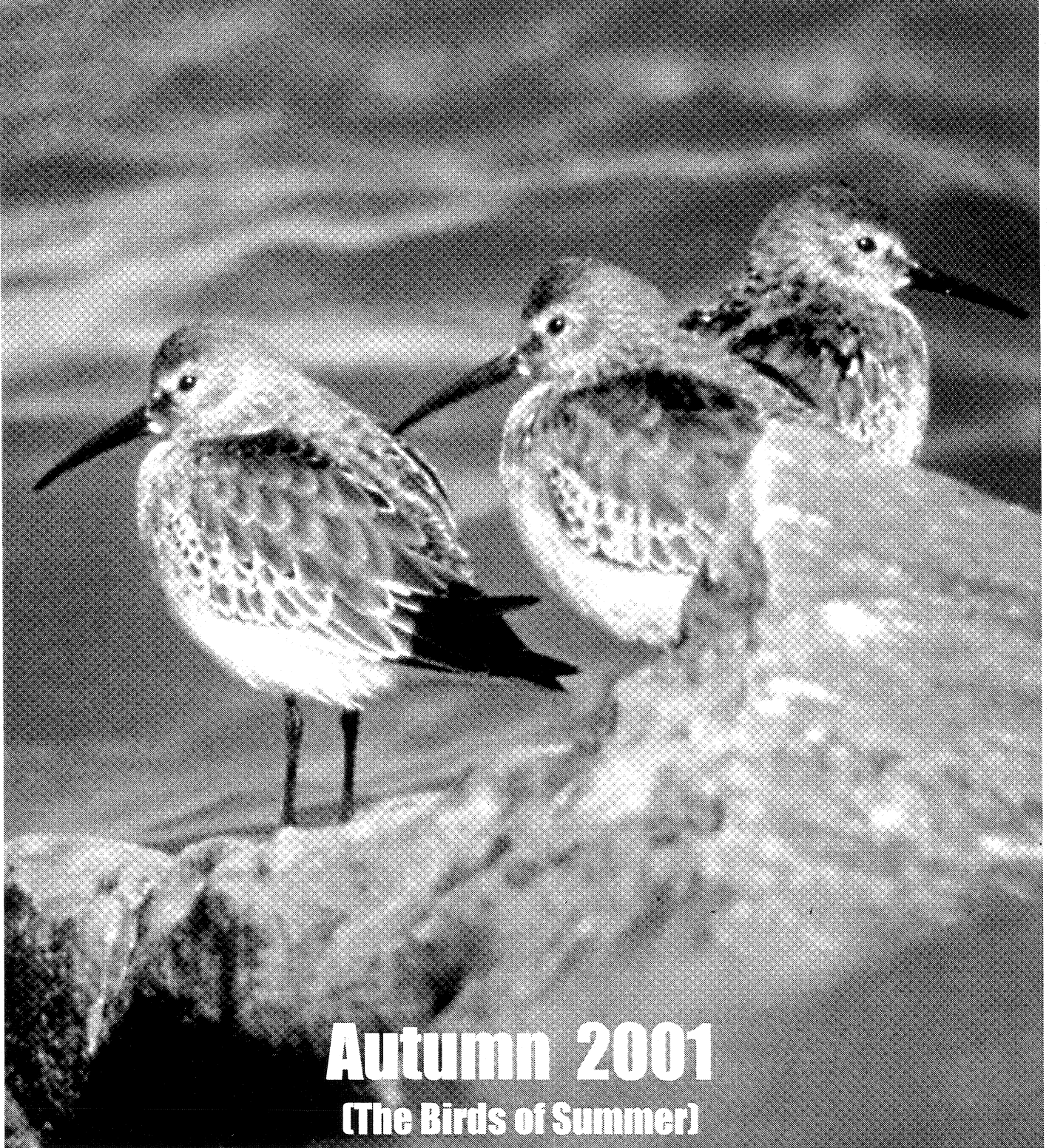


Nova Scotia Birds

A Quarterly Publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society



Autumn 2001
(The Birds of Summer)



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Formed in 1955, the Nova Scotia Bird Society is a member of the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists and 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 habitat.

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Reporting Deadlines

Winter 2002 issue: Dec. 7, 2001
Spring 2002 issue: Mar. 7, 2002

Summer 2002 issue: June 7, 2002
Fall 2002 issue: Aug. 7, 2002

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Cover Photo: These DUNLIN were photographed at Grand Pre by Richard Stern. [NSBS Library]

NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS
AUTUMN 2001

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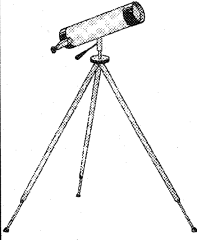
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The Spotting Scope



As fleeting as the Sharpie at my feeder, summer has simply come and gone. Wasn't I (just yesterday?) trying (yet again?) to differentiate between the songs of the Chestnut-sided and Magnolia Warblers? And don't even talk to me about Redstarts! And now, they're gone again, hopefully for a well-deserved rest from parenting. One of the joys of birding is to watch the seasons as they unfold, to relish in our nesting birds' arrivals, to infuse ourselves with their songs, to marvel at the nesting process and to share in the joy of successful fledglings. As many of our breeding birds depart, we welcome the arrival of winter residents, and of course, the unexpected birds...the reverse migrants, the storm-driven vagrants, and the rarities that defy rational explanation for their occurrences here.

If we reflect back a bit on the summer, we see two new breeding records for the Province (though one was a bat, which may be the most bird-like mammal, but still doesn't qualify for our checklist!). The Brown Thrasher, long predicted to be recorded as a nester here, has finally been documented by the folks on Cape Sable Island. Also, we faced yet another year of...as one Seasonal Editor puts it...still being the only province in the land that has yet to document the nesting of Ring-billed Gulls. Why? Perhaps this species really hasn't expanded its breeding range here? Perhaps the nest sites (usually on islands) are too inaccessible for birders? Perhaps we're just afraid of entering a nesting colony because of the very real fear of getting hurt (an attacking gull strikes HARD on the head). Or perhaps we're just maintaining a respectful distance from the breeding birds. One day, this record will come, and we'll bring that news to you, too.

There's also a new (or recurring) issue of ecological concern regarding our birds (with likely impacts on other wildlife, too). The National Wild Turkey Federation ("National" in this case referring to the United States, but there's a chapter here, too) wants to introduce Wild Turkeys into Nova Scotia. This alien species has never been native to our province, and although these birds will *likely* not create the problems of the *magnitude* that House Sparrows and European Starlings did, why should we take the chance? By the time this issue is in your hands, the deadline for submitting opinions to the Department of Natural Resources will be gone, but we'll report to you in a subsequent issue the results. What are your thoughts?

Have you ever reported a bird only to later realise that you misidentified it? Let's face it, we all make identification mistakes, but it's how we handle these mistakes that helps to classify us as a "good birder" or not. Within these pages is the acknowledgement of a misidentification, and a brief article on some fine points of differentiating the real bird from the alleged one. It's the first article of this nature that has appeared since my tenure as editor, and I would consider including more of these from time to time. Please tell me if this would interest you!

So, what is the connection between a crowbar and a crow?

Until the next issue, good birding!

Randy



News from the Nova Scotia Piping Plover Guardian Program

By Anna McCarron
Program Co-ordinator

The ultimate goal of the Nova Scotia Piping Plover Guardian program is to help Piping Plovers out of the endangered category. Guardians help to raise the numbers - in more ways than one.

The 2001 International Piping Plover Breeding Census took place June 3 - 16. With the help of guardians, Nova Scotians saw a slight increase in the number of Piping Plovers compared with five years ago (Table 1). But if you compare it with the five years previous, the population declined from 113 birds in 1991 to 80 birds in 1996. We still have a way to go even to recover the numbers to the 1991 level.

Less formal surveys are conducted in non-census years. Table 2 shows the vast difference in effort (number of beaches surveyed) between last year (non-census) and this year (census). However, it seems that we know our beaches very well, since the 2000 survey turned up very similar results to the formal census of this year. In addition to the census data, consistent observations throughout the season by DNR staff, Piping Plover Guardians and Parks Canada Staff provided more information (Table 3).

Table 1: Regional totals for the last three official censuses

Province	1991	1996	2001
New Brunswick	203	146	166
Newfoundland	7	27	39
Nova Scotia	113	80	87
Prince Edward Island	110	66	110
Quebec	76	104	70
Eastern Canada Totals	509	423	472
Saint Pierre & Miquelon	4	6	9
Eastern Pop. Totals	513	429	481

Table 2: Plovers at beaches over the last two breeding seasons. Data were combined from NSDNR staff, Parks Canada staff, and Piping Plover Guardians during June 3 - 16 2001.

County \ Year	Beaches Surveyed		Beaches With Plovers		Pairs		Singles		Total Birds	
	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000
Cape Breton	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Richmond	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Victoria	2	4	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0
Inverness	5	0	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Antigonish	11	2	2	2	4	5	0	0	8	10
Guysborough	1	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Pictou	21	4	1	1	1	1	0	0	2	2
Colchester	1	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Cumberland	6	0	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Halifax	19	8	1	2	1	2	1	1	3	5
Lunenburg	12	4	3	1	4	1	1	0	9	2
Queens	9	7	4	6	7	13	1	1	15	27
Shelburne	19	11	10	11	23	20	0	5	48	46
Total	118	43	22	23	42	42	3	7	87	92

Table 3: Nova Scotia Piping Plover statistics by county, for the entire season (not just the census period).

County	Beaches With Plovers	Pairs	Adults	Nests	Eggs	Hatched	Fledged**	Productivity
Victoria	1	2	4	1	4	4	(?) 4	(?) 2.00
Antigonish	2	5	10	5	20	18	14	2.80
Pictou	1	1	2	1	4	1	1	1.00
Halifax	1	1	3	1	4	4	4	4.00
Lunenburg	3	4	9	4	16	14	10	2.50
Queens	6	9	20	9	34	19	9	1.00
Shelburne	12	27	57	33	121	76	31	1.15
TOTALS	26	49	105	54	203	136	(4?) 73	(1.41?) 1.49

* '?' indicates that it is not known whether these chicks fledged. But because of their age at the time they were last seen it is reasonable to assume that these chicks fledged.

** fledged chicks/pair/year; the goal is to achieve a productivity above 1.5 chicks/pair/year.

An area that really needs Guardian attention, to raise the numbers of fledged chicks, is at Southside (Daniels Head) Beach. Of the 28 chicks that hatched there, only 6 managed to survive. This high mortality rate was frequently due to predation by gulls - as witnessed by DNR staff - a disturbing and unusual trend there this season. Having a human presence on the beaches (to a point) helps to deter predation of chicks. If you are interested in patrolling this beach next year, I would be happy to hear from you.

Guardian activity doesn't always involve going to beaches. At conferences and exhibitions, Volunteers and Youth Corps staff helped to inform people about ways to protect the Piping Plover. Guardian displays were seen at the Bridgewater Exhibition, the Shelburne Founders Days, the Lockeport Sea Derby closing ceremonies, and the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists' Conference in Lunenburg. The Guardian program is grateful to the Department of Natural Resources for loaning us equipment for the conference in Lunenburg and at the "Big Ex", and for the booth spaces there as well. A special thanks to guardians James Hirtle, Bill and Eileen Billington and their granddaughter Brittany Billington, Anne and Bruce Raymond, Judy Brown and Julie McKnight for taking time to volunteer in Bridgewater.

The last sighting of a Piping Plover reported to me this season was at Roseway, on Aug 23, where a single adult guarded its three week-old chick. If you have seen a Piping Plover beyond this date I would be interested in hearing about when and where you saw it.

It is a full time job for adult Piping Plovers to guard their chicks - and with such dedication! I had the pleasure of observing the adult at Roseway going to great lengths to protect its chick. Still not having seen any Piping Plovers between the numerous flocks of Semipalmated Plovers, an adult Piping Plover suddenly appeared as I approached the area. As I retreated to a good observation point to watch through my scope, the adult flew back to the chick that I suspected was there. In the half hour that I was observing their behaviour, the adult had protected its chick from flocks of Semipalmated Plovers and a Willet choosing to stop in the Piping Plovers' feeding area to get their pickings. I was amazed at how this solitary bird defended this territory, turning whole flocks and a Willet away, while the chick, seemingly oblivious to any threat continued to feed.

This final observation of natural interactions turned out to be the end of my first season with the Piping Plovers. I can't wait for next year to see if I can help increase the numbers by a few more. Care to join us? Call (902) 860-1263 or email me at plover@istar.ca. ☐

An Apparent Western Wood-Pewee in Nova Scotia

By Fulton Lavender and Andrea Clouston

On the morning of June 17, 2001, we were carrying out a breeding bird survey in the Kejimikujik National Park Seaside Adjunct, near Port Joli, Queens Co., NS. Around 10:00 a.m., we reached a small headland clump of black spruce, surrounded inland by scrubby barrens, when we heard a song that FL immediately recognized, from having heard recordings, as resembling that of Western Wood-Pewee. We first saw a silent Olive-sided Flycatcher, which added confusion, but then walked to the back of the spruce clump, from which the burry song seemed to emanate. The singer was indeed a wood-pewee, which we were able to observe (10 X 42 and 7 X 35 binoculars) for about 45 minutes, and for about five minutes at distances as close as 3 - 6 m. During our observations, the bird sang about a dozen times. The distinctive, burry song could be rendered (FL) as "peurraiu." For the survey work, AC was equipped with a tape recorder and microphone. Unfortunately, the equipment had an untimely malfunction, and no recordings were obtained. The following behavioural, structural and plumage characteristics were noted in the field, and pointed out on site by FL for the benefit of AC, for whom the species was novel.

- The bird showed the typical wood-pewee habit of returning to its original perch after flycatching excursions.
- It was distinctly smaller than the Olive-sided Flycatcher, but notably larger than the Boreal Chickadees in the same area. FL thought that its tail seemed short relative to its long primary extensions in comparison with the Eastern Wood-Pewee, with which he was very familiar.
- Its upperparts from forehead to uppertail coverts were dark, smoky brown, with darker brownish cheek areas, and paler lores.
- The throat and chest were uniformly smoky gray-brown, the belly dirty white, and the undertail coverts grayish white with some distinctly darker feather centres.
- The flight feathers of the wing and the tail feathers (including the outer ones) were blackish. The dark wing coverts had two narrow, grayish wing bars, the upper narrower than the lower. The tertials and secondaries were narrowly margined with dull, grayish white.
- Its short legs and upper bill were black, the lower bill about three-quarters black, dull orange at the base.

All possible distinctions of this bird from the Eastern Wood-Pewee were thus noted, among which the voice is reckoned to be diagnostic. The very dusky throat and chest of the bird were unlike any that FL had seen on Eastern Wood-Pewees. Sibley (2000) stresses the importance of the narrow, grayish wing bars of the Western compared with the broader, whiter ones of the Eastern Wood-Pewee. The observed amount of black on the lower bill was well beyond the extent of overlap with that of the eastern species as illustrated by Pyle (1997). As far as we know, ours are the first observations of this species in Atlantic Canada.

We can only guess why such a bird occurred so unseasonably out of range. It is well known that passerine migrants in Nova Scotia continue to appear in coastal regions in mid-June. The isolated stand of spruce at the tip of a peninsula also has characteristics of other "vagrant traps" in coastal Nova Scotia. This was also evident in our finding of a singing White-eyed Vireo in the park that day. Finally, the occurrence of western birds at this time of year is not unprecedented. Tufts (1996) documents spring occurrences of such species as Black-throated Gray, Townsend's and Hermit warblers. Like those, a spring vagrant Western Wood-Pewee might have resulted from the navigational error of mirror-image misorientation, when a bird that would normally migrate northwest from Mexico and Central America instead heads northeast, to end up in Atlantic Canada.

We thank Drs. Cindy Staicer for supporting the bird surveys, and Ian McLaren for editorial advice. □

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- Sibley, D.A. 2000. *The Sibley Guide to Birds*. Alfred A. Knopf, New York.
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Books on Birds and Birding

The Collection of Dr. Phyllis R. Dobson,
Editor, Nova Scotia Bird Society Newsletter, 1955 – 1977

During the period that Phyllis served as Editor of the NSBS Newsletter, she gathered about her a set of reference and general knowledge books on birds and birding, covering the full range of subjects from authoritative to entertaining. These books she used to arbitrate tough decisions on incoming records, as a basis for her extensive correspondence – both with her audience within the province and with the editors of other birding publications all over North America and Europe – and for her own reading enjoyment. When Capt. Tom Morland, her longtime friend and expert on marine birds, died, he left her his collection of books on birds at sea, to be looked after “for the benefit of members of the NSBS”. Phyllis in turn passed the books on to her son Fred, who has kept them until now. Based on Phyllis' wishes, the collection, or the proceeds from their sale, is to be given to the Society's Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund.

The books will be sold at auction on January 24, 2002, at the regular January meeting of the Nova Scotia Bird Society. The complete listing of available books starts on page 37.

For those members unable to attend the meeting, absentee bids are welcome and can be sent to Chris Field either by email field@mathstat.dal.ca or by mail, 5863 Grant St., Halifax, B3H 1E1. The bid should clearly indicate the item on which you wish to bid and the amount you're willing to pay for the item. The typical method of handling absentee bids is to open the bidding at about two-thirds of the absentee bid. To be considered, absentee bids should be received by Chris Field by January 16. □

Nova Scotia Bird Society November Meeting

Mark your calendars...it's time to plan for the yearly "out-of-Metro" meeting of the Nova Scotia Bird Society. This year, the meeting will be held on November 23rd, 2001, with a field trip on the 24th. The meeting will take place at 8:00 in room 237 of J. Bruce Brown Hall, St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish. A map of the campus is available at: <http://iago.stfx.ca/campus/maps/>.

We are very pleased to have as the guest speaker Dr. Tony Erskine of the Canadian Wildlife service, best known to birders as the author of *Atlas of Breeding Birds of the Maritime Provinces*. Dr. Erskine will speak on the topic of Nova Scotia's breeding birds, in a talk entitled,

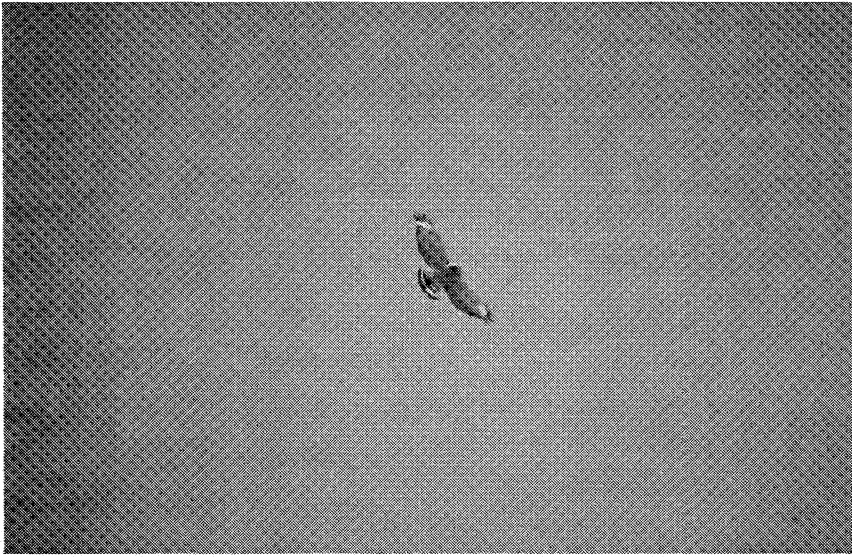
Birds + Volunteers = Information!
The many uses of Nesting Data derived from Maritime Birders.

