a feeder on CSI at the end of November (MUN).



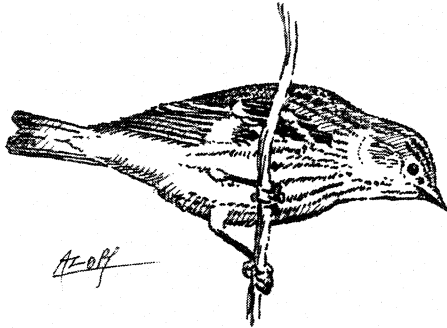
DARK-EYED JUNCOS were common and widespread. Notable pulses of migrants were noted in mid-September in Guys. Co., in early October at Apple R., Cum., Co. and in mid-October on Wolfville Ridge (KJM, KFS, JCT). **LAPLAND LONGSPURS** arrived on schedule during the last few days of September, simultaneously on Sable I., Cherry Hill Beach and Mud I., Yar. Co. (ZOL, BLM, SJF). Numbers peaked during the last two weeks of October and the first week of November. A highlight of the fall was the massive invasion by **SNOW BUNTINGS** in late October. The first arrival was a single bird Oct. 8 at Hartlen Pt. (PEL). Small flocks were seen in several places through mid-October. Larger flocks were first seen in northern CB and Waterside PP, Pict. Co. Oct. 23 (DAL, KJM). The weekend of Oct. 30-31 was a Snow Bunting weekend. Flocks of 100-500 were reported, mostly from coastal

areas, all the way from northern CB, through Halifax to CSI, around to Brier I. and up to the N end of the Annapolis Valley. Through early November one of the most frequent questions asked of birders by non-birders was, "What are those flocking white birds?" Numbers started to decline in mid-November and by the end of the month the more regular scattered small flocks were being reported.

Again this year **N. CARDINALS** are at least holding their own if not thriving in their strongholds, such as metro Halifax, Wolfville (including the Thexton's first at their feeder in 35 years of feeding), Yar. and Digby Cos. A very impressive 14 were counted Nov. 17 in the CSI Christmas Bird Count circle (MUN). Besides the more regular locations several cardinals were found elsewhere. For example, in November there was a pair in West Apple R., a young male in Louisbourg and a female at Pictou Landing. Most **ROSE-BREASTED GORSBEAKS** had left the province by the end of September. Only two were found in October and the last sighting for the fall was an imm. male at a feeder in Aldersville, Lun. Co. Nov. 12 (Christine and Bill Caudle). Last fall's massive fallout of **BLUE GROSBEAKS** and other vagrants from the southeast US was not repeated. Only three Blue Grosbeaks were found, the earliest Sept. 18 on CSI and the last Oct. 29 on Sable I. (MUN, Robert Goodwin, ZOL). There were also fewer **INDIGO BUNTINGS** this fall. From late September until the third week of October there were about 16 reports mostly from the Halifax area and the southern coast from Brier I. to CSI. Elsewhere there were two on CB. The latest was a bird lingering in Halifax Nov. 1 (JCZ).

As expected the first **DICKCISSEL** arrived during the first week of September, this year Sept. 4, on BPI (JAH). At least 16 individuals were reported from seven counties with several still frequenting feeders in late November. **BOBOLINKS** apparently migrated S early this year, with the last sightings Oct. 2 at both Schooner Pond, CB Co. and CSI (DBM, MUN). This was more than two weeks earlier than the average date of departure.

In September and October there were concentrations of RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS in the marshes of Cum. and Anna. Cos. (TEP, PEH). By late November most stragglers were found at feeders. A MEADOWLARK sp. made a



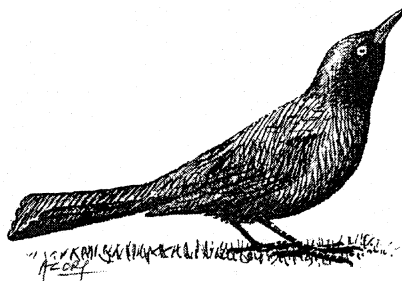
brief appearance at a feeder in Apple R., Cum. Co. Oct. 20 (Ralph Neves, *vide* KFS). It was a good fall for YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRDS, with at least seven found, including at least two in both Shel. and CB Cos., one on Sable I. and another on Brier I. The latest was a male in Aylesford, Kings Co., Nov. 7 (Bob and Jean Bellingham, *vide* JWW). Seventeen reports of RUSTY BLACKBIRD were received, spread geographically from CB to Cum. Co. to Brier I. The largest group was of five near Big I., Pict. Co. and the latest was at a feeder in Apple R., Cum. Co., Nov. 8 (DOU, KFS). Flocks of several hundred to a thousand COMMON GRACKLES were found in September and October on CB and in Cum., Anna. and Shel. Cos. Large flocks were replaced by smaller ones and then by scattered individuals in mid-November. The largest group of BROWN-HEADED COWBIRDS was also the latest sighting, nine Nov. 23 in Shelburne (DOE, DHY). Between mid-September and early November there were reports of about 10 birds from five different counties.

The only report of the very rare fall vagrant, **ORCHARD ORIOLE**, was of one on CSI in early October (ALM, CAM). BALTIMORE ORIOLES are seen more frequently in the fall than at any other time of year. There were a few reports in late August and early September and then a flurry starting

Sept. 12, continuing through early October. Counts of 10 and more from Sober I., HRM, Hartlen Pt. and CSI and nine on Sable I. on the weekend of Sept. 12-13 are noteworthy. In total there were more than 70 reports of at least 100 birds. Numbers dwindled after mid-October, yet even in late November there were at least five visiting a feeder in Howie Centre, CB Co. and a similar number in the vicinity of Sullivans Pond and several on CSI.

PINE GROSBEAKS were found in nine different counties with most reports concentrated in November. The largest group was 14 at White Rock Mt., Kings Co. (BLF). PURPLE FINCHES did not seem to be very common anywhere, yet they were reported in small numbers from many areas from August through November. In contrast to Purple Finches, HOUSE FINCHES were largely restricted to the areas in Halifax and Yarmouth where they breed. Away from these locations, one was captured aboard a boat in the Bay of Fundy off Brier I. and released on the island Sept. 25, a female visited a feeder in Apple R., Cum. Co. Oct. 26 and a third out of place bird was in Tremont, Kings Co. Nov. 21 (BLM, KFS, SLH).

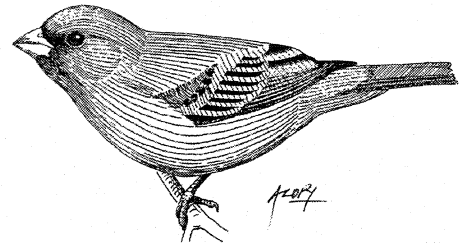
Most of the RED CROSSBILLS were at sunflower seed feeders. This is not usually a bird that we associate with feeders, but in the past few years this perception is changing. There were about nine reports from seven different counties, from CB to Shel. and Kings



Cos., the majority in November. Compared to the previous year, there were virtually no WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILLS in the latter part of the summer and very few in the fall. The only notable concentrations were 100-

200 at Schooner Pond, CB Co. during the last two weeks of October. Otherwise there were scattered individuals and small flocks reported from ten counties, mostly in late October and through November.

COMMON REDPOLLS invaded. The first of the fall was in Ingonish Oct. 20.



Then the vanguard arrived in Pictou, CB, Sable I. and the Halifax area, Oct. 30. This was the start of a flood. A week later, flocks of a few dozen to several hundred were throughout the province, with concentrations found along the coasts, especially where birders concentrate. Sizeable flocks continued to be seen throughout November. Individuals and flocks of a few dozen frequented many feeders. Nowhere were PINE SISKINS really common, but they were seen in many places from August right until late November. AM. GOLDFINCHES were also widespread through the province. Notable concentrations, presumably migrants leaving the province included more than 300 on Brier I. in late September (BLM). As with siskins, EVENING GROSBEAKS were widespread but nowhere were they very common. Many more reports came from N of Kings Co. than S of it.

More reports result in more accurate summaries and a much easier job for the seasonal editors. Overall many more reports were received this fall than last. As an example consider that last year fewer than half a dozen HOUSE SPARROW reports were received and this year there were more than two dozen from six counties -- all reporting normal numbers or a few more than usual in the urban and agricultural settings they prefer.

