

Nova Scotia Birds

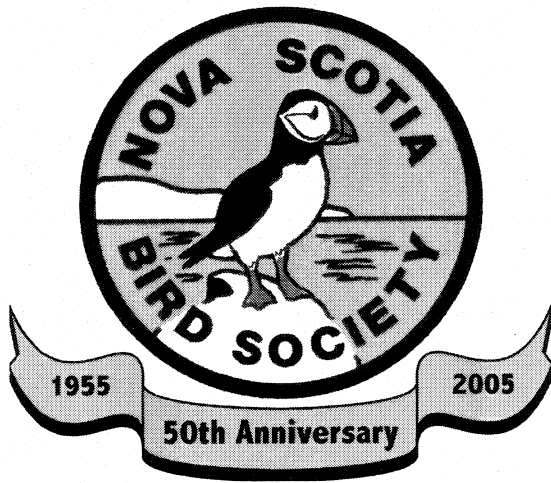
A Quarterly Publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society



Autumn 2005
(The Birds of Summer)

NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY

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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.

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

Rare Bird Alert: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NS-RBA/>
Email: nsbs@chebucto.ns.ca
Web: <http://nsbs.chebucto.org>

Reporting Deadlines

Winter 2006 issue: Dec. 7, 2005
Spring 2006 issue: Mar. 7, 2006

Summer 2006 issue: June 7, 2006
Fall 2006 issue: Aug. 7, 2006

Inside This Issue

Special points of interest:

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- 2005 Piping Plover Results
- Trip Reports
- Book reviews

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Cover Photo: This appealing portrait of a fledgling AMERICAN ROBIN symbolizes summer birding - atlassing - for upcoming years.
[Photo Hans Toom]

NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS
AUTUMN 2005

Editor

Blake Maybank

Production Assistant

Sterling Levy

Records Editor

Lance Laviolette

Photo Editor

Ian McLaren

Events Editor

Suzanne Borkowski

Seasonal Bird Reports

Ulli Höger

Andy Horn

Eric Mills

Ken McKenna

Angus MacLean

David McCorquodale

Ian McLaren

Susann Myers

Hans Toom

Banner Artist

Trevor Herriot

Other Help

Eileen Billington

Peter LeBlanc

Bird Reports to

Lance Laviolette

RR #1, Glen Robertson, ON

K0B1H0

lance.laviolette@lmco.com

Photo Submissions to

Ian A. McLaren

Photo Editor, NS Birds

Biology Department

Dalhousie University

Halifax, NS, B3H4J1

iamclar@dal.ca

All Other Items to

Blake Maybank

Editor, NS Birds

144 Bayview Drive

White's Lake, NS, B3T 1Z1

maybank@ns.sympatico.ca

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THE SPOTTING SCOPE

This issue is a tad late, but at least will arrive before Christmas. Birds occasioned the delay, as I spent some time enjoying the Wilma Windfall.

I was recently asked why I haven't printed letters to the editor. The reason is simple – I rarely receive any, but I print those that arrive. We welcome letters, either by e-mail or more traditional means. A letter did arrive, and I've included it here, as it relates to an earlier editorial. The letter's author is Gillian Rose, a longtime Society member, currently living in Guilford, Connecticut.

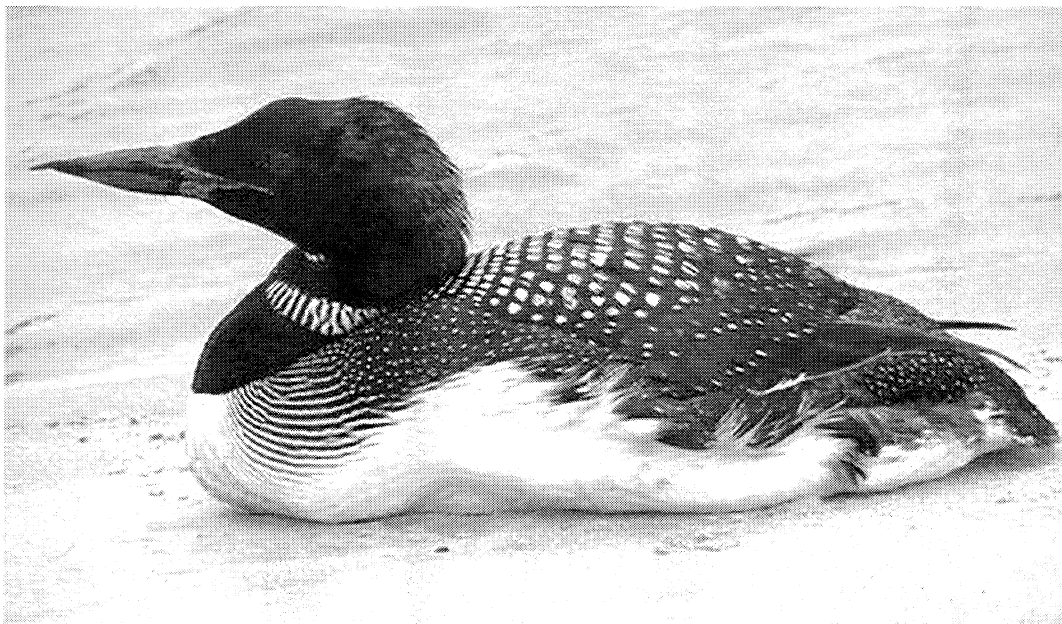
"I saw with interest your photo of a lobster pot being used as a bird feeder able to keep large birds out. We have a problem in our area with Grey Squirrels eating sunflower seed put on a ground feeder for small birds and chipmunks. I found some old wire bicycle racks, the kind used by boys delivering newspapers, or for carrying grocery bags. We turn them upside down on a flat slab of concrete. The seed is spread on the concrete, and a rock is placed on top of the wire "cage" so the squirrels can't move it or knock it over. It wouldn't work for Red Squirrels but it sure stops the Grey Squirrels, as well as large birds such as grackles, which are also a problem for us."

In the last issue the article on Indian Island was edited by me prior to publication; the unexpurgated version has been posted to the Bird Society's website.

By the time this reaches your hands the winter season will be upon us. As in previous years I'll keep track of the cumulative bird species' sightings province-wide. Go to:

<http://www3.ns.sympatico.ca/maybank/other/nswinter.htm>

Have a great Christmas, and enjoy the Christmas Bird Counts.



This beached COMMON LOON on CSI July 9, was easily approached, and alas possibly doomed from oiling of its plumage. [Photo Murray Newall]

We wish to acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program, toward our mailing costs.



BIRD SOCIETY NEWS

Presidents Corner

We have a new Area Representative: Maureen Cameron-MacMillan, President of our Cape Breton Chapter, has agreed to do double duty as Area Rep for Sydney and surrounding area. You can reach Maureen at 2841 Grand Mira North Road in Marion Bridge, N.S. 727-2733 E-mail: maureen_cameron@excite.com If you live in this area and want to renew your membership, join for the first time, buy checklists, ask questions or make suggestions, just go see Maureen. She'll be glad to help you out!

Christmas Bird Counts are right around the corner. If your Count is an Audubon one, don't forget to bring \$5.00 with you to give to your compiler. Audubon uses this fee to pay employees to include your sightings in their database which is used by scientists and researchers from all over the world. If your count is not an Audubon one, contact Dave Currie at david_currie@ns.sympatico.ca and he'll tell you how to get your area's sightings published by Audubon. Information on Nova Scotia's CBCs is available on-line at: <http://www3.ns.sympatico.ca/maybank/other/ns-cbc.htm>.



Our keen President, Suzanne Borkowski, attended an ornithology class on BPI this summer, and there helped Acadia University researchers with their studies of the breeding LEACH'S STORM-PETRELS. [Photo by a class member]

In 2006 I'm offering a Big Year Event! Starting January 1st, 2006, keep track of your sightings and send in your individual total after the 31st of December. We'll be printing your tallies for the province as well as for each county in Nova Scotia Birds! So, which county has the most birds? Send in your tallies and we'll see! I'd also like to encourage you to send in an account of your most interesting birding experience. It can be a great day of birding with lots of rarities; or a frustrating day with lots of mishaps, or a day when a particularly beautiful sight impressed you! We want to hear about it!

As you all know, "The Puffin of the Year" is awarded once each year at the AGM. The recipient is chosen solely by the President and no one knows until the night of the AGM who is going to receive it. This year I awarded it to Judy Tufts for her remarkable efforts coordinating the NAMC. However, I'm sure there are a lot of people throughout the province who do noteworthy things for the Society or for birds, or birding that I may not be aware of. I think these people should receive some sort of recognition for their efforts. I have proposed, and my Board has approved, giving "Certificates of Appreciation" on an ongoing basis to people who have made outstanding contributions to the Society, birds or birding. If you know of someone who should receive such an award, please send me their names and the particulars of their contribution.

Happy Birding!

Suzanne Borkowski,
18 Parmbelle Lane, Halifax, N.S. B3M 1N3; (902) 445-2922
sborkowski@hfx.eastlink.ca

Area Representatives

Cape Sable Island

Murray Newell
1631 Highway #330, Clark's Harbour, NS 745-3340
dowitcher@eastlink.ca

Liverpool

Gary Hartlin
80 Waterloo Street, Liverpool, NS 354-7250
garych@eastlink.ca

Mahone Bay

Brian Delaney
For The Birds Nature Shop,
647 Main Street, Mahone Bay, NS 624-0784
delaneys@ns.sympatico.ca

Sydney

Maureen Cameron-MacMillan
2841 Grand Mira North Road, Marion Bridge, NS 727-2733
maureen_cameron@excite.com


NSBS 50th Anniversary Tree Planting



Our commemorative tree planting: left to right - Barry Sabean (DNR), Suzanne Borkowski (President, NSBS), Margaret Clark (President, NSBS during our 25th Anniversary), Sherman Boates (DNR) and Joan Waldron (who did our press releases). DNR kindly donated the tree.



A cast bronze plaque mounted on Nova Scotia granite marks the spot where we planted a native tree commonly known as Serviceberry, Indian Pear or Saskatoonberry, in Point Pleasant Park overlooking both the Halifax Harbour and the Northwest Arm. [Photos Hans Toom]



SUMMER BIRD REPORTS

Loons Through Grebes

By Angus MacLean

RED-THROATED LOONS are rarely seen in Nova Scotia waters in summer even though this species nests in Newfoundland. Oddly the two records were both from Port George. KFS had the only nesting of PIED-BILLED GREBE this summer although they surely nested at Amherst Pt. and Belleisle Marsh. BLF had two calling all summer in Kings Co. but the area was inaccessible.

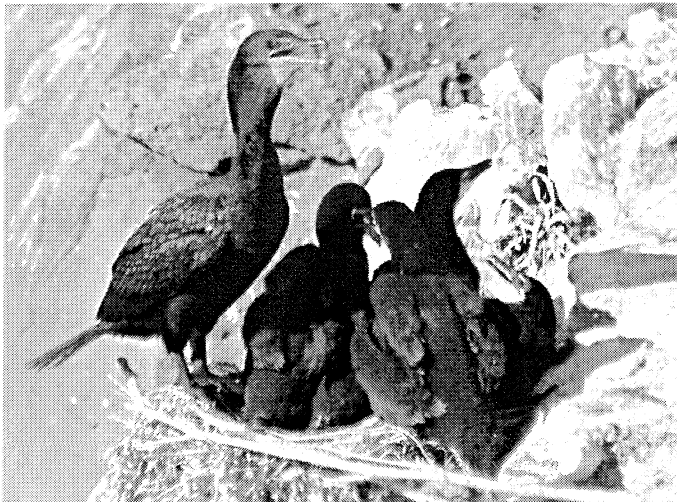
Red-throated Loon				July 10	Big I., <i>Pict.</i>	8	KJM
June 18	Port George, <i>Anna.</i>	3	PLC	July 15-31	Sandy Bottom L., <i>Anna.</i>	2	MCR
July 8	Port George, <i>Anna.</i>	1	JOB	Pied-billed Grebe			
Common Loon				June-July	Bentley Meadows, Kings	2	Calling all summer BLF
June 10	Port George, <i>Anna.</i>	19	JOB	June 9-July 9	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1	KFS
June 16	Port George, <i>Anna.</i>	10	JOB	June 19	Belleisle Marsh, <i>Anna.</i>	2	RBS, AAM, BLF
June 19	French Basin Trail, <i>Anna.</i>	2	AAM, BLF, RBS	July 14	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	4	KFS
July 8	Port George, <i>Anna.</i>	8	JOB	July 15	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	2 ads. & 3 young	KFS
July 8	Margaretsville, <i>Anna.</i>	2	JOB			□□□	

Tubenoses Through Cormorants

By Eric Mills

The first GREATER SHEARWATER of the season was seen June 2 from a whale tour off Brier I. On the same day a fisherman nearby reported "hundreds" of WILSON'S STORM-PETRELS.

GREAT CORMORANTS suffered disasters in two areas. A Halifax newspaper reported June 15 that the eggs and nests on Hertford I., one of the Bird Islands in *Victoria* (a sanctuary belonging to the NSBS) had been destroyed by a coyote that appears to have reached the island on the ice during the winter. RFL reported that the long-standing colony at Crystal Cliffs, in the Ogdens Pond area near Antigonish, was uninhabited June 16. As RFL wrote, "Did they abandon for some natural reason, or were they persecuted? This colony was the only colony of this species on the Northumberland shore on mainland NS and dates back to at least 1940."□



This DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT nest with half-grown young, photographed July 4 at Cheticamp, was on a steep bank more like the usual cliff sites used by Great Cormorants. [Photo Cindy Creighton]

Greater Shearwater				June 2	Off Brier I.	1	<i>fide</i> Shelley Barnaby
Wilson's Storm-Petrel				June 2	Off Brier I.		"Hundreds" <i>fide</i> Shelley Barnaby
Northern Gannet				July 10	Big I., <i>Pict.</i>	2	KJM
July 16	Lower L'Ardoise, <i>Rich.</i>	ca. 100	Sandy Arslan				
Double-crested Cormorant				June-July	Conrads Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	1-80	DMW
June 13	Sydney R., <i>CBRM</i>	78	Jen Cooper				
July 14-15	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1	KFS				
Great Cormorant				June 10	Westhaver I., <i>Lun.</i>	1 ad.	ELM
July 16	Crystal Cliffs, <i>Ant.</i>	Abandoned	RFL				
July 17	Pearl I., <i>Lun.</i>	2 imm.	BLM				
July 28	Peters I., Brier I.	2 imm.	ELM				

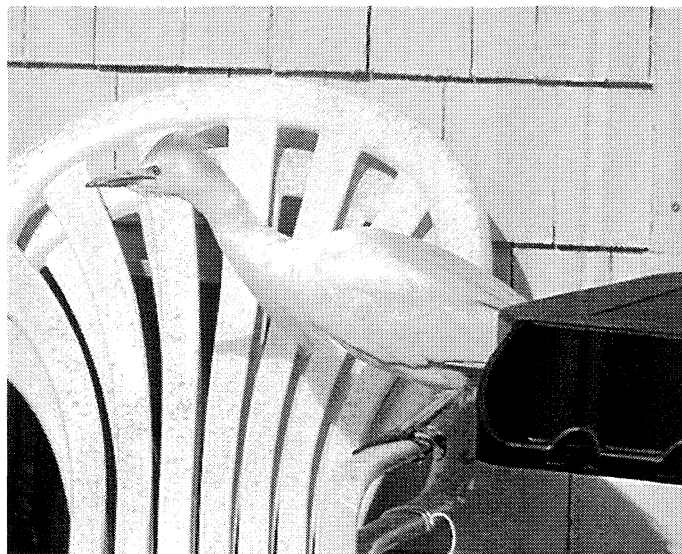
□□□

Hérons Through Vultures

By Ulli Höger and Wendy Laforce

Reports of common species during the summer were numerous and frequent, but we had a few summer sightings which added a bit of excitement to this otherwise slow birding time of the year. A **TRICOLORED HERON** was seen for two days in Three Fathom Harbor in June, and a **GREEN HERON** was reported from CSI. Also from CSI came frequent reports of **BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS**. A small breeding colony there offers good chances to see these magnificent birds. A rare sighting was an immature **YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** in Queens county. This bird was seen there regularly for several weeks.

In June, Sheffield Mills offered birders another chance to see a **BLACK VULTURE**. Sightings of this species are becoming more frequent, which raises the question, are there more Black Vultures visiting our province, or is the birding community becoming more aware of the possibility and paying closer attention to the vultures they see? I can't answer the first part of the question, but I see that Nova Scotia birders are improving their skills every year. Now let's see what Fall brings to us. □



A CATTLE EGRET made itself comfortable on a porch chair of a house in First South, Lunenburg, June 14. [Photo Marlene Spindler]

American Bittern

June-July	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>		KFS
June 15	Shearwater CFB, <i>HRM</i>	1	Chris Hawkins
June 24	Belle Isle Marsh, <i>Anna.</i>	1	JAH
July 24	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1 juv.	KFS

Great Blue Heron

Abundant in the province throughout the season. Listed are first reports of vagrant juveniles.

