

Nova Scotia Birds

A Quarterly Publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society



Autumn 2006
(The Birds of Summer)

NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY

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Formed in 1955, the Nova Scotia Bird Society is a member of Nature Nova Scotia and Nature Canada. The activities of the Society are centered on the observation and study of the bird life of this province and the preservation of habitat.

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Reporting Deadlines

Winter 2007 issue: Dec. 7, 2006
Spring 2007 issue: Mar. 7, 2007

Summer 2007 issue: June 7, 2007
Fall 2007 issue: Aug. 7, 2007

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- Summer Bird Reports
- Summer Weather Report
- Trip Reports
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Cover Photo: This Red-Eyed Vireo family (cropped to fit the cover) was an entry in the 2003 NSBS/PGNS photo competition. [Photo Lorris Keizer]

NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS
AUTUMN 2006

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Dear Mr. Maybank:

I was inspired to join the Nova Scotia Bird Society a year ago when a Western Kingbird visited my yard for two weeks. I submitted a report to the bird Society and it was in the winter publication of fall birds. However, I wanted to note that I made reports both in the winter and spring and neither was listed in the publications. The winter report was a white winged crossbill which spent a morning in my yard and died there and the spring report was of a barred owl that I rescued. It's wings were pierced on a barbed wire fence. It has since made a full recovery and has been released. Are all reports not published? And if not, what determines if a report is published?

Sincerely,

Corinne Redden

Upper Stewiacke, NS

Dear Corinne;

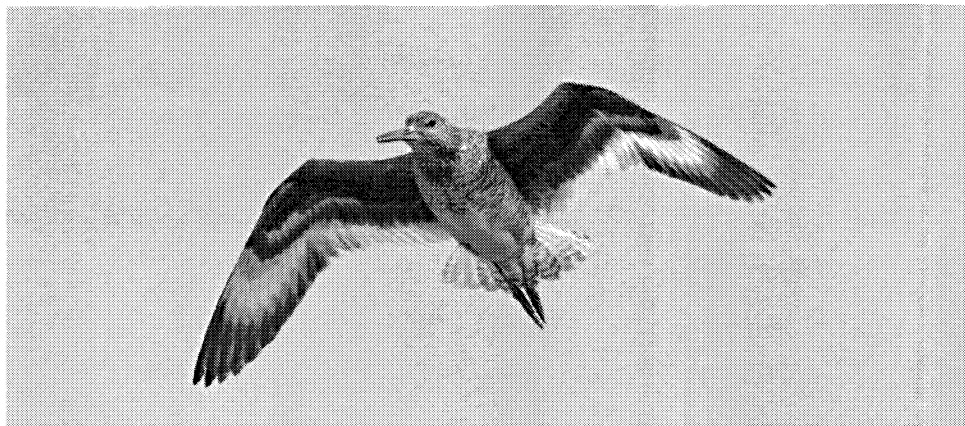
Indeed, not all reports are published, as there is simply not enough space to include everyone's sightings. Each editor decides which sightings to include, and they normally include rarities (such as your Western Kingbird), the early and late dates for migrating birds, significant numbers of migrating birds, unusual plumages of common birds, or especially interesting anecdotes. They also will highlight reports from areas that are little visited by birders. But, in the end, we all have sightings that they are not able to use, and there just isn't time to let each of the many contributors know which are used and which aren't.

I hope this answers your question, and I don't wish you to become discouraged. Upper Stewiacke is inland, and so is less likely to receive the kind of rarities that fill much of our report, but we still wish to hear about your sightings.

All the best,

Blake Maybank

Editor, "Nova Scotia Birds"



WILLETS can be a noisy nuisance for birders exploring our shores in summer, but this one July 10 at Martinique Beach PP compensated with an elegant photo. [Photo Hans Toom]

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



Presidents Corner

Our Annual General Meeting went well this year. We introduced a non-alcoholic punch, compliments of Susann Myers, along with our usual array of wine, cheese, and tasty tidbits. Incidentally, Susann received the Puffin award this year. You can read all about it in our next (Winter) issue.

The Charitable Tax Receipt Forms for Atlassers are now available on our website: <http://nsbs.chebucto.org> right on our home page. Please be sure to download both forms: the Atlasser's Claim Form (2 pages) and the Atlasser's Travel Log (1 page), and please note that the deadline for receipt of these forms has been extended to December 15th. Anyone who prefers to have a hard copy sent to them, please call Blake Maybank at 852-2077 and he'll mail the forms to you right away.