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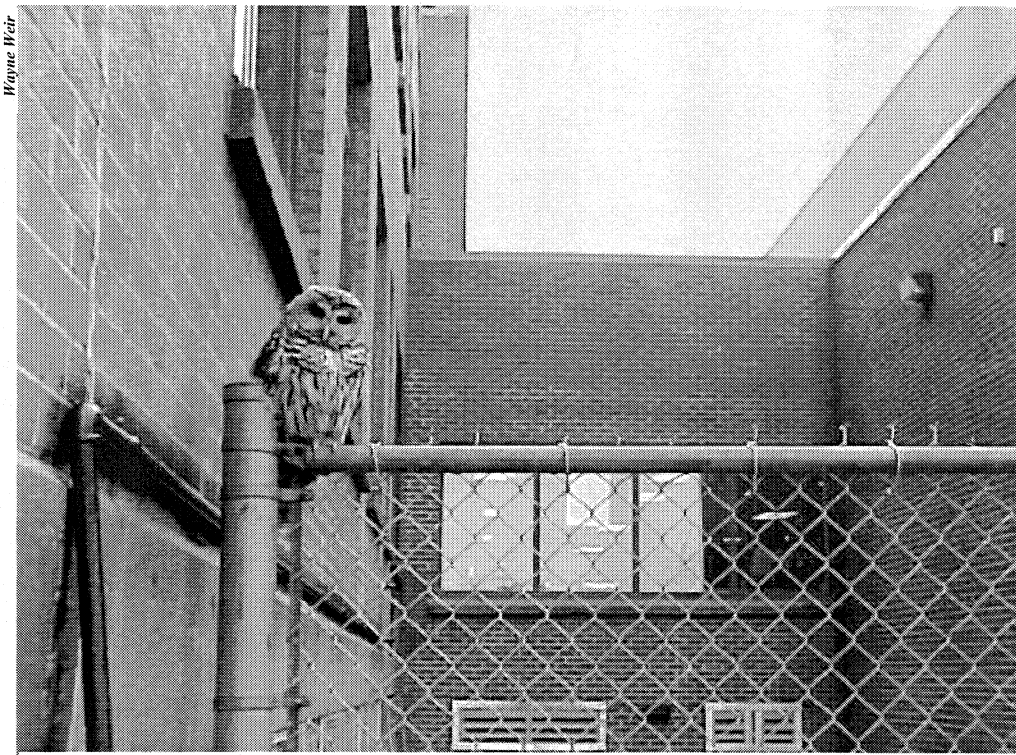


Abbreviations

Place Names		Bird Names		Counties	
APBS	Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary	Am.	American	Anna. Co.	Annapolis
CB	Cape Breton	Com.	Common	Ant. Co.	Antigonish
CBHNP	CB Highlands National Park	E.	Eastern	CB Co.	Cape Breton
CSI	Cape Sable I.	Eur.	European, Eurasian	Col. Co.	Colchester
Hbr.	Harbour	Mt.	Mountain	Cum. Co.	Cumberland
Hd.	Head	N.	Northern	Digby Co.	Digby
HRM	Halifax Regional Municipality	S.	Southern	Guys. Co.	Guysborough
I.	Island, Isle	W.	Western	Hfx. Co.	Halifax
Is.	Islands, Isles			Hants Co.	Hants
L.	Lake		Other	Inv. Co.	Inverness
Lwr.	Lower	ad.	adult	Kings Co.	Kings
Mt.	Mountain, Mount	BBS	Breeding Bird Survey	Lun. Co.	Lunenburg
Mts.	Mountains	ca.	circa (about, approximately)	Pict. Co.	Pictou
N.P.	National Park	CBC	Christmas Bird Count	Queens Co.	Queens
P.P.	Provincial Park	fem.	female	Rich. Co.	Richmond
Pen.	Peninsula	imm.	immature	Shel. Co.	Shelburne
Pt.	Point, not Port	juv.	juvenile	Vic. Co.	Victoria
R.	River	male	(no abbreviation)	Yar. Co.	Yarmouth
		MNRS	Maritimes Nest Records Scheme		
		var. obs.	various observers		



Scholarly Owl



Wayne Weir

This wandering Barred Owl roosted at the Canso High School which allowed students and staff an unusually fine time for viewing in mid-November.

Rare Bird Sightings

A First Bell's Vireo for Nova Scotia

By D.A. Currie

At about 7:30 a.m. 18 Sept. 1999, Azor Vienneau and I stopped to look for bird activity in a large gully filled with alder and low hawthorn at the head of Duncans Cove, Hfx. Co. We had often found a variety of passerines in this area, especially after storms.

I began to "swish", and almost immediately a small bird popped up only 10 m away. The rather heavy bill, with distinct anterior hook, as well as what appeared to be at first glance a rather indistinct supercillium, immediately identified it as a vireo. Overall it resembled a Warbling Vireo, which I prematurely declared it to be.

At this point, Azor mentioned that he heard a vireo singing. As it sang when I was "swishing", I could not hear it when Azor could.



Although blurry, Azor Vienneau's distant photograph of this active bird shows its vireo bill and indistinct whitish face markings. The latter are a good match for Bell's Vireo, but not other vireos with more distinct "spectacles." Note also that the crown feathers seem to be slightly erected, said to be typical of this species (Stallcup, 1985, "Birds for Real", p. 77).

The white areas (supraloral stripe) from the base of the bill to its dark eye were dingy white and did not encircle the eye as conspicuous spectacles. Rather, these were partial, breaking at mid-eye and leaving a small crescent under the eye.

Azor heard its buzzy, chattery, unmusical song about five times. His familiarity with song recordings (which he checked on returning home) left him in no doubt in the field that the bird was a Bell's Vireo. The bird is known to sing into September (A.C. Bent, *Life Histories of North American wagtails, shrikes, vireos and their allies*, p. 259. Dover reprint, 1965). He had heard this song once before, years ago during fall migration at Hartlen Pt., Hfx. Co., without sighting or identifying the singer, but its distinctiveness had stayed in his memory.

I had seen the species once before, at Pt. Pelee NP in spring 1975. That one, pointed out by none other than Roger Tory Peterson, was as I remember more olive-coloured.

Continual "swishing" kept the bird in close view for at least five minutes. Viewing conditions were excellent, sunny and calm, with the bird in front of us and the sun either to our left or behind us. We were able to study the bird both below us and at eye level.

First, the bird's behaviour should be noted. This was not a lethargic vireo. It moved quickly from one perch to another in the foliage, not pausing on exposed perches and sallying out like a flycatcher which it superficially resembled, but which do not, in my experience, respond to "swishing." Once I noted that it cocked its tail, although not in the exaggerated manner of a gnatcatcher, and lowered it again after it changed its perch. Of course this energetic behaviour could have been a response to my "swishing".

Our overall impression was that this was a small, chunky vireo, similar in size and shape to a White-eyed or Philadelphia, but it seemed to be longer-tailed. Its chin, throat, and breast were white. It was grayish above, more olive around the head and hindneck, more gray on the back and uppertail coverts. It had only a faint wash of yellowish along the flanks, not extending to the undertail coverts. It showed two whitish wing bars. The median covert bar was almost non-existent, but the greater-covert bar was more prominent, although not strikingly so.

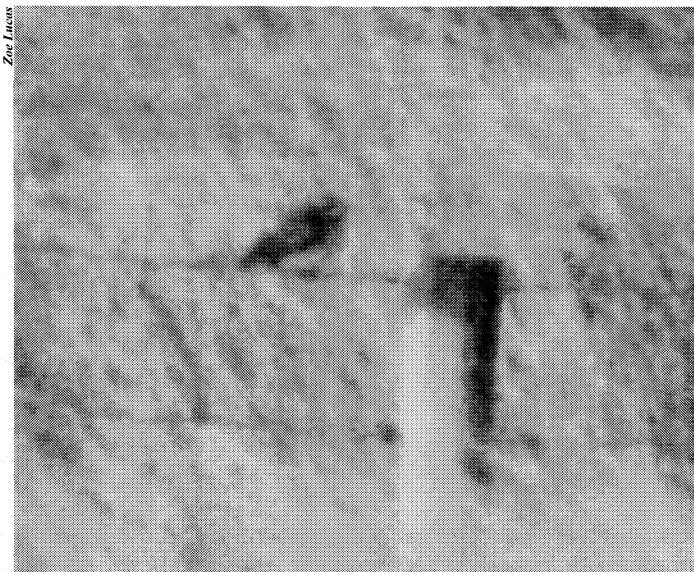
Rare Bird Sightings

Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher on Sable Island

By Zoe Lucas

In mid-afternoon September 21, 1999, during a visit to the Atmospheric Research Station on Sable Island, I saw perched on a wire fence a fairly large passerine with a bright rufous tail. Although it was not very approachable, I was able to study it in good light for several minutes before going into the station to consult field guides. Then, with the guide in hand I had two more opportunities, of about a minute each, to study the wary bird as I followed it around the station grounds. The bird was a match for an illustration of Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher in the National Geographic (1987) field guide. With the only available camera, unequipped with telephoto lens, I obtained two distant, blurry pictures, before it flew to the west of the station, not to be seen again.