On Saturday, November 24th, Dr. Tony Miller of St. Francis Xavier University will be the guest leader of the annual NSBS field trip, Antigonish's Harbours and Coastlines. We've always had some nice surprises on this trip, and hope to have a repeat of the more than 100 "inland" gannets that we had two years ago.

For more information, please contact **Randy Lauff at 867-2471 or rlauff@stfx.ca**.

Why the Red-shouldered Hawk is a Broad-winged Hawk

By Tony Leukering



BROAD-WINGED HAWK at Kentville July 20, 2001. [Photo Richard Stern]

The bird depicted (photographed in July 2001) is a Broad-winged Hawk that appears to have finished its First Pre-Basic molt, that is, transitioned from Juvenal plumage (the plumage in which it left the nest in 2000) to First Basic. All plumage features visible are typical of that species, including the tail pattern with one broad white tail band distal to the undertail coverts, widely-black-tipped flight feathers that are very pale basally, the chunky body shape, and the distinctively wide-based, yet somewhat pointed wing shape. However, this individual has retained its four outermost primaries on each wing from Juvenal plumage. I believe that it has finished the molt, as it has no missing primaries that would suggest continuing molt. Therefore, this bird will probably

retain this appearance until its next molt in the summer of 2002 (should it live that long) when it will probably replace all of its feathers, including all of its flight feathers.

This molt pattern of retaining a few outermost primaries in the First Pre-Basic molt is typical of the larger species of Buteo, but is much less common in Broad-winged Hawk. However, this in no way implies that this appearance is rare, as I have seen Broad-wings with this wing pattern numerous times in late May and June on birds that are still on north-bound migration past Whitefish Pt., MI. Unfortunately, I do not have all that much experience with southbound birds to know how many Broad-wings do not completely replace their flight feathers in their First Pre-Basic. However, I have seen at least a few in fall, so this phenomenon is not rare, but is probably much rarer in Broad-wings than in the larger buteos for whom retention of outer primaries is probably a significant energy savings.

Unfortunately, young Broad-wings that retain their outermost primaries are even more susceptible to misidentification as Red-shoulders than they normally are. This is because these retained feathers are part of the typical "window" or "pale panel" in the outer wing of all young Broad-wings. Thus, these feathers are much paler than are those of an adult and create a much smaller and differently-shaped window that is vaguely reminiscent of that of Red-shouldered adults. However, the window of the latter species is much more comma-shaped and cuts across the axis of the wing; it does not parallel the axis as on the bird pictured. Imagine if this bird had replaced just one or, worse, two more primaries on each wing -- the window would be very narrow and would resemble that of the Red-shouldered even more. This pitfall provides even more reason to learn to identify raptors by shape, which is often more distinctive than is plumage, and which often provides the only clues we get on distant individuals. ☐

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North American Migration Count - May 12, 2001

By Judy Tufts

NS Coordinator for NAMC

The species totals for Nova Scotia's NAMC have been included in this issue for everyone's interest. For more detailed information giving individual county tallies, a debt of gratitude goes to a thoughtful friend, Sherman Williams, from Avonport, who very generously set up the NAMC results on his own website for easy viewing at <http://www.glinx.com/~sherm/index.html>.

For those of you who do not know who is behind the scenes of this count, let me introduce you to a wonderful group of special people in Nova Scotia. The county coordinators and area reps make my life as provincial coordinator so much easier knowing their counties/areas are in capable hands; they all give of their own time to do the work. Many have been involved from the official inception of NAMC in this province back in Spring 1993 under the very capable hands of Bev Sarty who coordinated it for two years and built up contacts in many of the provincial counties, before turning it over to me. My thanks and appreciation go out to them all.

Ant. Co.	Harriet MacMillan	Hants Co.	Roslyn MacPhee (east), Bev Shanks (west)
Cape Breton	Susann Myers - a dedicated supporter of NAMC since '96, promoting it throughout the island of Cape Breton. Her help has been invaluable in more ways than I can say. Due to other commitments this may be her last year in this position.	Inv. Co.	Frances Hart
		Kings Co.	Judy Tufts, Sheila Hulford (Kingston and 'west' Kings area rep.)
		Lun. Co.	Sylvia Fullerton
Cum. Co.	Kathleen Spicer	Pict. Co.	Ken McKenna
Digby Co.	Brier I. - Blake Maybank and Richard Stern	Rich. Co.	George Digout
Guys. Co.	Kerstin Mueller	Shel. Co.	Donna Ensor (mainland), Murray Newell (CSI), Trina Fitzgerald (Bon Portage I.)
Hfx. Co.	Robert McDonald - the new kid on the block! Thanks also goes out to Fulton Lavender who helped ensure Hfx. Co. had good coverage in the last few years.	Vic. Co.	Fritz McEvoy
		Yar. Co.	Trina Fitzgerald (Seal I.), Jerome D'Eon (the Pubnicos)

Nova Scotia's totals for the North American Migration Count, Spring 2001.

Red-throated Loon	21	Tricolored Heron	1
Common Loon	321	Black-crowned Night-Heron	4
Pied-billed Grebe	54	Glossy Ibis	1
Horned Grebe	1	Turkey Vulture	21
Red-necked Grebe	12	Canada Goose	651
Northern Fulmar	26	Brant	482
Greater Shearwater	26	Wood Duck	47
Leach's Storm-petrel	15	Gadwall	11
Northern Gannet	238	American Wigeon	95
Double-crested Cormorant	4336	American Black Duck	1770
Great Cormorant	414	Mallard	721
American Bittern	37	Blue-winged Teal	103
Great Blue Heron	439	Northern Shoveler	32
Great Egret	1	Northern Pintail	36

Green-winged Teal	240	Caspian Tern	4
Ring-necked Duck	710	Roseate Tern	2
Greater Scaup	124	Common Tern	437
Common Eider	3461	Arctic Tern	8
Surf Scoter	275	Black Tern	2
White-winged Scoter	1760	Dovekie	2
Black Scoter	116	Razorbill	18
Long-tailed Duck	11	Black Guillemot	228
Bufflehead	100	Rock Dove (I)	1865
Common Goldeneye	52	Mourning Dove	2449
Hooded Merganser	28	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	1
Common Merganser	191	Great Horned Owl	23
Red-breasted Merganser	796	Snowy Owl	1
Osprey	152	Barred Owl	67
Bald Eagle	305	Long-eared Owl	3
Northern Harrier	61	Short-eared Owl	4
Sharp-shinned Hawk	49	Northern Saw-whet Owl	22
Northern Goshawk	13	Common Nighthawk	15
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	Whip-poor-will	2
Broad-winged Hawk	79	Chimney Swift	626
Red-tailed Hawk	109	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	146
Rough-legged Hawk	6	Belted Kingfisher	253
American Kestrel	74	Red-bellied Woodpecker	1
Merlin	49	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	86
Peregrine Falcon	2	Downy Woodpecker	461
Ring-necked Pheasant (I)	498	Hairy Woodpecker	269
Ruffed Grouse	210	Black-backed Woodpecker	8
Spruce Grouse	13	Northern Flicker	880
Sora	32	Pileated Woodpecker	86
American Coot	2	Olive-sided Flycatcher	2
Black-bellied Plover	98	Eastern Wood-Pewee	6
Piping Plover	8	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	3
Killdeer	97	Alder Flycatcher	3
American Oystercatcher	2	Least Flycatcher	102
Greater Yellowlegs	317	Eastern Phoebe	23
Lesser Yellowlegs	28	Great Crested Flycatcher	1
Willet	630	Eastern Kingbird	21
Spotted Sandpiper	57	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	1
Whimbrel (Eur. race)	1	Northern Shrike	2
Ruddy Turnstone	8	Blue-headed Vireo	522
Red Knot	54	Red-eyed Vireo	66
Sanderling	361	Gray Jay	76
Semipalmated Sandpiper	30	Blue Jay	2265
Least Sandpiper	43	American Crow	5648
Purple Sandpiper	6	Common Raven	897
Dunlin	41	Horned Lark	4
Common Snipe	145	Tree Swallow	3280
American Woodcock	90	Bank Swallow	66
Red-necked Phalarope	45	Cliff Swallow	81
Red Phalarope	55	Barn Swallow	767
Black-headed Gull	3	Black-capped Chickadee	3317
Bonaparte's Gull	1	Boreal Chickadee	311
Black-tailed Gull	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch	298
Ring-billed Gull	317	White-breasted Nuthatch	36
Herring Gull	13830	Brown Creeper	23
Iceland Gull	128	Winter Wren	140
Glaucous Gull	26	Golden-crowned Kinglet	244
Great Black-backed Gull	6008	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	773
Black-legged Kittiwake	1582	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	1

Eastern Bluebird	4	Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow	4
Veery	13	Fox Sparrow	80
Swainson's Thrush	19	Song Sparrow	3237
Hermit Thrush	438	Lincoln's Sparrow	14
Wood Thrush	1	Swamp Sparrow	179
American Robin	6519	White-throated Sparrow	1810
Gray Catbird	21	White-crowned Sparrow	136
Northern Mockingbird	25	Dark-eyed Junco	2405
Brown Thrasher	1	Northern Cardinal	12
European Starling (I)	6349	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	76
American Pipit	26	Blue Grosbeak	1
Cedar Waxwing	19	Indigo Bunting	2
Tennessee Warbler	3	Bobolink	83
Nashville Warbler	120	Red-winged Blackbird	2755
Northern Parula	385	Rusty Blackbird	68
Yellow Warbler	172	Common Grackle	5499
Chestnut-sided Warbler	20	Brown-headed Cowbird	241
Magnolia Warbler	108	Orchard Oriole	3
Cape May Warbler	12	Baltimore Oriole	22
Black-throated Blue Warbler	17	Pine Grosbeak	45
Yellow-rumped Warbler	2911	Purple Finch	2097
Black-throated Green Warbler	650	House Finch	13
Blackburnian Warbler	33	Red Crossbill	37
Pine Warbler	1	White-winged Crossbill	96
Palm Warbler	205	Common Redpoll	5
Bay-breasted Warbler	7	Pine Siskin	1304
Blackpoll Warbler	18	American Goldfinch	5999
Black-and-white Warbler	564	Evening Grosbeak	1006
American Redstart	7	House Sparrow (I)	1045
Ovenbird	239	Ipswich Sparrow	1
Northern Waterthrush	56	Mallard x Black Duck	11
Common Yellowthroat	52	Storm-Petrel sp.	1
Wilson's Warbler	7	Buteo sp.	4
Canada Warbler	2	Warbler sp.	13
Summer Tanager	1	Blackbird sp.	58
Scarlet Tanager	2		
Eastern Towhee	1	Total Species Counted	218
American Tree Sparrow	36	Total Birds Counted	119832
Chipping Sparrow	319		
Field Sparrow	1		
Vesper Sparrow	2		
Savannah Sparrow	812		

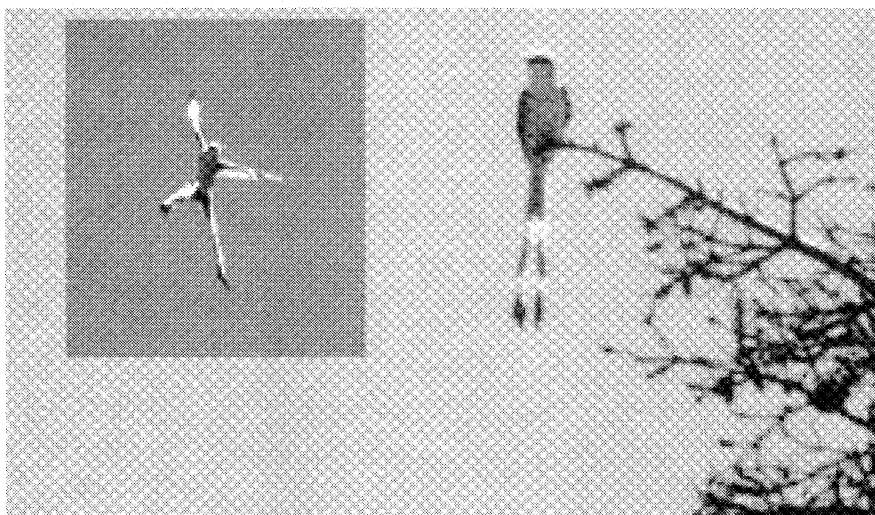
I = Introduced Species

□□□□



GREAT CORMORANT at Crystal Cliffs [Photo Randy Lauff]

Scissor-tailed Flycatchers in Nova Scotia



This **SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER** at Ketch Harbour, 12 May, (NAMC day) was the thrill of a lifetime for Fred Greig and Earl Bradley. Fortunately, they managed to encourage some equally fascinated local residents to obtain a number of diagnostic photos. The insert shows how these elegant birds can fling themselves about in pursuit of insects, using their lengthy tails as both rudders and brakes. [Photo Vern Crossman]



Another **SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER** was found in Canso (near the Chapel Gully Trail), by Stephan Bushell. It stayed for about three weeks in July and was seen by the birders there. We hope to hear more about the rarities found in this under-birded area in future issues. [Photos 2,3 & 4 Stephan Bushell]

Book Review

By Lance Laviolette

The ROM Field Guide to Birds of Ontario

Janice M Hughes

Royal Ontario Museum and McClelland & Stewart Ltd., 2001

Soft Cover. 416 pages. \$26.99

ISBN # 0-7710-7650-9

Choosing a field guide is as personal a decision as choosing a car. Whether you like the colour of the paint, the reliability, the gas mileage or the handling of your car there is one thing that's for sure, if it can't get you from point A to point B it won't be of much use to you. The ROM field guide to birds of Ontario will certainly get you out of your driveway and onto the road to birding but should it really be the vehicle of choice for a birder in Nova Scotia?

Comfort and appearance. At 11.5 X 20.2 cm this guide is compact and fits into a pants pocket. It also has a stitched binding for extra durability. It has almost 400 full colour photographs (usually of males in breeding/alternate plumage), 347 full species accounts and 300 maps (detailing distribution in Ontario). The guide is arranged taxonomically, in a very convenient page-per-species format.

Mileage. It is evident from the distribution maps, the status and frequently from the species accounts, that this is a book designed to be used primarily in Ontario. In addition, many of the species which commonly occur in and around Nova Scotia rate only a small paragraph in the 'accidentals' section and have no photograph.

Drivability and reliability. This is what it's all about. A bird guide is used as a reference to accurately identify birds. Unfortunately, it quickly becomes apparent that there is something missing in the ROM field guide. While the text does describe them, pictures of female, immature or winter/basic plumages are not usually included. A quick lookup of many of the 'confusing' warblers and 'drab' shorebirds so abundant in Nova Scotia in the fall is not possible. This is a major shortcoming in my view. While the winter plumage is shown for the Long-billed Dowitcher, a perfect opportunity is missed as the Short-billed Dowitcher is shown only in summer plumage, preventing possible comparison.

In addition, photographs do not appear to have always been selected to best illustrate the most useful identification points of a bird. For example, apart from a picture of an Osprey that appears to be landing, there are no pictures of hawks in flight. Lastly, it came as a great surprise to me when I noticed the picture of the female Orchard Oriole on the Common Yellowthroat page. Showing the picture of a different species is a major 'faux-pas'. Other erroneous photos noted were that the picture of the female Common Eider is really a female King Eider and the picture of the Franklin's Gull which is a Bonaparte's Gull. Though slightly less serious, there is also mislabelling of a number of pictures as to plumage. These errors should have been caught before the book was printed.

Final rating. The species accounts are good and contain interesting notes on habitat and song, though a number of common Nova Scotia species are not treated fully. Photographs are coffee table quality but not necessarily suitable or sufficient for identification.

If you wish to add a reference with a Canadian flavour or you want to add a guide with excellent photos of birds in the brilliant plumages you rarely get to see in the field then you might consider this one. If neither of these ideas gets your engine racing then I'd suggest Nova Scotia birders test drive one of the many other excellent field guides that are available and leave this one in the shop.

RR #1

Glen Robertson, Ontario

KOB 1H0

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Weather Summary - Summer 2001

By Larry Bogan
Cambridge Station, N.S.

Hot and dry are the two adjective to describe the three summer months of this year to me. Sometimes the weather statistics show something different from what I remember but the conditions were so extreme this season that it is unlikely.

Table 1. Weather Statistics for Kentville, NS Food and Horticulture Research Centre. The 40 year average is shown in parentheses for most parameters; the five year average is shown for evaporation since the 40 year average is not available.

	Temperature Means (°C)			Rainfall (mm)	Evaporation (mm)	Bright Sunshine (hours)
	minimum	maximum	average			
June	24.1 (21.9)	12.6 (10.1)	18.3 (16.1)	80 (67)	519 (129)	213 (212)
July	25.0 (25.0)	12.9 (13.5)	19.0 (19.3)	27 (70)	130 (162)	252 (232)
August	27.5 (24.1)	15.1 (13.1)	21.3 (18.6)	12 (91)	155 (120)	239 (217)
Season	25.6 (23.7)	13.6 (12.3)	19.6 (18.0)	119 (228)	336 (411)	704 (661)

Temperatures:

In early June the mean temperatures rose steadily to the low 20's and stayed there for most of the next 2-1/2 months (Fig. 1). Only in mid-July was there a two week period with average temperatures slightly below 20 °C. There were 15 days this summer that had highs of 30 °C or more in Kentville (September is not included when there were a couple of days that hot).

June was 2.2 °C above the 40 year average in mean daily temperature; July was about average while August was 1.7 °C above average. The season as a whole was 1.6 °C above the long term average temperature. We sleep through the coolest part of the day, and experience the highs for the day. Since the mean maximum temperature for the season was 1.9 °C above average, that made it seem even hotter this year.