July 29	Brier I.	3 juvs.	ELM
July 30	Brier I.	13 juvs.	ELM
Aug. 2	Halls Hbr., <i>Kings</i>	1 juv.	Alexander MacDonald

Little Blue Heron

July 6	Gardiner Mines, <i>CBRM</i>	1 ad.	Monique Vassallo
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Tricolored Heron

June 18-19	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1 ad.	SEM
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Cattle Egret

June 14-20	First South, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH
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Great Egret

June 27	Caribou I., <i>Pict.</i>	1	Richard Murphy
July 30	CSI	1	MUN

Snowy Egret

June 1	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1	Blaine Spicer
June 2	Brier I.	1	ELM

June 20	CSI	1	MUN
July 4	Grand Desert, <i>HRM</i>	1	Bruce Doucette
July 5	Lawrencetown L., <i>HRM</i>	1	FLL, CSS
July 7	Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	2	DAM

Green Heron

June 19	CSI	1	MUN
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Black-crowned Night-Heron

June 11	CSI	several	MUN
June 20	CSI	3	MUN
July 17	CSI	2	JAH

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron

May - June	Beach Meadows, <i>Queens</i>	1 imm.	Suzanne Marsh
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Turkey Vulture

June 1	Deep Brook, <i>Anna.</i>	1	MCR
June 4	Pipeline Road, <i>HRM</i>	1	BLM
June 4	Brooklyn, <i>Queens</i>	1	JSC, SJF
June 15	Yarmouth, <i>Yar.</i>	4	MUN
June 27	Brier I., <i>Digby</i>	11	PRG
July 17	Yarmouth, <i>Yar.</i>	9	MUN
July 18	Windsor, <i>Hants</i>	1	JCT

Black Vulture

June 12	Sheffield Mills, <i>Kings</i>	1	JCT, ELM
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Geese, Swans and Ducks

By Angus MacLean

There was no report on the Brier Island/Freeport BRANT after June 1 but it is likely the group left about that time. Such an attractive species as the WOOD DUCK was well reported but the majority were from the Annapolis Valley. No reports were received from CB although they are uncommon nesters there. GADWALL became quite common nesters in PEI in the 1970s and have begun to gain a foothold here in recent years. The record from Belleisle Marsh is from a new location and SEM tried to encourage a pair cavorting around Three Fathom Harbour most of the summer! There was just a single report of breeding MALLARDS which is not indicative of their numbers in the province. BLUE-WINGED TEAL numbers would also be more representative if reports were received from the Border region, in particular APBS. Hopefully the summer-lingering GREATER SCAUP will find suitable nesting grounds in the province as they have done in NB and (rarely) PEI. □

Canada Goose

June 1	Black River L., Kings	4 families	AAM
June 13	Lake Egmont, <i>HRM</i>	6	RHL
June 19	French Basin Trail, Annapolis Royal	pair & 4 young	AAM, BLF, RBS
July 10	Brier I.	25-30	ELM

Wood Duck

June 1	Black River L., Kings	2 nests, 7 & 10 eggs	BLF
June 6	Red Bridge Pond, Dartmouth	3 fems.	PLC
June 10	Margaretsville D.U. Marsh, Anna.	1 fem. 5 young	JOB
June 11	Antigonish Sewage Ponds	18	KJM
June 16	Margaretsville D.U. Marsh, Anna.	3 families	JOB
June 19	Margaretsville D.U. Marsh, Anna.	4	RBS, AAM, BLF
June 19	Belleisle Marsh, Anna.	Pair, 4 young & 4 others	RBS, BLF, AAM

June 19	French Basin Trail, Annapolis Royal	57 (inc. 15 young)	AAM, RBS, BLF
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June 24	New Minas Sewage Ponds, Kings	2 fems.	JCT
June 25	Moose L., <i>HRM</i>	5	BLM
July 8	Margaretsville D.U. Marsh, Anna.	4	JOB
July 15	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1 ad.	KFS
July 28	Port Williams Sewage Ponds	1 male	RBS, AAM
July 31	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1 juv.	KFS

Gadwall

June 5-July 5	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	pair	SEM
June 19	Belleisle Marsh, Anna.	3+3 imm.	AAM
June 19	French Basin Trail, Annapolis Royal	1	AAM, BLF, RBS

American Wigeon

June-July	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1-7+	KFS
June 5	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	2 males	SEM
June 17	Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	pair	RHL
June 19	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	11 males	SEM
July 5	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	2 males	SEM
July 8	Port Williams Sewage Ponds	fem.	BBT

American Black Duck

June 19	French Basin Trail, Annapolis Royal	20+	RBS, AAM, BLF
June 19	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	9 pairs, 5 young, & fem.	SEM

June 24	New Minas Sewage Ponds, Kings	fem. & 9 young	JCT
July 24	Conrad Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	117 (inc. 4 families)	DMW

Mallard

June 24	New Minas Sewage Ponds, Kings	fem. & 6 young	JCT
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Blue-winged Teal

June 8	Bissett L., <i>HRM</i>	pair	RHL
June 19	Belleisle Marsh, Anna.	6 males	RBS, AAM, BLF
June 19	French Basin Trail, Annapolis Royal	3	RBS, AAM, BLF
June 24	New Minas Sewage Ponds, Kings	3	JCT

Northern Shoveler

June 19	Belleisle Marsh, Anna.	3	AAM, BLF, RBS
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Green-winged Teal

June 10	Margaretsville D.U. Marsh, Anna.	2 pairs	JOB
June 19	Belleisle Marsh, Anna.	4	AAM, BLF, RBS
June 19	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1 pair, 11 young, & fem.	SEM
June 20	Russell L., <i>HRM</i>	2 males	RHL
June 24	New Minas Sewage Ponds, Kings	6	JCT
July 11	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	2 ads. & 4 young	KFS
July 24	Conrad Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	6 (family)	DMW
July 29	Brier I.	2	ELM

Ring-necked Duck

June 1	Russell L., <i>HRM</i>	pair	RHL
June 10	Margaretsville D.U. Marsh, Anna.	2 pairs	JOB
June 13	Lake Egmont, <i>HRM</i>	3	RHL
June 17	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	6	RHL
June 19	Belleisle Marsh, Anna.	25+	BLF, AAM, RBS
June 19	French Basin Trail, Annapolis Royal	10	BLF, AAM, RBS
June 19	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	9 males	SEM
June 24	New Minas Sewage Ponds, Kings	pair	JCT

Greater Scaup

June 19	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	pair	SEM
July 10	Big I., Pictou	1	KJM

Common Eider

June 16	Port George, Anna.	25	JOB
July 8	Margaretsville, Anna.	8	JOB
July 8	Crescent Beach, Lun.	42 ads. & 28 young	SEM
July 10	Big I., Pict.	1	KJM
July 23	Conrad Mash, <i>HRM</i>	4	DMW
July 31	Conrad Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	30	DMW

Surf Scoter

July 8	Port George, Anna.	4	JOB
July 8	Margaretsville, Anna.	19	JOB

White-winged Scoter

July 8	Margaretsville, Anna.	2	JOB
July 8	Brier I.	2 males	ELM

Common Goldeneye

July 13	Riverport, Lun.	2 fems.	JAH, DAW
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Hooded Merganser

June 1	Black River L., Kings	nest & 8 eggs	BLF
June 16	Margaretsville D.U. Marsh, Anna.	2 fems. & 9 young	JOB
June 19	Margaretsville D.U. Marsh, Anna.	fem. & 8 young	RBS, AAM, BLF
June 21	Lunenburg	2	BLM
July 8	Margaretsville D.U. Marsh, Anna.	3	JOB

Common Merganser

June 8-13	Bear R., Anna.	4	MCR
June 9	North Hbr., Vic.	8	AAM
July 15-31	Sandy Bottom L., Anna.	3 ads.	MCR
July 22	Bear R., Anna.	fem. & 6 young	MCR

□□□

Diurnal Raptors through Cranes

By Ulli Höger

The reports received of OSPREYS and BALD EAGLES indicated how abundant these two raptor species are in Nova Scotia. Sad news came June 12 from Avonport. A Bald Eagle nest fell and neither of the two young birds in it survived. This incident motivated JWW to check and report on five other Bald Eagle nesting sites in the Wolfville area. He noted a total of 7 to 9 fledglings June 28.

A quail of some sort, most likely a **NORTHERN BOBWHITE**, was reported from Feltzen South July 7 (JAH). The bird had been vocalizing for a number of days. Sightings of such out of place game birds can sometimes be traced back to breeders or hunters who use these birds to train dogs or release them for hunting purposes. Even so this is illegal. Occasionally released birds can temporarily sustain a small, local breeding population.

A **SANDHILL CRANE**, first sighted in the Yarmouth area June 14 by JUG was subsequently observed in the same spot by many birders throughout the summer.□

Osprey		Abundant	
Bald Eagle		Abundant	
Northern Harrier			
June CFB Shearwater, <i>HRM</i>	1 nest	Chris Hawkins	
June 2 Brier I.	male & fem.	ELM	
June 6 Mid. Musquodoboit, <i>HRM</i>	1	VJH	
June 24 Belle Isle Marsh, <i>Anna.</i>	1	JAH	
July 16 Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	1	DMW	
July 28 Grand Pré, <i>Kings</i>	1	RBS	
July 25-30 Brier I.	2 ads. & 2 juvs.	ELM	
Sharp-shinned Hawk			
July 16 Grand Desert, <i>HRM</i>	1	SEM	
Northern Goshawk			
June 15 Lilydale, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH, Anne Hughes	
June 17 Newtonville, <i>Kings</i>	1+2 nesting	BLF	
June 19 Debert, <i>Col.</i>	1	BLM	
June 27 Brier I.	2	PRG	
July 16 Shelburne	1 imm.	JAH <i>et al.</i>	
Broad-winged Hawk			
June 26 Sunken L., <i>Kings</i>	1	BLF	
July 3 Wentworth Valley, <i>Cum.</i>	2	JAH <i>et al.</i>	
July 9 Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	2	KFS	
July 20 Holman Marsh L., <i>HRM</i>	1	BLM	
American Kestrel			
July 5 Mid. Musquodoboit Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1	VJH	
Merlin			
June-July Wolfville	several	JWW	
June-July Grand Pré, <i>Kings</i>	several	var. obs.	
July 1 Evangeline Beach, <i>Kings</i>	2	JET	
July 7 Grand Desert, <i>HRM</i>	1	DAM	
July 29 Dartmouth	2	Don Forbes	
July 29 Kentville	3	RBS	
July 29 Brier I.	4	ELM	
Peregrine Falcon			
June 15 First South, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH	
June 20 Baxters Hbr., <i>Kings</i>	1	RBS	
June Halifax downtown	1 (photo)	<i>fide</i> AGH	
July 8 Wolfville	1	JET	
Gray Partridge			
June-July Truro, <i>Col.</i>	2 breeding	ROH	
July 26 River Run Golf Course,	1	ROH	
Ring-necked Pheasant		abundant	



Among several photos taken by several people of the well-watched SANDHILL CRANE summering along the Wyman Rd., Yarmouth, this one seemed the liveliest. [Photo Reigh Higgins]

Ruffed Grouse			
June 8 Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1 + 3	KFS	
June 15 Sunken Lake, <i>Kings</i>	1 + 5	BLF	
Northern Bobwhite			
July 7 Feltzen South, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH	
Sora			
June 2 Schooner Pond, <i>CBRM</i>	2	BES, GEC	
June 15 Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1	KFS	
June 19 Annapolis Royal, <i>Anna.</i>			
June 19 Margaretsville, <i>Anna.</i>	17	RBS	
June 19 Belle Isle Marsh, <i>Anna.</i>			
July 9 & 15 Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1	KFS	
American Coot			
June 6 CSI	1	MUN	
Sandhill Crane			
June 14 - July 31 Yarmouth, <i>Yar.</i>	1	JUG	□□□

Shorebirds

By Susann Myers

The summer season, which brings the first of the southbound migrants, is an exciting time for shorebirders even when, as this year, it produces no rarities. The reports in this issue owe a great deal to the efforts of Atlantic Canada Shorebird Survey volunteers, who regularly count shorebirds at specific sites on behalf of the Canadian Wildlife Service.

Except for the species that breed locally, most shorebirds seen in early June were likely still on their northward migration, while those present in mid-month were mainly summering non-breeders. Returning migrants began to appear in late June through July, in average numbers except as noted below.

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS summered in the usual numbers and returned on schedule, beginning July 4. The only concentration reported this season was at CSI, which also hosted the seasonal high of SEMIPALMATED PLOVERS. That peak count of 3,140 July 29 was notably high for so early in the season. Semipalmated Plovers did not appear to nest at The Cape, CSI this year, although BJS and SIS reported a single bird in the nest area July 4. The number of PIPING PLOVERS nesting in the province dropped again this year, particularly along South shore beaches, a cause for great concern. For details, see the report in this issue by Anna McCarron, Co-ordinator of the NS Piping Plover Guardian Program.

KILLDEER were reported in small numbers around the province, with a notable concentration at CFB Shearwater. At least one pair bred successfully on Brier I., where breeding was first confirmed by ELM in 2002. The two pairs of AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHERS that bred on CSI this year were unsuccessful in hatching young, but the adults remained through the summer.

GREATER YELLOWLEGS reported in mid- to late June may have been either summering non-breeders or early returning migrants. Migration was well underway by mid-July, with the seasonal peak as usual at Morien Bar, *CBRM*, a major staging

area for this species. No reports of breeding activity were received from northern counties this year. LESSER YELLOWLEGS, one of the earliest returning migrants, were reported in unprecedented numbers for the season. The earliest noted were 16, June 25 at Three Fathom Hbr., where the seasonal peak of 420 was found July 31. Smaller numbers were reported from around the province, with a notable peak of 106 at Brier I. July 29.

SOLITARY SANDPIPERS are late migrants, with a few normally appearing after mid-July. They were seen in typically small numbers at three widespread locations this July. Breeding WILLETS were reported in good numbers from the Eastern Shore, South Shore, *Pictou* and *CBRM*. The build-up in numbers of adults at staging areas in mid-July, when downy young were being reported, represents a mixture of migrating females with males still on breeding territories, as male Willets remain at least two weeks longer with the young. This year's adult peaks were as usual at CSI (150) and Morien Bar (246), although many staged in smaller gatherings at widespread locations. SPOTTED SANDPIPERS were more widely reported than in recent summers. Reports suggest a successful breeding season, particularly on Sable I., where at least 10 pairs nested.

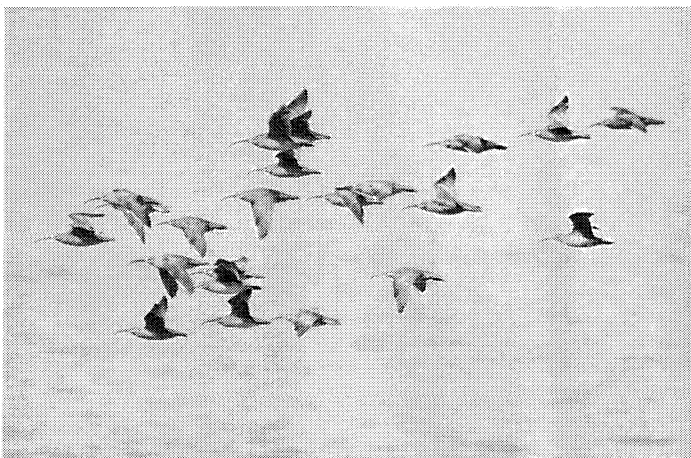
The first WHIMBRELS appeared on schedule in early July and were reported in usual numbers on the mainland, except for a remarkably high peak of 225 at Canso. TOK's detailed observations there show the great value of documenting bird numbers at a single site. HUDSONIAN GODWITS arrived in their usual small numbers in July, on their way to southern South America. The only concentration noted was 23 at Crescent Beach, July 27.

RUDDY TURNSTONES brightened four locations on their northward journey in early June, and began to reappear on their return slightly later than average, July 26. A group of 21 RED KNOTS, possibly failed breeders, appeared early at CSI July 6 and remained. Eight adults at Morien Bar July 23 were a typical early season count for that location. Returning SANDERLINGS appeared on schedule July 18 and were first seen at three preferred sites where they overwinter: Martinique Beach, CSI and Sable I.

SEMPALMATED SANDPIPERS were reported in above-average numbers at CSI, from mid-July. Numbers increased elsewhere at the end of the month, but reflect only the beginning of migration for this common transient, which peaks in August. ELM noted a peak of 450+ on Brier I. July 28, including the first juveniles. Unfortunately, no reports were received from the major staging areas in the Minas Basin area. The first LEAST SANDPIPER, at Cherry Hill Beach June 22, was probably a very early migrant. They were widespread and present in good numbers by mid- to late July, with peaks of 250+ at Brier I. and 241 at CSI. ELM noted the appearance of the first juveniles at Brier I. July 28. As SJF has frequently noted in the past, reports that include plumage details are very helpful for an understanding of shorebird migration, particularly in summer and early fall! No reports of breeding individuals were received this year.

Only a small number of WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPERS arrived in July, as expected for these later migrants. The 16 spotted at Conrad Beach July 23 were an unusually high count for this season. BAIRD'S SANDPIPER, uncommon on the east coast, is another late migrant. The two individuals seen at CSI and Brier I. were good finds, and typical numbers for the end of July. PECTORAL SANDPIPERS are also uncommon in July; the five individuals seen at four sites from July 17 were a higher count than usual.

A record early PURPLE SANDPIPER was closely observed by LUB July 28, on a rock at Taylors Head. The only STILT SANDPIPER of the season was with dowitchers at a brackish pond in Three Fathom Hbr., July 31.



WHIMBRELS, like this flock at Spry Bay, HRM, are among the earliest and most exhilarating of our shorebirds to return in summer. [Photo Hans Toom]



The first shorebirds to return from the arctic, like this SANDERLING July 18 on Martinique Beach, are adults, some of which have probably not bred successfully. [Photo Hans Toom]

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHERS were present at their favoured locations in good numbers. They arrived slightly early, first being seen June 25 at CSI and Three Fathom Hbr. At CSI, their main staging area in NS, numbers built to a notable peak of 7,000 July 21. The extensive and widespread marshes of the Eastern Shore also held significant numbers. Individuals of the *hendersoni* race, which breeds in the far northwest and migrates early, are typically present in small numbers among the early flocks of *griseus* migrants arriving at our shores. Three of the 18 Short-billed Dowitchers seen at Three Fathom Hbr. June 25 were *hendersoni*, building to circa 30 July 16. ELM reports that circa 20 *hendersoni* adults were among the dowitchers at Brier I. June 25, but almost all were gone by the 30th.