It seemed to be about twice the bulk of nearby Savannah (Ipswich) Sparrows. Obvious features were its stout, straight, flycatcher bill, bright rufous tail, brownish back streaked with blackish-brown, yellowish breast with broad, dark streaks, yellowish belly, dark eye-cheek mask with pale yellowish above and below, and broad, dark malar stripe. Its broad malar stripe, distinctly yellowish underparts, and dark underpart streaking seemed to eliminate the similar, remotely possible Streaked Flycatcher, as shown in Peterson and Chalif (1973).

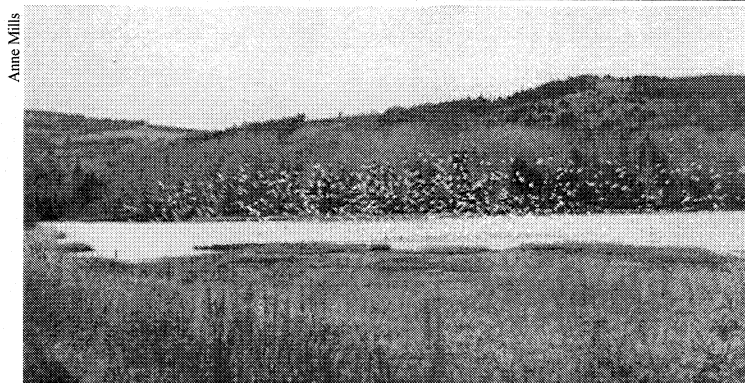


Although this photo is very blurry, the size of the bird (compared with the nearby 5" fence post), the strongly marked eye-ear patch, and the very strong malar stripe are all good marks of the Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher. The original colour version shows the yellowish belly and rufous tail; the last is also very clear on the only other photo taken, of the bird flying away.

This is evidently the fourth record in Canada of this wanderer, which nests no closer than southeastern Arizona. The others have been at Presqu'île Provincial Park, ON, September 28 to October 1, 1986 (James 1991), Waterside, NB, October 1-2, 1990 (Mactavish 1991), and St. Johns, NF, October 8, 1993 (Mactavish 1994).

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- Mactavish, B. 1991. Atlantic Provinces region. *American Birds* 48:82-84



Numbers of birders were fascinated by this year's late-fall feeding frenzies of BONAPARTE'S GULLS at Ogdens Pond, Ant. Co. Some impression of the phenomenon is captured in this panoramic view.

The Trouble With Wilderness

By Mark Brennan

Whitehill, Nova Scotia, 1999. Awake now, my eyes are drawn to the radiant light of morning as it dances on the mottled surface of a painting perched above the fire place. It is Sunday. I am drawn outside to breathe the sweet ambience of dawn, that mixture of pure air and pungent aroma of spring. I smile and watch a mist hovering in the fields below, its presence creating islands of trees. Sunlight skims its surface and the softness echoes across the landscape before me. The melodious voice of a Ruby-crowned Kinglet announces his presence, a bird so tiny few humans really ever see, yet he sings with the vigor of a resonant choir. On this morning I feel nature's energy, its truth and its balance. I feel its peace, and I thank her with a smile.

It is no doubt that experiences like this help us to understand nature's beauty and its balance. A collective wisdom gathered over millennia, its wholeness and enchanting scenes are seen through the eyes of few humans. The draw to nature and birds for many brings with it a sense of freedom unequalled in our everyday lives. After all, are we not a part of nature, too? Some would argue against this saying that humans have become detached from wildness and are now the most domesticated of all beings. So what really draws us to birds? Could it be that we are able to find a sense of our own wildness, or perhaps the vast array of species conjures up challenges to those who enjoy listing? Maybe it's just the peace and quiet. For myself, nature is everything. It provides the balance of life for all species. There is however one species on earth which nature cannot control, the human.

Nova Scotia's huge resource economy provides jobs and incomes for many. However, a sad tale is now being written and the balance of nature is being undone at an alarming rate. To recognize this and to have a passion for wild things is a combination that tends to provoke people to act. Last summer Kermit deGooyer from the Ecology Action Centre asked if a few of us in the northern mainland would like to be involved in protecting two large Crown land wilderness areas, namely Gully Lake and Eigg Mountain. The response has been overwhelming. These last untouched, publicly owned, special places hold huge tracts of forest that contain many of the province's breeding birds. In all, we are at risk of losing thirty thousand acres of pristine wilderness to industry. These two places make up part of that special balance nature has created in Nova Scotia. We are also at risk of losing something else, we are on the brink of becoming completely detached from nature and losing many of those species with which we share the earth. As society marches on, could we also lose that 'state of mind' or connection we all seek in the outdoors? Our lack of protected spaces in this region of our Province has to be rectified soon. No person can walk on any publicly owned land from Amherst to the Canso Causeway north of the Trans-Canada and feel it is safe from industry. This is a sad situation indeed.

The latest news from the Eigg Mountain and Gully Lake 'front' is that the Department of the Environment is now looking at the areas to see if they merit protection. A one thousand signature petition has been sent to Premier Hamm calling also for a moratorium to be put into place in both areas. A decision should be made sometime in the spring. The Nova Scotia Bird Society has supported this campaign. And I ask those of you who are concerned to also write to our Premier. The pressure is certainly on but with industry- and resource-type thinking being favoured over habitats and ecosystems, the news may not be good. With habitat loss being the primary reason for the decline of many species of birds through the last few decades in North America, I really wonder if we will wake up to smell sweet ambience of Nature's dawn in time.

Editor's note: For more information on the efforts to save these wilderness areas, visit Mark Brennan's website at:

<http://www.auracom.com/~mbrennan/saveit.htm>

or contact:

Ecology Action Center
Suite 31
1568 Argyle Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia
Canada B3J 2B3

Phone: (902) 429-2202
email: at420@chebucto.ns.ca

<http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/Environment/EAC/index.html>



1999 Puffin Of The Year Award

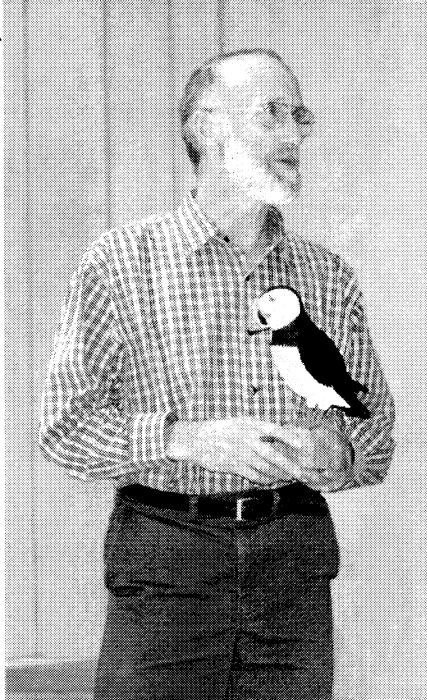
By Gisèle d'Entremont

One of the more pleasant duties of the President is to award the "Puffin of the Year." This award is presented to one of

our members in recognition of this person's substantial contribution to the aims of our Society.

Great Horned Owls, Long-eared Owls, American Kestrels, Wood Ducks, Common and Hooded Mergansers, Northern Flickers, Black-capped Chickadees and Tree Swallows have all used his nest sites.

Peter Poyzant



Bernard Forsythe & Friend

This year's recipient vividly remembers as a boy finding a song sparrow's nest while out picking wild strawberries. This was the start to many years of finding and recording nests of many different species. His neighbors, Rachel and John Erskine, avid birdwatchers, supported him in this interest and encouraged him to start sending records of his nest finds to the Maritime Nest Records Scheme in Sackville, NB. Since 1975, he has sent over 2,500 nest cards, including records from 118 different species of birds. As you can see, he is also meticulous at keeping notes.

In the mid 70's, this person became interested in putting up artificial nest sites for owls. Since that time, he has put up many nest boxes and platforms.