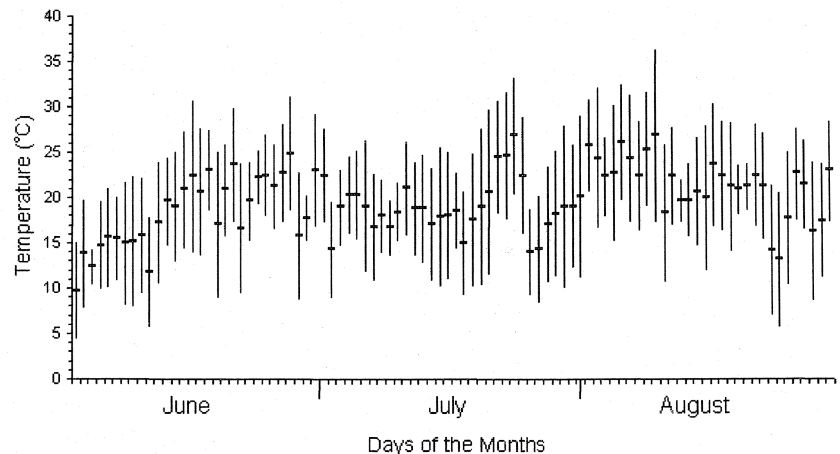


Figure 1. Daily temperatures (mean and range) for Kentville, NS Food and Horticulture Research Centre, Summer 2001.

Rainfall and Evaporation:

Only June had more rainfall than average while July and August were so dry that by the end of the season we had only slightly more than 1/2 the average rainfall (Fig. 2). August got only 1/8 the expected rain for the month. (We did have a heavy rainfall on September 1 which helped some). Instead of giving a rainfall chart, I have included the pan evaporation data for Kentville. This indicates the rainfall deficit for the day by measuring the amount of water evaporation from an open pan. The negative values occur when there is significant rainfall to increase the level of the water in the pan. Two thirds of the season's rain fell in June and after mid-July there was practically no rain.

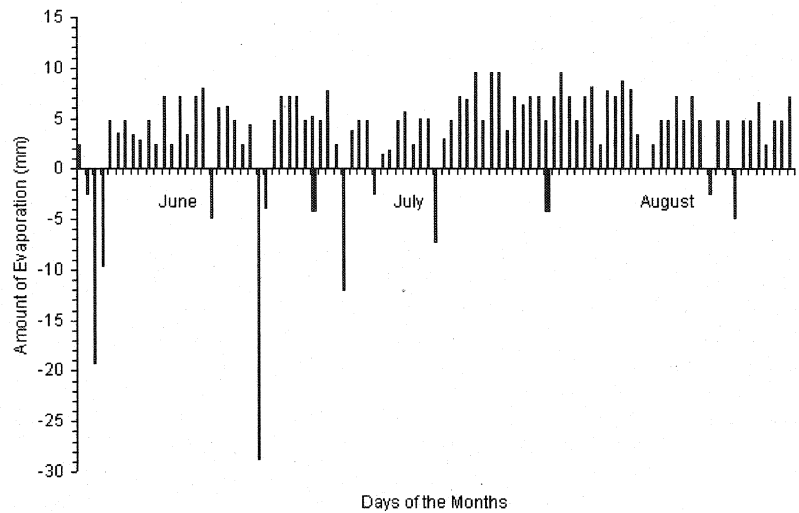


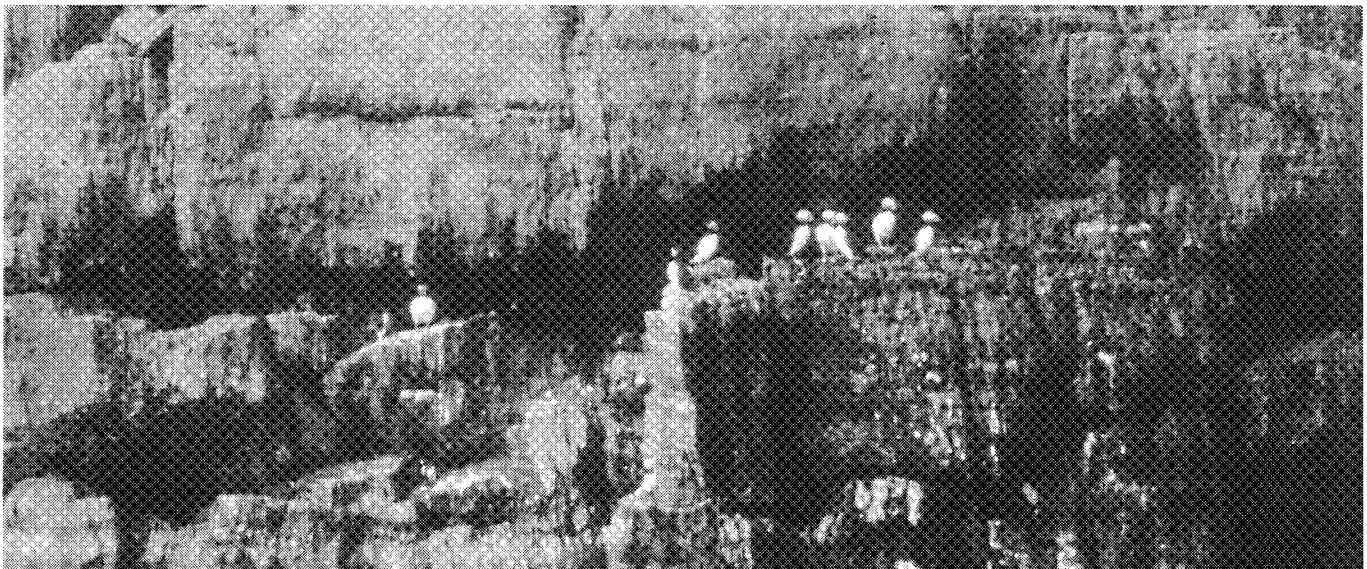
Figure 2. Daily pan evaporation for Kentville, NS Food and Horticulture Research Centre, Summer 2001.

The total evaporation for the three months was 336 mm. Compare that with the rainfall of 119 mm. Every summer season has a deficit of water in Nova Scotia, and we expect to make that up during the other cooler seasons of the year. This year actually was no worse than any other in the last five years but we have been having droughty conditions in the Annapolis Valley recently. Farmers must irrigate much more than in the past.

Sunshine Hours:

There is not much to say about sunshine. We had only slightly more than expected from the long term averages. That is not what gave us the hot weather. The jet stream remained north of Nova Scotia for most of the summer and we kept getting hot, dry air from the south flowing over us. This is reflected in the larger number of hazy, humid days this summer.

This year the season started earlier with plants and birds and appears to be holding on. I still have a hummingbird at the feeder as I write this on September 11. ☐



ATLANTIC PUFFINS - [Photo NSBS Library]

Seasonal Reports

A note on Breeding Bird Surveys

Breeding Bird Surveys (BBS) are done throughout Nova Scotia, and across the continent (see the Spring 2001 issue for details). To make the Seasonal Reports more readable, we have bucked convention and not included county names associated with the locales of each BBS. Here then are the counties for BBS's mentioned in the Seasonal Reports:

Survey	Counties
Dean and Chapter	Lunenburg and Kings
Grand River	Cape Breton
James River	Antigonish
Londonderry	Colchester
New Ross- Falmouth	Lunenburg and Hants
Roman Valley	Guysborough and Antigonish
Trafalgar	Guysborough

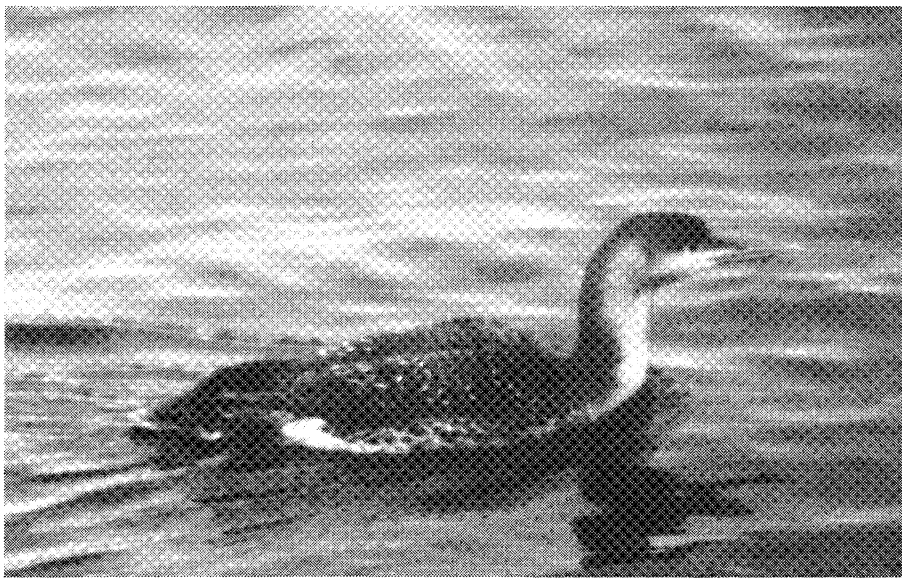
Loons and Grebes

By Fred Dobson

While there were some interesting reports of Grebes in their showy breeding plumage, only a few sightings were received; our thanks to those who did contribute sightings.

of Fundy and along the South Shore. Although it's normal to have individuals summer in NS waters, it's very unusual to have groups of five to ten do so." (*fide* AAM). Five were seen June 21 "off Hartlen Pt. to Cow Bay" (FLL,

breeding season, was only reported with any consistency from CB. A pair on a nest was observed June 27 at E Lake Ainslie, Inv. Co. (DBM) and the much-reported pair at Mill L., Head of St. Margarets Bay, Hfx. Co. were observed on the nest in May and early June (FED).



This RED-TROATED LOON was photographed in Dartmouth, February 10, 1985. [Photo Ian McLaren / NSBS Library]

RED-THROATED LOONS were seen in small numbers until the end of June. "(They) continue to be seen in the Bay

DOM, CLS). The COM. LOON, although surely distributed as normal throughout the province in the post-

PIED-BILLED GREBES were reported only from CB and only in June. Since they nest near the NB border and are widely distributed in summer, it would be unwise to draw any conclusions from the single report: one, June 1-9, Sydney Forks - "have nested here in the past few years" (DBM, RWK, GEL). Two HORNED GREBES were seen, rather late in the year, July 7 "...in full breeding plumage - off Summerville Beach by the Quarter Deck, Queens Co." (JAH). There were two sightings of the RED-NECKED GREBE, both from the Halifax area. Four were seen June 21 "off Hartlen Pt. to Cow Bay, Hfx. Co." (FLL, DOM, CLS) and one was found July 8 in "full breeding plumage" at Shad Bay, Hfx. Co. (JAH). The Grebes allow at least some lucky ones to see them in full dress! □

Tubenoses Through Cormorants

By Blake Maybank

Almost all the tubenose reports came from two trips on the Cabot Strait ferry. The first took place June 30 (DBM, RWK) and the second, July 2 (RWK).

JAH sent in the only other tubenose sightings, counting five GREATER and one SOOTY SHEARWATER off Baccaro, June 4. No details were ever submitted for a near-shore sighting of a Cory's Shearwater reported on NatureNS, so I must discount it. NORTHERN GANNETS were reported most often off CB, as expected (RWK, DBM), with the largest count 250+ seen in a feeding frenzy off Baleine, June 8. □

SPECIES	June 30	July 2
Northern Fulmar	4	24
Greater Shearwater	34	85
Sooty Shearwater	4	8
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	295	75
Leach's Storm-Petrel	35	120

Hérons and Vultures

By Richard Knapton

A handful of AM. BITTERNs was reported across the province this summer, with most records coming from CSI and CB Co. (MUN, GED, var. obs.). One was on the Trafalgar BBS, Guys. Co., June 16 (BLM). June 18, FLL and CLS had four calling at APBS, a stronghold for the species in the province. However, at another stronghold, Belleisle Marsh, Anna. Co., there were no significant numbers reported this summer. GREAT BLUE HERON reports were few, most coming from CBI. A colony at Cheticamp I., contained at least 35 nests, July 1 (DAL); sex were seen flying toward the Alder Pt., CB Co. colony, June 1 (DBM). Post-breeding gatherings numbered eight at R. Bourgeois, Rich. Co. in late July (GED). An intriguing report was of a possible GRAY HERON seen near Little Hbr., Shel. Co., June 11 (DHY). This widespread heron in Europe is considered by many to be one of the next species to be recorded in eastern North America. DHY writes,

...On 11 June two of us spotted four Great Blue Heron "types" in front of the house. One was obviously smaller, had white

"thighs", legs that were more yellow above the "knees" than below, very prominent white cheek patch and crown and noticeably large white "headlights" at the bend in the wing. The three Great Blues flew off and this one stayed for a better than 20 min. look through the scope at about 300 m and good sun. My best guess - and this needs much verification - was a Gray Heron... It DOES look different than a Great Blue and is not a juvenile.

Three reports of GREAT EGRETS were received. Singles were at Grand Desert marshes, June 24 (Bruce Doucette, GDE), from E Port Medway to Cherry Hill Beach, Lun. Co., July 24 - 31 (SJF, JAH, var. obs.), and at Daniels Hd., CSI, July 29 (CST, MUN). No SNOWY or CATTLE EGRETS were reported this season. An ad. LITTLE BLUE HERON foraged in ponds at Churn Rd., Overton, Yar. Co., June 23-24 (HUH, MUN), and an adult was at Mavillette Beach, July 8 (MUN). A TRICOLORED HERON foraging in marshland at Homeville, CB Co., June 1 (DBM, RWK, GEL) was

presumably the same one that had been at Lingan Bay in mid-May for a couple of weeks. There was one report of GREEN HERON; Eric Cunningham reported a single bird in the duck pond and along the shore behind his house at The Hawk, June 8, a bird not reported thereafter (CST). It may be a rather poor year for BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS this summer. They were found at the traditional localities on CSI during the period (var. obs.), but in smaller numbers than recent years. Most reports were of singles or two together. Also, only one ad. was seen, in early July on Seal I. where they nested last year (IAM, MMC). There were no reports of YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS received this season.

Reports of TURKEY VULTURES this summer came from Port Maitland, Yar. Co., three were soaring in the wind June 30 (MUN); from West Advocate, Cum. Co., one, July 22 (JAF, MSM); and from Digby Co., with four circling over Middle Cross Rd., leading from Digby to Digby Neck, June 29 (PLC). □

Geese, Swans and Ducks

By Fred Dobson

It was a quiet summer for the waterfowl. The weather was dry, with less fog than normal at the coasts and no early tropical disturbances. A GARGANEY remained in the Amherst area until at least mid-June. For the most part, reports were too sparse to warrant interpretation; our thanks to those who did contribute sightings, since they serve to "keep us in touch" with avian populations in the province.

Although distributed widely in the province, CANADA GEESE were reported mainly from CB. The first reports of breeding were two ads. with "at least two young", June 22 and June 27 in the same location, 89 ads. and 30 young at Nyanza Bay, Vic. Co. "a large group for here, especially during the summer" (DBM). The latest of the reports was two ads. and four young, July 2, Grand Passage, Brier I. "A local told me that every morning they left their roost on Peter I. and swam along the shore as far as the store or even the fish plant. In the evening they would reverse direction and swim along the shore back to the island. I observed this pattern myself when I saw them again in early August." (PLC). No other geese were reported this summer.

WOOD DUCKS were found at three or more locations this summer. "Five or six" were seen May 26 at Belleisle Marsh, Anna. Co. (RBS), one male was found June 1 at Blacketts L., CB Co. (DBM, RWK, GEL), and one and three were seen June 15 & 27 "from RR trail, north end, west side, Conrad Marsh, Lawrencetown, Hfx. Co. - Second sighting was an ad. and two imms (DMW)." There were two sightings of the dapper GADWALL this summer: eight to ten, May 26, Belleisle Marsh, Anna. Co. (RBS) and two pairs (but no ducklings), June 16-28, Conrad Marsh, Hfx. Co. (DMW *et al.*). A beautiful EUR. WIGEON was sighted only once - a single male, June 16, Cow Bay, Hfx. Co. (CSS). AM. WIGEONS, or Baldpates to give their local name, were reported first May 26 - a pair at Belleisle Marsh, (RBS). There was another pair, June 1 at the Tower Rd. Lagoon, Glace Bay, CB Co. (DBM, RWK, GEL) and two males and one fem. in mid-June at both Iona, Gillis Pond and at Jamesville Beach, Vic. Co. (Terry Powers). During the Salt Marsh Survey from mid- to end June a maximum of five were in the Conrad Marsh, Lawrencetown, Hfx. Co.

(DMW). The latest report was a pair on Seal I. "in early July" (IAM, MMC).

The AM. BLACK DUCK did well as always. "At least 18 families (were) seen during salt marsh surveys" June 15-July 19, Conrad Marsh, Lawrencetown, Hfx. Co. (DMW). At the end of June "There were pairs with families ranging from two to twelve feeding on the beaches in front of the barrier ponds at Green Bay, Lun. Co." (FED). Throughout June they were "always there, small numbers in summer ..." at Antigonish Landing (RFL). "Many" were to be found in the period of July 22-29 at R. Bourgeois, Rich. Co. (GED). MALLARDS were first reported June 1: one at Blacketts L., CB Co. and "a few, also young" at Tower Rd. Lagoon, CB Co. (DBM, RWK, GEL). Two were seen June 15-July 14 during the Salt Marsh Surveys at Conrad Marsh, Hfx. Co. (DMW). How widespread is the breeding area of this species? It has been increasing steadily in numbers for some decades - has it reached all corners of the province?

"Lots" of BLUE-WINGED TEAL were reported May 26 at Belleisle Marsh, Anna. Co. (RBS). A pair at East Bay and a male at Homeville, CB Co. were seen June 1 (DBM, RWK, GEL). The Salt Marsh Surveys turned up two and three, June 16 and July 14 at Conrad Marsh, Lawrencetown, Hfx. Co. (DMW). A male was at E. Margaree, Inv. Co., June 22 (DBM) and eight were seen in the July 22-29 period at R. Bourgeois, Rich. Co. (GED). The GARGANEY stayed in the Amherst area until at least mid-June. We quote the following description, kindly provided by Fulton Lavender:

One ad. male, Eddy Marsh, Amherst, 18 June (FLL, CLS). Description: Upper wing coverts - pale powder blue-grey; Head and back - dull dark brown; Tail - pale brown; Speculum - green with broad upper and lower white borders, visible on underside of



This CANADA GEESE photo was an entry in the 1999 NSBS/Photo Guild of Nova Scotia (PGNS) Competition. The photographer was not recorded. [NSBS Library]

trailing edge; Belly – white; Sides of breast and flanks - light grey; Breast - dark brown; Underwing - white with thick black leading border.

The GREEN-WINGED TEAL was reported sparsely – does this represent the reality of its breeding efforts in Nova Scotia?. There were two males June 1 at Homeville, CB Co., 14 individuals, June 7, Morrison Beach, Framboise, Rich. Co. and two, June 12, Heath Hd., Petit-de-Grat, Rich. Co. (DBM, RWK, GEL, R. Boone). The Salt Marsh Surveys discovered one, seven and 20 (15 imms. with five ads.), June 15, 28 & July 14 at Conrad Marsh, Hfx. Co. (DMW). There were three, July 22-29 at R. Bourgeois, Rich. Co. (GED).