As usual in the summer season, WILSON'S SNIPE and AMERICAN WOODCOCK were little reported. A female WILSON'S PHALAROPE at Port Williams July 6-7, an exciting find, constituted the only record for the season. BLM provided the only report of RED-NECKED PHALAROPES, which he saw in Mahone Bay while en route to Pearl I. □

Black-bellied Plover				July 3-29	7 locations, widespread	21 total		var. obs.
June 1 & 2	Pond Cove, Brier I.	3, 2	ELM					
June 4	Cherry Hill, Lun.	19	SJF	Solitary Sandpiper				
June 4	E. Petpeswick, HRM	1 m., alt.	SEM	July 13	Broad Cove, Lun.	1	JSC	
June 9 & 25	The Hawk, CSI	15, 14	MUN	July 24	Gully L., Col.	2	KJM	
June 19	Three Fathom Hbr., HRM	1 basic		July 31	Pond Cove, Brier I.	2	LIT	
June 26	E. Petpeswick, HRM	1 basic	SEM	Willet				
July 4, 6 & 17	The Hawk, CSI	50, 65, 40	MUN	June 1 & 2	Pond Cove, Brier I.	10, 15	ELM	
July 21 & 29	CSI	44, 30	JON, SAN; BJS, SIS	June 2	Crow Neck, Baccaro, Shel.	10	RMC	
July 23-31	5 locations, widespread	13 total		June 3 & 11	Sable I.	2, 1	ZOL	
Semipalmated Plover				June 4 & 22, July 23	Cherry Hill, Lun.	8, 13, 18	SJF	
July 4	CSI (in nest area)	1	BJS, SIS	June 9, July 4	CSI	6, 10	BJS, SIS	
July 8, 23 & 29	Cherry Hill, Lun.		1, 25, 135	June 26	Shore Rd., Chezzetcook, HRM	25 ads.	SEM	
July 10, 17 & 31	Three Fathom Hbr., HRM	10, 130, 230	SEM	July 8	Crescent Beach, Lun.	20 ads.+ 3 downy	SEM	
July 10 & 16	Lawrencetown L., HRM	1, 5	DOU	July 10	Big I., Pict.	24+	KJM	
July 10 & 17	The Hawk, CSI		35, 1400	July 13, 16 & 17	The Hawk, CSI	35, 141, 150	MUN; JAH <i>et al.</i>	
July 12, 21 & 27	Crescent Beach, Lun.		1, 57, 140	July 16	Lawrencetown L., HRM	21 ads.	SEM	
July 21 & 29	The Hawk, CSI	3000, 3140	JON, SAN; BJS, SIS	July 17	Three Fathom Hbr., HRM	42 ads.+ 1 downy	SEM	
July 23	Morien Bar, CBRM	133	Maureen Cameron-MacMillan, SEM	July 23	Morien Bar, CBRM	246 ads.	Maureen Cameron-MacMillan, SEM	
July 25-30	Pond Cove, Brier I.	45-100	ELM, AHM	July 25-30	Pond Cove, Brier I.	13-55	ELM, AHM	
July 31	Conrad Beach, HRM	40	DMW	July 27	Crescent Beach, Lun.	28	SJC	
Piping Plover				summer	7 locations, E. Shore, HRM	40 total	var. obs.	
June 2	Baccaro, Shel.	2	RMC	Spotted Sandpiper				
July 18	Martinique, HRM	ads. & several chicks	HAT	June	Sydney Tar Ponds, CBRM	1 pr.	Jen Cooper, Dan Stackpool	
July 19	Cherry Hill, Lun.	3 ads., 4 chicks	JWW	June 27	Port Caledonia, CBRM	1	DBM	
July 29	Cherry Hill, Lun.	2 ads., 4 juv., 2 chicks	SJF	June-July	Sable I.	10 prs., nesting	ZOL	
summer	38 monitored beaches, NS	35 nests, 73+ fledglings		July 8	Bras d'Or L., Vic.	1 pr., nesting	RHL	
Killdeer				July 16	Port Clyde, Shel.	4	JAH, DAW, Dorothy Poole	
June 1-2	Pond Cove, Brier I.	2	ELM	July 17	Long Beach, Kings	1 ad., 1 chick	RBS	
June	Sydney Tar Ponds, CBRM	1 pr.	Jen Cooper, Dan Stackpool	July 30	Broad Cove, Lun.	7	JAH	
June 15	CFB Shearwater, HRM	10 prs. ±	Chris Hawkins	late July	Sable I.	numerous juvs.	ZOL	
June 25	Three Fathom Hbr., HRM	1 ad.	SEM	late July	6 locations, widespread	10 total	var. obs.	
July 25-30	Pond Cove, Brier I.	3-5, ad.+ juv.	ELM, AHM	Whimbrel				
July 29	CSI	1	BJS, SIS	July 4 & 17	CSI	11, 28	MUN	
American Oystercatcher				July 8 & 10	Conrad Beach, HRM	2, 3	DOU	
June 3	Hawk Pt. and Cape Light, CSI	2 pr., nesting	MUN	July 17, 21, 24 & 26	Canso, Guys.	2, 80, 225, 50	TOK	
June 11	The Hawk, CSI	2 pr.	MUN	July 21 & 29	CSI	34, 52	JON, SAN; BJS, SIS	
July 4, 18 & 29	The Hawk, CSI	1, 3, 2 ads.	BJS, SIS	July 23	Morien Bar, CBRM	2	Maureen Cameron-MacMillan, SEM	
Greater Yellowlegs				July 28	Taylor's Head, Spry Bay, HRM	10±	LUB	
June 1 & 2	Pond Cove, Brier I.	6, 2	ELM	July 29	Cherry Hill, Lun.	3	SJF	
June 7	Sable I.	1-2	ZOL	July 30	Pond Cove, Brier I.	2	ELM	
June 19	Three Fathom Hbr., HRM	4	SEM	Hudsonian Godwit				
June 25	The Hawk, CSI	1	MUN	July 3 & 8	Sable I.	8, 5	ZOL	
July 2 & 31	Pond Cove, Brier I.	12	JUS, LIT	July 7, 10 & 17	The Hawk, CSI	4, 7, 8	MUN	
July 9	Conrad Marsh, HRM	8	DMW	July 8	Conrad Beach, HRM	1	DOU	
July 10	Big I., Pict.	2	KJM	July 8 & 16	Lawrencetown L., HRM	4, 8	DOU	
July 10 & 31	Three Fathom Hbr., HRM	8, 35	SEM	July 16 & 23	Morien Bar, CBRM	3, 2	Maureen Cameron-MacMillan, SEM	
July 17 & 21	The Hawk, CSI	10, 21	MUN; JON, SAN	July 27	Crescent Beach, Lun.	23	JSC	
July 17	Cole Hbr. Trail, HRM	30+	HAT, LAE	Ruddy Turnstone				
July 23	Morien Bar, CBRM	89+	Maureen Cameron-MacMillan, SEM	June 1	Pond Cove, Brier I.	1 alt.	ELM	
July 18-31	5 locations, widespread	28 total	var. obs.	June 1	Sable I.	1	ZOL	
Lesser Yellowlegs				June 4	Cherry Hill, Lun.	2 alt.	SJF	
June 25, July 3 & 31	Three Fathom Hbr., HRM	16, 82, 420	SEM	June 9, 11	The Hawk, CSI	17, 12	BJS, SIS; MUN	
July 16	Grand Desert, HRM	130	SEM	July 26-30	Pond Cove, Brier I.	1-16	ELM, AHM	
July 17	CSI	15	MUN	July 27	Crescent Beach, Lun.	1	SJC	
July 25-30	Pond Cove, Brier I.	13-106	ELM, AHM	July 30	Three Fathom Hbr., HRM	8 alt.	SEM	
July 30	Broad Cove, Lun.	25	JAH	July 31	Sable I.	12	ZOL	

Red Knot				July 23	Conrad Beach, <i>HRM</i>	16	DMW
June 4	Cherry Hill, <i>Lun.</i>	1	SJF	July 30	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	8	SEM
July 6, 17 & 21	The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>	21, 25, 21	MUN; BJS, SIS	Baird's Sandpiper			
July 16	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	3 ad.	SEM	July 30	The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>	1	MUN
July 22	Sable I.	1	ZOL	July 31	Pond Cove, Brier I.	1	LIT
July 23	Morien Bar, <i>CBRM</i>	8 ad.	Maureen Cameron-MacMillan, SEM	Pectoral Sandpiper			
Sanderling				July 17 & 31	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1 fem.	SEM
June 4	Cherry Hill, <i>Lun.</i>	2 alt.	SJF	July 24 & 30	The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>	2	MUN
July 18	Martinique, <i>HRM</i>	"in numbers", some alt.	HAT	July 27-28	Sable I.	1	ZOL
July 18 & 25	The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>	3, 250±	BJS, SIS; MUN	July 29	Pond Cove, Brier I.	1	ELM
July 22	Sable I.	60+	ZOL	Purple Sandpiper			
July 23 & 29	Cherry Hill, <i>Lun.</i>	6, 12	SJF	July 28	Taylor's Hd., Spry Bay, <i>HRM</i>	1 (earliest)	LUB
July 23	Wild Cove, <i>CBRM</i>	2 (1 part alt.)	Maureen Cameron-MacMillan, SEM	Stilt Sandpiper			
July 26-30 & 31	Pond Cove, Brier I.	1-4, 15	ELM, AHM; LIT	July 31	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1 ad.	SEM
July 30	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	2 (1 part alt.)	SEM	Short-billed Dowitcher			
Semipalmated Sandpiper				June 4	Cherry Hill, <i>Lun.</i>	1	SJF
June 1	Pond Cove, Brier I.	6	ELM	June 9	<i>CSI</i>	2	BJS, SIS
July 10	Big I., <i>Pict.</i>	1	KJM	June 25, July 6 & 14	The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>	11, 1000+, 5000	MUN
July 10 & 30	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	2, 211	SEM	June 25; July 16 & 31	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	18, 640, 840	SEM
July 13 & 17	The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>	40, 9000	MUN	July 3 & 25	Sable I.	1, 25	ZOL
July 21 & 29	The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>	8000, 6980	JON, SAN; BJS, SIS	July 8	Grand Desert Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	100's	DOU
July 21 & 27	Crescent Beach, <i>Lun.</i>	50, 65	BLM, SJC	July 10	Big I., <i>Pict.</i>	9	KJM
July 23 & 29	Cherry Hill, <i>Lun.</i>	123, 296	SJF	July 16	Lawrencetown L., <i>HRM</i>	200	SEM
July 25-30	Pond Cove, Brier I.	100-450+	ELM, AHM	July 16 & 23	Morien Bar, <i>CBRM</i>	38, 114	Maureen Cameron-MacMillan, SEM
Least Sandpiper				July 17	Cole Hbr. Trail, <i>HRM</i>	100's	HAT, LAE
June 22, July 3	Cherry Hill, <i>Lun.</i>	1, 4	SJF	July 21 & 29	<i>CSI</i>	7000, 4900	JON, SAN; BJS, SIS
July 10	Big I., <i>Pict.</i>	24	KJM	July 25-30	Pond Cove, Brier I.	160-300+	ELM, AHM
July 13	Lower Rose Bay, <i>Lun.</i>	26	JAH, DAW	July 29	Cherry Hill, <i>Lun.</i>	15	SJF
July 17, 18 & 29	<i>CSI</i>	25, 70, 241	MUN; BJS, SIS	Wilson's Snipe			
July 23	Morien Bar, <i>CBRM</i>	10	Maureen Cameron-MacMillan, SEM	June 11	Northwest, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH, DOU
July 23 & 29	Cherry Hill, <i>Lun.</i>	10, 38	SJF	July 10	Grand Desert, <i>HRM</i>	2	CRM, DAM
July 25-30	Pond Cove, Brier I.	60-250+	ELM, AHM	American Woodcock			
July 28	Grand Pré, <i>Kings</i>	1 alt.	RBS	June 2	Goose Cove, <i>Vic.</i> (owl survey)	1	Tim & Donnie Courage
July 30	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	6	SEM	Wilson's Phalarope			
White-rumped Sandpiper				July 6-7	Port Williams, <i>Kings</i>	1 fem.	GFO, IAM
July 21	The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>	2	JON, SAN	Red-necked Phalarope			
				July 17	Mahone Bay, <i>Lun.</i>	8	BLM

□□□

Skuas through Alcids

By Eric Mills

ZOL reported, without comment, the nesting this summer of a pair of LAUGHING GULLS near the west ponds on Sable Island. This species nested once on the Province's Eastern Shore (see Robie Tufts' account in *The Birds of Nova Scotia*) but was extirpated or left after about 1941. It was rediscovered nesting, but on Sable I., in 2001 (see S. Taylor, I. McLaren & K. Dillon, 2001. *Birding Journal* 11 (2): 58-60 on this and other aspects of the species status in the Maritimes and New England). Certainly the number of spring records documented below suggests that the status of this attractive gull is changing in Nova Scotia.

Another nesting record is also of exceptional interest. During a field trip to Pearl I., *Lun.*, July 17, BLM found at least five nests of BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKES, apparently the southernmost in the Province and only a little north of the southernmost in Canada, on The Wolves, near Grand Manan, NB.

A lone adult SABINE'S GULL resting on the sea off Hirtles Beach, *Lun.*, July 31 was carefully described by PMA.

Evidence is incomplete at the moment, but it appears that tern colonies in several areas had a bad season, including those (with a few ROSEATES and many COMMONS) in Mahone Bay, which failed completely for reasons unknown. Elsewhere, BLF commented that a Common at a lake in inland *Kings* June 11-13 was the first he had seen there in forty years of visits. TOK noted the scarcity of Roseate Terns in the Canso area this summer. From West Pubnico, Ted d'Eon reports that there were 68 Roseate Tern nests among the 445 tern nests on North Brother, and nineteen Roseate chicks were banded. A hybrid Roseate/Common chick was photographed, but not banded.

A small tern seen fleetingly at Canso June 21-22 appears to have been a LEAST TERN, and another was found and photographed at The Guzzle, *CSI*, July 24.

Twelve THICK-BILLED MURRES reported from Bedford Basin July 3, where they were seen at very close range from a sailboat, would be unusual in any Nova Scotian area in summer. The group declined throughout July and none were seen after the end of the month. □

Laughing Gull			June 19	The Hawk, CSI	"A few"	MUN
May 30-July 31	W ponds, Sable I.	2 ad., nesting	ZOL	July 18	Canso Hbr., <i>Guys.</i>	1 TOK
June 1-30	W ponds, Sable I.	1 imm.	ZOL	Common Tern		
June 2	Off Brier I.	1	Shelley Barnaby	June-July	Conrads marsh, <i>HRM</i>	1-4 DMW
June 10	Lockeport, <i>Shel.</i>	1 - 2 nd yr	DJC	June 2	Off Brier I.	? Shelley Barnaby
June 17	Grassy I., Canso, <i>Guys.</i>	1 imm.	TOK	June 11-13	Black River L., <i>Kings</i>	1 BLF
June 19	Daniels Hd., CSI	1 - 1 st summer	MUN	June 17	Conrads Beach, <i>HRM</i>	1 pair RHL
June 19	West Hd., CSI	1	MUN	June 22	Drain L., <i>HRM</i>	1 JCT
June 21	Lockeport, <i>Shel.</i>	1 ad.	DJC	July 6	Canso Hbr., <i>Guys.</i>	38 nesting TOK
July 3	The Hawk, CSI	1 ad.	MUN	July 10	Big I., <i>Pict.</i>	2 KJM
Black-headed Gull			July 20	Sandy Bottom L., <i>Anna.</i>	1	MCR
June 6-July 23	W ponds, Sable I.	1 imm.	ZOL	July 21	Canso Hbr., <i>Guys.</i>	6-7 remaining TOK
Bonaparte's Gull			July 25-30	Brier I.	A few ads., no juv.	ELM
July 5	Conrads Beach, <i>HRM.</i>	1 imm.	FLL	Arctic Tern		
July 10	Big I., <i>Pict.</i>	2 ads.	KJM	July 21	NE of Canso, <i>Guys.</i>	"A few" nesting TOK
July 22	Broad Cove, <i>Lun.</i>	4 in alt.	SJF	July 23	Conrads marsh, <i>HRM</i>	2 DMW
July 24	Lawrencetown R., <i>HRM</i>	6	DOU	July 28	Peters I., Brier I.	1 ad. ELM
Ring-billed Gull			LEAST TERN			
July 4	Lockeport, <i>Shel.</i>	2 ads.	DJC	June 21-22	Canso, <i>Guys.</i>	1 ad.? TOK
July 19	Lockeport, <i>Shel.</i>	1 ad.	DJC	July 24	The Guzzle, CSI	1 JON, MUN
Iceland Gull			Black Tern			
June 5	New Waterford, <i>CBRM</i>	1 imm.	DBM	June 18	APBS	? CIC
June 5	W ponds, Sable I.	1 imm.	ZOL	July 8-29	W ponds, Sable I.	1 ZOL
Glaucous Gull			Common Murre			
April - mid-July	W Spit, Sable I.	1 imm.	ZOL	June 1	Daniels Head, CSI	1 MUN
June 2	Arisaig, <i>Ant.</i>	1 - 1 st summer	JOK	June 2	Off Brier I.	? Shelley Barnaby
Black-legged Kittiwake			Thick-billed Murre			
July 17	Pearl I., <i>Lun.</i>	5-6 pairs, nests	BLM	July 3	Bedford Basin, <i>HRM</i>	12 GDE
July 29	Off Brier I.	1 ad.	ELM	Razorbill		
SABINE'S GULL			June 1 Off Brier I. 2 Shelley Barnaby			
July 31	Hirtles Beach, <i>Lun.</i>	1 ad.	PMA	ca. July 15	Pearl I., <i>Lun.</i>	4-5 Meaghan Jankowski
Caspian Tern			Black Guillemot			
June 3	Daniels Hd., CSI	1	<i>fide</i> MUN	June 23	Delaps Cove, <i>Anna.</i>	2 JAH
June 5	Pt. Michaud, <i>Rich.</i>	1	WMA	Atlantic Puffin		
June 18	APBS	?	CIC	June 2	Off Brier I.	? Shelley Barnaby
July 5	Pictou, <i>Pict.</i>	2	<i>fide</i> KJM	ca. July 14	Mud I., <i>Yar.</i>	75+ nesting <i>fide</i> MUN
July 16/24	Lawrencetown R., <i>HRM</i>	1	DOU	July 17	Pearl I., <i>Lun.</i>	75+ BLM
Roseate Tern			ooo			