This past year, Barred Owls laid eggs in 15 of his nest boxes. Over the years,

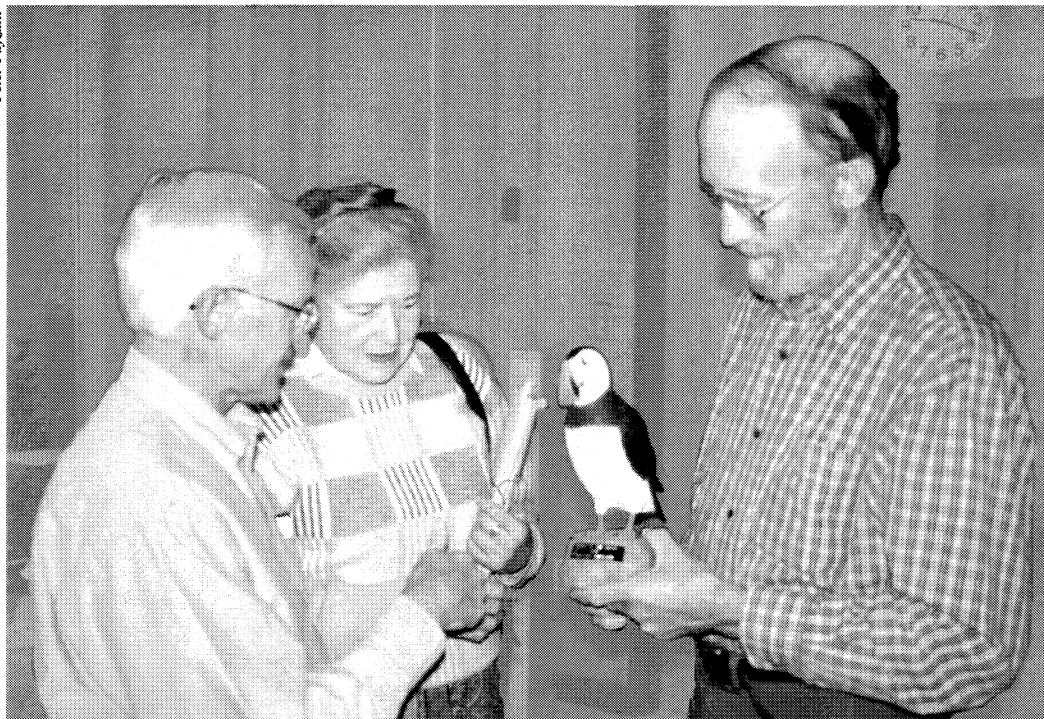
This person has been a member of the Nova Scotia Bird Society and the Blomidon Naturalists Society for over 25 years, and has consistently sent in sightings and records.

He is an annual participant in the Christmas Bird Count, and has been doing Breeding Bird Surveys for 23 years. He is very willing to share his knowledge and love of owls and is frequently invited to give presentations.

This person has tremendous interest in plants as well, and is very knowledgeable on the many orchid species in Nova Scotia.

It is my pleasure to present this year's Puffin of the Year Award to Bernard Forsythe.

Peter Poyzant



L to R Ralph MacLean (carver of the award) with Barbara Hinds and Bernard Forsythe

Summer - Autumn Rarities

By Ian McLaren

Zoe Lucas



The small straggler in this flock of Canada Geese on Sable I. Nov. 3, 1999, has the very short neck, stubby bill, pale breast, and wide cheek patch typical of "Richardson's Goose", *Branta canadensis hutchinsii* from the central Canadian arctic islands the tiny subspecies *hutchinsii*. This is Nova Scotia's first confirmed occurrence. Supposed Nova Scotia records (e.g. in Tufts, 3rd edition) are hearsay, and may involve the less diminutive mainland race *parvipes*, a photograph of which is in our April 1997 issue, p. 45. It is possible that the smallest Canada Geese, including *hutchinsii*, will be split as a species distinct from the larger ones, including *parvipes*.

Ken McKenna



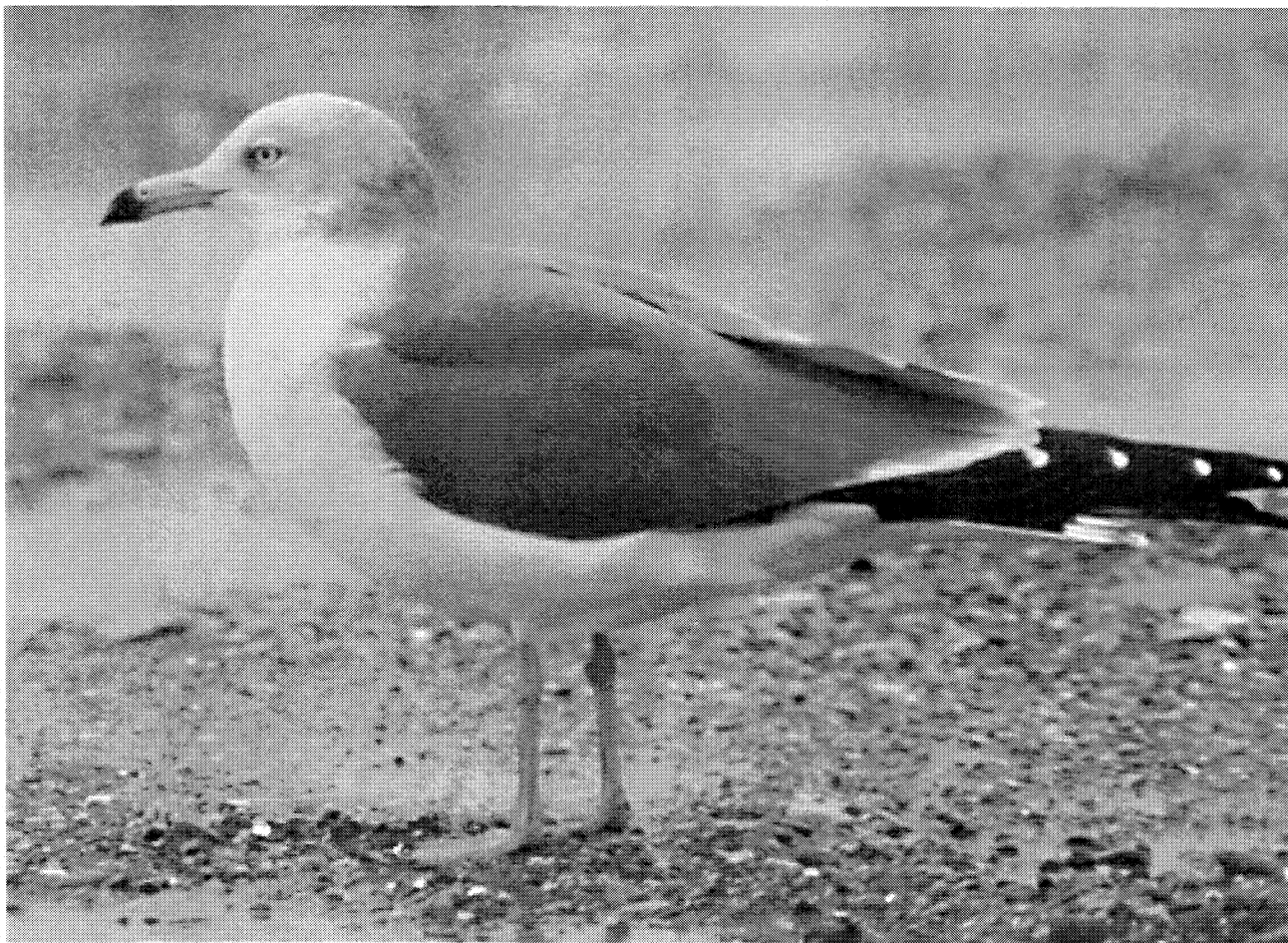
LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULLS were first found in Nova Scotia 30 years ago and since then have been noted as regular winter visitors. In recent years, a few off-season individuals have been found. These have been subadult non-breeders, like this third-summer bird at Big I., Pictou Co., in July. Doubtless some adults will soon stay to nest in the province.

Margot Kaufmann



The long legs, thick bill, and heavy white spotting are all marks of an immature YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON. This one was found and nicely photographed Oct. 3 in a backyard tree near Rainbow Haven, Cole Harbour., HRM.

Blake Maybank



Four mainland birders (Angus MacLean, Blake Maybank, Ian McLaren, Eric Mills), who responded to the rare bird alert on Oct. 22 were able to see the province's first "tickable" BLACK-TAILED GULL frequenting a N. Sydney harbourside park. They approached it cautiously by car, whereupon it came flying over for handouts. They only offered pieces of blueberry granola bar, which it cleverly snatched from competing larger gulls, and offered in exchange this stunning portrait. The black tail band, and long, dark-tipped (black and red) bill are obvious here, but not its bright yellow legs.

Zoe Lucas



Forster's Terns nest in freshwater marshes in interior North America and on the East Coast south of New York, so we can't be sure of the origin of the occasional one that occurs here, mainly in late fall. This one, on Sable I. Oct. 28, is easily distinguished from the young Common Tern behind it, by its dark ear patch and rather heavy-duty bill. This is only the third to be photographically documented in the province.

Blake Maybank



A CATTLE EGRET, breasting the long grass on Seal Island, Oct. 28, was one of few that appeared this fall.