All but one of the reports of the RING-NECKED DUCK came from the north of the province. There were “lots”, May 26 at the Belleisle Marsh. The reports from CB covered the period June 1 – July 29. They included three ads. and six young at Dosite L., Inv. Co., 12 males, 22-23 June, Beacon St. Dam, Glace Bay, and a pair, June 27, E Lake Ainslie, Vic. Co. (JWM, DBM). There were “three or four”, July 16, Canso, Guys. Co. (RFL, MZG) and 12, July 22-29, R. Bourgeois, Rich. Co. (GED). A pair of GREATER SCAUP was

reported June 22 at Nyanza Bay, Vic. Co. (DBM - “unusual location at an unusual time of the year”).

COMMON EIDERS breed along many of the province's shores. The early reports came from CB. Of particular interest were the reports of 110, June 7 at Morrison Beach, Rich. Co. and 200+ at Big Lorraine, Baleine, CB Co. (DBM, RWK, GEL and R. Boone). A flock of 25 mixed fems. and imms. was seen June 25, Green Bay, Lun. Co. (FED). In early July there was a total count of 244 young around Seal I. (IAM, MMC) “This compares poorly with counts of ~200 fems. there in recent springs. However, (the count) may not be complete, as we saw at least two broods inland, yet to go to sea”. The latest report was 40, July 29, Cherry Hill Beach (BLM). There were two SURF SCOTER reports: Five were seen June 1 at Florence, CB Co. (RWK, DBM, GEL), and 25 were spotted July 29 in Green Bay, Lun. Co. from the Rissers Beach PP (BLM). WHITE-WINGED SCOTERS were reported twice from the north and once in the south, all in June. Four were seen June 1 at Mira Gut and 25, June 30 in Sydney Hbr., CB Co. (DBM, RWK, GEL); an individual showed up June 5 at Gilberts Cove, Digby Co. (PRG). The only reports of BLACK SCOTERS came

from Morrison Beach, Framboise, Rich. Co.: 220, June 7 and 30, June 12 (DBM, RWK, R. Boone), “ads. in breeding plumage”.

A single male BUFFLEHEAD was reported June 22-23, Beacon St. Dam, Glace Bay, (JWM, DBM). The only other report was of 31, July 4, Broad Cove, Lun. Co. (SJF). The only report of COM. GOLDENEYES was of two, June 11, at Dan Bank's pond, Big Hbr., Vic. Co., “usually a pair in his pond in summer (DBM).”

The only report of the HOODED MERGANSER was of a fem. in a nest box, June 21, Mt. Uniacke, Hants Co. (F L L , C S S). C O M M O N MERGANSERS were reported only twice. There were six seen June 1 at Homeville, CB Co. (RWK, DBM, GEL) and a “hen with a dozen chicks” July 25, Williams Pt., Ant. Co. (RFL). RED-BREASTED MERGANSER reports all came from the north of the province, in small numbers. One was seen at Mira Gut, June 1 and five were seen June 8 at Baleine, CB Co.; one male was seen June 15 at Belfry Gut, Rich. Co. and two fems. were at Margaree Forks, Inv. Co., June 22 (DBM, RWK, R. Boone, GEL). The only other report was one fem. at Pomquet Beach PP, Ant. Co. (RFL). □

Diurnal Raptors, Galliforms, Rails and Cranes

By Richard Knapton

There were 26 reports of OSPREYS, scattered throughout the province, 13 of which came from CBI. Many reports were of pairs at well-known active nests. On a small island in Pubnico Hbr., Yar. Co., where they have nested the past several years, RSD found “one young in the nest.” Nesting adults were also present at nests at Belleisle, Anna. Co. (RBS), Taylor Hd. PP (TEP), E Lake Ainslie, Inv. Co. (DBM), and at Hartlen Pt., HRM, on the nesting pole. Evidently they recycle as a blue bag was stuck on one side of the nest (Henk Kwindt). Two nests monitored in Lun. Co., in Bridgewater and along Hwy.

103, both had two young, whereas all nests monitored last year only had one young each (JAH). One at Canso, Guys. Co., is noteworthy because it was carrying nesting material on the late date of July 25 (RFL).

There were a few reports of BALD EAGLE from throughout the province, with most coming from CBI. where this species is the most frequently seen raptor by far. Because Bald Eagles start nesting early in the year, most reports of nesting birds appeared in the spring seasonal report of *Nova Scotia Birds*. Four nests followed by JWW this

summer in Kings Co. had the following outcome, at least to Jun 21: the Greenwich nest fledged one young, the White Rock Pond nest fledged one young, the Muskrat Farm marsh nest (Canard) evidently failed, and Starrs Pt. nest fledged two young. Concerning a fifth nest in Kings Co., JWW writes,

June 13, 2001 - Great news concerning the Bald Eagles at Wallbrook! They (the same ones?) have rebuilt their nest back in the original tree along the ravine on the property of Kay and Ralph Stirling, and they have three nestlings! A

year ago in May, Pat and I noticed that their long-used nest there (since perhaps 1989?) had fallen or blown down. Where they nested in 2000, if at all, is unknown.

A pair nesting in a white pine on the Stewiacke R. near Middle Stewiacke (near Rutherford Brook) produced two young, both birds perched on branches close to the nest on July 15 (Dusan Soudek). An escape by rainbow trout near Whycocomagh, Inv. Co., attracted many Bald Eagles, always the opportunistic predator. There were about 35 there June 21 (Ian MacNeil) with still six ads. there June 27 (DBM). Few N. HARRIERS were reported, with nothing suggesting changing trends. Probable nestings were at South Side Hbr., Ant. Co., a pair present all season (RFL, MZG), and on Brier I., a pair exchanging food June 29 (PLC).

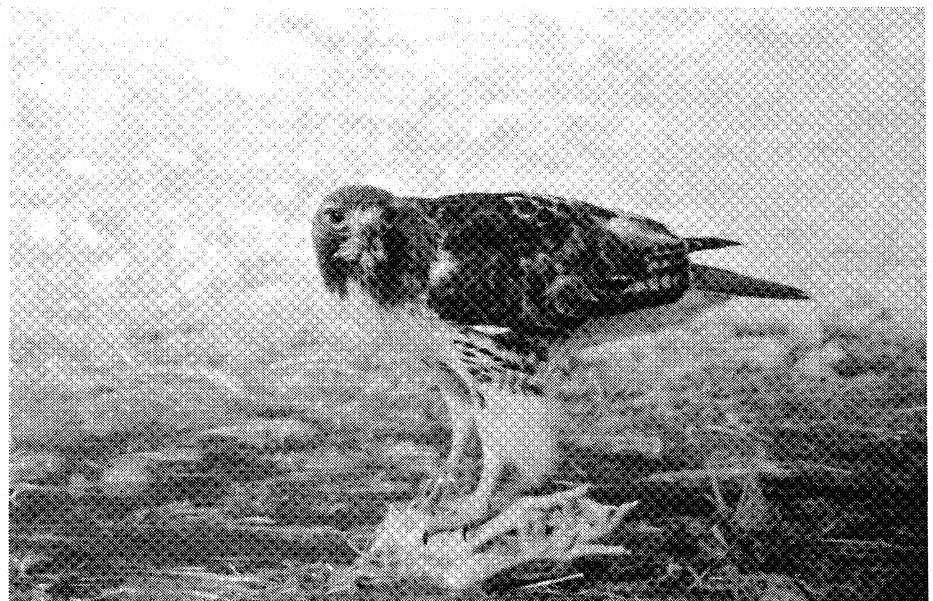
There were a mere six reports of SHARP-SHINNED HAWKS, from Inv. Co. to Yar. Co.; however, as mentioned in previous summer seasonal reports, all *Accipiter* hawks are secretive during the nesting season, therefore it is not surprising to have so few reports. An ad. female attended a nest at Long L., Spryfield, HRM, July 16 (FLL). Similar to last year, there were no COOPER'S HAWKS reported this year. Four N. GOSHAWK reports came in this summer, two from Inv. Co. (RWK), one each from Yar. Co. (MUN), and Col. Co. (FLL).

A sighting of a Red-shouldered Hawk circling over Kentville was reported July 20, apparently with prey in its mouth (RBS). However, after more carefully examining the photograph that he took, RBS became more certain that the bird was actually a BROAD-WINGED HAWK with abnormally prominent wing panels formed by very light outer primaries, thus superficially looking like a Red-shouldered. He called for some help in sorting this out by posting the photo on the internet and asking for comments. Experts from around the continent helped and agreed that the bird was a BROAD-WINGED HAWK that had not finished its molt. See the accompanying article for details on how this conclusion was drawn. Very few sightings of Broad-winged

Hawk were received. Singles were on CSI, June 10 (MUN) and near Carleton, Yar. Co., July 22 (MUN); two were along the Mersey R., Kejimikujik NP, July 30 (BLM). A pair at Argyle Hd., Yar. Co. in July had a nest alongside the Forbes Rd., but the nest was not checked for contents (RSD). RED-TAILED HAWKS are widespread in the province, but received scant attention this season. The pair that nested at Acadia University did not fare too well this summer (JWW). Two young were present in the nest until June 13, when one died. On July 3, JWW found the fledgling on the cement landing at the top of the steps of University Hall, directly beneath the nest. However, the juvenile evidently had a problem, namely some kind of growth or deformation associated with the breastbone area; it was captured July 6, examined, and despite efforts to release the bird, in the end it was transported to the Atlantic Raptor Rehabilitation Centre. Just one ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK was reported, a light-phase bird over John Lusby Marsh, Amherst, Cum. Co., June 18 (FLL, CLS). An imm. GOLDEN EAGLE at Sutherlands R., Pict. Co., June 8 (Maia Jensen) was a good sighting.

AMERICAN KESTRELS appeared to be somewhat scarce this summer. PLC wrote "One, Granville, Anna. Co., July 2. The only one I have seen this year.

They have been missing in areas of suitable habitat where I have seen them in past years." This prompted other comments about apparent scarcity of the species within the province. A sighting July 19 of a male along Hwy. 101 at Hortonville, Kings Co. (JWW), was fairly unusual as they are not common in that area in summer. MERLINS on the other hand were frequently reported, from CBI to the southern islands (var. obs.). On July 21, JAH had five birds at Bridgewater, two ads. along Walnut Street with a nest and feeding young, and two ads. with a young bird training to hunt in the cemetery. A pair plus three juvs. at Broad Cove, Lun. Co., in July were observed flying and calling around a hay field, even venturing out over the water. All five departed July 25 (SJF, BAH). July 29, PLC watched a fem. at Margaretsville, Anna. Co., noisily defending its territory from crows. Finally, a pair spent the summer in the south end of Halifax and probably nested (PLC). On July 16, a Merlin interrupted the daily routine of roosting by Chimney Swifts at Wolfville, by flying around the chimney at 9:30 p.m., and the swifts abruptly left (ABM). PEREGRINE FALCONS were once again reported most frequently in eastern Kings Co. One at Grand Pré, July 26, made a few half-hearted passes at a peep flock and then flew to the west (RBS). July 31, one at



RED-TAILED HAWK [Photo Al Zinck - NSBS/PGNS 1991 Competition]

Evangeline Beach, came low over the beach and then rose up in front of members of the South Shore Naturalists Club presenting excellent views (JAH, JWW).

No reports of GRAY PARTRIDGE were received, not surprisingly as the species is elusive in summer, and only a few reports of RING-NECKED PHEASANTS were noted, with nothing too remarkable. Summer reports of both RUFFED and SPRUCE GROUSE are also usually few and not really indicative of the true status of either species in the province. JAF reported two families of Ruffed Grouse and a family of Spruce Grouse in Cape

Chignecto PP, Cum. Co., June 29. Other reports of Ruffed Grouse came in from Kejimkujik NP (BLM), Cape St. Lawrence, Inv. Co. (RFL), between New Ross and Falmouth, Kings Co. (RBS), Trafalgar BBS, Guys. Co. (BLM), and Frenchvale, CB Co. (DBM, RWK, GEL). Spruce Grouse were found at Mt. Uniacke, Hfx. Co. (FLL, CLS), MacLellan Brook, Pict. Co. (ALD), and CBHNP (RFL, DOM). A fem. with young was located at Pt. Royal, Rich. Co., June 27 (DBM). Spruce Grouse fems. occur in two morphs, grey and the more common rufous, therefore the sighting of a grey morph female by BLF in Kings Co., July 9 is noteworthy. No reports were

received of WILD TURKEYS or N. BOBWHITE this summer.

The only VIRGINIA RAIL reported was from Eddy Marsh, Amherst, Cum. Co. One was calling June 18 (FLL, CLS). There were very few reports of SORAS this summer. Two were at a pond at Pt. Hood, Vic. Co., June 15 (Terry Power), which may be a new site for the species. The only report of COM. MOORHEN came from APBS, with five there June 18 (FLL, CLS). AM. COOTS were conspicuously absent; no sightings were reported this summer. □

The Shorebirds

By Sylvia Fullerton

The summer season was lacklustre and other than a Ruff in CB no interesting vagrants visited the region. The southbound migration appeared to be generally on schedule and numbers were average. For example, a count of 20,000 at CSI, July 27, was on a par with other years. Semipalmated and Least Sandpipers were the exception, numbers of which were abysmally low. The following season may tell a different story, of course.

Twelve BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER at CSI, June 27 (MUN), may have been failed breeders or summering non-breeders making an early southbound migration. Right on schedule, singles appeared at Cherry Hill Beach, Lun. Co. and Morien Bar, CB Co., July 7 & 8 respectively (SEM). By the end of the month numbers were average: 30, Windsor Causeway, July 29 (JWW); 17, Morien Bar, July 29 (SEM); 25, Cherry Hill Beach, July 31 (JAH). Two pairs of SEMIPALMATED PLOVER nested successfully and fledged young on The Cape, CSI (MUN), but it is disappointing that nesting pairs have not increased. The first migrants typically appeared in early July: one, Cherry Hill Beach, July 7; two, Morien Bar, July 8

(SEM). By the third week of July numbers were average: up to 200 at both Sandhills PP, Shel. Co. (RMC) and Cherry Hill Beach; 100, Evangeline Beach (JWW); 400, CSI (MUN); 320, Crescent Beach, Lun. Co. (JSC).

On an annual trek on Pomquet Beach PP, Ant. Co., July 15, MZG and RFL were rewarded with the discovery of not just two pairs of PIPING PLOVER with three young each but a third family of two ads. and four chicks at the far end of the beach. RWK also found a successful pair with four young at South Hbr. Beach, Vic. Co., July 19. This scenario was repeated at various locations, delighting Guardians and birders alike. Anna McCarron, the Coordinator of the Piping Plover Guardian Program, reported 101 ads., 47 pairs, 67-73 fledged young. For a full account see her article in this issue.

KILLDEER must have been not only silent, but invisible, as few were reported. Random reports were: two, Schooner Pond, CB Co., June 1 (DBM, RWK, GEL); four, CSI, June 24; a post-breeding wanderer at Big I., Pict. Co., July 31 (DOU). PLC unwittingly disturbed a nest at Gypsum Mines, Hants. Co., June 9

and was no doubt chagrined to be treated to the broken-wing act and "piteous" distressed-sounding cries from both ads. John Lee noted their absence in Paradise, Anna. Co., where for the first time in 30 years they had not bred locally.

This is the third season for celebrating a successful nesting of AM. OYSTERCATCHERS on The Cape, CSI. Three ads. and two juvs. were still doing well as of July 31 (MUN).

Twelve GREATER YELLOWLEGS were tallied in four locations in CB Co., June 1 (DBM, RWK, GEL). Perhaps they were on their way to breeding territories in the CBHNP. One such site, along the Bengies L. Trail, must have supported at least one pair as two birds were still calling there in mid-July (SJF). A single bird at Rights R., Ant. Co., June 22 (RFL), eight at Three Fathom Hbr., HRM, June 27 (IAM, MMC), and six at Lawrencetown Marsh, HRM on the same day (DMW) were undoubtedly early southbound migrants. Small numbers were seen in suitable habitat through July. Peaks were: 20, CSI, July 20 (MUN); 19, Crescent Beach, Lun. Co., July 30 (JSC); 156, the all time record-high, Morien Bar, July 29

(SEM). A lone LESSER YELLOWLEGS at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co., May 20, was unusual (JSC), as was one at Cherry Hill Beach, June 8 (JAH). Perhaps they were non-breeders not continuing on to breeding areas. Twenty seen at Three Fathom Hbr., June 27 (IAM, MMC) were early, and by the middle of July they were widespread. Highest counts were: 20, Back Oler Marsh, Garden Lots, Lun. Co., July 13 (JAH); 40, R. Bourgeois area, last week of July (GED); 39, Morien Bar, July 29 (SEM).

Adding further fuel to the rumours of possible breeding in CBHNP, RWK discovered two juvs. SOLITARY SANDPIPERS at a pond along the Microwave Tower Rd., at Money Pt., near Bay St. Lawrence, Vic. Co., July 18. Interestingly, he had spotted a single bird in the same locality in early June, 1999. Normally late migrants, two were early at Oak Park, near Barrington, Shel. Co., July 25-26 (MUN), as was another at Churchville, Pict. Co., July 28 (KJM, NSBS).

WILLETS were visible everywhere, almost every beach and inlet supporting one or more pairs. MUN stopped for an ad. and four juvs. crossing the road in Barrington, June 17. A pair with two young at Canso July 16 probably constituted a second nesting (RFL, MZG). Gregarious, post-breeding flocks built up on favourite beaches and peaked towards the end of July: 120, Sandhills PP, July 19 (RMC); 110, Morien Bar, July 21 (SEM); 86, Crescent Beach, Lun. Co., July 30 (JSC).

SPOTTED SANDPIPERS were abundant in CB. About 35 were counted in various locations in June (DBM *et al.*), and two pairs, one with two chicks, were at Louisbourg Hbr., July 14 (SEM). GED saw up to 12 birds in the R. Bourgeois area, perhaps family groups, in late July. Normally the breeding capital, South Bar, CB Co. hosted eight birds June 1, but by July 4, inexplicably, nary a bird could be found (DBM). A

sprinkling of reports came from the mainland, including six at Gaspereau L., Kings Co., June 24 (ULH).

Few WHIMBREL were reported in July. Earliest were two at Morien Bar, July 1, building to 11 by July 8 (SEM). Another was on Seal I., July 7 (IAM, MMC). JAH reported a "flock" flying over at Cherry Hill Beach, July 31 and one was at Pt. Michaud, Rich. Co. in late July (GED). DMW believes she may have seen a **LONG-BILLED CURLEW** feeding at the tideline at Conrads Beach, HRM, July 14, however, being unaware of how rare a vagrant this would have been she did not make notes at the time. From memory she noted its large size and long bill, in comparison to Whimbrel, its "buffy" colour and reddish wing-linings. Alas, more details are needed for a substantiated record, and to convincingly rule out Whimbrel. As she herself suggests, it should serve as a lesson to all of us to be ever alert to the possibility of vagrants and of meticulously documenting every detail, particularly if a camera is not in hand. To date there exist only two or three sight records.