It's almost time to send in your tallies for our "Big Year". We don't need a species list; just the number of species you've seen in the province and in individual counties. For example: Suzanne Borkowski – 185 – Nova Scotia, and - 100 – Halifax County. You can submit as many county tallies as you like. This way we'll soon know which county gets birded most often, and which has the highest number of species. Think your county is the best? Prove it! Send your tallies no later than January 15th by E-mail to: suzanneborkowski@yahoo.ca, by phone: (902) 445-2922, or regular mail: Suzanne Borkowski, 18 Parmelle Lane, Halifax, N.S. B3M 1N3. Results will be published in the next issue.

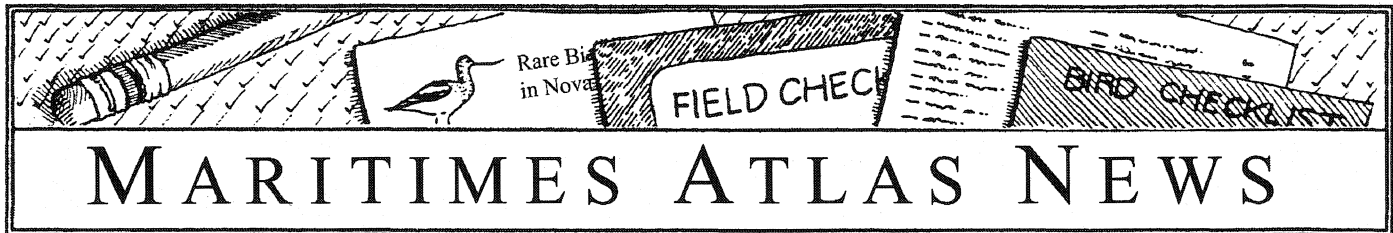
Here's an interesting opportunity for those of you who like camping. The Bluenose Coastal Action Foundation is looking for volunteers to provide vacation relief for their Roseate Tern Project workers on Quaker Island. Relief periods run from 4 days up to a week. Food and boat transportation to and from the island will be provided, as will a tent and a sleeping mattress, although you're welcome to bring your own if you prefer. In return, you'll be asked to observe and monitor the Tern colony, and make note of such things as mating and nesting behaviour, feeding preferences, weather conditions, and any disturbances. If you're looking for a chance to get away from civilization, and contribute to a study of an endangered species – this is it! For more information, and to volunteer, contact Cheyenne Dickinson at: cheyenne@coastalaction.org

Finally, I'd like to announce that our annual out-of-area meeting will be at the Liscombe Lodge in Guysborough County next year. The dates are Saturday, May 26th and Sunday, May 27th, 2007. It will be combined with an atlas workshop to which everyone is welcome! Becky Stewart and staff from the MBBA office in Sackville, N.B. will be at the meeting, which starts at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, to give an overview of season one, and answer questions from the floor. Tom Kavanaugh, Regional Coordinator for Guysborough County, will be on hand to assign squares from that region. He has lots of great squares available: coastal ones, inland ones, and some with both! After the meeting we'll have a brief walk about the grounds to learn how to atlas for owls and rails. At dawn on Sunday, we'll receive a Point Count demonstration. Then it's back to the Lodge for a full breakfast buffet (included in your room rate) after which there will be a choice of field trips. Rooms with two double beds and a balcony overlooking the Liscombe River are \$155.00 + tax, and can be booked by calling 1-800-665-6343. Be sure to state that you are attending the Nova Scotia Bird Society Conference in order to get this rate.

Christmas Bird Counts are coming up fast. Be sure to get out there and do your bit for Citizen Science. And don't forget to renew your membership by December 31st.

Merry Christmas, everyone!

Suzanne Borkowski
President – Nova Scotia Bird Society



Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas: A Treasured Island Experience

by **Becky Stewart**

Reprinted with permission from BSC

Eight kilometres southwest of Cape Chignecto, in the middle of the inner Bay of Fundy, the cliffs of Isle Haute tower above the rushing waters below. Named by Samuel de Champlain in 1604, Isle Haute (“High Island”) is visible from both the New Brunswick and Nova Scotia coastlines. Despite its grand stature, the island is quite small—only 2 kilometres long and 500 metres across. The 100-metre-high, basalt cliffs for which the island was named surround most of the island except its western and eastern tips. The east end has a gentler slope with a shallow salt-water pond at its base. Surrounding the pond is a rocky spit that juts out into the bay.

Isle Haute is rich in history and legend. The Mi’kmaq once used the island and it is part of their oral tradition (Glooscap is credited with the island’s creation). They named the island Maskusetkik, meaning “place of wild potatoes.” Archeologists believe it served as a seasonal food-gathering site.