This BLACK GUILLEMOT, at Cheticamp July 4, has subdued a relatively big "Fishdoctor," *Gymnelis viridis*, a common inshore eelpout. The fish was identified by Paty Avendaño, who informs me further that the it seems to be a female. [Photo Cindy Creighton]



I believe that this photo of a BLACK TERN, taken June 18, is the first from our breeding population at APBS to appear in "Nova Scotia Birds." [Photo Cindy Creighton]

Doves Through Woodpeckers

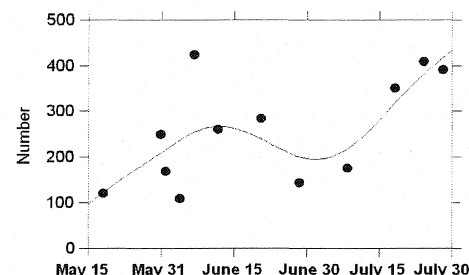
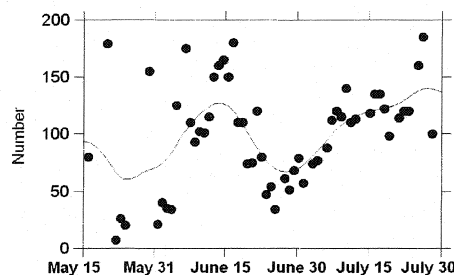
By Ian McLaren

Our usual doves and pigeons were almost ignored, but our 31st **WHITE-WINGED DOVE** turned up in Halifax in early July (see undated photo on the back cover of the last issue). Its grayish tones suggested it might be of southwestern U.S. origin. Our few **BLACK-BILLED CUCKOOS** were, in fact, more than usual.

Twelve of BLF's nest boxes in *Kings* fledged a gratifying 27 **BARRED OWLS**. **BOREAL OWLS** in a nest box set by RFL in *Guysborough* had two eggs and produced two fledglings (first mainland nesting). Another in N. CBI ("not well monitored") laid at least three eggs and had three fledglings. Most of RFL's boxes hosted **NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWLS**. A box on his property in *Antigonish* had seven eggs of which five fledged; one in *Guysborough* had 6 eggs and four fledged; two in CBHNP produced a total of eight fledglings; and one near Cape North, *Vic.*, had five eggs and four fledglings.

There were NO reports of **WHIP-POOR-WILLS**, but two **CHUCK-WILL'S WIDOWS** were amazing. The first was flushed twice in *Guysborough*, by FLL, who wrote convincing details of its size, shape, and behaviour, suggesting to him a female or first-summer male; Cindy Creighton flushed it a bit later in the same area. The second bird lingered in the woodsy Williams Lake district, Halifax. It was first heard in late May by local residents, including Kris Allinson who correctly diagnosed its "song." June 18, she let Anne von Maltzahn hear it over the phone; Anne agreed it was not a Whip-poor-will, and contacted me. Some of us tried for it next night, but it was not until June 23 that FLL, BLM, ELM, and I were treated to sustained bouts of singing. It was heard and seen in flight next night by them and other birders, and from time to time by local residents until June 29. Finally, FCG believes he flushed it near Williams Lake July 14. Most extraordinarily, several locals told us that they had heard the same bird in the area last summer! In addition to the six in Tufts (one may be an undocumented specimen in the Acadia Museum), there is one old corpse from BPI in fall 1977 (not collected), another salvaged from Round I., HRM, June 4, 1986 (in Acadia Museum), and a third killed by crows May 13, 2001 (feathers in NS Museum).

This year's Wolfville peak counts of **CHIMNEY SWIFTS** were below those of recent years, and JWW notes that they have declined throughout North America. In Nova Scotia there has been an 11% per year decline of BBS counts between 1966 and 2004, with a statistical probability of much less than 1% that this is a false conclusion. They have disappeared from at least one traditional roost at S. Brookfield, *Queens*. Numbers of Chimney Swifts entering each evening the chimneys at the Robie Tufts Centre, Wolfville (data from JWW) and Temperance Street, Pictou (data from KJM) varied greatly through the season and from day to day. Statistically fitted curves (see graphs) suggest they peaked at both sites in mid-June, then dropped, and rose again in July.



CLD, JWW and others have suggested that more swifts roost in poor weather. Temperature, relative humidity, wind speed, and wind direction (used as N, S, E, and W) at 8 p.m. for Kentville are on the web (nothing on cloud or other conditions). No such data are available from the Pictou area, but KJM supplied temperatures, percentage cloud cover, and winds (as calm, breezy, mild breeze) for most counts. I plugged these variables into a statistical program to see how they might have affected numbers of swifts. [For those interested, I used a backward-stepped, general linear model. This procedure selects only "significant" influences; i.e., very unlikely to be a result of chance.] Combinations of date and weather accounted for 72% of variation in numbers through the season in Wolfville, and 53% in Pictou. For Wolfville, the date (overall seasonal increase) and relative



This **BOREAL OWL** from this year's nesting in *Guysborough*, stood by brave, but not seemingly agitated, while RFL examined its nest box. [Photo Tom Kavanaugh]

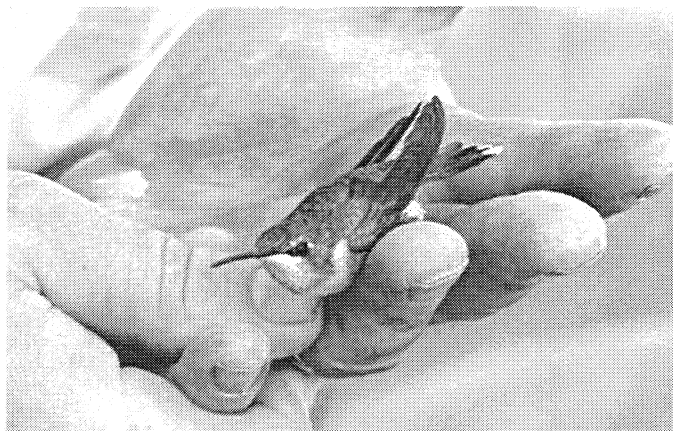
humidity (higher counts in damp weather) were most important, and wind direction (lower counts in fair-weather westerlies) and wind speed less so (though both statistically highly significant). For the less frequent counts in Pictou, only date was significant. The results are also complicated by significant interactions among the variables - relative humidity (in Wolfville) and temperature (at both sites) understandably change in effect through the season. A more sophisticated statistical analysis could give more insights, but it does seem that bad weather sends swifts scurrying for chimneys. Where do they go in fine weather? Do they cling to trees or stay aloft, as some have suggested?

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRDS still seemed to arrive in early June. There were three reports of hand-caught hummers, perhaps related to these high-energy creatures being trapped without food. BELTED KINGFISHERS were hardly reported; a pair in mating flight June 2 at Lockeport marked the season.

As usual in summer, woodpeckers got little attention. Despite attendance at two holes, no nesting by a **RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER** pair was confirmed in Jollimore, Halifax (FCG). Were none seen elsewhere? Other marks of breeding included: four fledgling **YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKERS**, June 27 near Georgefield, *E. Hants* (ROW); a **HAIRY WOODPECKER** carrying peanut butter to its nest in HRM in early June (ROG); and a **NORTHERN FLICKER** carrying food June 5 in Lunenburg (JAH). [Note: last issue's report by DAM (wrongly attributed to DOM) of a sapsucker attending nest-hole young should be disregarded; DAM thinks the "chirping" could have been from a mate.] □

White-winged Dove ~July 5-11 Ft. Needham, Halifax	1	Bob Thomas <i>et al.</i>
Mourning Dove June-July Widely	mostly 1s, 2s	var. obs.
Black-billed Cuckoo June 17 Canso	2	TOK
July 12-13 Wolfville Ridge	1	BLF
July 23-24 Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1	KFS
Great Horned Owl June-July Widely	singles	3 reports
June 18 APBS	nest, two young	CIC
Snowy Owl June-July CSI	1	MUN, var. obs.
Barred Owl June 5 Bear R., <i>Anna.</i>	1	MCR
June 12 Owl Survey, <i>Ant.</i>	3	KJM
July 5 Canning, <i>Kings</i>	3 owlets	<i>fide</i> MAG
June-July <i>Kings</i>	see text	BLF, var. obs.
Short-eared Owl June-July Goldboro area, <i>Guys.</i>	Pair	<i>fide</i> RFL
July 9 Big I., <i>Pict.</i>	1	DOU
BOREAL OWL See text		
Northern Saw-whet Owl See text		
Common Nighthawk June-July Widely	1's, 2's	var. obs.
June 16, 23 Bear R., <i>Anna.</i>	8+	MCR
June 18 E. Amherst Marsh, <i>Cum.</i>	12	FLL <i>et al.</i>
June 18 Pleasant R., <i>Kings</i>	15	BLF
June 20 Most BBS stops, <i>Guys.</i>	1's, 2's	BLM
June 20 Lr. Caledonia, <i>Guys.</i>	12	BLM
July 10 Jollimore, Halifax	1	FLL <i>et al.</i>
July 23 Bear R., <i>Anna.</i>	8+	MCR
July 26 Kingston	11	JOB
July 26 New Minas	7	GFO
July 29 Yarmouth	several	JOS
CHUCK-WILL'S WIDOW Late May - July Jollimore, Halifax	1	var. listeners
June 9 Chapel Gully Trail, <i>Pict.</i>	1	FLL, CIC
Chimney Swift June 2 Brier I.	2 migrants	ELM
May-July Wolfville*	See text	JWW <i>et al.</i>
May-July Pictou*	See text	KJM
June 5 Middleton*	151	CLD
June 7 Truro*	263	LHA
June 8 Middleton*	819+	CLD
June 11 Bear River*	400++	JET
June 14 Middleton*	155	CLD
June 17 Middleton*	530+	CLD
June 19 Truro*	145	LHA
June 21 McGowan L., <i>Queens*</i>	28	PEH

June 22 Middleton*	4	CLD
July 20 Truro*	5	LHA
(* = the usual chimney roosts)		
Ruby-throated Hummingbird June 2 Halifax	1 st arrived	E. Keizer
June 2 Sandy Cove, <i>Digby</i>	"	C. & R. Inkster
June 4 Glace Bay	"	BES, GEC
June 5 Halifax	"	ANM
June-July Widely	1-4 at feeders	var. obs.
Belted Kingfisher June-July Widely	1-3	var. obs.
RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER June-July Jollimore, Halifax	pair	FCG
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker June-July Widely	1's, 2's	4 obs.
Downy Woodpecker June-July Widely	1-3	var. obs.
July 23 Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1 ad., 1 young	KFS
Hairy Woodpecker June-July Widely	1's, 2's	var. obs.
Black-backed Woodpecker June 6 Earltown, <i>Col.</i>	1	SMB
July 26 North Mt., <i>Kings.</i>	1	A. MacDonald
July 27 Wyman Rd., <i>Yar.</i>	1	JOS
Northern Flicker June-July Widely	1's, 2's	var. reports
Pileated Woodpecker June-July Widely	1's, 2's	5 reports



Several cases of apparently exhausted RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRDS, like this on at River Bourgeois in July, were reported this summer. [Photo George Digout]

Flycatchers through Thrushes

By Hans Toom

The relentless northeast winds of late May resulted in many of our late arriving birds either nesting elsewhere or perishing on route. Flycatchers, vireos and swallows were particularly affected. The BBS data recorded low numbers for many of these birds. It will be interesting to observe next spring's migration and BBS results to see if a full recovery in numbers can be attained in one year.

A **WILLOW FLYCATCHER** was heard at Moose R., *HRM*, June 13, the only report of this very rare NS visitor this summer. Only birders with a good grasp of the bird's song can identify this bird since it is indistinguishable from the **ALDER FLYCATCHER** by sight.

Sadly the reporting of **PURPLE MARTINS** continues to decline with only two reported at the NS Sand and Gravel Plant, *Hants*. [Ed. Note – The colony at Oxford has not seen a martin for two years, and only three pairs were noted in Amherst this year]. □

Olive-sided Flycatcher				June 25	Bible Hill, <i>Col.</i>	1	LPP, <i>et al.</i>
June 1	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1	KFS	June 28	White Rock, <i>Kings</i>	1	BLF
June 4	Pipeline Rd., <i>Hants</i>	3	BLM	June 30	White Rock, <i>Kings</i>	1	BLF
June 10	Black R., <i>Kings</i>	1	BLF	Eastern Kingbird			
June 11	Conqueral Mills, <i>Hants</i>	1	JAH, <i>et al.</i>	June 1	Heartlands Pt.	50+	STB
June 19	Sunrise Valley, <i>Vic.</i>	2	FMC	June 2	Brier I.	3+	ELM
June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	1	BLM	June 8	Canso Town	50+	STB
June 24	Mabou Rail Trail, <i>Inv.</i>	1	Ken Copenhagen, <i>et al.</i>	June 11	North West, <i>Lun.</i>	50+	JAH, DOU
July 16	Port Joli, <i>Queens</i>	1	JAH, <i>et al.</i>	June 23	Port Clyde, <i>Shel.</i>	1+	JAH, <i>et al.</i>
Eastern Wood-Pewee				Philadelphia Vireo			
June 1	Wolfville Ridge, <i>Kings</i>	3+	JCT	June 1	Brier I.	1	ELM, AHM
June 1-2	Brier I.	1	ELM	Purple Martin			
June 5	Victoria Hbr., <i>Kings</i>	2+	JCT	June 6	NS Sand and Gravel Plant, <i>Hants</i>	2	ROW
June 6	Mid. Musquodoboit	1	VJH	--	Oxford, <i>Cumb.</i>	abandoned	
June 6	Grimm Rd., <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH	White-breasted Nuthatch			
June 11	Conqueral Mills, <i>Lun.</i>	numerous	JAH, <i>et al.</i>	June 5	Waverley, <i>HRM</i>	1	Darren and Shelly Hume
June 13	Lake Egmont, <i>HRM</i>	1	RHL	Winter Wren			
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher				June 3-28	Various, <i>HRM</i>	numerous	RHL
June 2	Wolfville Ridge, <i>Kings</i>	3	BLF	Apr. 23-Jul. 1	White's Lake, <i>HRM</i>	1 singing	BLM
June 11	Baxters Hbr., <i>Kings</i>	1	RBS	Eastern Bluebird			
June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	2	BLM	June 11-12	Ross Creek Rd., <i>Kings</i>	1 male	BLF
June 22	Benjies Trail, CBHNP	1	Ken Copenhagen, <i>et al.</i>	July 29	Brier I.	1 fem.	ELM
July 23	Louisbourg	2	SEM, Maureen Cameron-MacMillan	Veery			
Alder Flycatcher				June 5	New Waterford, <i>CBRM</i>	1 male	DBM
June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	16	BLM	June 11	Lake Rd., <i>Lun.</i>	2	JAH, <i>et al.</i>
WILLOW FLYCATCHER				June 20	Bear R., <i>Anna.</i>	1	MCR
June 13	Moose R., <i>HRM</i>	1	FLL	June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	1	BLM
Eastern Phoebe				July 26	Bear R., <i>Anna.</i>	1	MCR
June 1	Bear R., <i>Guys.</i>	1		Hermit Thrush			
June 24	Mabou Hbr., <i>Inv.</i>	1	Ken Copenhagen, <i>et al.</i>	June 8-28	various, <i>HRM</i>	numerous	RHL
June 21	Caledonia, <i>Guys.</i>	1	BLM	June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	21 (low)	BLM
June 28	Eastern Run Trail, <i>HRM</i>	1	RHL	Swainson's Thrush			
Great Crested Flycatcher				June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	9 (low)	BLM
June 14	Sandy Bottom L., <i>Anna.</i>	1	MCR			□□□	

Starlings Through Warblers

By Ken McKenna

The poor weather at the end of May held back migration and when the weather cleared in the first week of June, many species that had been missing up to then suddenly appeared. On Brier I. June 1, ELM noted 15+ GRAY CATBIRDS on territory for the first time this year. Mimics were otherwise not commonly reported. NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD numbers continued to be low and with only a single BROWN THRASHER report, it seems like observers did not locate evidence of active nesting in the province this year. Since there were many more May sightings, it might take more intense searching on an exercise like the Breeding Bird Atlas to reveal a few more nesting locations as this bird tries to expand its range into the province.