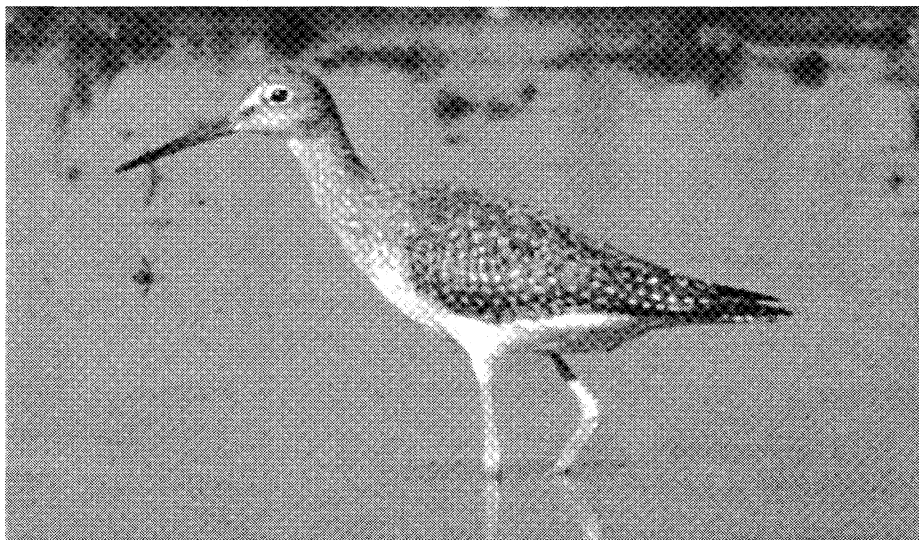
Two ad. HUDSONIAN GODWIT at Three Fathom Hbr., HRM, June 21 (FLL *et al.*) and one at The Hawk, June 28 (MUN), were no doubt early returning migrants. Five had reached Morien Bar, July 1, with 14 there by

July 29 (SEM). One was seen off and on at Cherry Hill Beach, July 7-29 (SJF, BLM).

Eight RUDDY TURNSTONE at CSI, June 27 (MUN) posed the question, were they returning or just summering? Typically they turn up in late July, this year all on July 29: two, Morien Bar (SEM); 15, Cherry Hill Beach (BLM); one, Windsor Causeway (JWW).

Five RED KNOT at The Hawk, June 28 (MUN) could have been summering or failed nesters. Fifteen on Seal I., July 3 (IAM, MMC), "some in full basic plumage, were unexpected." Noting plumage is instructive, particularly in mid-summer birds and I urge all to follow Ian's example. The peak count of 31 at Morien Bar, July 29 (SEM), was a good number for the period. For the second year in a row SEM spotted a colour-coded bird, which, after consulting with the Delaware banders, she surmises could be the same bird which visited the mudflats last year on July 23. This year it lingered July 21-25. Two were on Big I., Pict. Co., July 28 (KJM, NSBS).

Not many SANDERLING had shown up by the end of the report period. I presume the eight on Cherry Hill Beach, June 12 (JAH), were summering birds. The only migrants



This GREATER YELLOWLEGS at Cole Harbour Sept. 9, is still in crisp, relatively new plumage. [Photo Ian McLaren]



These SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHERS July 4 on Seal I., are in full breeding (alternate) plumage. [Photo Ian McLaren]

were two at Windsor Causeway July 29 (JAH) and nine at Cherry Hill Beach from July 27 on (var. obs.).

The earliest SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPERS were four at Conrads Beach, HRM, July 19 (DMW). Numbers were down significantly, perhaps partially a reflection of lack of coverage. Peaks were: 200, CSI, July 20 (MUN); 2,000 "peeps," mostly Semipalmated, Evangeline Beach, July 21 and 5,000 "peeps" at Windsor Causeway, July 29 (JWW); 27, Cherry Hill Beach, July 31. On an encouraging note, RBS estimated "several thousand" at Grand Pré, July 26, which could indicate migration was just getting under way. A LEAST SANDPIPER at Schooner Pond, CB Co. and four at South Bar, CB Co., June 1 (DBM, RWK, GEL), may have been attempting to nest or just summering. Six at Cherry Hill Beach, June 28 were probably early migrants, increasing to only 21 by the end of July. The migration was dismal elsewhere, as well, with only one or two per beach. Only a single

bird was seen at Morien Bar throughout July (SEM).

The only WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPERS of the season were four early birds at the premiere shorebird location, CSI (MUN) and one at Cherry Hill Beach (SJF), both July 31. Two PECTORAL SANDPIPERS made the deadline on Big I., Pict. Co., July 27 (ALD). An ad. DUNLIN in alternate plumage on Seal I., July 3 must have been a startling sight, and perhaps was of the Greenland population (IAM, MMC). Three STILT SANDPIPERS were well seen at Rainbow Haven, HRM, July 14-21, "as usual on the fringe of a dowitcher flock" (BEM, IAM).

RUFFS are rare at anytime, and only five or so have been seen in July. ALM spotted a moulting ad. at Morien Bar, July 14. It was seen again the next day by the Murrants, the Metcalfes and SEM, who provided a full description. Noted were the blotchy breast, and dark

orange scapulars and wing coverts. Undoubtedly the same bird, one was seen again July 25 (SEM).

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHERS made an early appearance: 60 were at Three Fathom Hbr., June 27, including some *hendersoni* ssp. (IAM, MMC) and 700 were at The Hawk, June 28 (MUN). Most beaches supported small flocks and peaks were average: 5,000, CSI, July 3-7 (MUN); 45, Cherry Hill Beach, July 7; 300, Windsor Causeway, July 29 (JWW); 94, Morien Bar, July 29 (SEM). An infrequently birded area, Bantam Bay Beach, Cape LaHave I., Lun. Co. hosted 70, July 10 (ULH). DOU tallied 350+ from E. Chezzetcook to E. Passage, July 9. MUN had "great looks" at a **LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER** at The Hawk, CSI, June 28. Unusually early, perhaps it was off-course to its staging area in Delaware.

COMMON SNIPE were abundant, as usual, in CB throughout June (DBM, RWK), but only a handful were reported from the mainland. As well, AM. WOODCOCK seemed plentiful in CB, but scarcely reported elsewhere. ELS and RBS came upon an ad. and three fledglings in the middle of the highway near New Ross, July 8. Risking their lives and their car, they directed the speeding traffic around the young, "frozen" on the road, until they could shoo them into the ditch. Nobly done, Liz and Richard!

A juv. WILSON'S PHALAROPE at Morien Bar, July 29 constituted the only record for the period (CAM, ALM, SEM). Perhaps it had wandered from NB. RED-NECKED PHALAROPE were seen off Brier I. in small numbers in early July, building to the low thousands by later in the month. A few RED PHALAROPE were mixed in, at a ratio of one to ten (CAH). About 25 storm-driven phalarope sp. were close to shore at Baccaro, Shel. Co., June 3 (MUN). On the same day a Red was at The Hawk (CST). Two ads. were seen from the Port-aux-Basques ferry July 22 (RWK). □

Skuas Through Alcids

By Blake Maybank

No jaeger reports were received, although I've heard they were very scarce in the Bay of Fundy (fide CAH). It was an unprepossessing summer for LAUGHING GULLS. Two were at The Hawk beach on CSI, June 6 (CST, JON, SAN), and a second-summer bird was at Conrads Beach, HRM, June 27 (FLL, Barb Bradley). There were no details regarding a Little Gull reported in late July, a time of year for which sightings are unprecedented. Two BLACK-HEADED GULLS at Conrad Beach, HRM, July 26 (DMW), seem to be the earliest arrival of autumn birds on record, with Aug. 3 the earliest other date I can find. There were no reports of Bonaparte's Gulls, but judging from the numbers seen in early August along the Northumberland shore, they must have been present in July as well. The BLACK-TAILED GULL at Florence, Cape Breton, was last reported June 1 (DBM, GEL, RWK). There is little to report on our common gull species. Nova Scotia continues to be the only

Canadian province with no breeding records for RING-BILLED GULLS... perhaps next year. HERRING GULLS apparently like North Harbour, Vic. Co., as Terry Powers estimated 2,000 there June 16, approaching the total noted there in 1999 by DBM. Lingered imm. white-winged gulls included three ICELAND GULLS at Florence, CB Co., June 1 (DBM, RWK, GEL), and a GLAUCOUS GULL at Kingsburg Beach, Lun. Co., June 5 (JAH). DBM, RWK, and B. Boone counted 200 GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULLS, June 8, from Baleine to Main-a-dieu, many nesting on islets. One thousand Great Black-backs were with the aforementioned concentration of Herring Gulls at North Harbour, June 16 (Terry Powers).

The only CASPIAN TERN was at Belfry Gut, CB, June 7 (DBM, RWK, B. Boone). There were 70 ROSEATE TERN nests on The Brothers, Yar. Co., down from a high of 86 last year, but still the second highest

total ever (TCD); some may have switched to other sites, perhaps near CSI. There were more than 800 COMMON and ARCTIC TERN nests on The Brothers however, nearly double last year's number, and the highest total ever (TCD). In light of the single report of but four BLACK TERNS at APBS, June 18 (FLL), it may be time to suggest that someone undertake a thorough census of all the appropriate impoundments in the Amherst area in 2002. A RAZORBILL was present through the period at the Bras d'Or Lakes' East Bay, undoubtedly the same bird present the previous two summers (DBM, RWK). Perhaps it is unaware there is a breeding colony on the Bird Islands, not too distant. Or could the bird be lost, and unable to find an exit from the Bras d'Or Lakes? If so, where does the bird spend the winter? Fifty BLACK GUILLEMOT were counted June 8, around islands offshore of Baleine; they're likely local breeders (DBM, RWK, B. Boone). □



Nesting BLACK GUILLEMOTS, like this group photographed July 3, are much at home on the boulder-strewn shores of Seal I. The surrounding waters must be rich in their prey, as they seemed to spend quite a lot of time sitting about, despite their parental responsibilities at this season. [Photo Ian McLaren]



This light-phase adult POMARINE JAEGER was found by George Woolaver in mid-May at Bear East, Ann. Co., not far inland from the Bay of Fundy. Although it was able to run and flap its wings, it was unable to take off. It was kept in a box to rest quietly overnight, but did not survive. The interesting, but inexplicable, event was brought to our attention by JWW. [Photo Mac MacInnes]

Doves Through Woodpeckers

By Ian McLaren

A glance at the 1992 Atlas shows a decided disposition of ROCK DOVES along highways 101 and 103, probably related to their developing tradition of nesting on highway bridges. So, five on a bridge at West Bay Road, Inv. Co., which to DBM "seemed like a strange place for them, a long way from much food," does not surprise me. MOURNING DOVES now vie with crows as the most frequently seen birds along highways and byways, and can be seen on power wires along roads even in stretches of deep woods. PLC also finds that they are increasingly being reported to her by non-birders as novel "pretty birds." Interestingly, although they have flourished here during the last few decades, they are declining sharply in the more southern parts of their range according to US authorities.

There were only two reports of the uncommonly breeding BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO. One was calling June 9 near Maple L., Pict. Co. (MAB), and another July 2 on Big I., Pict. Co. (ALD).

BARRED OWLS were widely reported from CB (including six calling birds, June 1, between Beechmont and Fairview (DBM) to Queens Co. (FLL) and Shel. Co. (MUN). BLF reported that nine of his nest-boxes had a total of 18 large owlets, June 20. GREAT HORNED OWLS were just as frequently noted as Barred Owls this summer, although doubtless less common in fact. Two young were fledged on CSI and were flying strongly by June 17 (MUN *et al.*). At least one young was fledged by the pair nesting on Brier I., where it was being harassed by gulls, June 21 (June Swift). FLL, who did

considerable owling this summer, reported a LONG-EARED OWL, near Kempt, Queens Co., June 10. The only other records were of one adult successfully catching a vole at South Side Harbour, Ant. Co. (RFL, MZG) and of the young which could be heard giving begging calls most nights up to mid summer. SHORT-EARED OWLS were found in traditional places: one at Belleisle Marsh, Anna. Co., May 27 (RBS), an individual in E Amherst and at least two pairs at John Lusby Marsh, June 18 (FLL, CLS), and one in mid-June on Oak I., near Wallace (ROH). Did no one hear N. SAW-WHET OWLS this summer? There seemed to be the usual numbers in spring (last issue).

The only "townie" COM. NIGHTHAWK was one hawking around baseball-field lights in Spryfield, June 13 (DOM). They now

depend on barrens and regenerating clearcuts and burns. MUN thought them to be scarcer than usual in the Upper Clyde region, Shel. Co., but they seemed as numerous as ever in mid-June over clearcuts around Maple L., Pict. Co. and Trafalgar, Guys. Co. (KJM). July 21, two daytime flocks of 20-30 birds between Meteghan and Weymouth, Digby Co., signalled the start of migration. The Spryfield WHIP-POOR-WILL was still singing, June 18 (FLL, CLS), hopefully to a mate. Others were heard by FLL *et al.*, June 10 at Kempt, Queens Co., June 16 near Port l'Hebert, Shel. Co., and June 21 near Elmsdale, Hfx. Co. - the best show in years. A few scattered CHIMNEY SWIFTS were reported but, as usual, the big action

was at traditional chimneys. JWW reports that the peak count at the Robie Tufts Centre, Wolfville, was ~230 (200-265) during evening, June 7. Numbers generally tapered off in June, with a slight recovery to 125, July 11 and 150+, July 14 (scared off by a Merlin). Thereafter, numbers dropped markedly, with none entering the chimney July 30-31, although some flew nearby. Merlins didn't appear to be a factor in Wolfville this summer. A good count at the Middleton High School chimney was 261, June 14 (BBT). ROH counted 152, June 13 at the N.S. Agricultural College chimney, Truro, and June 26, a goodly 149 entered DOE's chimney at Lower Ohio, Shel. Co., 10-12 at a time. Finally, mention should be made

of the five entering the University of King's College chimney, June 27 (Laurel Banks); pioneers of a metro showplace? There seemed to be more than usual reports of RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRDS this summer, mostly at feeders. They may also have done well with wild flowers, which often seem to bloom nicely under water stress. For example, GED reports that hummers between July 22-29 were "difficult to count but seemed to be everywhere" around River Bourgeois, Inv. Co.

BELTED KINGFISHERS presumably occurred as usual around the province, but no indications of trends or other reports of interest were submitted. Among routine woodpeckers, YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKERS as usual elicited some interest. Four observers reported some 20 of these, including a pair at a nest with young in mid-June near Bear River (JET). No nests of DOWNY WOODPECKER were reported; HAIRY WOODPECKERS were nurturing young in a poplar nest hole in Kentville, June 17 (RBS). Both species were noted feeding on (green?) cow parsnip stalks in Lawrencetown, HRM, during July (DMW). Single BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKERS were noted in early July at their usual site on the Uniacke Estate Barren Trail (DOM), and during BLM's June 16 BBS at Trafalgar. Few reports of N. FLICKER were submitted. Of interest were at least three seemingly territorial birds in early July on Seal I., where few large nest trees would seem available (IAM, MMC). Two adults were feeding a young bird, July 14, in a saltmarsh behind Conrad Beach, HRM (DMW). Mary Macaulay started an e-mail exchange on NatureNS by suggesting that PILEATED WOODPECKER numbers were down in her area because of clearcutting. Others responded with that they seemed as common as ever. Quite a bit is known of the habitat requirements of this impressive bird; a study for Fundy NP some years ago suggested that they did not need such massive trees as might be thought necessary for food and nest holes. □



This photograph of a male PILEATED WOODPECKER was an entry in the 1992 NSBS/PNGS Competition. [Photo Fred Greene - NSBS Library]

Flycatchers Through Thrushes

By Richard Stern

It has been a few years since I last edited a regional section for *Nova Scotia Birds* and I was struck on this occasion by how many more reports and observers there are now compared to before, especially for the Summer season and especially from CB. Common breeding birds are now better reported, although I still find it hard to get a feel for total or representative numbers over the province as, not unreasonably, reporters tend to concentrate on rare or "more exciting" birds. But as before it is always interesting and exciting to browse through the lists of observations that have been submitted, as there is always good overall coverage, and both interesting and unexpected birds keep showing up. Anyway, here goes!

OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHERS tend to stick to more remote and heavily wooded areas but are usually prominent in that habitat by virtue of their diagnostic "Quick, three beers" song. There were six reports submitted, between June 14 and July 30, mostly on Breeding Bird Survey routes, from central NS (BLM) and Ant. Co. (RFL, MZG). On one occasion, June 16, BLM saw five along his Trafalgar BBS. RBS also saw them regularly during these two months in the Butler Rd., Kings Co. area. They were always, as expected, singly. Of major interest is a sight record of a bird whose description is consistent with a **WESTERN WOOD PEWEE**, right in the middle of the breeding season, at the Kejimikujik NP adjunct, Port Joli (FLL, Andrea Clouston). This is a species whose normal breeding range extends westward from mid-Manitoba and for which there are three claimed records for Ontario. I am aware of one previously claimed record for NS, on one of the south-westerly islands in the Fall, but no photographic, sonographic, or specimen-obtained proof. (*Editor's note*: see the very detailed, complete report elsewhere in this issue). The **EASTERN WOOD PEWEES'** mournful song is a prominent feature of our woodlands. They are often found

closer to habitation than the previous species and often sing well into the day on hot, lazy, summer afternoons. The earliest reported was one seen in Kentville, May 30 (RBS), and subsequent sightings were from around the Province (BLM, SLH, JAH, PLC). There were no reports from CB.

YELLOW - BELLIED FLYCATCHERS were widely seen this Summer. The NSBS field trip at Mickey Hill, Anna. Co., found at least five or six singing birds May 26. Most of the other reports were from CB during the first half of June (DBM, RWK *et al.*). There was one as late as July 21 at Pubnico Pt. (RSD).

The redoubtable FLL described another rare Flycatcher, an **ACADIAN FLYCATCHER**, at Cow Bay on June 15. He writes "While carrying out a breeding bird survey on Moses I. in Cow Bay, Hfx. Co., I heard and immediately recognized the distinct explosive song of an Acadian Flycatcher". His assistant, Lorne Spates, noted the hunched posture when perched, the long mostly pale bill, and the rich leaf-green upper body colour. FLL got some further looks, both perched and in flight, and he noted the very long broad bill, large greenish head, rich green upper parts, long tapered primaries, greenish-olive primary shafts, broad tapered tail, non-contrasting cheek, blackish median and greater coverts with bright white wing-bars, and the Pwi-pwi-pwi-pwi call note, all diagnosing it as this species as against the other similar *Empidonax*. There are a few other well-documented Spring records for this species in NS.