In the late 19th century, when shipping activity increased in the bay, a lighthouse was built on the island. Isle Haute was home to five lighthouse keepers and their families from 1878 to 1956, when a lantern fire destroyed the homestead. Today, there is little evidence of their presence other than a thin trail (once a wagon road) and several overgrown clearings where keepers once planted crops and kept their animals. A solar-powered “skeleton tower” has since been erected where the original lighthouse once stood.

Isle Haute’s folklore centers around one topic: buried treasure. Many claim that several infamous pirates buried treasure there, some sacrificing a crew member whose ghost could then watch over their bounty. In one tale, the island is said to move every seven years, and if you are there at midnight when it moves, a headless ghost will rise to reveal the treasure’s burial site. Unfortunately, not only does the treasure not exist, but a century of digging by treasure hunters has disturbed some of the island’s important archeological sites.

Isle Haute is as rich in plant and wildlife as it is in history and legend. Its vegetation is a strange mosaic of deciduous, coniferous, and mixed forest stands of varying ages. The open areas (previously cleared by lighthouse keepers) contain various grasses and wildflowers, plus spruce and alder. Sixty bird species have been observed there and, according to legend, the birds of Isle Haute “sing a different language.” This is where I and 10 other members of a Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas team come into the picture—we went to find out which birds were singing and which were breeding.

The Maritimes atlas is a volunteer-based, five-year scientific project designed to assess changes in the distribution and abundance of all bird species that breed in the three Maritime provinces. This is the Maritimes’ second atlas; the first took place between 1986 and 1990, when more than 1200 volunteers spent 43,000 hours documenting breeding evidence. During the first atlas, many coastal islands did not receive adequate coverage, primarily because of accessibility issues; all require a boat, significant boating skills, local knowledge, and permission from government agencies.

In the first atlas, Isle Haute was surveyed from a plane and only five species were recorded. To ensure better coverage this time, with the support of BSC’s Baillie Fund, atlas staff organized volunteers and chartered boats to visit St. Paul’s Island, the Tusket Islands, and Isle Haute this past summer. The expedition to Isle Haute consisted of 11 dedicated volunteers, all with different areas of expertise, levels of birding experience, and degrees of, shall we say, outdoor savvy.

When our team first arrived at Cape Chignecto Harbour to make the crossing to Isle Haute, I wondered whether we were in the right place. There were several fishing boats sitting in the mud below the dock, and the Bay of Fundy was at least a kilometre away. Of course we were in the right place, but I had never seen anything like it. The Bay of Fundy has the highest tides in the world—in excess of 15 metres—and sure enough, as we loaded the boat, the water began to rush into the harbour. Within half an hour, we were off!

The crossing from Cape Chignecto Harbour was extremely foggy and only a few gulls were seen. This weather, fog combined with rain (“aggressive fog” as one atlasser named it), continued throughout our trip. When we arrived at the rocky spit on the east end, Isle Haute’s cliffs were nowhere to be seen, hidden by a thick white wall of fog. But, there was no time to ponder their whereabouts—we had 15 minutes to unload the boat so that Hal, the captain, could return before the tide receded. We formed a human chain from the boat to the shore, passing our gear (and there was a lot of it) from person to person.

We quickly set up camp at the base of the island’s eastern slope and spent the rest of the day looking for treasure—of the bird variety. A short distance from camp, we heard our first bird, an American Robin, followed by a Red-eyed Vireo and a Golden-crowned Kinglet. At the top of the island we heard a Common Yellowthroat, a Magnolia Warbler, a Black-throated Green Warbler, and a second-year American Redstart male, with black mottling on his face and throat. None of these birds sang “a different language,” but there was some question about who they were singing to. There seemed to be only one or two individuals of each species and all of them were males.

That afternoon, while the tide was out, a few of us explored the north shore’s cobble beach and found Black Guillemots nesting on the cliffs. Our first discovery was quite accidental—we were examining a crevice when a guillemot burst out from the cliff, three metres above our heads. In the evening, we listened for Bicknell’s Thrush—a secretive species that only sings before and shortly after sunrise and sunset. Although we did not hear any Bicknell’s that night, we did hear our first Swainson’s Thrush and a White-throated Sparrow.

The next morning we awoke to a distinctly absent dawn chorus—not a single bird could be heard from camp, just the sound of water dripping off the forest leaves. Not to be discouraged, we grabbed our rain gear and broke into four teams to cover the island from end to end, each team taking a 500-metre square block. My team learned a valuable lesson that day: always bring a compass because 1) GPS units don’t always work in the forest in the rain and fog, and 2) it is entirely possible to get lost in a foggy 500-metre square. Several new species were detected that morning and, perhaps more importantly, so were their mates. These included a Veery that sang twice and then remained silent for the rest of the day, a pair of Yellow-rumped Warblers carrying food for their young, a singing Winter Wren, and a Herring Gull colony.