Field Trip Reports

Bon Portage Labour Day Week-end

This trip is usually one which produces high numbers of species and a good sprinkling of rarities. This year was the exception, with a total of 74 species, and no unusual birds. It was, however, a great success as an outing. Eighteen people with lots of gear met at Prospect Point wharf, necessitating three trips over to the Island on Acadia University's boat, "Eider", driven by Dennis Brannen, Island manager. Only two trips were required to return, indicating how much food we consumed over the week-end. Saturday was sunny and warm, perfect for the first day walk-about. There was a light breeze but warm enough on the west side for a swim. Several beginning birders were with us, and all had good looks at the few lingering shorebirds. There were a few raptors and a sprinkling of warblers. James Hirtle got a Blue-winged Warbler which was a lifer for him. This bird is quite a regular on BPI at this time of year. Many birders found a Winter Wren, which Ken McKenna and Claire Diggins saw near the camp, to be a highlight. The Atlantic Bird Observatory Station also experienced a very quiet week-end, but a good time was had by all.

Parks are for People

By Joan Czapalay

Chance of rain 100% is not a good forecast for a field trip. The trip to Cape Chignecto for July 10th was cancelled, and an alternate outing by car in the Port Greville area was organized. We met at noon in Ward's Brook and went first to Seal Brook. At the Fox River bridge there were Barn Swallows, with 16 nests under the bridge. Tree Swallows were present in the fields. At the old Kerr farm we heard activity, and during breaks in the weather saw Am. Robins, Song and White-throated Sparrows, Vesper Sparrows and a Winter Wren. It was raining heavily when we reached the Brook Road, so heard only one brief bubble from one of our resident Mourning Warblers. (At 5 p.m. they were in full sight and song!) Next we went back Red River Road to the Forks. Here we saw and/or heard Common Yellowthroat, Black-throated Green and Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warblers, two Cedar Waxwings, three Chimney Swifts, one Ruby-throated Hummingbird and a dark woodpecker. The Swainson's Thrushes were in full song when, thoroughly soaked, we went to tea at the Port Hole. Mourning Doves, Am. Crows, Starlings, and one Rock Dove were seen, and a Veery was singing in my yard on return. Congratulations to Jean and Bill Morse from Mahone Bay, Eileen Riley from Hatchett Lake, Marjorie Dickie from Halifax and Jo Slater from Wards Brook for not letting a rainy day dampen their spirits. Had we lingered a bit longer at our meeting place we would have seen a pair of Eastern Bluebirds engaged in nest building. P.S. Four young E. Bluebirds were fledged on Aug 4th.

Antigonish North Shore

By Randy Lauff

The bird trip on November 20th, co-sponsored by the Eastern Mainland Field Naturalists' Society, started off slowly (a wrong turn didn't help), but things picked up considerably later in the day. Most of the time was spent surveying the waters of the Northumberland Strait and its associated harbours. Seven participants began the day at a local coffee shop, then headed off to Tracadie Harbour. We worked our way westward and before finishing the day, we visited Bayfield, Pomquet, Williams Pt., the Antigonish sewage treatment plant, Antigonish Landing, Ogdens Pond and Lanark.

Noteworthy observations include an immature Northern Goshawk, a Northern Shrike, two Northern Pintails, one Barrow's Goldeneye, Black-headed Gulls and 20 House Sparrows (hey, they are [thankfully] not often seen in our area!). In addition, the spectacular numbers of birds at Ogdens Pond gave exceptional excitement when we all tried to get our binos pointed at the same bird. There were over 100 immature gannets and over a thousand Bonaparte's Gulls in the melee.

Exceptional sightings include two Eurasian Widgeon (one drake molting at Williams Pt., one in breeding colours at Antigonish Landing), two Little Gulls (one adult, one immature), and an albino Bonaparte's Gull (all three at Ogdens Pond) and the Sandhill Crane at Lanark. In all, 43 species were enjoyed on a wonderful November day.

South Shore

By James Hirtle

Upon leaving home on July 25, the weather did not look great. There was thunder and lightning; with a heavy downpour. Across from the three churches in Mahone Bay, I greeted eight individuals, one of whom was a young lady from New York, who had heard about the outing on the Net.

Our first stop was Long Hill, Mahone Bay. The day before, I had seen a Gray Catbird there. It appeared long enough for me to see it and then it dropped out of sight, not to appear again. We did see two brown creepers, who were very co-operative, a Downy and Hairy Woodpecker, Least and Alder Flycatchers, Golden-crowned Kinglets, and a few warblers, along with various other birds. A Great Blue Heron landed in the tallest tree towering above the surrounding area.

We drove to Maitland and proceeded along an old railway track to two lakes. The first lake provided a male and female Wood Duck in eclipse, Ring-necked Ducks, a Common Loon with young, and a very co-operative Chipping Sparrow. By the second lake there was an Eastern Wood Pewee, singing away at the tip of a dead tree in plain view of everyone in the group. It was still singing as we strode away. On the way back to our cars we saw an American Kestrel with food. We could hear it calling nearby from a nest.

Westhaver Beach was the next stop for Common, Arctic and Roseate Terns. A small pond on the other side of the road gave up a few more species. We stopped at Second Peninsula next. Ospreys were evident with young. Our lunch stop was at a Provincial Park where we witnessed Harbour Porpoises breaching repeatedly. Great Cormorants and Double-crested Cormorants were seen as well as a Spotted Sandpiper and Ruby-throated Hummingbirds.

Some of the group departed for home after lunch. Those that remained accompanied me to Cherry Hill Beach, with a few short stops in between. We found more than 200 shorebirds on Cherry Hill Beach, loads of Semi-palmated Plovers and Sandpipers, Least Sandpipers, Black-bellied Plovers, a Piping Plover with young, and a pair passing through, Willets, Short-billed Dowitchers, and Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs. As we left two Ruddy Turnstones flew in. There were also numerous Sharp-tailed Sparrows and three pods of porpoises.

In all, the day gave us 73 species and it did not start to rain again until we got to our cars at Cherry Hill Beach. I would like to give a special thank you to Shirley Cohrs and Sylvia Fullerton who did a scouting trip for me prior to the outing.



About a decade ago, Francis "Sonny" Dalby was deer hunting near Liverpool when he came across a commotion in the woods that sent him scurrying home about three miles for his camera. He returned to find the contest settled, but the drama was far from over. Did the victim make the mistake of getting too close when mobbing the owl? That must be a very rare mistake for the sagacious Common Raven

President's Report

Annual General Meeting - 1999

January 2000, will be the 45th anniversary of the Nova Scotia Bird Society. We will soon have to start planning for our 50th anniversary celebrations for the year 2005.

The Society has continued to benefit this year, as over its history, from the tremendous commitment and support from many of our members.

One of our accomplishments this year has been in being granted Registered Charity Status for the Society, effective October 1, 1998. This enables us to be eligible for HST rebate. The Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund (SSTF) also has Registered Charity Status. All donations to our organization will continue to be given to the SSTF. Bernice Moores, our Treasurer, needs to be commended for her work in obtaining our Registered Charity Status, as well as overseeing our financial affairs.

Last year, I reported that the Executive was considering the possibility of out-of-province or out-of-country birding tours for our members. The Society is now sponsoring a trip to Cuba under the auspices of Nature Travel Holidays, with Blake Maybank as tour leader. The Society will receive \$200.00 from the tour company for each Bird Society member who goes on the trip.

The Bird Society supported the Nova Scotia Nature Trust in its first annual birdathon, "Counting for Conservation." The program included a one day birdathon, classroom sessions and field trips with children in Grades 4 and 5, and an educational day at the Museum for families, and participants. It has been a wonderful way of involving children in a birding activity. I would encourage you to participate in this very worthwhile event next year.

Education continues to be one of our priorities. We are co-sponsoring a 4-part lecture series with the Museum of Natural History in March 2000, titled

"Seabirds of the Atlantic Provinces." Joan Waldron has continued to be our liaison with the Museum, and again deserves special mention for having organized this lecture series.

The guest speaker for our February meeting is Carl Haycock, who will be speaking on "Whales and Seabirds of the Bay of Fundy." This will be a fitting lead to the Museum series. It will be part of two presentations by Carl Haycock on Wednesday, February 23, and Thursday, February 24, 2000, that are being sponsored by the Halifax Field Naturalists, the Nova Scotia Bird Society and the Museum of Natural History. Thank you to Bernice Moores for having organized this program.

We have participated in a number of other educational programs with: Elder Hostel, the schools, the Museum, to name a few. Joan Czapalay has done many of these educational sessions on behalf of the Society.

Field trips are a very important part of the Society's program. They play a major role in educating new birders, introducing members to new birding areas, and facilitating networking within our membership. This year there have been 27 trips led across the province. A special thank you to Fulton Lavender, our Field Trip Coordinator. A number of these trips were also part of the "Parks are for People Program." We very much benefit from the expertise and generosity of our members who lead our many field trips. Many of our members are also very welcoming and helpful to visiting birders.

I would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Museum of Natural History for its support. The Museum provides us with space for our monthly meetings as well as a mail box and filing cabinet that enables us to carry out the Society's business. We value our continued partnership with the Museum.