The first singing **ALDER FLYCATCHER** was at Belle Isle Marsh, Anna. Co., 26 May (RBS *et al.*), followed by 24 reports, all during June, from all over the Province. One comment was "June 2, one in Lun. Co., common thereafter (PLC)." A **WILLOW FLYCATCHER** was singing at L. Egmont on June 21 (no details) (FLL, DOM, CLS) - again, a rarity, but

a few prior records during breeding season. **LEAST FLYCATCHERS** seemed a little late arriving in the woods this Spring, with comments like "June 1, Frenchvale but not back in numbers yet" (DBM, RWK, GEL). There were only four reports, although RBS found them in normal numbers in their usual woods around Kentville.

EASTERN PHOEBE sightings submitted were: one singing at E Kempt, June 10 (FLL, K. March), one in Londonderry (BLM) as part of a BBS and one carrying food near White Rock, Kings Co., in late July (BLF). Just as last year, there was a **GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER** singing, rather briefly, in Coldbrook in the early part of the season (AAM). **EASTERN KINGBIRDS** tend to be prominent, easily seen perched on wires and treetops, and thus well reported. The first reports were all June 1, in CB (five reports, DBM *et al.*), and there were 10 others from around the Province - these included three on Seal I. (IAM), considered to be early migrants, and a group of five flying over an orchard in Kentville, July 31 (RBS) - perhaps a family group.

There were, not surprisingly, no shrikes seen, although there are occasional reports of a lingering Northern or vagrant Loggerhead. FLL and A. Clouston heard a **WHITE-EYED VIREO** singing at Port Joli, June 17. **BLUE-HEADED VIREOS** are one of the earlier arrivals and are generally well established in the Province by this reporting time. On June 1 there were "lots singing" in the Frenchvale, CB area (DBM *et al.*), and BLM found a total of 21 on the Trafalgar BBS, June 14. **RED-EYED VIREOS** are, of course, one of our commonest woodland birds and are also one of the most conspicuous by virtue of their tendency to continue singing late into the day and late into the season. There were 17 reports, including 12 from CB (DBM *et al.*), 19 on the Dean and Chapter BBS (RBS), 28 on the Londonderry BBS, June 14 (BLM), and

27 on the Trafalgar BBS (BLM). Figures like these help to emphasise the value of doing a BBS route or similar repeated formal survey. Of the less common vireos, there was a report of a WARBLING VIREO singing in E Amherst, June 18 (FLL *et al.*). This species has been seen there before in Summer and thus may nest locally. Reports of single, singing PHILADELPHIA VIREOS were: June 15 at Cow Bay, June 21 at Riverside, Col. Co. (both FLL *et al.*) and in Kempt, Queens Co., July 30 (BLM).

A few GRAY JAYS were noted, from CB (DBM *et al.*), Isle Madame (a pair - DBM), the Trafalgar BBS (three - BLM) and Mt. Uniacke (a family - FLL *et al.*). As expected, BLUE JAYS were more obvious, with 13 reports from all over the Province, including one of 23 on the Londonderry BBS, June 14 (BLM).

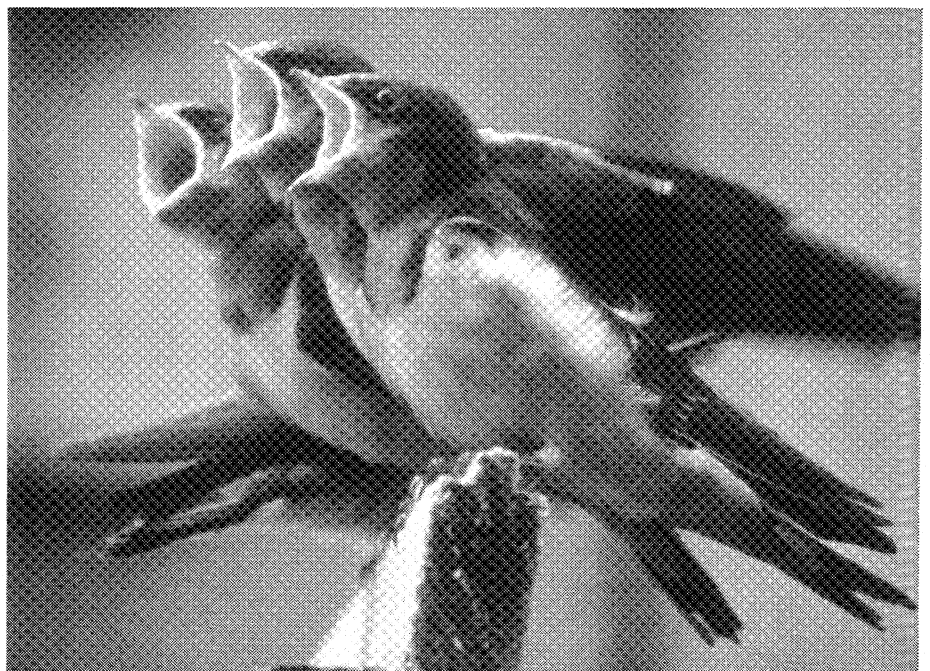
AMERICAN CROWS were, of course, ubiquitous - some numbers included 93 on the Londonderry BBS, June 14 (BLM), and several comments of "lots" (DBM), and "everywhere" (River Bourgeois - GED). There were no huge concentrations as in Winter. There were 18 other reports of smaller numbers and individuals. COMMON RAVENS are a little less gregarious, but widespread, generally in somewhat more remote areas. There were 11 reports, several of which mentioned the birds being harassed by Am. Crows. PLC observed an adult and two juvs. calling raucously at the corner of Young and Robie St. in central Halifax, July 1.

A pair of HORNED LARKS were observed by FLL and CLS in W Amherst on the rather unusual date of June 18. PURPLE MARTINS seem to continue their precarious hold in the centre of the Province. Barb Hood found a pair nesting at Amherst and watched the adults coming and going from the nest site, feeding the cheeping young, on June 30. More unusually, one was at Cape North on July 16 - described by RWK who saw "a large swallow, sitting, all dark breast, dark purplish back, hooked bill", also present a few days later. Would this have been an overshoot from Amherst or Oxford, or a late migrant returning from

Newfoundland, where they must be an extremely rare vagrant, or just a lost waif? TREE SWALLOWS were, as expected, widespread. There were 10 reports, from various locations, including a pair that had usurped a nest box from a House Sparrow at St. Peters, June 15 (BID). Up to 25 ads. with local young were on Seal I., early July (IAM). The first BANK SWALLOWS reported were a few at Belleisle Marsh, May 26 (RBS). Other sizeable colonies included 60 at Morrison Beach, Framboise, Rich. Co. (DBM) and several hundred in the soft sandstone cliffs at Medford Beach, Kings Co. (RBS). IAM commented that there were only two on Seal I., early July, an unusually low number. Although CLIFF SWALLOWS are often the most ubiquitous of the family elsewhere, they are more localised here in NS. Only small colonies were reported -, four under the bridge over the Annapolis R., Middleton (RBS), nine at New Salem, Hants Co. (FLL, CLS), but a nice exception - "scores" with hatched young and parents attending, under the overhangs at Louisbourg (PLC). There were nine BARN SWALLOW reports, including 15 at L'Archeveque, Rich. Co., June 12 (DBM, RWK), "lots" over the RR trail at Lawrencetown, July 15 (DMW) and a few dozen nesting at Louisbourg (PLC).

I suspect that BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEES are always under-reported because they are taken for granted. Look at the discrepancy between CBC figures and those reported to the NSBS for the same season. Anyway, they always seem to me to be abundant in the woods and suburbs of NS. Some representative figures this season include nine on the Londonderry BBS, June 14 & 15 along the Peters Pont Trail, Kejimikujik NP, July 30 (both BLM). As I write this, there are at least half a dozen flying around the spruces right outside my office. BOREAL CHICKADEES are harder to find, unless you are in more remote boreal forest type habitat, and not surprisingly most of this season's reports came from CB during June and July ("some", RWK; "a few", DBM *et al.*). A total of four were found on BLM's BBS routes.

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES seem to retreat into the woods in summer and are less obvious than on migration and at winter feeders. There were six reports of 14 birds and DBM and RWK commented that none were heard during three days of birding in coastal CB forests. A pair of WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCHES were apparent all of June in Tremont (SLH), with four being present on June 28 (a family group?). The only other sighting was at Kejimikujik NP, July 31 (BLM).



Young BARN SWALLOWS begging to be fed. [Photo Francis Spalding - NSBS Library]



This EASTERN BLUEBIRD nested this summer in a Canso backyard. [Photo Stephan Bushell]

No BROWN CREEPERS were reported this period. There were a few WINTER

WRENS heard, including up to five singing males on Seal I., early July (IAM). RSD found an ad. with three young at Pubnico Pt., July 21, in the same spot where he found fledglings last year. There were fewer on the Dean and Chapter BBS than in the last two years (RBS).

There were only five reports of GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET, mostly of ones and twos (RWK, GEL, BLM *et al.*), and seven of RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET, but with larger numbers (e.g. BLM found 15 on the Londonderry BBS and 36 on the Trafalgar BBS).

There were only seven VEERIES actually reported, but RBS recalled hearing them late in the day and evening most of the time he was near the woods all Summer. FLL heard three GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH calling overhead at Cow Bay, early June 15, perhaps on their way to Nfld.? IAM notes that this species is regular on Sable I. in mid-June. There were some good reports of

our "near endemic" and hard to find speciality, BICKNELL'S THRUSH, in CBHNP. A few were at Benjies L., June 9, Money Pt. Rd., Vic. Co., June 10 (RWK, R. Boone), again at Benjies L. but singing in the evening 10 days later, and on the nearby Skyline Trail, June 22 (DBM). There were several reasonably good concentrations of SWAINSON'S THRUSH, including up to eight pairs on Seal I., early July (IAM) and 23 on the Londonderry BBS (BLM). RSD only heard one in Yar. Co. but wondered if it was the species or his hearing that is declining! However, the HERMIT THRUSH apparently continue to do well everywhere. There were 14 reports, totalling approx. 120 birds, often on BBS routes (BLM, RBS) and from diverse areas. Perhaps it is the arresting song so characteristic of our woods in the evening that makes people notice them more. Comments about the ubiquitous AMERICAN ROBIN included "lots" in several places (DBM, PLC *et al.*) and "young birds everywhere" (PLC). □

Mimics Through Warblers

By Ken McKenna

Most reports of EUR. STARLING came from CB (DBM) but most drives in populated areas of the province still yield large flocks. GRAY CATBIRDS were widely reported, but I will highlight a couple from unusual places. DBM and DAH report two, June 29 at Grand R., a first in nine years of this BBS. Likewise, two singing males from Seal I. in July (IAM, MMC) were uncommon that time of year. The only N. MOCKINGBIRD report outside Kentville (RBS) was a pair, June 18, W Amherst (CLS, FLL). In the Summer 2001 issue of *Nova Scotia Birds*, reports of BROWN THRASHER were numerous. A pair settled at The Hawk, CSI and the Nickerson family (JON, SAN *et al.*) provided an exciting observation on July 9 when the pair of thrashers were seen with two young at house # 348. The thrashers were fed at this feeder for four-five days and then took up residence at the well-known house #38 at The Hawk and were still present at the end of August. A few

Brown Thrashers have been nesting in NB since 1968 (*Atlas of Breeding Birds of the Maritime Provinces*). From the third edition of *Birds of Nova Scotia*, Tufts writes, "its frequent occurrences here (in NS) suggest it soon may nest if it has not already done so." Congratulations are in order to the Shel. Co. birders in confirming this nesting. PLC noted that CEDAR WAXWINGS were just about everywhere possible in June and July.

All warbler reports received were for the 22 regular breeding warblers (Pine Warblers were not reported). TENNESSEE WARBLERS seem to have a bit of a stronghold along the Trafalgar BBS route when 29 were tallied June 16 (BLM). On the Londonderry BBS, June 14, 11 were noted (BLM). Only one was recorded on each of the James R. BBS, June 16 (KJM) and New Ross BBS, June 9 (RBS). Similar small numbers were reported from CB and Lun. Cos. (DBM,

JAH). NASHVILLE WARBLER numbers were small, with the four on the Londonderry BBS being the highest reported. NORTHERN PARULA numbers seemed about average with a high of 28 on the Londonderry BBS and 21 on both the Trafalgar and nearby James R. BBS. A male was still singing July 17 at the home of DBM in Georges R., CB Co. Comments attached to about 15 reports of YELLOW WARBLERS varied from a few to lots and numerous. There were 14 on the James R. BBS, five on the Londonderry and only one on the Trafalgar BBS. Fewer reports of CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLERS were received, with six on the James R., three on the Londonderry and one on the Trafalgar BBS.

In DBM's travels through three CB counties, he saw lots of MAGNOLIA WARBLERS. Numbers on the BBS's were nine on Trafalgar, 12 on James R. and 16 on the Londonderry route. Three reports of CAPE MAY WARBLER

probably indicate this warbler is not as common as others. One was singing in the APBS, June 18 (FLL, CLS) and one each on the Londonderry and Trafalgar BBS. A few more reports of BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER were received. On June 10, four were heard singing in Kempt, Queens Co. (FLL, CLS). Two were on the Trafalgar BBS. This warbler is not always easy to find in Pict. Co., but a male was heard on territory in Brookville, July 7 (KJM) and from Big I., DOU found an adult feeding young, July 30. YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER reports were widespread but interestingly, on both the Trafalgar and James R. BBS routes, BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLERS outnumbered them 18:14 and 10:8, respectively; on the Londonderry BBS, where there were 29 Yellow-rumps and only nine Black-throated Greens, this was not the case. A single BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER was noted on the NSBS field trip in Ben Eoin, CB Co., June 9. Of BBS reports received, James R. had the highest Blackburnian total with six.

Five PALM WARBLERS were noted on the Trafalgar BBS and small numbers from early June in Richmond and CB Cos. (DBM, RWK). Often overlooked with its high-pitched song, the high number of nine BAY-BREASTED WARBLERS on the Trafalgar count was noteworthy. The only CB report sent was from Big Glen, June 1 (GEL, DBM, RWK). Another of the high-

pitched singers, the BLACKPOLL WARBLER was reported from CB and along the Atlantic coast. Birds were found at Baleine, CB Co., June 8, (DBM); Belfry Gut, CB Co., June 15 (DBM, CET, Danielle Gouthro); Port Joli, Queens Co., June 17, (FLL, Andrea Clouston); two young at Catalone CB Co., July 22 (PLC), and three singing males on the Port Bickerton lighthouse trail, Guys. Co., July 29 (KJM, JEM). Up to 11 Blackpolls on Seal I. in early July (IAM, MMC), were felt to be many fewer than in the 70's and 80's. IAM wondered if squirrels and/or global warming might be a factor in the decline. BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLERS numbered an average 11-13 on the James R. and Trafalgar BBS routes, but the four on the Londonderry BBS seemed rather low. All other reports were from CB in June and of single to a few birds (DBM, RWK).

The AM. REDSTART was well reported from CB and quite common on the Trafalgar and James R. BBS with 38 and 23 respectively, but only ten on the Londonderry BBS. SLH reported OVENBIRDS singing daily in Tremont. The James R. BBS had 14 Ovenbirds about twice as many as the Londonderry and Trafalgar routes. NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH numbers were above average on the James R. BBS with 12, compared with seven on the Trafalgar survey. DBM reported a few from Frenchvale, CB Co., in early June. MOURNING WARBLERS are late

returning to breeding territories and reports from June 1, Big Pond, CB Co., (RWK, GEL) and Brookville, Pict. Co., June 2 (KJM) were likely recent arrivals. Although SJF had four on the Roman Valley BBS more than other BBS route reported, she felt this species has been in decline for the last 30 years. Fifteen to 20 individuals were heard along this route. Certainly the Mourning Warbler is still in good numbers in CBHNP and male and female birds at Cape Clear, Inv. Co., June 15 were lifers for DOM. There were many reports of COM. YELLOWTHROAT and it was the most numerous warbler on the James R. BBS with 24 recorded, about average for this count. The Trafalgar route had 22 and Londonderry 16.

WILSON'S WARBLERS were only reported from the eastern mainland and CB. Four were found on the Trafalgar BBS, where they out-numbered Yellow Warblers, and on the Pict. Co. side of Trafalgar, KJM, MAB and FHM had four pairs, June 9. This area is clearly a hotbed for this hard to find breeding warbler. In CB, two were found at East Bay, June 1 (RWK, DBM, GEL). CANADA WARBLER reports were up a bit from last year with two on the Trafalgar BBS and one on the New Ross-Falmouth BBS, June 9 (RBS). A single Canada Warbler was at the north end of the rail trail at Conrad Marsh, Hfx. Co. (DMW). □

Tanagers Through House Sparrows

By David McCorquodale

Tanagers of all species are most frequent as vagrants in the province. The two reports of SCARLET TANAGERS, one in Kings Co. in late May (JCT, GWT) and the other near Trafalgar, Guys. Co. in mid-June (BLM), are consistent with its status as a rare nesting bird.

As expected there were reports of CHIPPING SPARROWS from many areas, from Lunenburg to Guys. Co. to CBI. July 30, JAH reported a **FIELD SPARROW** in a flock of House

Sparrows in Hants Co. Most of our records for Field Sparrows are in October on the southern islands. Both the location and the association with House Sparrows are unusual. SAVANNAH SPARROWS were most noticeable on grassy beaches around the province. Life is not always easy on the sandy beaches of CBI. At Baleine a Merlin stooped at a Savannah Sparrow several times as it sat on an exposed perch and then tried to find cover. Eventually the Merlin ate its breakfast. Counts done as part of the Salt Marsh

Survey for the Canadian Wildlife Service on part of Conrad Marsh, Lawrencetown Beach, HRM, revealed a peak of 91 in mid-July (DMW). The survey also tallied 60 NELSON'S SHARP-TAILED SPARROWS in the same area. There were reports of a few from CSI to Wolfville to Amherst to CBI. Other high counts included about 20 at Grand Desert, HRM (FLL, Barb Bradley) and more than 12 pairs at Martinique Beach, HRM (TEP). But the highest counts of sharp-tails come from Belleisle Marsh, where JJN and



A male SCARLET TANAGER on Brier Island. [Photo Richard Stern - NSBS Library]

colleagues are studying grassland birds. He thinks the 75 pairs nesting there may be the highest concentration in the province. If there are rivals, Joe, and the rest of us, would love to hear about them. JAH provided two intriguing descriptions of grey sparrows he saw in late July at LaHave and Cherry Hill Beach, Lun. Co. Both had grey colouration, white throat, and dark whiskers and he saw dull yellow lores on one of them. His descriptions fit the rare SEASIDE SPARROW and he came to this conclusion. The only other sparrow that is somewhat similar is the Savannah Sparrow, which differs in the pattern of the breast, size and shape. JAH's descriptions alert us to some interesting possibilities and hopefully they will cause others to also spend the time to chase and observe skulky sparrows all along the coast.