There were no reports of AMERICAN PIPITS for this report period. A block of reports at the first of June indicate many of the CEDAR WAXWINGS had just arrived and immediately busied themselves eating apple blossoms (JAH, VJH).

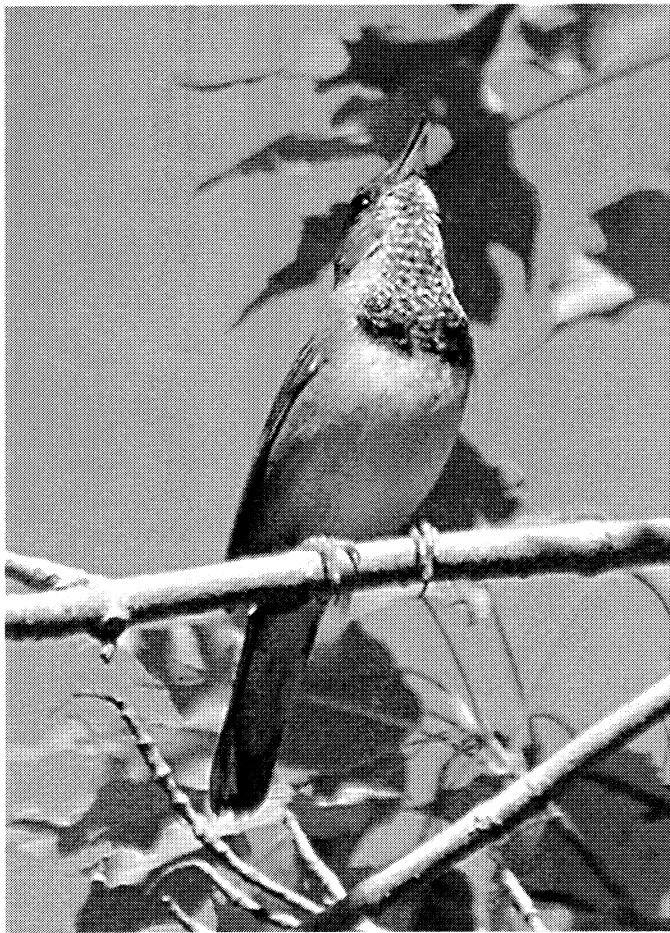
Warblers were also held back by the poor migratory winds of late May and a few observers noted good movements of waves of warblers at the beginning of June. JCT recorded such a movement in a regenerating cut-over behind her property in Wolfville Ridge as did BLF the previous day. RES also noted a nice group of warblers June 1 in Palmetter Woods, Kentville. Raw data from six BBS routes noted very few TENNESSEE, NASHVILLE and CAPE MAY WARBLERS. Several observers noted an abundance of YELLOW WARBLERS this summer although BLM noted his lowest numbers recorded on the Trafalgar and Londonderry BBS routes. More encouraging is a report from SJF that both NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH and MOURNING WARBLERS were up significantly on the Roman Valley BBS.

Alas, it is hard to come to any great conclusions on breeding success from the reports submitted, but it is not hard to imagine that such poor spring weather during migration must have had a great negative impact on warblers reaching breeding territories.□

European Starling			June 19	Londonderry BBS, <i>Colch.</i>	0	BLM	
June-July	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	10-35+	KFS	June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	4	BLM
Gray Catbird				June	widely	3 reports	var. obs.
June 1	Brier I.	15+	ELM	July 23	Louisbourg	1	SEM, M. Cameron-MacMillan
June 2	CSI	1	JON <i>fide</i> MUN	Northern Parula			
June 3	Sable I.	1	ZOL	June 5	Lake R., <i>Lun.</i>	3	NSBS <i>fide</i> JAH
June 4	Halifax	1	MAA	June 11	Tatamagouche BBS	29	KJM
June 4	Palmetter Woods, <i>Kings</i>	1	JCT	June 12	James R. BBS	27	KJM
June 8	Clearland, <i>Lun.</i>	3	JAH	June 19	Londonderry BBS, <i>Colch.</i>	13	BLM
June 26	Lockeport	pair	DJC	June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	9	BLM
Northern Mockingbird				July 8	Green Bay Rd., <i>Lun.</i>	5 males	SEM
June 22	Freeport, <i>Digby</i>	1	A. Moir, C. Callaghan	Yellow Warbler			
June 26	Port Williams, <i>Kings</i>	1	BLF	June 2	Sable I.	1	ZOL
Brown Thrasher				June 2	Schooner Pond <i>CBRM</i>	6	BES, GEC
June 2	Sable I.	1	ZOL	June 11	Tatamagouche BBS	6	KJM
Cedar Waxwing				June 12	James R. BBS	19	KJM
June 5	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	20+	KFS	June 19	Londonderry BBS, <i>Colch.</i>	7	BLM
June 5	Mid. Musquodoboit, <i>HRM</i>	10	VJH	June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	0	BLM
June 8	Clearland, <i>Lun.</i>	10	JAH	June 17	Grassy I., <i>Guys.</i>	1 on nest, 1 egg	TOK
June 10	Margaretsville, <i>Anna.</i>	30	JOB	June-July	widely	5 reports	var. obs.
June-July	New Salem, <i>Cum.</i>	10+	KFS	July 26	Sable I.	1	ZOL
July 17	Broadway, <i>Pict.</i>	nest with eggs	Charlie Kendell	Chestnut-sided Warbler			
Tennessee Warbler				June 5	Baxters Hbr., <i>Kings</i>	3-4 pairs	RBS
June 1	Wolfville Ridge, <i>Kings</i>	1	JCT	June 11	Tatamagouche BBS	14	KJM
June 27	Sable I.	1 male	ZOL	June 12	James R. BBS	8	KJM
June 27	Maple L., <i>Pict.</i>	1	KJM	Magnolia Warbler			
Nashville Warbler				June-July	widely*	10 reports of 42	var. ob.
June 11	Tatamagouche BBS	3	KJM	June 11	Tatamagouche BBS	15	KJM
June 12	James R. BBS	0	KJM	June 12	James R. BBS	14	KJM
				June 19	Londonderry BBS, <i>Colch.</i>	10	BLM
				June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	24	BLM
				June 2-15	Sable I.	2	ZOL
				Cape May Warbler			
				June 12-15	Whites L., <i>HRM</i>	1 singing	BLM
				June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	1	BLM
				Black-throated Blue Warbler			
				June 2	Lewis L. PP, <i>HRM</i>	pair	ANM, DOU
				June 2	Lewis L. PP, <i>HRM</i>	2 males	BLM
				June 11	Tatamagouche BBS	1	KJM
				June 3 & 12	Centredale, <i>Pict.</i>	2 male singing	KJM, GMU
				June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	2	BLM
				June 18 & 25	Gully L., <i>Col.</i>	3 males singing	KJM
				Yellow-rumped Warbler			
				June 7	Sable I.	3	ZOL
				June 11	Tatamagouche BBS	7	KJM
				June 12	James R. BBS	6	KJM
				June 19	Londonderry BBS, <i>Colch.</i>	3	BLM
				June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	7	BLM
				June-July	widely	6 reports	var. obs.
				Black-throated Green Warbler			
				June 11	Tatamagouche BBS	2	KJM
				June 12	James R. BBS	1	KJM
				June 16	Sable I.	1 fem.	ZOL
				July 14	Arlington, <i>Kings</i>	fledglings	DOL
				June 19	Londonderry BBS, <i>Colch.</i>	2 (low)	BLM
				June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	14	BLM
				June-July	widely	13 reports	var. obs.
				Blackburnian Warbler			
				June 11	Tatamagouche BBS	5	KJM
				June 12	James R. BBS	2	KJM



This fine portrait of the rather shy GRAY CATBIRD was obtained near Fort Needham Park, Halifax, July 9. [Photo Cindy Creighton]



MOURNING WARBLERS are easy enough to find in CBHNP, but to photograph one in full-throated song is another matter. [Photo Cindy Creighton]

June 19	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	1	BLM
June 21	Londonderry BBS, <i>Colch.</i>	0 (low)	BLM
June-July	Jeddore Oyster Ponds, <i>HRM</i>	1 male	LUB
Palm Warbler			
June 3	Pipeline Road, <i>HRM</i>	2	BLM
June 8	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	3	KFS
June 11	<i>Lunenburg</i>	3	NSBS <i>fide</i> JAH
June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	3	BLM
July 23	Louisbourg	1 male	SEM, M. Cameron-MacMillan
July 21	Franey Corner, <i>Lun.</i>	3	BLM
Bay-breasted Warbler			
June 6	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	2	KFS
June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	4	BLM
July 23	Louisbourg	1	SEM, M. Cameron-MacMillan
Blackpoll Warbler			
June 1	Cole Hbr. Area, <i>HRM</i>	pair	RHL
June 1	Sand L., <i>CBRM</i>	2	BES, GEC
May 31-June 15	Sable I.	5	ZOL
Black and White Warbler			
June 11	Tatamagouche BBS	13	KJM
June 12	James R. BBS	5	KJM
June 19	Londonderry BBS, <i>Colch.</i>	3	BLM
June-July	widely	10 reports	var. obs.
American Redstart			
Apr 27	Sable I.	1 fem. (very early)	ZOL
June 11	Tatamagouche BBS	25	KJM

June 12	James R. BBS	14	KJM
June 13	Sable I.	2 fems.	ZOL
June 14	Sable I.	1st spring male	ZOL
June 19	Londonderry BBS, <i>Colch.</i>	7	BLM
June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	13	BLM
June-July	widely	7 reports	var. obs.
Ovenbird			
June 11	Tatamagouche BBS	28	KJM
June 11	<i>Lunenburg</i>	15	NSBS <i>fide</i> JAH
June 12	James R. BBS	8	KJM
June 19	Londonderry BBS, <i>Colch.</i>	3 (low)	BLM
June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	3	BLM
Northern Waterthrush			
June 5	Sable I.	2	ZOL
June 11	Tatamagouche BBS	4	KJM
June 12	James R. BBS	8	KJM
June 15	Sable I.	1	ZOL
June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	1	BLM
July 21	Franey Corner, <i>Lun.</i>	1	BLM
Mourning Warbler			
June 9	Blomidon PP,	2 males singing	JCT
June 10	Sable I.	1 fem.	ZOL
June 11	Baxters Hbr.	6+	RBS
June 12	James R. BBS, <i>Ant.</i>	2 singing	KJM, Jean McGee
June 12	Sable I.	1 male	ZOL
July 17	Cole Hbr. Salt Marsh Trail	1 singing	HAT
June 19	Londonderry BBS, <i>Colch.</i>	1	BLM
June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	1	BLM
July 27	Mid. Musquodoboit, <i>HRM</i>	1 imm.	VJH
Common Yellowthroat			
June 9	Sable I.	1 male	ZOL
June 24-25	Sable I.	1 fem.	ZOL
July 23	Louisbourg	5 ads., 2 fledglings	SEM, M. Cameron-MacMillan
June-July	widely	11 reports	var. obs.
Wilson's Warbler			
June 1	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	2 males	PLC, LUB, Kier Gigeroff
June 1	Donkin, <i>CBRM</i>	1	BES GEC
June 2	Lewis L. PP, <i>HRM</i>	1 male	ANM, DOU
June 4	Sable I.	1 male	ZOL
June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	1	BLM
Canada Warbler			
June 3	Pockwock, <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT
June 4	Lewis L. PP, <i>HRM</i>	1	BLM
June 15	Fauxburg Trail, <i>Lun</i>	1	JAH, Anne Hughes
June 21	Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guys.</i>	1	BLM

□□□



This pair of YELLOW WARBLERS posed prettily in Kentville, July 1. [Photo Richard Stern]

Tanagers Through House Sparrows

By David McCorquodale

For many of our common species few reports are received for the breeding season. Much of this is because of familiarity and the effort required to write reports for each species. For many of these, the breeding bird atlas project set to get underway next year will provide the impetus to document range and abundance. For a few species I note changes anticipated from the last atlas project, 1986-1990.

SCARLET TANAGERS are not common nesting birds, but only a singing male in Bear R. was reported this summer.

SAVANNAH, SONG, SWAMP, and WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS were widespread. On two BBS (Trafalgar and Londonderry) BLM found the lowest number of sparrows and juncos in all his years running the routes. Next summer with the start of the atlas we will learn more about their distribution and abundance in the province.

An Ipswich SAVANNAH SPARROW lingered at Hartlen Pt. to the beginning of June. The first NELSON'S SHARP-TAILED SPARROW was singing the second week of June in Lunenburg Co. and then numbers built up, for example 10 singing at W Chezzetcook June 26 (SEM). From CBI to the Northumberland shore to the south shore they were still singing in late July.

A FOX SPARROW was unusual on the Trafalgar BBS (BLM), while two singing on CBI were the only two reports from a vibrant population along the coast and in the highlands of the island.

NORTHERN CARDINALS continue to sing, and presumably nest, from Halifax in towns along the south shore and then along the Fundy coast at least as far as Wolfville. This is a species that the atlas project will play an important role in showing its expanded range compared to 20 years ago.

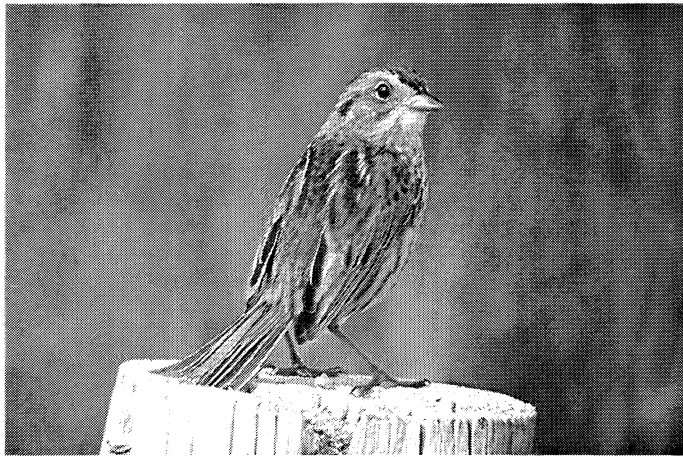
Again there were few BOBOLINK reports and a couple of observers noted fewer than in past years. As abandoned farmland converts to young spruce forest we would expect fewer nesting Bobolinks. I am curious to see if the atlas project will confirm this expectation. There were two other interesting sightings from farm fields relayed by JAH from a farmer on Second Peninsula, Lun. Both EASTERN MEADOWLARK and a LAPLAND LONGSPUR were found, the first unusual in early June and the latter unusual at any time although it was in habitat similar to that it nests in further west.

RUSTY BLACKBIRD records continue to be scarce. BLF notes that although he did find three near Black R. they no longer nest at several other bogs in the area. In contrast COMMON GRACKLES have increased in numbers over the past 50 years. However this year BLM noted that numbers were lower on two BBS routes in northern NS. There were few reports of BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD again this year. It will be interesting to see if the atlas project will find them in more locations. Similarly I expect a few more BALTIMORE ORIOLES nest than this year's records show. The atlas project should let us know if some of the numerous fall visitors may also nest here.

RED CROSSBILLS were widely reported and a few sizeable flocks were noted, including 100 in Antigonish Co., more than 20 in Tatamagouche and more than 20 at a feeder on CSI. As IAM has noted, it would be interesting to know which variety(ies?) of Red Crossbills breed here. In contrast, and as expected with no cone crop to speak of, there were few WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILLS. The only two reports were of about 100 birds and both were along the coast where flocks might gather in preparation for leaving the region.

On CBI there were few PINE SISKINS after they finished breeding. Perhaps some of them were included in the concentrations on Brier I. early in June.□

Scarlet Tanager				June 26	Bible Hill, Col.	3	PLC
July 22	Bear R., Anna.	1	MCR	June 26	W Chezzetcook, HRM	10	SEM
Chipping Sparrow				June 26	Port Williams	3	GFO
June 11	Fitch Rd., Lun.	1	JAH, NSBS	July 5	Big I., Pict.	Some	KJM
July 24	Lawrencetown, HRM	1	DMW	July 5	Wallace, Cum.	1	RBS
Savannah Sparrow				Fox Sparrow			
June-July	Cum., Col., CBRM, Ant., HRM, Kings, Digby, Anna.	var. obs.		June 21	Trafalgar BBS	1	BLM
Savannah 'Ipswich' Sparrow				July 2	Cheticamp Flowage	1	CIC
June 1	Hartlen Pt., HRM	1	PLC	July 23	Louisbourg	1	Maureen Cameron-MacMillan, SEM
Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow				Song Sparrow			
June 10	Second Peninsula, Lun.	1	JAH	June-July	Widespread	var. obs.	
June 11	Antigonish Landing	Some	KJM	Lincoln's Sparrow			
June 24	Mabou Landing, Inv.	1	Ken Copenhaver	June 4	Port Greville, Cum.	1	JCZ



This fine portrait of one of our resident NELSON'S SHARP-TAILED SPARROWS was obtained at Wallace, Cumberland, July 17. [Photo Richard Stern]

June 4	Pipeline Rd., HRM	1	BLM
June 18	Amherst, Cum.	1	CIC, NSBS
June 19	Sunrise Valley, Vic.	1	FMC
June 19	Londonderry BBS	1 (low)	BLM
June 23	Cape Smokey, Vic.	1	Ken Copenhaver
July 3	Wentworth Valley	Some	JAH
Swamp Sparrow			
June 1	Hartlen Pt.	1	BBU
June 2	Schooner pond, CBRM	2	BES, GEC
June 10	Yarmouth	Some	Bernice d'Entremont
June 11	Lake Rd., Lun.	3	JAH
June 19	Shubenacadie	1	ROW
June 21	Trafalgar BBS	3 (low)	BLM
June 24	Mabou Hbr.	Some	Ken Copenhaver
White-throated Sparrow			
June-July		Widespread	var. obs.
June 19	Londonderry BBS	13 (low)	BLM
June 23	Trafalgar BBS	28 (low)	BLM
Dark-eyed Junco			
June-July		Widespread	var. obs.
June 19	Londonderry BBS	15 (low)	BLM
June 23	Trafalgar BBS	21 (low)	BLM
Lapland Longspur			
About June 8	Second Peninsula, Lun.	1	fide JAH
Northern Cardinal			
June-July	HRM, Lun., Shel., Yar., Digby, Kings		var. obs.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak			
June-July	Kingston, Kentville, Kings	Some	fide RBS, JOB
June 2	CSI	1	JON
June 4	Cape George, Rich.	fem.	Jeannie Shemerhorn
June 10	Portuguese Cove, HRM	1	HAT
June 18	Amherst, Cum.	1	Cindy Creighton, NSBS
Indigo Bunting			
June 1	Lockeport, Shel.	1	Denny Williams, fide DJC
June 2	CSI	1	JON
June 4	Cape George, Rich.	1	Jeannie Shemerhorn
June 7	East Dalhousie, Kings	1	Donna Crossland, fide JWW
June 11	Port Clyde, Shel.	male	SAH
Dickcissel			
June 4	Canso, Guys.	2	TOK
Bobolink			
June-July	CBRM, Inv., HRM, Lun., Col., Cum., Digby, Anna.		var. obs.
Red-winged Blackbird			
June-July	CBRM, Kings, HRM, Cum., Yar., Anna.		var. obs.
Eastern Meadowlark			
July 14-15	Second Peninsula, Lun.	1	fide JAH
Rusty Blackbird			
June 10	Black River, Kings	3	BLF
June 18-20	Shubenacadie	Some	ROW, DOU
Common Grackle			
June-July	Kings, Anna., Yar., Col., Inv., Rich., CBRM		var. obs.