I would like to thank our Editor, Paul Quinn, and our Associate Editor, Marion Allsebrook. They have been very effective in developing a new look and format to Nova Scotia Birds in the past two years. The upcoming Autumn issue will be Paul's and Marion's last issue due to personal and family reasons. I am pleased to announce that Randy Lauff has graciously accepted to be our new Editor. We look forward to working with Randy in the upcoming months. Randy has worked hard as the Records Compiler this past year. We will now be needing a replacement for this position. We welcome volunteers to have an interest in becoming involved with our publication.

A word of thanks to our Seasonal Editors for their contribution: Fred Dobson, Sylvia Fullerton, Andy Horn, Richard Knapton, Blake Maybank, David McCorquodale, Ian McLaren, and Eric Mills. A special thank you to Azor Vienneau for his wonderful drawings that are often featured in Nova Scotia Birds, and to Larry Bogan for his regular Weather Reports. I would like to express our appreciation to all our members who contribute to our Seasonal Bird Reports. These reports are published in Nova Scotia Birds and become very valuable records since issues of our publication are preserved in the Public Archives of Nova Scotia. These then become part of our province's permanent record.

Each year, the Society presents a trophy to a member of the Photographic Guild of Nova Scotia who wins the competition on bird photography. This year the trophy was won again by Lorris Keizer of Antigonish. The slides from this competition are donated to our slide collection. We received 21 slides this year. We will be showing these at Members' Slide Night in January. Thank you to Allan Covert for having been our representative on the selection panel for this competition.

Our September meeting was a joint meeting with the Blomidon Naturalists' Society in Wolfville. The meeting was well attended and the speaker, Dr. Ian Jones, from Memorial University gave an excellent talk on birds in the Aleutian Islands. I would like to express our appreciation to Randy Milton and Phil Taylor with the Blomidon Naturalists' Society for organizing this meeting, and to Jim Wolford for leading the field trip on the following morning.

In the past four years, we have had at least one meeting each year outside the Halifax area: Barrington Passage, New Glasgow, Sydney and Wolfville. We will be looking for another destination for this upcoming year.

Communication within an organization is key in linking us to our membership and to the larger community. Marie Moverly has taken on the task this year of maintaining our membership list, and providing labels for our mailings. This year a few members have taken turns

maintaining our Computer Bird Information Line: Blake Maybank, Trina Fitzgerald and Joe Nocera, Marina and Peter Leblanc. Joan Waldron has taken over from Blake in maintaining our Telephone Bird Information Line. Joan has also been primarily responsible for answering our e-mail requests and inquiries over the year, having initially shared this task with Peter Payzant. Peter has continued to maintain our web page, and is our official photographer for this evening. Thank you to all these members.

I would like to express our appreciation to the Directors of the Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund; Ken Gregoire, David Currie, Shirley Cohrs and Peter Bell for their contribution to the Society. Joan Czapalay has continued to do a great job as Membership Secretary. This is a demanding position and we appreciate her efforts. We have benefited and enjoyed having Chris Field, Doug Roy and Joan Waldron on the Executive. This has been their last

year. A special thank you for Chris, Doug and Joan.

I would like to express our sincere appreciation to our Honorary Solicitor, Mr. Tony Robinson and our Honorary Auditor, Mr. James Morrow.

Many thanks to Chris Field for facilitating our monthly meetings; Ralph MacLean for carving the Puffin of the Year; Joan Waldron for looking after our slide collection, housing our books and supplies, and answering Museum inquiries; Peter Leblanc for looking after our mailings; and Inez Roberts and her helpers for providing refreshments at our meetings.

I would personally like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Executive for their support over the past year.

Finally, I would like to thank Shirley Brothers and Doug Roy for organizing tonight's Wine and Cheese.

Computer Birding

For those with access to the World Wide Web here are a few sites that you may find interesting -

American Birding Association

www.americanbirding.org

The site contains information on ABA, listings of birding events and links to other birding related sites.

Birding Canada

www.web-nat.com/bic

This site offers access to birding checklists, chat room, birding events calendar and birding links.

Peterson Publishing

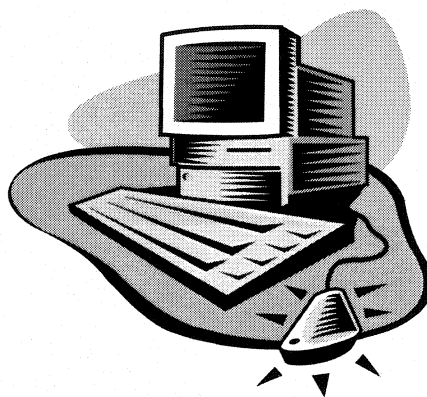
www.petersononline.com/birds

This is the company that publishes the Field Guides and Birdwatchers Digest. Some interesting material at this site.

Canadian Wildlife Service

www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/cwshom_e.html

Check out 'Hinterland Who's Who', find information on CWS programs, publications and other items of interest to birders.



Gulls

www.martinreid.com/gullinx.htm

See lots of photos of various gulls here.

Birders World

www.birdersworld.com

Another birding magazine site with selections from magazine articles and links to other birding resources.

Birding Hot Spots

www.camacdonald.com/birding/

If you are planning a trip and looking for areas to do some birding you might try checking this site for ideas. The site has lots of bird photos as well.

The Americas' Birding Trip Repository

www3.ns.sympatico.ca/ns/maybank/trips.htm

This is a great source for finding out what other people saw on their birding trips to a large number of birding spots.

Minutes of Annual General Meeting - NSBS

October 28, 1999

President Gisèle d'Entremont called the meeting to order. The minutes of last year's annual general meeting had Nellie Snyder's name spelt incorrectly. Corrections were made. Eric Mills moved that the minutes be approved, Chris Field seconded.

Business Arising

There was no business arising from the minutes

Treasurers report

See the financial Statements on pages 46-47 of this issue.

Other highlights -

- Membership is up, includes one new life membership.
- Sale of publications down
- Cost of NS Birds down
- Museum grant not yet received since NS Government budget is late

Questions: Peter Payzant. How much is the Museum grant?

Chris Field explained the Society's new charitable status.

Chris asked approval of auditor, James Morrow which was given.

Chris Field moved the Treasurers report be approved, Eric Cook seconded.

Membership report

See full report on page 44 of this issue

Thanks to David Currie for sending NSBS membership forms to Christmas Bird Count participants. Joan Czapalay moved the report be approved, Barbara Hinds seconded.

Scholarship and Trust Fund report (SSTF)

See report on page 44 of this issue.

SSTF financial report reported by Dave Currie: See page 45 of this issue

Questions from floor about taxes on Society's properties. Dave Currie moved the report be approved, Eric Milled seconded.

Dave also reported on the success of the bank Swallow colony at the Bowater property on St Margarets Bay. Azor Vienneau worked with Dave on this. Dave thanked Azor.

Chris Fields gave Vice-President's report. He commented on the co-operation of Bowater in protecting the Bank Swallow nesting site.

Roland Chiasson and Sabine Dietz met with executive to discuss Important Bird Areas. It is a National and International program but has no political weight. The sites suggested for NS are Bon Portage Island, Country Island, Bird Islands, Cape Breton, Pomquet Beach, parts of Cape Sable Island and the Brothers Islands. Roland and Sabine will work with community stakeholders in chosen areas.

Presidents Report

The full text of Gisèle's report is on page 40 of this issue

Puffin of the Year Award

Awarded this year to Bernard Forsythe. See page 35 of this issue

Nominating Committee

Sylvia Fullerton asked that the new executive be approved. Blake Maybank seconded.

New Business

Blake Maybank spoke about the NS Bird Society's upcoming trip to Cuba.

Meeting adjourned.



NSBS Executive for 2000-01

From the left:

Gisèle d'Entremont, Peter Ackerman, Peter Richard, Barbara Hinds, Joan Czapalay

Absent from photo:

Andy Horn, Lise Bell, Bernice Moores, Randy Lauff, Peter Leblanc

In Memoriam

By Calvin Brennan

Margaret Kenney

Margaret Kenney, a friend to nature and naturalists alike, passed away suddenly on January 20, 2000. She was a nurse by profession but a birder in her spare moments. Margaret was a charter and life member of the Nova Scotia Bird Society and did much to spread the gospel on birding in the northeastern mainland. In this area of the province, Margaret was a birding pioneer and the driving force behind my parents (Harry and Jean Brennan) as well as many others, in developing an interest in birds. Margaret, with her husband Fred, began the Springville Christmas Bird Count in the late 1950's and continued as compiler until I took it over in 1993. With the exception of the last year, Margaret had participated in all the Springville counts as well as hosting the wrap-up dinner and tally at her home. Margaret was involved in *The Atlas of Breeding Birds of the Maritime Provinces*, surveying several squares in Pictou County. She also had a Breeding Bird Survey route for many years in Antigonish county. Over the years, she and Fred led field trips for the Nova Scotia Bird Society, many to Big Island.