Many Nova Scotians only see FOX SPARROWS as they head north as the snow melts. Many do remain to nest, as shown by sightings this summer in coastal spruce woods on islands in the extreme south, at Taylor Hd. PP, HRM (TEP), and in the highlands of northern CB. Strange or unlikely juxtapositions intrigue birders. On CSI, MUN had both Fox Sparrows and N. Cardinals in his yard through much of the summer -- north meets south. As expected SONG SPARROWS were both common and widespread. One thing that amazes me

is that they sing regularly and strongly from March right through the end of July and into the late summer. A busy adult was feeding two young Brown-headed Cowbirds in Oak Park, Shel. Co. in late July (MUN). LINCOLN'S SPARROWS are much more common breeders on CBI than the mainland, but it is still surprising that there are 10 reports this summer from CBI and only one, Trafalgar, Guys. Co. (BLM), from the mainland. The bulk of reports for SWAMP SPARROW are also from CBI, a handful from more than a dozen locales. Undoubtedly they were more common on the mainland than the reports from E Amherst Marsh and CSI suggest (KJM, ABM, Ruth Miller, MUN).

WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS and DARK-EYED JUNCOS are two of the most common nesting birds along roadsides in wooded areas throughout the province. Counts from Breeding Bird Surveys near Trafalgar, Londonderry, Col. Co. and three on CBI confirm this.

N. CARDINALS have been relatively plentiful for the past few years. With more exposure, people comment on sightings far less frequently. The approximately 20 pairs MUN found while visiting garage sales in the Yarmouth and Hebron areas were definitely noteworthy. Elsewhere a few

others in Shel. Co. and a pair in Wolfville were the only others noted this summer. We will have to wait for the CBCs to see if the heavy snows of last winter had an influence on numbers in the province. A smattering of June reports of ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAKS in suitable nesting habitat were received, from Big I., Pict. Co. (ALD), Tremont, Kings Co., (SLH), two locations in Lun. Co. (JAH, CSS) and at Scotch Village, Hants Co. (PLC). Although not really common on the mainland, they are more frequent than they are on CBI, as reflected in these reports.

BOBOLINKS were reported from 13 different counties, indicating they were widespread. The lack of nesting birds was noted in a couple of places this summer, near Margaretsville, Anna. Co. (PLC) and one location on CBI, in particular. However, elsewhere numbers were thought to be similar to recent years. The largest concentration was at Belleisle Marsh, Anna. Co., where work by JJN and colleagues shows there are about 200 pairs nesting. At Belleisle about 90% of young fledge by July 1, suggesting that if haying starts after that date, it will have little effect on Bobolink nesting success.

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS were widespread and as expected the largest concentrations were in the marshes in the valley and in the Amherst area. The habitat requirements of RUSTY BLACKBIRDS are more restrictive. Only a successful nesting in Yar. Co. (MUN), two males near Riverside, Col. Co. (FLL, CSS) and a male near Gabarus, CB Co. (RWK, Rob Boone) were reported. In contrast COM. GRACKLES were widespread and numerous in many locations. This is a species that is more abundant now than 30 years ago. BROWN-HEADED COWBIRDS appear to be most frequent in Shel. Co. (MUN), with only two males at Tremont, Kings Co. (SLH), reported from elsewhere. BALTIMORE ORIOLES in suitable nesting habitat were found near Amherst (FLL, CLS), Antigonish (RFL) and Coldbrook, Kings Co. (AAM) in June.

PINE GROSBEAKS were found near New Ross, Lun. Co. (MUN) and Mt. Uniacke (FLL). Most reports come from CBI, where about a dozen were along the Loch Lomond Rd., and a few more at each of Money Pt., Vic. Co., Grand L. on Isle Madame, and near Cape Gabarus, CB Co. in June (RWK, GEL, Rob Boone, DBM). PURPLE FINCHES were widespread throughout the summer. Many feeders or yards hosted a few, while some had up to a dozen. HOUSE FINCHES again nested in Halifax (ABM). Away from their new footholds in the province a fem. visited a yard in Kentville June 8 & 9 (AAM).

RED CROSSBILLS continued to visit feeders, such as those of the Blundin's

and Joan Mills in Gabarus in June this year. Elsewhere a few were near the Pict./Ant. Co. line in late July (KJM, NSBS) and in Kings Co. and nearby Lun. Co. in June (RBS, SLH). Year to year variation in numbers of WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILLS is much more dramatic than that of Reds. Last summer a reasonable cone crop on spruces and Balsam Fir resulted in White-wings through the late summer and fall. A smaller cone crop -- although still more than most off years -- has not resulted in an influx of crossbills this year. A smattering of birds were in Pict., Anna., Lun. and Hants Cos. and coastal CB Co. from early June through July. A sizeable flock of 50 flew over Money Pt., Vic. Co., June 10 (RWK, Rob Boone).

PINE SISKINS were widespread with concentrations noted on the Clyde R. loop, Shel. Co. (MUN) and on CBI. Similarly AM. GOLDFINCHES were both widespread and common. A few observers, including one from the Halifax area (PLC), noted they were particularly abundant and vocal this summer. EVENING GROSBEAKS were also widespread, with the bulk of reports coming from sparsely populated areas, such as the southern interior, CBI, Guys., Cum., Col. and Pict. Cos. In contrast and as expected, HOUSE SPARROWS were largely restricted to towns and cities throughout. ☐

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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		Other	Hants Co.	Hants
L.	Lake	ad.	adult	Inv. Co.	Inverness
Lwr.	Lower	BBS	Breeding Bird Survey	Kings Co.	Kings
Mt.	Mountain, Mount	ca.	circa (about, approximately)	Lun. Co.	Lunenburg
Mts.	Mountains	CBC	Christmas Bird Count	Pict. Co.	Pictou
N.P.	National Park	fem.	female	Queens Co.	Queens
P.P.	Provincial Park	imm.	immature	Rich. Co.	Richmond
Pen.	Peninsula	juv.	juvenile	Shel. Co.	Shelburne
Pt.	Point, not Port	male	(no abbreviation)	Vic. Co.	Victoria
R.	River	MNRS	Maritimes Nest Records Scheme	Yar. Co.	Yarmouth
The Cape	Cape Sable	var. obs.	various observers		

Brown Thrasher Breeding in Nova Scotia



This photo of an adult and juvenile BROWN THRASHER on Cape Sable Island confirms suspected breeding status for this species. [Photo Murray Newell]

Book Review

By Brian Starzomski

Restoring North America's Birds : Lessons from Landscape Ecology
by Robert A. Askins, Julie Zickefoose (Illustrator) Hardcover - 288 pages (March 2000)
Yale Univ Pr; ISBN: 0300079672

No one would dispute that there have been some dramatic changes in relative bird abundances in North America in the last few centuries, and few would argue that these changes are independent of the different land uses that have developed during that time. So where is a good explanation of the links between bird numbers and the landscape? Look no further than this book.

Why are Red Crossbills abundant one year and gone the next? Do Bobolinks belong in eastern North America, or are they only here because we have razed the forests and replaced them with fields? Why are Kirtland's Warblers so rare when Jack Pine forest, their preferred habitat, is so common? These are the sorts of questions Robert A. Askins seeks to explain. There are complex interactions between the landscape and the birds that inhabit it, and they are seldom presented in such an accessible manner- to both practising biologist and backyard birder.

This book is not restricted to one part of North America, but instead draws on a number of different bird species and their respective habitats to illustrate how changes in habitat, and habitat amounts within a geographically defined region, combine to affect relative abundances in birds. Moving from the birds of eastern forest, meadows and thickets (all treated in their own chapters), to southwestern floodplains, the boreal forest and western mountains, Askins sketches the ecology of birds in these environments. Using examples of the effects of mast year cone production on the abundance of Red Crossbills, the dual-habitat requirements of Phainopeplas, the unusual nesting preferences of the Marbled Murrelet, as well as others, the author shows how incompletely understanding the ecology of these birds led to their declines. Preserving only one part of their habitat while allowing another to be destroyed was not enough to allow the continued persistence of the species. Similarly, examples of birds dependent on disturbance processes such as fire and storm damage are discussed.

While the scope of the book is continental in scale, there are discussions of birds closer to home, such as various neotropical migrants, and the Newfoundland Crossbill. The ideas presented in the book are not necessarily specific to any one location, however. Examples from experience with introduced Saltcedar on the Colorado River provide insight into how a plant like Purple Loosestrife may affect bird populations in Nova Scotia.

In short, this is an excellent book for any birder who seeks to understand bird ecology, history, and conservation in North America. Askins' writing style is tight and easy to follow, and makes for good reading. The ideas presented here will be used for years to come in saving rare species, and ensuring that the habitats of more common birds will be maintained. □

Wildlife Division, Department of Natural Resources
Kentville, Nova Scotia



A mixed flock of foraging Sandpipers - [Photo NSBS Library]

New Books

The Nova Scotia Bird Society occasionally receives books from publishers for review purposes. We require a review of about a few hundred words (or less for smaller books) which will be printed in *Nova Scotia Birds*; the reviewer gets to keep the book (i.e. the only cost to the reviewer is the written review). Reviewers should have some experience in the topic of the book so a critical review can be written; children's books should be reviewed in conjunction with a child. Reviewers should be able to write clearly and concisely and must be current members of the Nova Scotia Bird Society.

The following books are available for review. The review is due one month after receiving the book and will be subject to editing.

Puffin's Homecoming by D. Bailer, K. Lee.
Smithsonian. For younger children.

Pigeons and Doves by D. Gibbs, E. Barnes and J. Cox.
Yale.

Ahmed and the Nest of Sand by K. Bieber Domm, J. Domm. Nimbus. For children.

Birds of the Seychelles by A. Skerrett, I. Bullock.
Princeton.

The Feeder Watcher's Guide to Bird Feeding by M.A. Barker and J. Griggs. Harper Collins.

Crows and Jays by S. Madge and H. Burn. Princeton.

The complete Backyard Birdwatcher's Home Companion by D.S. Heintzelman. Rocky Mountain Press.

Birds of Southern South America and Antarctica by M. de la Peña, M. Rumboll. Princeton.

Feeder Birds by R. Peterson. Houghton Mifflin

Watching Birds – Reflections on the wing by A. Taylor. Rocky Mountain Press.

Advanced Birding by K. Kaufman. Houghton Mifflin.

Sylvia Warblers, by H. Shirihai, G. Gargallo, and A. Helbig. Princeton.

Getting Started in Bird Watching E. Cronin, Jr.
Houghton Mifflin.

Birds, Birds, Birds by the National Wildlife Federation.
For children. McGraw Hill.

Common Birds and Their Songs by L. Elliott, M. Read. Book and CD. Houghton Mifflin.

Raven's End A Tale from the Canadian Rockies. by B. Gadd. McLelland and Stewart.

Backyard Birds by J. Latimer, K. Nolting, R. Peterson.
Houghton Mifflin. For young readers.

Exploring Alaska's Birds. Ed. P. Rennick. Alaska Geographic Society.

Bizarre Birds by J. Latimer, K. Nolting, R. Peterson.
Houghton Mifflin. For young readers.

☺☺☺

Given the great discrepancy in communication speeds of the postal service and email, all replies will be pooled for three weeks after delivery of this issue of *Nova Scotia Birds*. A lottery system will be used to choose the books' recipients if necessary.

If you are interested please contact:

Randy F. Lauff
Editor, *NS Birds*
Biology Department
St. Francis Xavier University
Antigonosh, NS B2G2W5

Field Trip Reports

Mahone Bay

4 August 2001, Leader: James Hirtle

We met at the three churches in Mahone Bay at 08:00. Things were quieter than usual there with very little tern activity. There was no sign of the Bald Eagles usually seen there either. We did get a look at a Black-capped Chickadee and a few other more common birds. A few Common Terns flew by and I was able to explain the differences between the terns as to what to look for in identification. A single Roseate Tern flew by and was seen by only a few as it strangely headed inland.

After a quick Tim Horton's stop, I led six vehicles to Long Hill. While scouting two days prior to the trip, things were quiet. I was concerned that this day would be similar. At Long Hill the day before there were signs of migration with a few species in good numbers. We lucked out on the basis of finding large numbers of migrants concentrated over a 1 km area. Lots of warblers were present including Chestnut-sided, Yellow-rumped, Common Yellowthroat, Blackpoll, Magnolia, Blackburnian, American Redstart, Black-throated Green, Black and White, Nashville and Northern Parula. Red-eyed Vireos and Blue-headed Vireos were present. Both kinglets, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Cedar Waxwings, Grey Catbirds, Common Grackles, Eastern Wood Pewees, Alder Flycatchers, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, Purple Finches, Dark-eyed Juncos, Song Sparrows, White-throated Sparrows, and Northern Flickers abounded. Other species found included Chimney Swifts, Evening Grosbeaks, Great Blue Herons and both a Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers.

After leaving Long Hill we proceeded to Westhaver Beach. The Red-winged Blackbirds present the day before could not be found, but we did see a Belted Kingfisher, a lone Arctic Tern on a rock, and Common Loons. We tried for the Cardinal at Princess Inlet Drive, that was there earlier in the day...he did not show. Everyone had a tour of a lovely garden though. Coming back onto the main drag to Lunenburg we saw a Common Merganser and a Bald Eagle sitting overlooking the bay. We then went to the community of Centre for a short walk back of the Balmar Road and lunch. After lunch, where a Spotted Sandpiper was found, we panned Back Oler Marsh from the community of Garden Lots. There we observed a pair of Killdeer, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Semi-Palmated Sandpipers and a few lone Semi-Palmated Plovers.

Our next stop was Crescent Beach. The fog was thick so shorebirds were hard to see. We did see a number of Sanderlings, a few Least Sandpipers and the other shorebirds already sighted. I was able to give those present a good look at a pair of Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows and a Savannah Sparrow. Common Eiders were present and on the way home two of us saw a Green-winged Teal at Blockhouse. I did not continue on to Cherry Hill as I usually do, as the fog was too thick. In all I feel that it was a good day with 69 species. □

Matthews Lake

11 August 2001, Leader: David Young

Fifteen very convivial Birders enjoyed good weather for a change, but were not overwhelmed with birds for the day. The group included five visitors from the States and I believe this helps to enhance the reputation of Nova Scotia as a great place to bird!

We managed to see 13 species of shorebirds and compared to normal numbers, this was a rather short list. The best bird was a Baird's Sandpiper. Another bird generated a lively discussion as to whether it was a Stilt Sandpiper or just a Short-billed Dowitcher in disguise. This type of discussion always adds to the day's interest!

A Roseate Tern was the only other bird of note and the only raptor was a Harrier. Total number of shorebird individuals was in the 500-600 range and this continues the downward trend in numbers that I have witnessed in recent years. □

Point Michaud, Cape Breton

25 Aug. 2001 Leader: George Digout

Reporter: Ken McKenna

An enjoyable day was spent in the Point Michaud area on Saturday when George Digout led the annual NSBS field trip. Highlights were a Peregrine Falcon, which put on an excellent display for a good 10 minutes, eventually flying right over our heads, a single American Golden Plover and a Baird's Sandpiper (two of the 14 species of shorebird seen), and a Sora discovered by Elizabeth Doull. Dave McCorquodale enlightened us on the sexual habits of dragonflies. Thanks Sharon for the excellent scoff and social wrap-up. Thanks again George for showing us some of the many interesting inlets of Richmond Co. ☐

Bon Portage Island

31 August - 01 September, 2001 Leader: Joan Czapalay

When there is a fallout of migrating birds on a small island, you need only sit down with your field glasses and look around you to get a good count. On Monday, September 3rd, this occurred for the third time that I have been on the island for this holiday, and it was a great morning. The weekend started slowly, with several last minute cancellations, leaving Claire Diggins, Catherine Early, Sharon Hawbolt and me to share the larger of two camp buildings. The banders, with whom I had lived for the past two weeks, were in the small camp next door. We had had one small "fallout", and a sprinkling of interesting birds during the previous week: Chats, a **HOODED WARBLER**, a Grey-cheeked Thrush, a good variety of shore birds and a Great Egret at the Salt Water pond, so we were hoping for a good count for the NSBS trip.

Friday brought poor weather, and Saturday more rain, so we sloshed around, rested, ate and read. By Sunday evening we were happy to have seen a N. Gannet and the Great Egret, and some saw a Yellow-billed Cuckoo, but we wondered if we would be able to get 50 species. There were still quite a few Leach's Storm-Petrels (if you have not seen these wonderful creatures, it is reason enough to visit BPI), both Double-crested and Great Cormorants, three Black-crowned Night-Herons, one Canada Goose, both Blue- and Green-winged Teal, lots of Common Eider and a few Raptors: Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Am. Kestrel and Merlin. All of us made a trip to Kelp Cove on Saturday and saw only a few shorebirds remaining: Black-bellied and Semi-palmated Plover, Greater Yellowlegs, Spotted Sandpiper, Whimbrel and Semi-palmated Sandpiper. Two Common Terns were on the East Side with the usual Herring and Black-backed Gulls. Two Hummingbirds, two Kingfishers and a single Mourning Dove appeared, as well as a Northern Flicker. On Monday morning it was Sharon who alerted us to "...birds all around". Sure enough, right outside the door were a number of warbler species and Baltimore Orioles. I sat beside the boat shed, and while Claire admired Wilson's Warblers and a Canada Warbler, I had a Philadelphia Vireo, and Blue-headed Vireo and several Red-eyed Vireos all within a few minutes. Our evenings and nights had been filled with Owls calling: Saw-Whets, Short-eared and Great Horned, and we (especially Claire) had excellent views of the Great Horned Owls in daylight. We feel quite sure that there were four present all weekend.

Of the small birds we had Eastern Kingbird, a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, and several Alder Flycatchers, Tree Swallows, two Barn Swallows, both Nuthatches and Boreal Chickadees, a Winter Wren and lots of Golden-crowned Kinglets; Swainson's was the only Thrush we saw. There were lots of Crows, the resident Ravens, some Cedar Waxwings, Savannah, Fox, Song and Swamp Sparrows, Purple Finch, Goldfinch and the following Warblers: Nashville, Parula, Yellow, Magnolia, Myrtle, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Bay-breasted, Blackpoll, Black-and-white, Redstart, N. Waterthrush, C. Yellowthroat, Wilson's, Canada, and a mystery one which we all agreed had to be a Pine. We observed it for about fifteen-twenty minutes while referring to a number of field guides. It seemed early in the fall to see one, but we did have excellent views.