After drying off from the morning’s adventures, we ventured around the south shore in search of Peregrine Falcons, which have previously nested on the island. However, the terrain became so difficult and slippery that we were forced to turn around. That night we went in search of owls. A few of us even tried hooting (some much more realistically than others), but no owls responded to our efforts.

Table 1. Species observed on the Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas trip to Isle Haute in June 2006.

Northern Gannet	Golden-crowned Kinglet*
American Black Duck	Veery
Common Eider	Swainson’s Thrush
Common Loon	American Robin*
Double-crested Cormorant	Gray Catbird
Great Blue Heron*	Magnolia Warbler
Bald Eagle	Yellow-rumped Warbler*
Herring Gull*	Black-throated Green Warbler*
Great Black-backed Gull	Black-and-white Warbler
Black Guillemot*	American Redstart
Alder Flycatcher	Common Yellowthroat*
Red-eyed Vireo	Song Sparrow
Common Raven	White-throated Sparrow*
Black-capped Chickadee	Red Crossbill
Winter Wren	

* *Species that are confirmed breeders (e.g., nest was found) or probable breeders (e.g., pair observed).*

On our final morning, with the boat set to arrive in just a few hours, we went out again, hoping to uncover a few more species. We were successful...or lucky. In a shrubby patch near the cliffs, we heard a jumble of fluty notes, followed by a distinctive "meow." The vocalist, a Gray Catbird, soon appeared. Later, as we were pushing through the brush on our way back to camp, a hair-raising series of clacking sounds erupted above us. We looked up to see a Great Blue Heron fly from its nest; the clacking was from its brood of prehistoric-looking nestlings. Since herons usually nest in colonies, this lone nest was a particularly interesting find.

We boarded our boat, forming a human chain once more (our coolers and water jugs were much lighter this time—the food cooler, in particular). As we pushed off, the island disappeared, engulfed by the same white wall of fog that had shrouded it for much of our visit. Unlike the empty-handed treasure hunters that had come before us, our crew left Isle Haute in great spirits. With a bit of luck, some good ears, 11 pairs of binoculars and two scopes, we had uncovered much of the island's best treasure (see Table 1) and we didn't have to wait on a midnight ghost to reveal it.

*The Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas is a cooperative project of Bird Studies Canada, Environment Canada, the provincial governments of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island, private corporations, and hundreds of volunteer citizens. Additional supporters currently include: New Brunswick Wildlife Trust Fund; Nova Scotia Bird Society; Nature Nova Scotia – The Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists; New Brunswick Federation of Naturalists (Federation des naturalistes du Nouveau-Brunswick); and the Natural History Society of Prince Edward Island. **Thank-you to all our volunteers and other supporters who have made this a very successful first season!** To participate in the Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas please visit www.mba-aom.ca or contact the atlas coordinator at 1-866-5atlas5 or atlasmaritimes@gmail.com. □*



Subadult LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULLS have become more frequent here in recent summers. This second-summer bird dropped in at Sullivans Pond, Dartmouth, 11 June. [Photo Bernard Burke]



Loons Through Grebes

By Angus MacLean

It's encouraging to note the two families of PIED-BILLED GREBES at Apple R. A HORNED GREBE in mid-summer is unusual but not unprecedented. □

Common Loon

June 9	Aylesford L., <i>Kings</i>	4 (family)	AAM
July 15	Sandy Bottom L., <i>Anna.</i>	2 (1 young)	MCR
June-July	Lewis Lake, <i>HRM</i>	pr (2 young)	BLM

Pied-billed Grebe

June 16	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	6 (4 young)	KFS
July 15	Wallace Bay, <i>Cum.</i>	2-3	NSBS

Horned Grebe

July 15	Wallace Bay, <i>Cum.</i>	1	NSBS
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Tubenoses Through Cormorants

By Eric Mills

Tube-nose records through the early summer were normal for the season, with the exception being the nesting LEACH'S STORM-PETRELS seen and heard on St. Paul I. June 23-25 by an atlassing party, and the likely presence of breeding MANX SHEARWATERS there too. With luck, next year will tell the tale. Although WILSON'S STORM-PETRELS were increasingly abundant on the Nova Scotian side of the Bay of Fundy during the season, we had no counterpart to the 100,000 reported on the New Brunswick side near Grand Manan July 15, presumably gathered there to feed on an abundance of copepods.