June 19	Londonderry BBS	1 (low)	BLM
June 21	Trafalgar BBS	37 (low)	BLM
Brown-headed Cowbird			
July 7	Apple River, Cum.	male	KFS
July 27	CSI	1 imm.	MUN
Baltimore Oriole			
June 5-6	Brier I.	Up to 6	ELM
June 4	Canso, Guys.	1	TOK
June 10	Goose Creek Marsh	1	Bernice d'Entremont
Purple Finch			
June-July	Lawrencetown, HRM	Up to 9	DMW
June-July	Apple River, Cum.	6 to 18	KFS
June-July	HRM, Kings, Yar., Hants, Inv., CBRM		var. obs.
Red Crossbill			
June 3	Doctors Brook, Ant.	100	JOK
June 6	Spryfield, HRM	20	FLL
June 5	Cape d'Or, Cum.	5	JCZ
June 8	Clearland, Lun.	12	JAH
July 8-9	Middle Musquodoboit	Up to 3	VJH
June 9	Bear River, Anna.	6+	MCR
June 10	Brier I.	2	DAP
June 10	Canso, Guys.	5	TOK
June 11	Tatamagouche, Col.	24	KJM
June 11	Wolfville	6	JET
June 11	Pubnico, Yar.	2	JCZ
July	St Peter's, Rich.	At feeder	Murdoch Digout, BID
July 31	CSI	23 at feeder	JON
White-winged Crossbill			
June 8	Lingan, Port Caledonia, CBRM	About 100	DBM
June 9	Lunenburg	100	JAH, DWA
Pine Siskin			
June 1	Brier I	400+, down to 50 the next day	ELM
June 16	Brier I	100+	CAH
June-July	Apple R., Cum.	Peak of 15	third week of June KFS
June-July	Lawrencetown, HRM	Peak of 6	DMW
June 19	Shubenacadie	Some	ROW
June 22	Benjies L., CBHNP	Some	Ken Copenhaver
American Goldfinch			
June-July	CBRM, Rich., Cum, Col., Kings, HRM, Yar., Anna.		var. obs.
Evening Grosbeak			
June 1	Wolfville	pair	JWW
June-July	Middle Musquodoboit	A few	VJH
June-July	Apple R.	Up to 7	KFS
June 19	Shubenacadie	Some	ROW
June 21	Trafalgar BBS	6 (low)	BLM
June 24	Wolfville	family	BBT
July 29	Brier I.	1	ELM
House Sparrow			
June-July	HRM, Hants, Col., Ant., CBRM		var. obs.



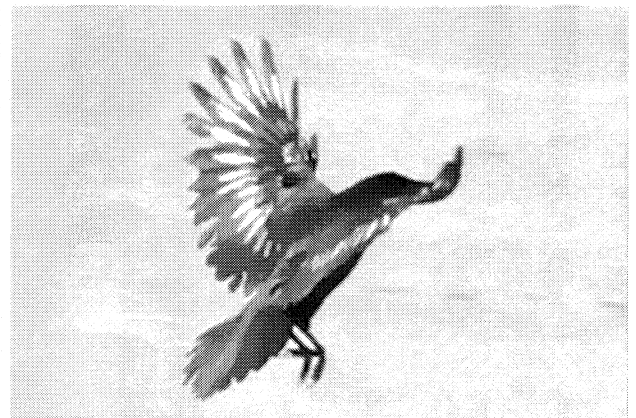
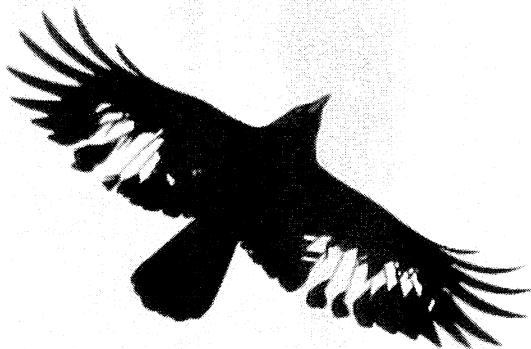
Chickadees and nuthatches can often be coaxed into hand-feeding, but this tame PINE SISKIN at a Beaverbank, HRM, feeder is unusual. [Photo Ron Smith]

List of Contributors

Thanks to all of our contributors.

Sorted by Initials

MacLean, Angus	AAM	Timpa, Jean	JET	Kavanagh, Tom	TOK
Mills, Anne	AHM	Belbin, John	JOB	Higgins, Verna J.	VJH
Morrison, Ann	ANM	Kearney, John	JOK	MacPhail, Weldon	WMA
Breeding Bird Survey	BBS	Nickerson, Johnnie	JON	Lucas, Zoe	ZOL
Thexton, Bill & Brenda	BBT	Sollows, John	JOS	Arslan, Sandy	
Burke, Bernard	BBU	Cohrs, Shirley	JSC	Barnaby, Shelly	
Sarty, Bev	BES	Graves, June	JUG	Callaghan, Christine	
Digout, Billy	BID	Swift, June	JUS	Cameron-MacMillan, Maureen	
Smith, Betty June	BJS	Wolford, Jim	JWW	Cooper, Jen	
Forsythe, Bernard	BLF	Spicer, Kathleen	KFS	Copenhaver, Ken	
Maybank, Blake	BLM	McKenna, Ken J.	KJM	Courage, Donnie	
Haycock, Carl	CAH	Elliot, Laura	LAE	Courage, Tim	
Creighton, Cindy	CIC	Hall, Linda	LHA	Crossland, Donna	
Diggins, Claire	CLD	Thurber, Linden	LIT	d'Entremont, Bernice	
MacNeill, Carol	CRM	Payzant, Linda & Peter	LPP	Digout, Murdoch	
Stevens, Clarence R. Sr.	CSS	Berrigan, Lucas	LUB	Doucette, Bruce	
MacNeill, Don	DAM	Alward, Mary	MAA	Gigeroff, Kier	
Pugh, David	DAP	Gibson, Merritt	MAG	Hawkins, Chris	
Walmark, David	DAW	Rice, Maggie	MCR	Hughes, Anne	
McCorquodale, Dave	DBM	Newell, Murray	MUN	Hume, Darren & Shelly	
Crosby, Donna	DJC	NS Bird Society Field Trip	NSBS	Inkster, Chip & Rob	
Welch, Dottie M. K.	DMW	Chalmers, Patricia L.	PLC	Jankowski, Meaghan	
Linzey, Doug	DOL	MacDonald, Paul	PMA	Johnston, David	
Doull, Elizabeth	DOU	Gould, Paul	PRG	Keizer, E.	
Watson, Dave	DWA	Stern, Richard	RBS	Kendell, Charlie	
Mills, Eric L.	ELM	Smith, Ruth E.	RES	MacDonald, Alexander	
Greig, Fred C.	FCG	Lauff, Randy F.	RFL	Marsh, Suzanne	
Lavender, Fulton L.	FLL	Lindsay, Robert H.	RHL	McGee, Jean	
McEvoy, Fritz	FMC	McCormick, Roland	RMC	Moir, Andy	
d'Entremont, Giselle	GDE	Gallinger, Rosemary	ROG	Murphy, Richard	
Crowell, George	GEC	Woods, Robert	ROW	Poole, Dorothy	
Forsythe, George	GFO	Hiltz, Sandy	SAH	Shermerhorn, Jeannie	
Murray, Gary	GMU	Nickerson, Sandra	SAN	Spicer, Blaine	
Toom, Hans	HAT	Myers, Susann	SEM	Stackpool, Dan	
McLaren, Ian	IAM	Smith, Sid	SIS	Thomas, Bob	
Hirtle, James	JAH	Fullerton, Sylvia	SJF	Vassallo, Monique	
Tufts, Judy	JCT	Borkowski, Suzanne	SMB		□□□
Czapalay, Joan	JCZ	Bushell, Steve	STB		



“White-winged” COMMON CROWS are occasional in Nova Scotia, but we haven’t published photos. The condition is believed to result from deficient nutrition during growth of feathers in young crows. The dark pigments of bird feathers add strength (hence dark wing-tips on many white birds), and white feathering in crows is generally eliminated by subsequent moults. The one at left, Mar. 22 at Sullivans Pond [photo Bernard Burke], is clearly a different one from the one at right, May 27 in Bedford, *HRM*. [Photo Bob Kerr]



Weather Summary - Summer 2005

By Larry Bogan
Cambridge Station, N.S.

Monthly Summary
Weather Data - Kentville, N.S.
Atlantic Food & Horticulture Research Centre

Month	Temp (°C)			Rain fall (mm)	Bright Sunshine hours	Hfx airport rainfall (mm)
	Max	Min	Mean			
June	22.9	11.4	17.1	39.2	199.7	28
44 yr avg	21.9	10.2	16.1	66.8	211.6	98
July	24.9	13.9	19.4	67.5	205	40
44 yr avg	25	13.6	19.4	68.9	232	102
August	25.9	14.3	20.1	29.5	233.9	25
44 yr avg	24.3	13.3	18.7	89.4	217.6	93
Season	24.6	13.2	18.9	136.2	638.6	93
44 yr avg	23.8	12.4	18.1	225.1	661.2	293

When I scan the daily temperatures for the three month of summer (see the included graph), I am impressed with the uniformity of the weather. During the whole time, the mean daily temperatures stayed pretty well within the 15-25 °C band. The warmer "end-months" of June and August leveled the peak of warmth for the summer.

The monthly mean temperature deviations from long term normals were:

June +1.0 °C
July 0.0 °C
August +1.4 °C
Season +0.8 °C

When you look at the monthly temperatures for the international airport the same sort of deviations occurred. The only difference is that the temperatures in the Valley are higher each month by 1/2 to 3/4 °C. The only month that was significantly different was June when the Valley was warmer by 1-1/2 °C than the Airport. This resulted in the whole season in the Valley being up but 0.9 °C over the airport.

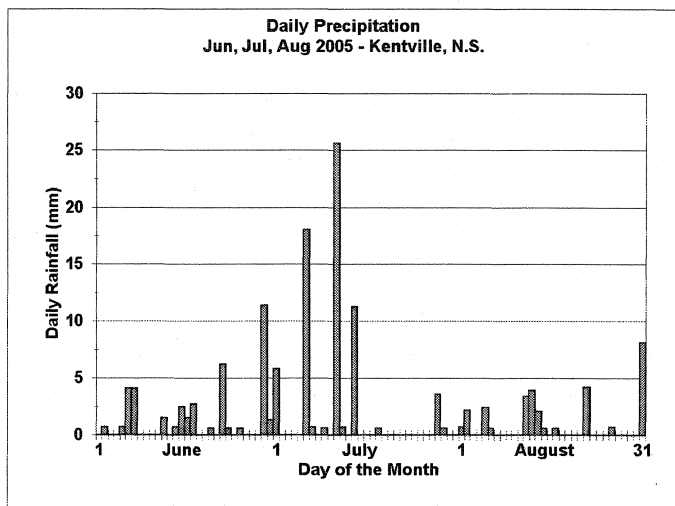
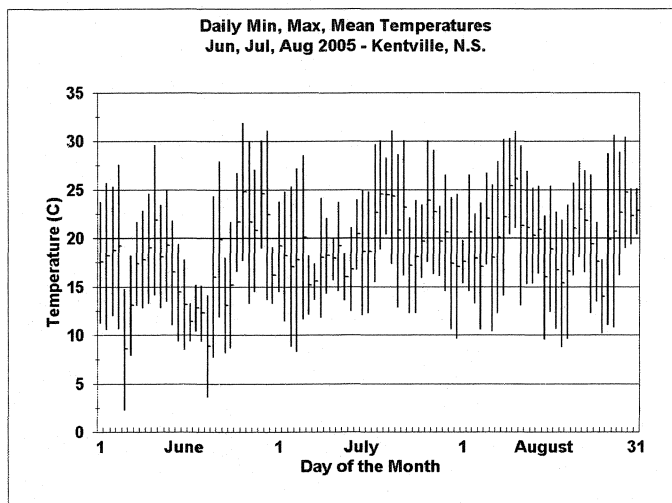
Rainfall in the Valley this summer was well below normal with only 60% of the normal precipitation. July, which seemed wet this year, was actually just at the average, while the other two months were dry, with August getting only 1/3 of its expected rainfall. There were only four days this summer with more than a centimeter of rain and these were all in a two-week period at the beginning of July, when we had 75 mm of rain (55% of the season's total). We really do need more rainfall in the summers; the last five years averaged 186 mm of rain for the season, only 82% of the long term normal rainfall.

At the Halifax airport the rainfall for the summer was even worse with only 32% of the normal precipitation. I have added a column to the table above showing the precipitation at the international airport. Note that the airport normally receives 68 mm

more rain than the Valley but this summer got 43 mm less. The total for the summer there was less than is usually received in any one summer month.

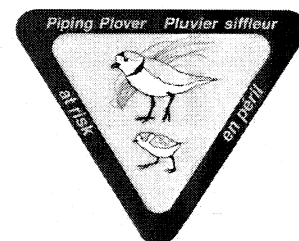
August had the "best" weather for the summer because it was the sunniest. Over all, it was a normal sunny summer with less than a 12% variation from the normals in bright sunshine hours for all months.

As of this writing (mid-October), the days have turned cloudy and rainy, but comfortable in the daytime and at night. We have had some much-needed precipitation in large amounts. We have not yet had a frost which is very late for the Valley since our usual first frost date is mid-September. □



News from the Nova Scotia Coastal Guardian Program

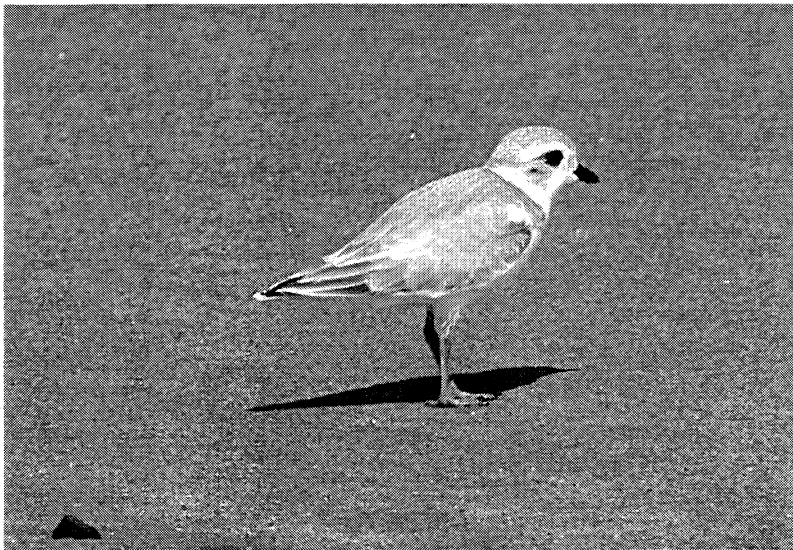
By Anna McCarron
Program Co-ordinator



The Nova Scotia Coastal Guardian Program has just completed its fifth season since the Nova Scotia Bird Society took it under its wing in 2001. Over the past two seasons, however, I have been operating the program under my own umbrella. To mark this occasion, and to thank the many volunteers who have helped with the program during this period, receptions were held for the North Shore guardians at the Claymore Inn in Antigonish, and at White Point for the South Shore participants. A PowerPoint presentation highlighted the efforts and accomplishments of the program over the past five years. I wish to extend my gratitude to the NS Bird Society for launching the guardian program under my direction and to all the volunteers who have helped so passionately and enthusiastically. This is the last season I will be coordinating the program. The Canadian Wildlife Service and the NS Department of Natural Resources are currently working on finding a new home for the guardian program. See the contact information below for more information on where that new home will be...so stay tuned!