Back in Shag Harbour while walking up the lane to pick up my car, a bright little warbler with yellow face, throat and underparts landed on a nearby wire. I put up my binoculars and there were the bluish wings with wing bars and a dark eye line! A **BLUE-WINGED WARBLER**. It was supposed to be on BPI this weekend! I was happy to see it, but wished we could all see it together. Perhaps next year? ☐

Book Review

By Robert McDonald

The Sibley Guide to Birds,
by David Allen Sibley. 544 pages (October 2000)
Alfred A. Knopf Inc., ISBN 0-679-45122-6

I first examined this book in November 2000 and acquired my own copy just before Christmas. My initial reaction was mixed despite the fact that the book received many "rave" reviews within a few weeks of its appearance. I have now had some time to actually use Sibley in the field and at home, and have gradually become a supporter. Let us examine what we need in a field guide and see how Sibley measures up.

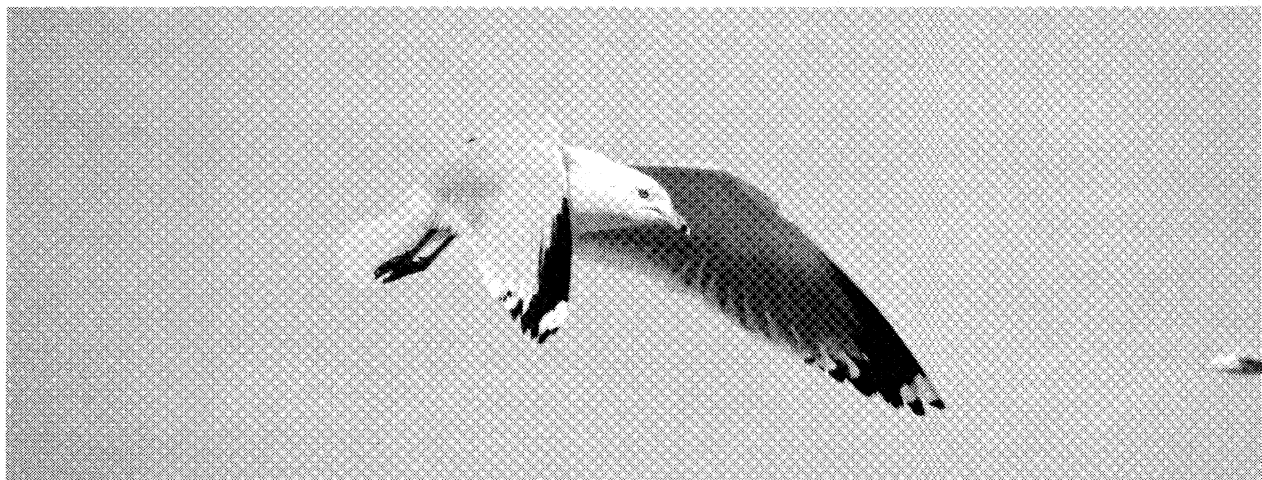
The Illustrations. Without a doubt, the illustrations are the most outstanding feature of Sibley, especially in quantity. There are over 6,600 illustrations in all, representing 810 species and 350 regional populations. (Sibley avoids using the terms, subspecies and races, since ornithologists cannot agree on the use of these terms). This works out to an average of eight illustrations per species, and varies from one (!) for Northwestern Crow to over 20 (!) for Herring Gull. Most plumages are illustrated which are useful in distinguishing sex, age, regional population and seasonal variation. The illustrations emphasize differences between similar species but they are not of the artistic quality of those in Peterson.

Species Descriptions. For the most part, these are rather brief and not particularly useful to the beginning birder. However, they do remind the more advanced birder about features useful in distinguishing among similar species. Unfortunately, the descriptions of vocalizations are of little use to me unless I am already familiar with the song or call.

Distribution Maps. The template used is all of North America and the maps are rather small so these aging eyes had some difficulty in using them. They show winter, summer (breeding) and year-round ranges as well as principal migration routes. Green dots are used to indicate regions or locations of rare occurrence. Most I examined were fairly accurate, although Sibley could use more input from Canada. For example, Greater Sage-Grouse is not shown in Canada although there are some 500 breeding pairs in southern Saskatchewan/Alberta. (Mountain Plover however is shown as a breeder although there are fewer than 20 pairs). Black-necked Stilt is shown only as a vagrant in Alberta although they have been breeding there for over ten years and are not difficult to see. Closer to home, Common Moorhen is not shown as a breeder in NS although Laughing Gull is! No record of Western Sandpiper is given. According to our breeding bird atlas, both Warbling and Philadelphia Vireo are rare breeders in NS. Sibley assigns the former vagrant status while the latter is shown as breeding.

Regardless of any negative comments made above, I believe Sibley should be in the library of every birder in North America. The illustrations for the most part are excellent, especially since so many plumages are shown, allowing for side-by-side comparisons of similar species. However, due to the weight and cost of the book, it is more of a reference manual than a field guide. It is not suitable as a first field guide for beginners, nor should it be the only field guide used by more experienced birders. I hope that the second edition will have fuller species descriptions and more accurate distribution maps for Canada. □

Mount Saint Vincent University
Halifax, NS



RING-BILLED GULL at its nesting colony (when will they be found breeding here?). [Photo Randy Lauff]

The Book Collection of the late Dr. Phyllis R. Dobson, Editor, NSBS Newsletter, 1955 - 1977.

To be auctioned off at the January 24, 2002 meeting of the Nova Scotia Bird Society

A Birdwatcher's Guide to Atlantic Canada (Vol. 1 - Nfld. & Lab.)			
Roger Burrows	1981		Soft
A Gathering of Shore Birds			
Hall, H.M.	1960	Devin Adair	Hard
A Guide To Bird Song			
Saunders, A.A	1951	Doubleday	Hard
Annotated List of the Birds of Yarmouth & Vicinity			
E. Chesley Allen	1916	NS Inst. Sci.	Pamphlet
Audubon Bird Guide Eastern Land Birds			
Pough, R.H.	1946	Doubleday	Soft
Bird Recognition Volume #3			
Fisher, J	1955	Penguin	Soft
Birds and their Attributes			
Allen, G.M.	1962	Dover	Soft
Birds and their Ways			
Robie Tufts	1972		Soft
Birds in the Garden and how to Attract Them			
McKenny, M.	1939	Grosset & Dunlap	Hard
Birds of the Ocean			
Alexander, W	1955	Pitman	Hard
Canadian Water Birds, Game Birds, Birds of Prey. A Pocket Field Guide			
Taverner, P	1939	Musson	Hard
Catalog of Canadian Birds			
Macoun, John; Macoun, James	1909	Govt. Can.	Hard
Checklist of North American Birds			
A.O.U.	1957	Lord Baltimore	Hard
Ducks at a Distance			
Canadian Wildlife Service	1969		Pamphlet
Ducks, Geese and Swans of North America			
Kortright, F	1969	Telegraph	Hard
Field Book of Wild Birds and their Music			
Matthews, F.S	1967	Dover	Soft
Handbook of Birds of Eastern North America			
Chapman, F	1966	Dover	Soft
Handbook of North American Birds Vol.1			
Palmer, R.S	1962	Yale U.	Hard
Hawks Aloft: The Story of Hawk Mountain			
Brown, M	1949	Cornwall	Hard

How to Study Birds				
Stuart Smith		1946	Collins	Hard
Key for Identifying our Common Land Birds				
E. Chesley Allen		no date		Pamphlet
Key to the Wildfowl of the World				
Peter Scott		1951		Pamphlet
Life Histories of North American Petrels and Pelican and their Allies				
Bent, A.C.		1964	Dover	Soft
Life Histories of North American Gulls and Terns				
Bent, A.C.		1947	Dodd, Mead	Hard
Life Histories of North American Wagtails, Shrikes, Vireos, and their Allies				
Bent, A.C.		1965	Dover	Soft
Life Histories of North American Woodpeckers				
Bent, A.C.		1964	Dover	Soft
Life Histories of North American Flycatchers, Larks, Swallows, and their Allies				
Bent, A.C.		1963	Dover	Soft
Life Histories of North American Cardinals, Grosbeaks, Buntings, Towhees, Finches, Sparrows, and Allies				
Part 1	Bent, A.C.	1968	Dover	Soft
Part 2	Bent, A.C.	1968	Dover	Soft
Part 3	Bent, A.C.	1968	Dover	Soft
Life History of North American Thrushes, Kinglets, and their Allies				
Bent, A.C.		1964	Dover	Soft
Life Histories of North American Birds of Prey				
Part 1	Bent, A.C.	1961	Dover	Soft
Life Histories of North American Birds of Prey				
Part 1	Bent, A.C.	1961	Dover	Soft
Part 2	Bent, A.C.	1961	Dover	Soft
Life Histories of North American Wood Warblers				
Part 1	Bent, A.C.	1963	Dover	Soft
Part 2	Bent, A.C.	1963	Dover	Soft
Life Histories of North American Blackbirds, Orioles, Tanagers, and Allies				
Bent, A.C.		1965	Dover	Soft
Life Histories of North American Cuckoos, Goatsuckers, Hummingbirds and their Allies				
Part 1	Bent, A.C.	1964	Dover	Soft
Part 2	Bent, A.C.	1964	Dover	Soft
Life Histories of North American Jays, Crows and Titmice				
Part 1	Bent, A.C.	1964	Dover	Soft
Part 2	Bent, A.C.	1964	Dover	Soft
Life Histories of North American Wild Fowl (Ducks, Geese and Swans)				
Volume 1	Bent, A.C.	1951	Dover	Hard
Volume 2	Bent, A.C.	1951	Dover	Hard
Life Histories of North American Shore Birds				
Part 1	Bent, A.C.	1962	Dover	Soft
Part 2	Bent, A.C.	1962	Dover	Soft

Life Histories of North American Marsh Birds				
Bent, A.C.	1963	Dover		Soft
Life Histories of North American Diving Birds				
Bent, A.C.	1963	Dover		Soft
Life Histories of North American Gallinaceous Birds				
Bent, A.C.	1963	Dover		Soft
Life Histories of North American Nuthatches, Wrens, Thrashers, and their Allies				
Bent, A.C.	1964	Dover		Soft
Looking Back				
Robie Tufts	1975	Lancelot		Soft
Maine Birds				
Palmer, R.S.	1949	Harvard		Hard
North American Bird Eggs				
Reed, C.A.	1965	Dover		Soft
Notes on the Birds of the Grand Pré Region				
Robie Tufts	1917	NS Inst. Sci.		Pamphlet
NS Institute of Science Proceedings and Transactions - Including Birds of Grand Pré, R.W. Tufts				
Vol. XIV	1916-1917	Soft		
Reflections of a Bird Watcher				
Ross Baker	1979	Lancelot		Soft
Some Canadian Birds				
Chamberlain	1895	Copp Clark		Hard
Studies in the Life History of the Song Sparrow				
Nice, M.M.	1964	Dover		Soft
The Bird Life of the Grand Manan Archipelago				
O. S. Pettingill, Jr.	1938	NS Inst. Sci.		
The Birds of New Brunswick				
Squires, W.A.	1952	NB Museum		Soft
The Birds				
Heinoth, O&K	1958	U. Michigan		Soft
The Birds of America (Seven Volume Set)				
Audubon, J	1967	Dover		Soft
The Ipswich Sparrow				
Stobo, W.T.; McLaren, I.A.	1975	NS Inst. Sci.		Soft
Watching Birds				
James Fisher	1946	Pelican		Soft
Words for Birds: A Lexicon of North American Birds with Biographical Notes				
Gruson, E.S.	1972	Quadrangle		Hard



Field Trip Report

Pictou County

28 July 2001 Leader: Ken McKenna

A great day in Pictou Co. for the NSBS field trip!! A dozen people participated with a nice clear day that was quite comfortable in the mid 20's. Highlights - Catbirds in the alders behind the Heather Motel in Stellarton, all four regular swallow species including Cliff Swallows in Churchville. Also there were Pied-billed Grebe, a small brood of Hooded Merganser, several E. Kingbirds, Eastern Phoebe, Am. Bittern, Solitary Sandpiper, and a nice little flock of Evening Grosbeak.

Along the Brook Rd., Olive-sided Flycatcher begged us for Quick-three-beers! but the couple of E. Peewee with their very slurred singing seemed to indicate too many kegs had already been consumed. Both Canada and Mourning Warbler were present in song but not too visible in the thick undergrowth. Both Crossbill species were also noted along this road.

At the Willard Fraser property in the vale of the winding MacLellans Brook and its surrounding hills, our stroll produced Am. Kestrel, Sharp-shinned and Red-tailed Hawk in the raptor department. A highlight for some was the young Eastern Phoebe seen on the nest under the bridge on the property (illuminated by flashlight). A Sora called from the cattails and another brood of Hooded Mergansers ~ five young swam with Ring-necked Ducks. Some days Boreal Chickadees are hard to find but several flocks were seen.

At 12:30 we reached the Big I. Causeway...food was the main thing on my mind. However, progress was halted by a CASPIAN TERN flying east. It seemed to settle down on the beach so we hiked up and had great views. There were 300-400 Bonaparte's Gulls seen from the Island and an astute observer (Bob McDonald - take a bow) noted a Black-headed Gull with the characteristic chocolate-coloured hood in the midst of the crowd. The terns at the sand spit at the end of the island were closely observed but as usual on the Northumberland shore, only Commons were determined to be present. A couple of Red Knots made a short landing on the spit as one of the twelve species of shorebird we noted on the island. Osprey, Bald eagle and N. Harrier rounded out the day's raptor sightings. A couple of very co-operative Nelson's sharp-tailed Sparrows at close range were the last species we noted on Big I. A Ruffed Grouse drumming near the pond at Camp Geddie was rather late for the season.

Thirteen species of warbler were observed for the day and a total of 98 species of birds for the day. Add in the Pine Siskins at my feeder and the 143 Chimney Swifts that entered the Temperance St. school chimney between 8:50-9:00 made a day total of an even 100. I want to thank all the participants for making the day most interesting. □



CAPE MAY WARBLER [Photo Ian McLaren]

NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY
Membership Application/Renewal Form

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 Foreign Addresses:
 \$2/year, for _____ years \$ _____
 Fed. of NS Naturalists:
 \$5/year, for _____ years \$ _____
Membership Total: \$ _____

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

Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund Donation: \$ _____

NSBS Supplies
 The following items are available to members:

NSBS crests @ \$4 each \$ _____
 NSBS decals @ \$1 each \$ _____
 Bird checklists @ four for \$1 \$ _____
 Birding Nova Scotia @ \$5 each \$ _____

Gift Memberships:
 An excellent way to mark a special occasion! List recipient's name and mailing address on a separate sheet or on the back of this form.

Number of Gift Memberships: _____

Gift Memberships Total: \$ _____

Supplies Total: \$ _____

Total Enclosed: (Make cheque payable to Nova Scotia Bird Society) \$ _____

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

Renewal

Additional Name(s): _____

Address: _____

 _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

I WOULD BE WILLING TO HELP WITH:
 Hospitality Magazine Publicity Leading Bird Walks
 Conservation 2005 Committee Other _____ 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:

Membership Secretary,
 Nova Scotia Bird Society,
 c/o Nova Scotia Museum,
 1747 Summer Street,
 Halifax, N.S. B3H 3A6

Upcoming Events



Field trips are open to non-members as well as members. Please phone or email 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.

Ideas and suggestions for future trips are welcome. You do not need to be an expert to lead a field trip, and the trip does not need to last all day; you just need to share your favourite birding spots. Any questions, comments or suggestions should be directed to the Events Editor, Peter Richard 463-5612. Email: prichard@ns.sympatico.ca

Thu. 25 Oct. 2001. NSBS Annual General Meeting

NSMNH, Summer St., Halifax, 7:30 p.m.

As usual, the AGM will be followed by a wine and cheese reception, a great opportunity to meet and mingle.

Sat. 3 Nov. 2001 - The Pubnicos

Leader: Gisèle d'Entremont 422-7739 (Halifax) or 762-2439 (Pubnico). Email gdentremont@ns.sympatico.ca

Enjoy autumn birding. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Red Cap Motel & Restaurant, Middle West Pubnico, Yarmouth County. If people express interest, we could have another trip for the following day. Rain date: Sun. 4 November.

Fri. 23 to Sat. 24 Nov. 2001 - Regular Meeting in Antigonish

The yearly "out-of-Metro" meeting of the NSBS will be held at 8:00 on Friday, 23 November, with field trips on the 24th. The meeting will take place in room 237 of J. Bruce Brown Hall, St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish. We are very pleased to have as the guest speaker Dr. Tony Erskine of the Canadian Wildlife Service, best known to birders as the author of Atlas of Breeding Birds of the Maritime Provinces, in a talk entitled,

Birds + Volunteers = Information!

The many uses of Nesting Data derived from Maritime Birders.

The field trip(s) will survey the birds of the Northumberland Strait and its harbours, with stops at all of the best birding spots, including Ogdens Pond, home of the "inland" Gannets. For more information, please contact Randy Lauff at 867-2471 or rlauff@stfx.ca.

Sat. 1 Dec. 2001 - Cape Sable Island

Murray Newell 745-3340. Email murcar@klis.com

Meet at 8:30 a.m. at Tim Horton's in Barrington Passage. This is an opportunity to have a great start to your winter list.

Sat. 6 Jan. 2002 Sewer Stroll I, Halifax/Dartmouth Area

Leader: Terry Paquet 452-3622.

Email terrypaquet@hotmail.com

Meet at Hartlen Pt. at 8:00 a.m. to look for rare birds and regular winter visitors. Dress for cold weather and bring a lunch. Plan to carpool as much as possible. Storm date: Sunday January 7.

Sat. 19 Jan. 2002 Halifax Field Naturalists Sewer Stroll, Halifax/Dartmouth Area

Leaders: Linda and Peter Payzant. 861-1607 (evenings).

Email aa095@chebucto.ns.ca

Dress warmly and bring a lunch, binoculars, field guides and telescope (if you have one). 9:15 a.m. at the Boondock Restaurant in Eastern Passage. Rain Date: 9:15 a.m., Sunday January 20.

Thu. 24 Jan 2002. Members' Slide Night

NSMNH, Summer St., Halifax, 7:30 p.m.

Members are invited to bring along 10 to 15 of their most interesting slides relating to birds or birding.

The auction of Phyllis Dobson's book collection will take place at the end of the meeting.

Sat. 2 Feb. 2002. Sewer Stroll II, Halifax/Dartmouth Area

Leader: Blake Maybank. 852-2077.

Email: maybank@ns.sympatico.ca

Meet at Hartlen Pt. at 8:00 a.m. Dress for cold weather and bring a lunch. Plan to carpool as much as possible. Storm date: Sunday 3 February.

Thu. 21 Feb. 2002. Regular Meeting

NSMNH, Summer St., Halifax, 7:30 p.m.

"A Yankee Birds Down Under." Guest speaker Dr. Andy Horn, NSBS President.

Thu. 21 Mar. 2002. Regular Meeting

NSMNH, Summer St., Halifax, 7:30 p.m.

Topic and Speaker to be announced.

Sat 30 Mar 2001. Baccaro and Blanche Peninsula.

Leader: Donna Ensor 875-4269. Email: ensorg@auracom.com
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. Rain date: Sunday, 31 March. ☐