By late in July it became clear that GREAT CORMORANTS had attempted to breed, likely successfully, on Brier I. and also farther east on Ram I., *Shel.* This is probably not new, but shows the kind of knowledge that atlassing gives us.

A well-described adult WHITE PELICAN made a one-day showing in Cape Breton July 31, perhaps the same bird that has been wandering from place to place in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island all summer. □

Northern Fulmar

July 17	Off Brier I.	Several	SBA
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Greater Shearwater

June 5	Off Brier I.	10-15	SBA
July 17	Off Brier I.	Abundant	SBA

Sooty Shearwater

June 5	Daniels Hd., <i>CSI</i>	15	JON, SAN
June 5	Off Brier I.	15-20	SBA
June 11	Baccaro Pt., <i>Shel.</i>	"A few"	MUN
July 11	Off Gull Rock, <i>Shel.</i>	1	Jane Alexander
July 17	Off Brier I.	Abundant	SBA

MANX SHEARWATER

June 5	Off Brier I.	1	SBA
June 11	Baccaro Pt., <i>Shel.</i>	1	MUN
June 23-25	St Paul I., <i>Vic.</i>	Heard at night	FMC <i>et al.</i>

Wilson's Storm-Petrel

June 5	Off Brier I.	"Numerous"	SBA
June 22	Off Brier I.	Several	SBA
July 17	Off Brier I.	Several	SBA

Leach's Storm-Petrel

June 22	Off Brier I.	"A few"	SBA
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June 23-25	St. Paul I., <i>Inv.</i>	Nesting	FMC <i>et al.</i>
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Northern Gannet

July 1	Jeddore, <i>HRM</i>	ad. on road	LUB
July 9	W. Baccaro, <i>Shel.</i>	3	MUN
July 27	Cow Bay, <i>HRM</i>	1 injured	Karl Hudak

WHITE PELICAN

July 31	Catalone Gut, <i>CBRM</i>	1 Jerry Sponagle, <i>fide</i>	CAM, ALM
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Double-crested Cormorant

June 5	Avon R., <i>Windsor, Hants</i>	ca. 200	JCT
June 5	Off Brier I.	40 overhead	SBA
June 13	Green I., <i>CBRM</i>	300+ ads.; nests	SEM
June 22	Peters I., Brier I.	Ca. 14 nests	ELM, AHM
July 7	Shad Bay, <i>CBRM</i>	600	BLM
July 10	Green Bay., <i>Lun.</i>	89	JAH
July 31	Conrads Bch., <i>HRM</i>	250 feeding	DMW

Great Cormorant

June 13	Green I., <i>CBRM</i>	240+ ads.; nests	SEM
June 22	Green Hd., Brier I.	2 ads., nest?	ELM, AHM
July 11	Ram I., <i>Shel.</i>	2 breeding?	Jane Alexander, <i>fide</i> SJF