On a more personal note, Margaret was very enthusiastic about her birding and was especially keen on early morning birding often returning home on June mornings before many people had actually peeled the covers of their beds. In my early days as a birder, she provided constant encouragement and I always looked forward to hearing her kind words of approval. In later years when she wasn't able to be as active, she would always have an appreciative ear for what I was seeing in my travels. She was always bright and cheerful whenever our paths crossed and always managed to find the positive side to any situation. I will miss my friend Margaret.

Zoe Lucas



Although WHITE-WINGED DOVES would be rated as stunning rarities in much of Canada, they have become almost regular here. This one posed in a driftwood "forest" constructed to attract birds at the meteorological station on Sable Island, Oct. 19. It was our 17th since the first one in Nova Scotia, again on Sable Island, in August 1979.

Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund Annual Report 1999

By G. Kenneth Gregoire

The last 12 months have been a rather reserved time for the Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund.

We prepared a written submission to the Atlantic Canada Tern Working Group meeting in Sackville, N.B. Our hope was that we could get permission for signage and predator control on specific tern colonies.

The tern colony on Westhavers I. did very well this summer. The population increased as the survivors of other predated colonies settled on the island. Thirty to forty terns fledged before disaster struck in the form of severe thundershowers which caused erosion and collapse of the clay banks. In the Atlantic Region, CWS reports of 14 core colonies, five were abandoned and three had unknown status.

As in the past, we maintained a position on the Mahone Bay Aquaculture committee. One lease was moved which will benefit the scoter population and a long discussion was had with another lease holder on the shooting of scoters and guillemots.

We have decided to reduce our real estate holdings due to the cost of ownership and the fact that these properties are not biologically significant. The Port Joli land was offered to Parks Canada due to its proximity to the Kejimikujik National Park Seaside Adjunct, and Peters I. was offered to the Nova Scotia Nature Trust. There being no interest in these lands, our intent is to sell these properties and use the returns to assist other groups in the purchase of significant sites. Indian Island and Hertford Island will be retained and be the focal points of our

sanctuary efforts.

This year proved to be one of the best for Indian I. and even the cormorant colony escaped serious shooting. Fortunately, we are able to overfly this Island twice a week to monitor its progress. Hertford had another great year so we can take heart that we own two of the most important offshore islands in Nova Scotia.

On behalf of the Fund, I personally thanked then Premier MacLellan for the enactment of the Special Places Legislation.

We hope the membership will provide some ideas for the coming year as it is most important that this interaction be maintained. In closing, I would like to thank our directors for their support and hosting our meetings.

1999 Membership Report, NSBS

Joan Czapalay - Membership Secretary -

Our membership numbers have held quite steady this year, with 444 active members at the end of September, compared with 447 in 1998. Thank you to all who have renewed their memberships or will do so by the end of December. If you know of members who have changed their address or who did not receive their magazine for any reason, please ask them to call me at 422-6858. We have kept our fees at \$15.00 and \$18.00 (family) for another year, in spite of rising postal costs. I will continue to send membership cards on request. It is appreciated when a stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed.

Thank you for sharing news of our meetings, and helping to distribute membership forms. Forms have been posted at most of the universities' Biology Departments, many have been handed out at field trips and some have been posted at the Atlantic Bird Observatory Stations.

I have been pleased to represent the Bird Society on the Board of the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists. This is the Provincial arm of the Canadian Nature Federation - which grew from the National Audubon Society. It is a way for us to work together with other naturalist groups in the province for our mutual benefit.

I have enjoyed being your membership Secretary this year. Thanks to Marie Moverly for her work on the computer, to Bernice Moores for helping me to keep the records balanced and up-to-date (except for the summers, which I take off!) and to Gisèle for encouragement and good leadership. Statistics for the past four years are shown below:

	1996	1997	1998	1999
Individual	352	322	290	294
Family	151	141	119	116
Institution	16	15	14	10
Life	18	17	17	17
Exchange	7	7	7	7
Total	544	502	447	444

NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY SANCTUARY AND SCHOLARSHIP TRUST FUND

Financial Statements to September 30, 1999 (with comparison for the twelve months ended September 30, 1998)

	Current Year	Previous Year
Receipts		
Contributions	1,404.00	1,936.20
G.I.C. Interest	935.44	701.46
Bank Interest	8.02	7.61
Insurance Refund	250.00	0.00
Total Receipts	2,597.48	2,645.27
Disbursements		
Bank Charges	68.71	69.31
Property Taxes	1091.22	900.10
Insurance	0.00	500.00
Tern Project	0.00	700.00
Christmas Bird Counts	53.36	0.00
N.A. Migration Count	285.87	0.00
Miscellaneous	0.00	180.00
Total Disbursements	1,499.18	2,349.41
Excess of Receipts Over Disbursements	1,098.30	295.86
Opening Bank Balance	3,527.70	3,231.84
Closing Bank Balance	4,626.00	3,527.70

BALANCE SHEET

Assets		
Guaranteed Investments Cert.	26,400.00	26,400.00
Bald Islands	1,000.00	1,000.00
Hertford Island	160.00	160.00
Indian Island	12,000.00	12,000.00
Kemptville Property	1,500.00	1,500.00
Peters Island	20,000.00	20,000.00
Port Joli Property	13,000.00	13,000.00
Bank Balance	4,626.00	3,527.70
Total Assets	78,686.00	77,587.70
Statement of Surplus		
Opening Balance	77,587.70	77,291.84
Excess of Receipts over Disbursements	1098.30	295.86
Closing Balance	78,686.00	77,587.70

NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS AND MEMBERS' EQUITY

For the year ended September 30, 1999
(With comparative figures for the year ended September 30, 1998)

	<u>1998/99</u>	<u>1997/98</u>
Receipts		
Memberships	8,072	7,796
Sale of publications, etc.	1,178	2,316
Nova Scotia Museum grant	-	4,000
Interest	649	432
Foreign exchange	383	522
Miscellaneous income	2	276
	10,284	15,342
Disbursements		
Cost of publications and other items for sale	102	110
Nova Scotia Birds	5,636	7,574
Committees	661	1,129
Printing and stationery	60	453
Promotion	829	1,178
Insurance	250	-
Miscellaneous expense	78	235
	7,616	10,679
Excess receipts over disbursements	2,668	4,663
<u>Statement of member's equity</u>		
Opening balance	15,848	11,185
Excess receipts over disbursements	<u>2,668</u>	<u>4,663</u>
Closing balance	18,516	15,848

NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY

BALANCE SHEET

As at September 30, 1999

(With comparative figures for the year ended September 30, 1998)

	<u>1998/99</u>	<u>1997/98</u>
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Bank accounts	814	692
Term deposits	<u>18,000</u>	<u>16,350</u>
Total cash	18,814	17,042
Accounts receivable	748	774
Prepaid expense	<u>172</u>	<u>112</u>
	920	886
Total current assets	19,734	17,928
Fixed assets		
Office equipment	<u>430</u>	-
Total assets	20,164	17,928
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable	1,648	2,080
Total liabilities	1,648	2,080
Members' equity		
Opening balance	15,848	11,185
Excess receipts over disbursements	<u>2,668</u>	<u>4,663</u>
Total members' equity	18,516	15,848
Liabilities and equity	20,164	17,928

G. d'Entremont, President

B. Moores, Treasurer

J. Morrow, Auditor

**NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY
Membership Application/Renewal Form 2000**

Membership in the Nova Scotia Bird Society is open to all. The membership fee includes a subscription to *Nova Scotia Birds*. Application for membership assumes that you have read and agreed to the waiver below. Membership runs from January to December. Rates are:

Individual:	\$15/year, for _____ years	\$ _____
Family:	\$18/year, for _____ years	\$ _____
Institutional:	\$25/year, for _____ years	\$ _____
Life:	\$375	\$ _____
Additional for addresses outside of Canada:		
	\$2/year, for _____ years	\$ _____
Fed. of NS Naturalists:	\$5/year, for _____ years	\$ _____
	Membership Total:	\$ _____

The following items are also available:

_____ NSBS crests, \$4 each	\$ _____
_____ NSBS decals, \$1 each	\$ _____
_____ Bird Checklist, four for \$1	\$ _____
_____ Birding Nova Scotia, \$5	\$ _____
Supplies Total:	\$ _____

Please consider a tax-creditable donation to our Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund.

Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund Donation: \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

Name: _____ Renewal
 First Name Mid. Initial(s) Last Name

Additional Name(s): _____

Address: _____

_____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

- I WOULD BE WILLING TO HELP WITH:
- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality | <input type="checkbox"/> Magazine | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity | <input type="checkbox"/> Leading Bird Walks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Leading School Group | |

In signing this membership application I/we hereby waive and release the Nova Scotia Bird Society, its executive committee and members from all claims for injury and/or damage suffered at any function or field trip organized by the Nova Scotia Bird Society.

Signature: _____

Mail to the Membership Secretary: Joan Czapalay,
Nova Scotia Bird Society,
c/o Nova Scotia Museum,
1747 Summer Street,
Halifax, N.S. B3H 3A6

(Continued from outside back cover)

Sat 1 Apr – Baccaro and Blanche Peninsula Leader: Donna Ensor 875-4269 Early spring birding with Donna. Rarities have shown up here quite often at this time of year. Dress warmly and bring a lunch. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the parking lot opposite the exit to Port Clyde.

Wed 5 April - Eiders & Gulls: Can They Live Together? 7:30 p.m.
NSMNH auditorium
Eiders are the familiar sea ducks we see usually feeding in flocks close to shore. Historically they were found in such abundant numbers that using them as a food source and their feathers to stuff pillows and winter clothing seemed appropriate. Now eiders are threatened by another seabird species, the gull. Kim Mawhinney has studied eiders for many years and tonight will update us on this unhappy relationship.

Sat 15 Apr – Martinique Beach
Leader: Ian McLaren 429-7024
Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Scotia Bank parking lot, Bridge Plaza, Dartmouth. Look for early migrants such as Piping Plover and Ipswich Sparrow as well as possible rarities. Bring a lunch. Note – this trip is always the first Saturday after Easter.

Sat. April 15 – Getting Ready For the Birds 10 a.m. to 12 noon
NSMNH auditorium
Bring your family and friends and join members of the Nova Scotia Bird Society and learn how they enjoy birding. Some species of birds have already arrived back from their wintering places and are already raising families. Soon the woods will be filled with brightly coloured wood warblers. Learn to use binoculars and spotting scopes; what field guides are most useful; how to recognize different bird calls and see some museum specimens of the kinds of birds you might see in various habitats throughout Nova Scotia.

Thu 27 Apr – NSBS Meeting
Important Bird Areas 7:30 p.m.
NSMNH auditorium
Roland Chiasson and/or Sabine Dietz, community conservation planners with Maritime Important Bird Areas Program will present on their work in the past year.

Sun 30 Apr – Wolfville Area
Leader: Jim Wolford 542-7650
Pond hopping for ducks and early migrants. Meet at the Robie Tufts Nature centre, Front St., Wolfville at 10 a.m. This will be a joint field trip with the Blomidon Naturalists Society. No registration necessary. Bring a lunch.

Sat 13 May – North American Migration Count
Note – this event is always the second Saturday in May. Contact: Judy Tufts 542-7800. See information on page one of this issue.

Sun 7 May – Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary Leader: Alan Smith 506-536-0164 (h) or 506-364-5038 (w)
Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the APBS parking lot. Take exit 3 from TCH 104 at the Wandlyn Inn and proceed a few km toward Nappan; the entrance is on the left. Wear appropriate footwear for wet conditions and bring a lunch. Enjoy a day of observing waterfowl, shorebirds and early migrants.

Sat 13 May – Sun 14 May – Joint Weekend Field Trip With Halifax Field Naturalists and Wild Flora Society to Cape d'Or & Advocate Area Contacts: Jane Mills 392-2027, Maureen Mills 392-2096, Joan Czupalay 348-2803, Fulton Lavender 455-4966. **PRE-REGISTRATION IS NECESSARY!**

On Saturday Jane Mills will lead us around the Cape d'Or – Advocate area on a number of short trips. Maureen Mills is the leader on Sunday. Meet on both days at 7:00 a.m. at the Advocate Fire Hall.

Directions: Bicentennial (102) to Truro. Trans Canada (104) to Glenholme. Route 2 to Parrsboro. In

Parrsboro take extreme right at the bandstand and continue on Route 2 for 5 km. Then left onto Hwy 209 to Advocate.

Wed 17 May – Halifax County Early Morning Warbler Walk
Leader: Fred Dobson 852-3042
Meet at 6:00 a.m. at the parking lot at the junction of Prospect Rd. Rte. 333 and St. Margaret's Bay Rd. Duration of 2 to 3 hours.

Fri 19 May - Mon 22 May – Bon Portage Island
Leader: Claire Diggins 825-6152
PRE-REGISTRATION IS NECESSARY!
Depart late afternoon or early evening on Friday from Prospect Point Wharf. Bring food, drinking water, warm clothing and foot-wear suitable for rough (sometimes wet) terrain, a flashlight, mattress sheet and sleeping bag. Carry gear in waterproof bags or containers. Field guides are available on the island, as are cooking pans, dishes and utensils. There is a charge of \$45 to NSBS members for three nights accommodation, as well as a boat trip donation.

Sat 27 May – Bridgetown/Annapolis Royal
Leader: Sharon Hawboldt
Meet at the Tidal Power parking lot at 7:30 a.m. There will be a warbler walk in the morning, and a trip to Belleisle Marsh in the afternoon. Bring rubber boots and a lunch.

Sun 28 May – Shubenacadie Area
Leader: Roslyn McPhee 758-3265
Meet at Miller's Restaurant in Shubenacadie at 7:00 a.m. Bring a lunch and insect repellent. Warblers and woodpeckers are common on this trip. Note – this trip is always the last Sunday in May.

Ideas and suggestions for future trips are welcome. You do not need to be an expert to lead a field trip; you just need to share your favourite birding hotspots. Any questions or suggestions should be directed to the Field Trip Coordinator, Fulton Lavender at (902) 455-4966.

Inside this issue:

Special points of interest:

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Upcoming Events



Field trips are open to non-members as well as members. Please phone the field trip leader or contact person ahead of time to register for the trip and obtain further information (e.g. directions). In this way no trip is oversubscribed, and you can be contacted in case of cancellation. Field trips range from early morning warbler walks to all day outings, to overnight expeditions to offshore islands. The area code for N.S. is 902. NSMNH = The Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer St. Halifax.

Whales & Seabirds of the Bay of Fundy Wed., Feb. 23, 7:30 p.m. (for the general public) & Thurs., Feb. 24, 7:30 p.m. (Bird Society meeting night, public welcome)
NSMNH Auditorium

Carl Haycock is a noted whale researcher and naturalist. He has lived and worked on Brier Island since 1984 and has observed and studied the marine life surrounding it. Join Carl and meet two humpback whale sisters-Lacey, born in 1985, and Foggy, born in 1987-who returned to the Bay of Fundy this past summer. Hear about other whale species, plus pelagic seabirds who live on the rich resources of the bay. Co-sponsored by the Halifax Field Naturalists, the Nova Scotia Bird Society, and the MNH.

Wed 1 Mar - Seabirds of the North Atlantic: An Overview 7:30 p.m.
NSMNH auditorium

Thousands of seabirds either breed or feed in the eastern North Atlantic. They must survive the hazards of oil spills, pollution, plastic garbage, fishing gear, and predation by humans and other species. Tony Lock of the Canadian Wildlife Service brings us up to date on the state of our local seabird species.

Wed 8 Mar - Murres: A Circumpolar Perspective 7:30 p.m.
NSMNH auditorium

Canada is home to some of the largest colonies of Thick-billed and Common Murres. All murres are threatened by pollution, while others like the thick-billed murres face additional risks in Newfoundland and Labrador where they are hunted. Join John Chardine of the Canadian Wildlife Service who will sort out the species of murres and tell us where they breed and feed and how they are doing world wide.

Wed 22 Mar - Terns & Their Survival in NS 7:30 p.m.
NSMNH auditorium

The familiar terns of the North Atlantic-common, arctic, roseate, and black-are the species that we expect to see in our area. Terns have had, and are having, a

tough time. They must migrate long distances, historically their beautiful feathers were used to decorate hats, and nowadays the roseate terns' nesting areas are being threatened. So can they survive? Tonight Andrew Boyne, Canadian Wildlife Service, will give us some background and an update on the status of these elegant birds.

Thu 23 Mar - NSBS Meeting 'Birding Adventures in Arizona' 7:30 p.m. NSMHN auditorium
Speaker: Joan Czapalay

Wed 29 Mar - Cormorants: "Black, Bad Birds" 7:30 p.m.
NSMNH auditorium

A familiar bird of Nova Scotia's lakes and bays is the cormorant, the skinny-necked bird that hangs out its wings to dry. By 1900 both the great cormorant and the double crested cormorant were almost wiped out in this area as they were seen as competition to another fish eating species ... humans. Today, fish farming presents another threat. Some places are even considering a hunting season on these birds. Join Randy Milton for an update on cormorants: their behaviours, their habitats, and the threats facing them.

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