This year's results were good and not so good for PIPL recovery efforts. In early November, the Piping Plover Working Group and Recovery Team met at the Canadian Wildlife Service office to discuss the season's results and challenges. Overall, the numbers of PIPLs that returned to Atlantic Canada were down again, for the second year in a row. The tentative 2005 total year-end count for Piping Plovers in Eastern Canada was approximately 430 adults. This compares to 470 adults in 2004. In 2003 there were 549 adults. Some members of the Working Group speculated that perhaps we are in a natural downturn in the population as many things in nature are cyclical. However, others were at odds to explain why. If the productivity rate is up again for the second year running, this year with a total rate of 1.72 (331 chicks fledged/192 pairs monitored), then why isn't the increase in population reflected in an upturn rather than a downturn of birds returning to nest? Perhaps something is happening on the wintering grounds of which we are unaware.

Certainly there is concern about what has happened on the wintering grounds around the Gulf of Mexico and in the Caribbean where so many storms were generated this year. If any of you are planning to go south of the Carolinas this winter, please keep an eye open for our PIPL friends while at the beach and report any sightings to Diane Amirault, Canadian Wildlife Service, Sackville NB office, Diane.Amirault@EC.GC.CA or call 506-364-5060. Remember, PIPLs lose their breeding plumage in the winter and look like the fledglings we are accustomed to seeing on our beaches in late summer.



By mid July (this one 18 July on Martinique Beach, HRM) PIPING PLOVER juveniles can be safely photographed with long lenses. [Photo Hans Toom]

Of particular concern is the sharp downturn in nesting plovers on Nova Scotia's south shore beaches. As you can see from Table A (page 23), the numbers of pairs returning to nest in that area have decreased by more than half since 2001! This is causing great concern within the PIPL Recovery Team. The concern results from the observations of the banding program (conducted from 1999 – 2004) which revealed strong evidence that south shore PIPLs, are a unique subspecies of PIPL. Sadly, if the south shore population declines much further, we may need to declare this Nova Scotia PIPL subspecies extinct! In other areas of the Atlantic region, PIPLs will nest in one province or another. For example, a PIPL that was banded in PEI's National Park in 2003 was recaptured while nesting on an Antigonish area beach in 2004. While on the south shore there was no evidence of this exchange between provinces or even other areas of Nova Scotia.

The good news is that PIPLs seem to be making a comeback in some areas of Cape Breton and are nesting on new beaches there. In 2001 there was only one beach observed with nesting PIPLs. This season there were four beaches with nests and chicks and one beach with at least two pairs. On a fifth CB (former) nesting beach, I observed a single PIPL possibly scouting out prospective nesting areas for next year!

Although the numbers of birds returning to nest on Nova Scotia beaches, especially on the south shore has steadily declined over the past five years, the recovery rate (F/P) or productivity of plovers has gradually increased, as mentioned previously. The recovery rate is greatest where there is the greatest level of public participation and guardian efforts. All but two nesting beaches on the **South Shore** had a recovery rate greater than 2:00 this year. The remaining two beaches on south shore beaches had recovery rates of 0.00 due to: a) **an ATV running over a nest** just before it was due to hatch and b) three nests being tampered with by either a predator (likely a crow) and/or by human disturbance. In this case truck tracks led up to the fencing around one nest and then foot tracks were found inside the fencing. After this event, the nest disappeared. There were three nesting attempts on this beach by two pairs, none of which were successful.

In **northern NS**, Antigonish County, a full time guardian, Courtney Lancaster spent a great deal of time educating the community on the beaches. Twelve chicks from three nests fledged from one beach there—a perfect record! Habitat protection on another beach in the area relied on a new breach (break or channel in the barrier beach) created in the December 2004 storm, which provided protection from human disturbance and their dogs for at least three nests. At least 6 chicks fledged from this beach.

In **central NS** one beach was very successful with 8 chicks from two nests fledging—another perfect record. Guardian participation and public respect of the habitat is high in this area. Verna Higgins, a guardian for this area, was featured in a Newfoundland video used to train guardians all over Atlantic Canada. Verna was the perfect model. Thanks Verna!

Land and cottage owners in **Pictou County** and western **Cape Breton** need a great deal of education and/or more public participation. A common thread on the three beaches with the greatest disturbance and lowest fledging rate is they all have cottage developments in close proximity to the nesting areas. In northern Cape Breton, the greatest disturbance is due to the 100s of gulls around a fishing village and a significant level of ATV activity on the two nesting beaches there. More guardian effort is needed in these areas. Thanks again to all who have helped in any way with the guardian program.

[Note: highlights from this summer's guardian program will appear in the Winter issue of Nova Scotia Birds].

If you have any concerns or questions about the guardian program or have any PIPL sightings to report please contact:

- Canadian Wildlife Service – Andrew Boyne at andrew.boyne@ec.gc.ca or (902) 426-1900
- NSDNR Endangered Species Biologist – Mark Elderkin at elderkmf@gov.ns.ca or (902) 679-6091
- Nova Scotia Coastal Guardian Program - Anna McCarron at plover@istar.ca or (902) 860-1263

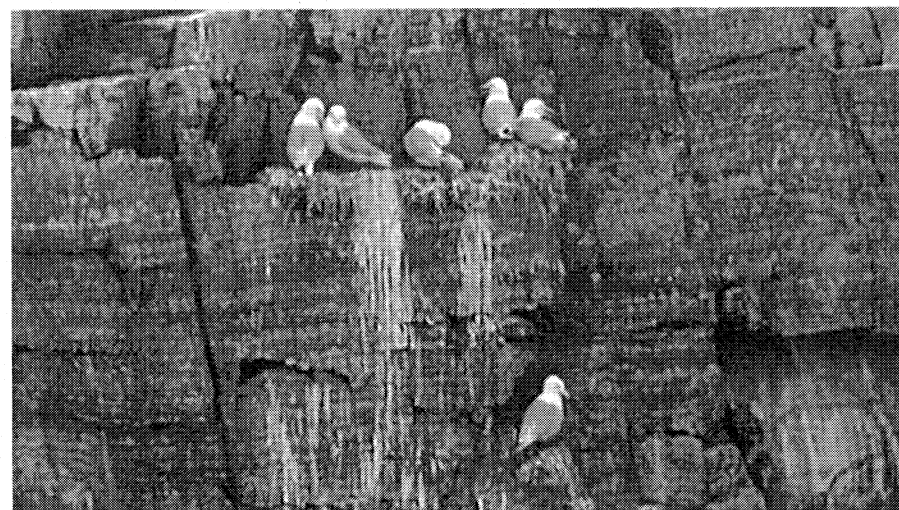
Table A - NS Piping Plover statistical comparison on beaches 2001 - 2005

	2001					2002					2003					2004				2005					
Counties (most # beaches)	P	S	A	# F	F/P	P	S	A	# F	F/P	P	S	A	# F	F/P	P	S	A	# F	F/P	P	S	A	# F	F/P
Shelburne (17)	28	3	59	30	1.07	28	1	57	20	0.71	28	0	56	25	0.93	21	0	44	19	0.90	13	1	27	21	1.75
Queens (6)	9	2	20	9	1.00	9	1	19	7	1.33	6	3	15	6	1.20	4	0	8	12	3.00	5	0	10	12	2.40
Lunenburg (3)	4	4	9	10	2.50	3	1	7	6	2.00	2	1	5	3	1.50	2	1	5	8	4.00	3	0	6	8	2.67
Halifax (1)	2	1	5	4	4.00	3	0	6	8	2.67	3	3	9	8	2.67	3	2	8	9	3.33	2	2	6	8	4.00
Pictou (3)	1	0	2	1	1.00	1	0	2	uk	?	1	0	2	1	1.00	1	0	2	4	4.00	1	0	2	2	2.00
Antigonish (3)	5	2	12	14	2.80	6	1	11	15	2.50	6	1	13	14	2.33	5	2	12	14	2.80	6	2	14	18	3.00
Victoria (2)	2	0	4	4?	2.00	1	0	2	3	3.00	1	3	5	3	3.00	1	1	3	4	4.00	3	3	9	?	?
Inverness (2)	0	0	0	0	n/a	0	0	0	0	n/a	1	0	2	4	4.00	2	0	2	7	3.50	2	0	4	4	2.00
Cape Breton (1)	0	0	0	0	n/a	0	0	0	0	n/a	0	0	0	0	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a
Totals	51	12	111	72?	1.41	51	4	104	59+	1.16	48	11	107	64	1.33	39	6	84	77	1.97	35	8	78	73+	2.08 +

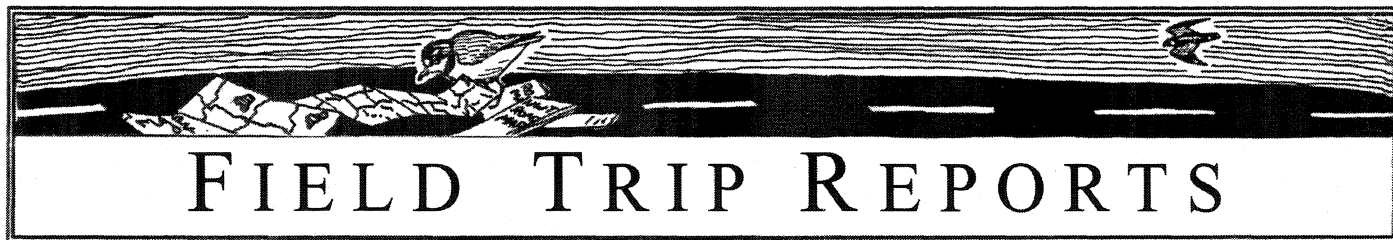
A Quarterly Publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society



This **LEAST TERN** was found Aug. 24, on CSI. Note its small size compared with the nearby Greater Yellowlegs, tiny bill (yellow in the original), and white forehead, all good marks of this rare find. [Photo Murray Newell]



During the 18 Aug. boat trip organized by JAH to Pearl I., Lunenburg, all were able to see the nesting (apparently unsuccessfully) **BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKES** discovered July 17 by BLM. Perhaps in time they'll build up enough pioneers to found our southernmost colony. [Photo Hans Toom]



FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Canso and Area

04 June 2005, Leaders: Steve Bushell & Tom Kavanaugh

We had a great day with great company. We had 8 people on the walk which was a couple more than expected, with Canso being so far off the beaten path.

The weather cooperated pretty well. The wind could've been a bit calmer but it certainly could've been a lot worse. The group picked up 79 species, with lots of easy birds missed.

A major flight of kingbirds arrived in the Glasgow Head area on the afternoon of the 3rd. Steve Bushell reported seeing the birds in a flock (~50) flying over the road, and shortly afterwards he saw what he believed to be 1/2 of the flock flying off to the east over the water. He counted 27 as they flew over him again and watched as they stalled and bunched up in the air over the water before returning back to land. On the 4th we likened the fall-out to dropping a bag of marbles - finding Eastern Kingbirds scattered around the area! One bird that was seen gave the appearance of a Western Kingbird but we were unable to relocate this bird to confirm its identity!

Probably the best sighting for the group was the unexpected arrival of a pair of Dickcissels at my feeders at daybreak on the 4th (for me the best sighting was four Ring-billed Gulls, which are rare here). We missed the nesting Black-backed Woodpeckers, but only stayed at the nest site for 10 minutes. The miserable week of weather we had prior to the walk seemed to have cleared out the Glossy Ibises, Great Egret, and Snowy Egret. The Sandhill Crane was still in the area but now nomadic in behaviour, and not regularly visiting the Armsworthy's Geese.

Some highlights were Nesting Common Loon, Baltimore Oriole, 12 Species of Warblers and 8 Species of Sparrows. Thanks to everyone that attended!

Tom Kavanaugh

Cumberland County

18 June 2005, Leader: Clarence Stevens, Sr.

At 8:00 a.m. ten people gathered at Wentworth Provincial Park to enjoy a birding adventure. Temperatures were 10 – 14 degrees with overcast skies during the day. Eight more people joined us at Amherst.

An impressive 111 species were recorded in twelve hours such as: Mourning Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Black Tern, Caspian Tern, Short-eared Owl, Great Horned Owl, Common Nighthawk, Purple Martin, Virginia Rail, Sora, Common Moorhen, Pied-billed Grebe, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Winter Wren, Marsh Wren, Bobolink, Lincoln's Sparrow, Pileated Woodpecker, Northern Mockingbird, etc.

We arrived home at midnight, having driven 550 kilometers. What a superb group of birders. Thanks to everyone.

Conquerall Mills, Lunenburg County

11 June 2005, Leader: James Hirtle

I met three others at the Conquerall Mills Community Hall at 07:00. I suppose many people opted out of going on the outing due to the early hour. I took the group along Fitch Road, Woodland Road, Lake Road, the Watermill Road, to Mount Pleasant, along Crescent Beach and to Brown Branch Brook. Afterwards, Elizabeth Doull and I continued birding as far as Northwest, and the day ended with roughly 65 species.

Highlights were 13 species of warblers, including three Blackburnians. Notable was the absence of Chestnut-sided Warblers which are usually plentiful on this route. Flycatchers were plentiful, except for Least whose numbers I thought were down. There were a lot of Eastern Wood-Pewees back at Woodland Road and all had good looks. An Olive-sided Flycatcher was also viewed by most at that location as was a White-breasted Nuthatch.

At Publicover Lake a single Common Tern was seen fishing and we had a good look at a male Bobolink beside the road. Three species were added to the day list at Northwest, which included Eastern Kingbird, Wilson's Snipe and a good look at five Golden-crowned Kinglets. All in all a good day.

Bird Islands, Cape Breton, Field Trip 09 July 2005

The sun was shining and the seas were relatively calm for the 26 birders who showed up for our boat tour of Ciboux and Hertford Islands. Captain Vince van Schaick provided entertaining and informative tales of the residents of the Bird Islands (will we ever forget the distinctive field mark of the breeding Black Guillemot, its "sexy red legs"?), while we birders scanned the sea, skies and rocks for the species breeding on the islands. We were not disappointed, as all of the species on the list provided by the tour operators were spotted, along with several others. Birds seen included the Atlantic Puffin, Razorbill, Black Guillemot, Black-legged Kittiwake, Great and Double-crested Cormorant, Great Black-backed and Herring Gulls, Bald Eagle, Osprey, American Crow, Common Raven, Tree and Bank Swallows, Common Tern, Great Blue Heron, Mourning Dove, and a probable sighting of a Common Murre, which likely would have been confirmed if given a slightly longer look. Along with the birds, Gray Seals were seen in great numbers; however, the most infamous mammalian resident of the islands this year, the Coyote, was not spotted by the group.

Maureen Cameron-MacMillan

Wallace Bay Field Trip 17 July 2005, Leader Paul MacDonald

Just over a dozen birders joined leader Paul MacDonald on a beautiful Sunday morning at the Wallace Bay wharf. From the wharf a group of 12 Bonaparte's Gulls (a few with dark hoods) was scoped and a few Common Terns were closely scanned in hopes of a Caspian, but alas none were seen this trip. At the first stop, Drysdale's Meats near the Wallace bridge, a colony of CLIFF SWALLOWS was observed as young were being fed in the nests under the eave. Both Tree and Barn Swallows were busy feeding in the same area. Summer breeding Willets and Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were noted along the causeway, as well as a Greater and a Lesser Yellowlegs that posed side-by-side for great comparison of the differences. A pair of Killdeer also were in that area as well.

We drove the rough back road to the sanctuary where the leader noted a mink appear out of a pot-hole on the road. Now that is a deep hole! We were greeted at the sanctuary by a Bald Eagle. Our walk along the dyke gave us lots of Yellow Warblers, Swamp Sparrows, and Red-winged Blackbirds. The sound of Soras were everywhere in the wetlands, and we encountered over a dozen, with several seen briefly. A young American Bittern made a couple of short flights. The most common ducks in the impoundments were American Wigeon and Hooded Mergansers, and there were also a good number of Pied-billed Grebes. A surprise was a Common Loon in the impoundments, while Osprey overhead, a few Wilson's Snipes and a pair of Common Terns were more expected.

A Least Flycatcher called as we entered the woodland trail to proceed back to the parking lot. The day was starting to get hot, so bird chatter in the woods was at a minimum. A Brown Creeper gave a single song and a Veery called several times as we passed through their territories. As always the group spent some time with the wildflowers when the heat of the day makes birding a challenge. Shinleaf and dwarf enchanters nightshade were blooming and some Shadberries were ripe for eating as we walked along.

Some of the group left after a late lunch and those that remained went to another impoundment accessed from the Stewart property where a family of American Kestrels was busily demanding food from obliging parents. A doe with a fawn crossed the marsh and a few Yellowlegs and a Least Sandpiper were on the mud flats exposed with the low tide. With the temperature now a blistering 30°C the group broke up at about 3:00 with a total of about 50 species recorded for the day.

Ken McKenna

Pictou County Field Trip 30 July 2005, Leader: Ken McKenna

A picture-perfect day (temperature ~ 24°C max) greeted the 14 gathered in Stellarton for the annual Pictou County summer field trip. A cooperative Grey Catbird perched in a dead snag and sang to start off the trip. As we arrived at the Churchville Pond an overhead Osprey put up several kingfishers, a couple of Great Blue Heron, and probable American Bittern which quickly disappeared into the cattails, not reappearing while we scanned hoping for another glimpse. The pond was surrounded by the

sound of Alder Flycatchers, but swallows were non-existent, including the usual nesting Cliff Swallows which did not appear to succeed in building nests this year. A highlight was watching the antics of a couple of River Otters which played hide and seek in the duckweed.