□□□

Hérons Through Vultures

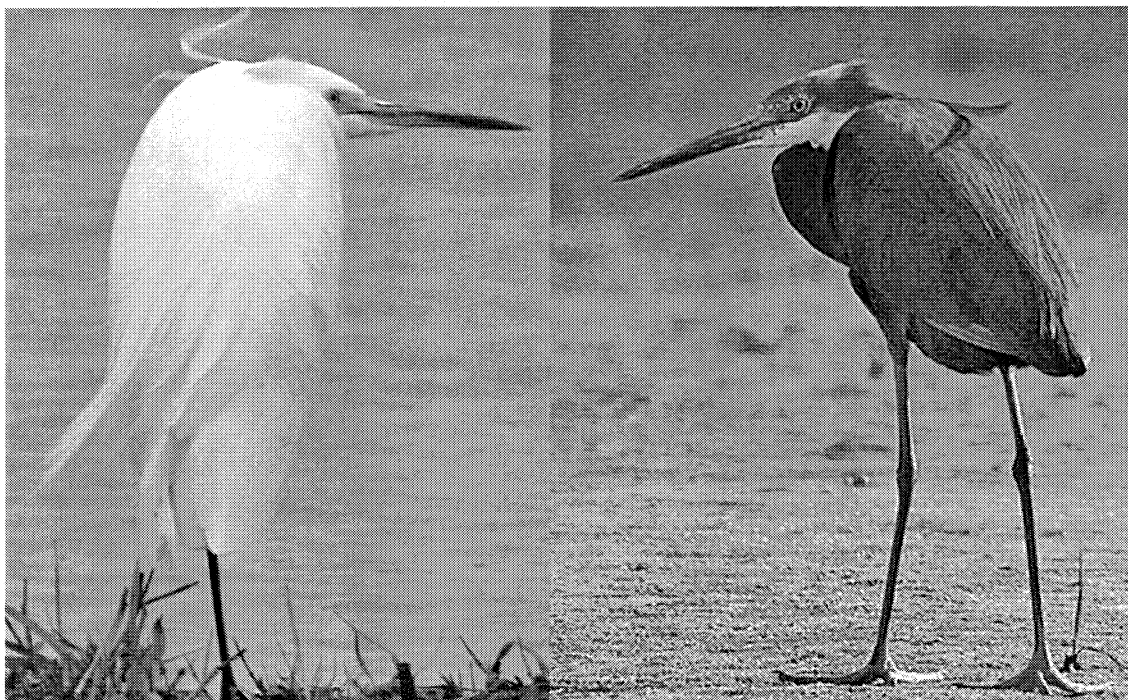
By Ulli Höger

The summer of 2006 brought an international birding highlight to Glace Bay, CB. June 26 Monique Vasallo identified and reported a dark morph, adult **WESTERN REEF-HERON** (*Egretta gularis*, alias Western Reef-Egret) from Big Glace Bay L. This is the third North American record of this old world species. There is a good possibility that the Reef-Heron was in the area as early as May, when George Crowell sighted an odd Little Blue Heron. The same fate (i.e. initially ticked as Little Blue Heron) befell a dark morph, adult Western Reef-Heron in Stephenville Crossing, Newfoundland last year. [Ed. Note – there is a strong suspicion that both sightings are of the same bird]. That bird supplied the second North American record after its true identity was eventually established by none other than Monique Vasallo! Small world. The first North American record dates back to 1983. Back then it took three months to figure out that this bird on Nantucket I., Mass., wasn't just an odd Little Blue Heron. Birders from all over the continent traveled to Cape Breton to add this species to their life lists. The heron was last seen Aug. 2 and two weeks later on August 18 was found on the Maine – New Hampshire border.

[Ed. Note – Perhaps as many as 300 out-of-province birders made the trek to Glace Bay to view the heron, injecting at least \$150,000 into the province's tourism economy as a result. Thanks are due George Crowell, Bev Sarty, Cathy Murrant, Monique Vassalo, Karen Chiasson, and Dave McCorquodale for keeping track of the bird, and assisting visiting birders.]

Initially there was little doubt about the bird's identity. However, on Aug. 22 the potential of a mistaken identity was brought up. It seems that the species status of Western Reef-Heron is anything but clear. Some ornithologists see *Egretta gularis gularis* (West Africa) as a dark southern morph (or subspecies) of the Little Egret, while others consider *Egretta gularis schistacea* (East Africa and Asia) as a separate species all together. Other experts grant the Western Reef-Heron full species status consisting of the two *gularis* subspecies mentioned above. Just to add to the potential confusion, there are white morphs of both Western Reef-Heron subspecies which are just as, or even more, prone to be mistaken as Little Egrets (if they are not this species anyway) or with one of our smallish white egrets or herons. "Happy electrophorsis" as one birder put it during the discussion (electrophoresis is a technique used for gene analysis), and maybe one day all this may be sorted out.

Berni Thorycroft described a vulture displaying fieldmarks of a **BLACK VULTURE** (wing pattern, head structure), seen by he and his wife July 10 at Dundee, *Rich*. The bird was seen again two days later in the area by a third observer feeding on a small carcass. □



This comparison shows, not only obvious plumage difference, but also the more robust body and longer, thicker bill of this summer's **WESTERN REEF-HERON** (here June 27) and the **LITTLE EGRET** photographed May 2 last year at Homeville, *CBRM* (and quite possibly the same bird that summered in 2005 alongside "our" Reef-Heron at Stephenville, NL). There has been much discussion of the status of the West African population of the Western Reef-Heron as a possible southern subspecies of the largely Eurasian Little Egret. The latter has interbred with settled vagrants of the former in Spain, but this is not generally a sufficient indication in itself. It seems that a good case can be made for "splitting" the eastern and western subspecies of Western Reef-Heron, but without genetic evidence, the "lumping" of the western subspecies and Little Egret has not gained full acceptance. [Photos Cathy Murrant]

American Bittern

June 3	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	2	KFS
June 12	Cheticamp, <i>Inv.</i>	1	BLM
June 16	Silver Sand Bch., <i>HRM</i>	1	HEK
June 17	Amherst	several	JAH <i>et al.</i>
June 17	Trafalgar, <i>Guys.</i>	3	BLM
July 5	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1	KFS
July 22	Schooner Pond, <i>CBRM</i>	1	SMB <i>et al.</i>
July 24	Highland Village, <i>Col.</i>	1	Valerie Meredith

Great Blue Heron

June-July	Conrad Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	several, fewer than usual	DMW
July 11	Windsor Sewage Ponds, <i>Hants</i>	1	JCT
July 30	Morien Bar, <i>CBRM</i>	40+	SEM, MCM

WURDEMANN'S HERON

July 1	Bayport, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH
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Great Egret

July 8	Melbourne, <i>Yar.</i>	2	Rachel Smith
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WESTERN REEF-HERON

June 26-Aug. 2	Glance Bay, <i>CBRM</i>	1 (dark morph)	Monique Vasallo
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Snowy Egret

June 1-5	CSI	2	MUN, JON
June 2	Sambro Hd., <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT
June 16-17	Silver Sand Bch., <i>HRM</i>	2	HEK
July 3	Brier I.	2	RBS
July 30	CSI	1	JAH <i>et al.</i>

Little Blue Heron

June 23	CSI	1	JON
July 2	Pickneys Pt., <i>Shel.</i>	1	PRG

Tricolored Heron

June 27-July 1	Brooklyn, <i>Lun.</i>	1	AND, JAH
July 8-12	Martinique Bch., <i>HRM</i>	2	TEP, HAT, BBU

Cattle Egret

June 9	Pubnico, <i>Yar.</i>	1	MUN
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Green Heron

June 10	CSI	1	MUN
June 16	Martinique Bch., <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT
June 18-19	Bayport, <i>Lun.</i>	1	ELM, RMA

Black-crowned Night-Heron

June 1	CSI	4	MUN
June 11	CSI	2	MUN
June 23	CSI	7	JON
July 14	CSI	1 st juv.	JON

BLACK VULTURE

July 10 & 12	Dundee, <i>Rich.</i>	1	Berni Thorycroft
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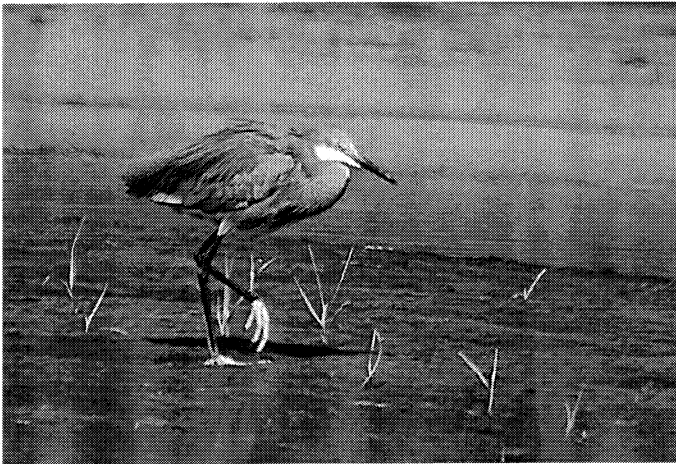
Turkey Vulture

June 6	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1	KFS
July 3	Halls Hbr., <i>Kings</i>	1	Mike McCall
July 3	Brier I.	2	RBS
July 8	Clarence, <i>Anna.</i>	1	MCR

□□□

Western Reef-Heron

The bird of the year, and perhaps the decade, was this summer's **WESTERN REEF-HERON** at Glance Bay, and our photographers did themselves proud in documenting the find. [Top left, June 27, Cathy Murrant; top right, July 9, Bernard Burke; bottom left, July 15, Richard Stern; bottom right, July 29, Hans Toom]



Geese, Swans and Ducks

By Angus MacLean

Reports were scanty as one would expect in the summer months. BLUE-WINGED TEAL are scarce in the province but surely not limited to one bird! The pair of LESSER SCAUP at Three Fathom Hbr. in May apparently moved on. Presumably at such a late date the group of BUFFLEHEAD at Parrsboro would be summering birds. No RED-BREASTED MERGANSERS were reported but undoubtedly they were present as usual in their favorite haunts in Cape Breton if not elsewhere. □

Canada Goose

July 3 Sandy Bottom L., *Anna*. 17 (13 young) MCR
June-July Peggy's Cove, *HRM* 8 pr (++) young BLM

Wood Duck

June 2 Clam Pt., CSI 6 (family) MUN
July 15 Wallace Bay, *Cum*. ? NSBS
July 18 Pipeline Rd, *HRM* 1 BLM