Warblers were quiet on our walk along the Brook Road. Our usual Canada Warbler and Ovenbird were not detected this year, perhaps a result of more logging along the road. Both Hermit and Swainson's Thrushes and an Olive-sided Flycatcher belted out their tunes, and from a hilltop we were able to watch the flycatcher through the scope, albeit at a distance. When the birding got slow some of the group spied Slender Ladies-Tresses and small Purple-fringed Orchids.

We walked along the Willard Fraser Road with the splendid view of the fields and the background hills and the meandering MacLellans Brook. A doe White-tailed Deer with twin fawns drew "aahs" from the participants. Because the bridge was out, I had scouted out a way to ford the brook, but the 50 mm rain the previous day made the crossing a little challenging with the higher water level. Those who made it across were rewarded with families of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Wood Ducks, Hooded Merganser, Pied-billed Grebe and the sounds of a Winter Wren and a Sora Rail from the ever-increasing mat of cattails. Some debate arose as to whether a Virginia Rail was heard or not -- one had been one present there earlier in the season. We left this area and checked under the Diamond Lake bridge where a pair of Eastern Phoebe were feeding young.

Lunch was eaten at the access to Big (Merigomish) Island and afterwards we walked the western sand-spit. We were able to pick out a single Black-headed Gull (imm.) among the many Bonaparte's Gulls many which were supporting black hoods. Bank Swallows had finished nesting and were busy feeding over the fields which were beautifully coloured with wildflowers. A check of the salt marsh on the way back showed about 50 shorebirds present including a couple of Whimbrel and a lone Sanderling with the more expected Semipalmated Plovers and Sandpipers, Willets, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs.

A few continued on to Camp Geddie where the ponds were deserted by the waterfowl, but on the way out a nice pre-migratory mixed flock containing American Redstart, Chestnut-sided Warbler, and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker provided a nice flurry of mid-afternoon activity. At Lower Barneys River an adult Bald Eagle forced a sub-adult off its perch and confiscated its meal. The pond at Egerton had been drawn down. An aggressive Eastern Kingbird chased a flicker from the snags in the pond and several Bobolinks were observed perched on the grasses of the fields. In the exposed mud, six Blue-winged Teal sunned themselves and a Sora spent about ten minutes fully exposed on the mud flat providing a great chance to study the usually secretive bird foraging. In all, about 95 species were tallied for the day, much better than the previous two years when the temperature was above 30°C. □



Handbook of Bird Biology, second edition.

S. Podulka, R.W. Rohrbaugh, Jr. and R. Bonney, Editors

Cornell Lab of Ornithology in association with Princeton University Press, 2004

ISBN 0-938-02762-X; 1248 pages.

All-encompassing. This text book, designed for home study by Cornell's Ornithology Lab, is simply about as all-encompassing as a text could be. If I had a single critique about this massive work, it would be that some parts are likely *too* in-depth for the average student of their home study course. However, the course *is* designed for "anyone with a serious interest in bird biology."

This book has one chapter on bird watching *per se*, though the rest of the book covers ornithology, including chapters on anatomy, migration, evolution, behaviour and more; there is also a compact disk to assist readers with the chapter on vocalizations. Most chapters terminate with a short list of suggested readings, for those wishing to further pursue the area of interest. The References includes over 750 entries, signifying a thorough use of the literature from at least as early as 1678 to the most current available. The text is richly illustrated with photographs and line drawings.

Unlike the more popular *The Bird Almanac* (David M. Bird, Firefly Books Ltd.), which is a wonderful collection of bird facts in itself, *Handbook of Bird Biology* a resource where some serious research into bird life can begin. It's not a coffee table book, nor (for most of us) a book to curl up with, but that doesn't matter at all – this book will set the standard for ornithological texts for some time.

Randy Lauff

A Field Guide to North Atlantic Wildlife - Marine Mammals, Seabirds, Fish, and Other Sea Life.

by Noble S. Proctor & Patrick J. Lynch

published 2005 by Yale University Press

This compact field guide should be more accurately titled “A Field Guide to Wildlife in the Northwestern Atlantic”, since it only covers the area between the island of Newfoundland in the north to Cape Hatteras in the south. With that proviso in mind, the guide does a rather thorough job of illustrating the various fauna and flora you might encounter at sea, both near-shore and offshore. The larger organisms are well-represented, but plankton is understandably dealt with only perfunctorily.

The macro flora and fauna are presented in a standard field guide layout, with illustrations placed opposite descriptive text and maps. The book is overall quite light and compact, and would be quite handy on any pelagic trip, though it is obviously not as thorough in its treatment of any one group of animals as are the more specialised guides.

But is it accurate? I can't speak for the fish or invertebrates, as I have too little experience, but I can assess the bird section somewhat, and I elicited help with the marine mammals portion. For most users, these are the two groups of most interest.

The birds include many species of the near-shore, including sea-ducks, loons and grebes, cormorants, even osprey. All the expected pelagics are included, including tubenoses, gulls and terns, phalaropes, and alcids. The illustrations are good quality, but due to space restrictions there are many fewer depictions of different ages and plumages for each species than one would find in standard bird field guides, such as Sibley or National Geographic. Still, for the average user, they should suffice. The range maps, however, contain many inaccuracies, too many to list in detail, although a couple of examples stand out, in particular the map for Northern Gannet (which is used also in the introduction), that depicts the species breeding in Cape Breton. If the book is ever revised, they should take the care to ensure accurate maps, as has been done in the most recent Sibley, Peterson, and National Geographic guides.

I handed the marine mammals section of the book to Meaghan Jankowski, who has studied Long-finned Pilot Whales off Cape Breton. Her comments, which I'll list in point form, suggest that the section was not accurately vetted, as there are many minor and major errors and omissions.

- In the discussion on Minke Whales the guide states that individual whales frequently approach boats. This is often the case in the Pacific, but in the Atlantic Minke Whales almost never approach boats.
- The guide describes the colour of a Sperm Whale as dark-grey or black, whereas it is best described as brown.
- Because Meaghan knows her Long-finned Pilot Whales, she found several discrepancies in its write-up. Contrary to the text, males cannot be recognised by the presence of a hooked dorsal fin, and there is no study that demonstrates that dorsal saddle mark changes with age. The text is correct when it states that the species is primarily offshore, but it neglects to mention the species' reliable presence each summer off the northern coast of Cape Breton, where it supports a viable whale-watching industry.
- “The Gully” off Sable Island is mis-spelled “The Gulley”
- The Northern Bottlenosed Whale is inexplicably not included with the other beaked whales, and is not even mentioned as belonging in the same family. And, contrary to what is mentioned in the guide, this species does develop a light-coloured “forehead”.
- The guide has several plates illustrating comparisons between confusion species, but places these after the various specific accounts. They'd be more useful before the accounts..
- The distribution maps for the various marine mammals reflect little of the current knowledge regarding their status off Newfoundland.
- No mention is made of the importance of Sable Island to Gray Seals.

In summary, the guide is useful to take along on any near-shore or off-shore boating trip, but if you are particularly interested in one group (birds, whales, etc.) then you should also take the more detailed specialty field guides. But if you are on a deep-water pelagic birding trip, this book would be handy to identify any incidental encounters, whether whale, shark, or jellyfish.

Blake Maybank

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. Please submit all book reviews to Randy Lauff, rlauff@stfx.ca.

Note: Several people have had books out, some for months/years, and have yet to submit a review. This is not in the intended spirit of the book review process. Publishers give a copy to us *so* they will be fairly reviewed. If book reviews are not submitted, I will be ethically obliged to stop this feature.

Birding Across North America – A Naturalist's Observations. by P.E. Keenan. Timber Press.

Compact Guide to Atlantic Canada Birds. R. Burrows, K. Kagame, C. Adams. Lone Pine Publishing.

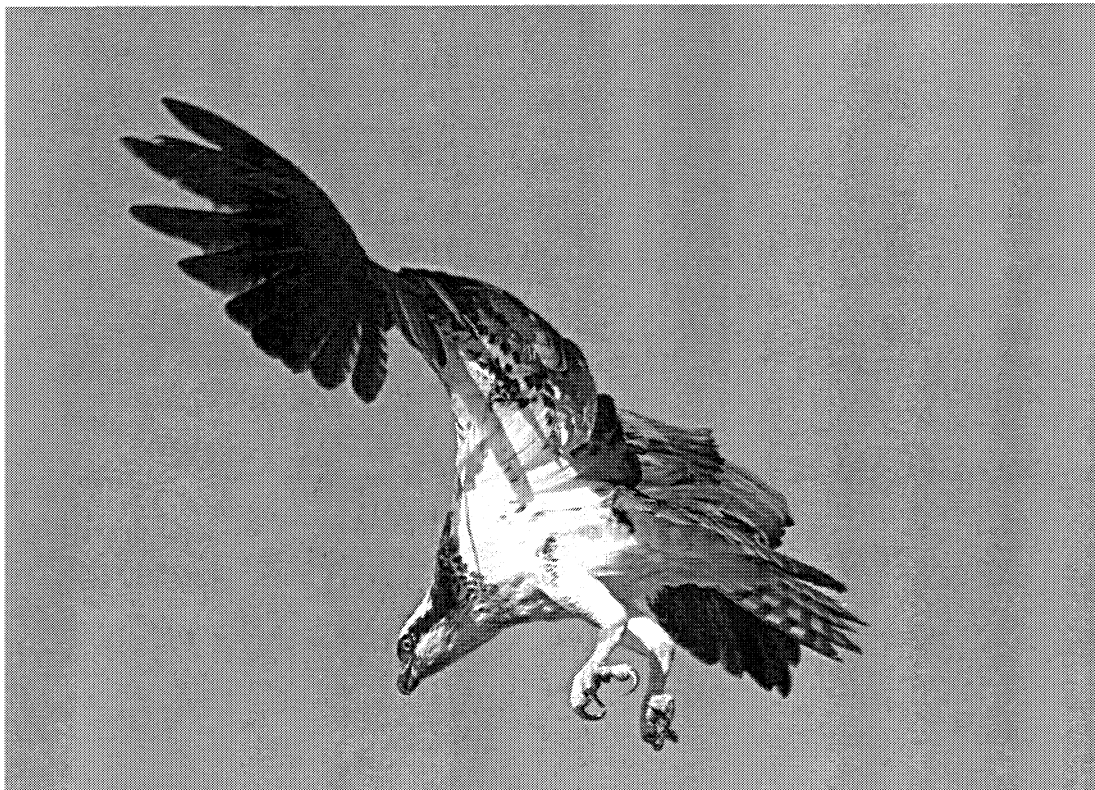
Birds of a Feather. by Linda Johns. Goose Lane.

Flight or Fight part of the Wildlife Rescue Series. D. Haynes. Walrus Books.

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
Biology Department
St. Francis Xavier University
Antigonosh, NS B2G2W5
rlauff@stfx.ca



Wing flaps, anti-stall devices? Birds have long had the edge on aircraft manufacturers. This OSPREY was one of the nesting pair at Hartlen Pt., HRM. [Photo Hans Toom]

(Continued from back cover)

Sun 23 Apr 2006 – Wolfville Area

Leader: Jim Wolford 542-9204 E-mail: jimwolford@eastlink.ca

This will be a joint trip with the Blomidon Naturalists Society, pond hopping for ducks and early migrants. Meet at the town wharf off the east end of Front Street in Wolfville at 10:00 a.m. Dress warmly and bring a lunch.

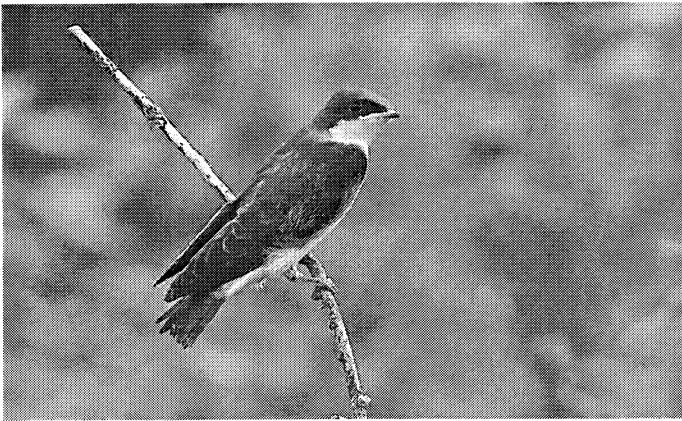
Thu 27 Apr 2006 – Regular Meeting

NSMNH, 1747 Summer Street, Halifax, N.S. 7:30 p.m.

“Greetings From Panama” – Guest Speaker: Richard Stern

Last year the Maritimes Nature Travel Club visited Panama. Richard Stern, one of the lucky participants, will tell us all about it and show us his fabulous slides! □

Photo Album



Most TREE SWALLOWS are fully fledged by late July (this one July 28) and begin to migrate soon after. This one probably needs a little more tail-feather growth before setting out completely on its own. [Photo Richard Stern]



This PILEATED WOODPECKER at Waverley in May offered the finest portrait yet published in “Nova Scotia Birds.” [Photo Hans Toom]



This sprightly NORTHERN CARDINAL in Kentville Apr. 18 was one of the increasing number residing in our mainland towns and villages. [Photo Richard Stern]



From the complete lack of warm tones on its wings and tail in the colour version, this GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH, photographed May 15 on CSI, seems to be of the boreal subspecies *aliciae*, unusual, and probably never before photographed, in spring. [Photo Cindy Creighton]



UPCOMING EVENTS

Field trips are open to non-members as well as members. Feel free to phone or E-mail the field trip leader or contact person ahead of time to obtain further information, directions or restrictions (e.g. dogs are not normally allowed on field trips). The area code for Nova Scotia is 902. NSMNH = The Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer Street, 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, as well as all field trip reports should be directed to The Events Editor, Suzanne Borkowski 445-2922. E-mail: sborkowski@hfx.eastlink.ca

Wed 14 Dec 2005 – Tue 3 Jan 2006 – Christmas Bird Counts

There are 35 different CBC's held annually in Nova Scotia. To obtain more info on a count near you, click on Blake Maybank's winter birding link on our Nova Scotia Bird Society's website (address on inside front cover), or type the following website address into your browser: <http://www3.ns.sympatico.ca/maybank/other/ns.cbc.htm>

Sat 07 Jan 2006 – Sewer Stroll 1 - Halifax/Dartmouth Area

Leader: Bob McDonald 443-5051
E-mail: bobathome@hfx.eastlink.ca

Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot of McCormack's Beach Provincial Park, just past Boondocks Restaurant in Eastern Passage. We'll 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: Sun 8 Jan. Please note: Bob will be away through Christmas and New Years. For info, please contact Suzanne Borkowski: 445-2922,
E-mail: sborkowski@hfx.eastlink.ca

Thu 26 Jan 2006 – Members' Slide Night and Skills Workshop

NSMNH, 1747 Summer Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia; 7:30 p.m.

"Recognizing Accipiters" - Fulton Lavender will help us distinguish between large female Sharp-shinned Hawks, Cooper's Hawks, and small Northern Goshawks. This workshop will be followed by our ever popular Members' Slide Night. Bring along 15 - 20 of your favourite slides related to birds or birding!

Sat 28 Jan 2006 – HFN Sewer Stroll – Halifax/Dartmouth Area

Leader: Peter Payzant 861-1607 E-mail: pce@accesswave.ca

Meet at 9:15 a.m. in the parking lot behind Boondocks Restaurant, Fisherman's Cove, Eastern Passage. Dress warmly and bring a lunch, binoculars, field guides and telescope (if you have one). Storm date: Sun 29 Jan.

Sat 18 Feb 2006 – Sewer Stroll 2 – Halifax/Dartmouth Area

Leader: Fulton Lavender 455-4966

Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot of McCormack's Beach Provincial Park, just past Boondocks Restaurant in Eastern Passage. Dress warmly and bring a lunch. Storm date: Sun 19 Feb.

Thu 23 Feb 2006 – Regular Meeting

NSMNH, 1747 Summer Street, Halifax, N.S. 7:30 p.m.

"The 2nd Maritime Breeding Bird Atlas" – Guest Speaker: Karel Allard

Karel Allard, coordinator of the 2nd MBBA will give an overview of this exciting project and let you know how you can get involved!

Sat 18 Mar 2006 – Along the Fundy Shore

Leader: Jim Wolford (902) 542-9204

E-mail: jimwolford@eastlink.ca

This will be a joint trip with the Blomidon Naturalists Society. Meet at 9:00 a.m. in Wolfville at the town wharf off the east end of Front Street. We'll be visiting various spots along the shore such as Annapolis Royal and Digby to the ferry terminal. Dress warmly and bring a lunch. No storm date.

Thu 23 Mar 2006 – Regular Meeting

NSMNH, 1747 Summer Street, Halifax, N.S. 7:30 p.m.

"Where are the Birds?" – Guest Speaker: Blake Maybank

Blake will show us some birding hotspots that we can check as spring weather approaches; from his book: "Birding Sites of Nova Scotia".

Sat 01 Apr 2006 – Baccaro and Blanche Peninsula

Leader: James Hirtle 640-2173 E-mail: jrhbirder@hotmail.com

Early spring birding with James. (Donna Ensor will be back in 2007). Rarities have shown up here quite often at this time of year. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot at exit 28 off Hwy #103 (Port Clyde). Dress warmly and bring a lunch. No rain date.

Sat 08 April 2006 – Martinique Beach

Leader: Ian McLaren 429-7024 E-mail: iamclar@dal.ca

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Scotiabank parking lot, Bridge Plaza, Dartmouth. Look for early migrants as well as possible rarities. Bring a lunch. No rain date.

(Continued on inside back cover)