Gadwall

June 25 Three Fathom Hbr., *HRM* pair SEM

American Wigeon

June 25 Three Fathom Hbr., *HRM* pair SEM
June 29 Apple R., *Cum*. 5+ KFS
July 15 Wallace Bay, *Cum*. ? NSBS

American Black Duck

June-July Apple R., *Cum*. 30+ KFS
June 12 Parrsboro, *Cum*. 2 pairs JCZ
July 15 Wallace Bay, *Cum*. ? NSBS
July 30 Second Peninsula, *Lun*. 85 JAH

Mallard

June 12 Parrsboro, *Cum*. 3 JCZ

Blue-winged Duck

June 30 West Berlin, *Queens* male JAH

Northern Shoveler

July 18 The Guzzle, CSI 1 JON, SAN

Green-winged Teal

June 25 Three Fathom Hbr., *HRM* 7 males, 2 fems., 4 young SEM
June 29 Apple R., *Cum*. 7 (6 young) KFS

Ring-necked Duck

June 29 Apple R., *Cum*. 7 KFS
July 15 Wallace Bay, *Cum*. ? (6 young) NSBS

Greater Scaup

July 19 Cherry Hill Bch., *Lun*. 8 JAH *et al.*

Lesser Scaup

July 15 Wallace Bay, *Cum*. ? NSBS

Common Eider

July 9 West Baccaro, *Shel*. 487 (37 young) MUN
July 11 Pond Cove, Brier I. 35 (19 young) JUS

Bufflehead

June 12 Parrsboro, *Cum*. 17 JCZ

Common Goldeneye

July 11 Green Bay, *Lun*. male JAH, DPO

Hooded Merganser

July 15 Wallace Bay, *Cum*. ? NSBS

Common Merganser

June 11 Holden L., *Lun*. 1 duckling BLM
June 22-Aug 1 Bear R., *Anna*. 5 MCR
July 29 Herbert R., *Hants* 2 broods BLM

□□□

Diurnal Raptors Through Cranes

By Ulli Höger

In June we received several reports of CHUKARS from the Bridgeville, *Pict*. area. From there they presumably spread in short time to New Glasgow. CHUKARS (*Alectoris chukar*) are an Old World species, introduced to North America as gamebirds in 1893. Since then they established populations in arid parts of the West. Birds found elsewhere are almost certainly farmed individuals released for hunting purposes. According to KJM the *Pictou* birds were released in the area earlier this year during dog trials, and managed to "escape". Good for the birds, not so good news from the environmental viewpoint. Such additions to the native fauna (same applies to introduced plant species) can have unforeseen consequences, and their release is illegal. A proposal by the National Wild Turkey Federation to introduce WILD TURKEYS in Nova Scotia was turned down in 2004 by the authorities. However lobbying to add a turkey season to the hunting schedule in Nova Scotia is still going on. Another group of gamebird escapees seen on and off in parts of our province are NORTHERN BOBWHITES. Several of those (four or more, *fide* JAH) were reported from the Lunenburg area this summer and from Falmouth (two or more, *fide* JCT).

Sightings of non-native game birds make me wonder if those "escapees" are illegal attempts to establish non-native gamebird populations in our province. Will we soon hear about the first Wild Turkeys successfully breeding in mainland woods?

Reports from Jim Wolford indicate that six of the BALD EAGLE nests in the Wolfville area had fledged 6-7 youngsters by the end of June. This was earlier than usual and likely connected to the early onset of spring this year. Two additional nest sites produced five more young in early July.

After a report of a PURPLE GALLINULE from *Kings* in spring, PKE's report of a possible sighting from Windsor in June may be related. However, neither report was confirmed by subsequent sightings. □



A few COMMON MOORHENS nest in the border region, and they are occasional elsewhere in fall, but this one at a pond at the E end Crescent Beach, *Lun.*, in early June (here June 12) was more unusual. [Photo Hans Toom]

Chukar

June-July Bridgeville, *Pict.* several KJM

Ring-necked Pheasant

June & July Lawrencetown, *HRM* 17+ DMW

June 2 & 10 W. Lawrencetown, *HRM* 2 males SEM

June 2 Three Fathom Hbr., *HRM* male SEM

Ruffed Grouse

July 2 Big Lorraine, *CBRM* family of 7 SEM

July 5 Bateston, *CBRM* 13 (2 families) SEM

July 9 Apple R., *Cum.* family of 4 KFS

Spruce Grouse

June 1 Powers Lake trail, *HRM* 1 BLM

July 8 Big Pond, *CBRM* family of 3 SEM, John W. MacInnis

July 17 New Hbr., *Gufs.* 1 family JES

July 18 Pipeline Road, *HRM* 1 BLM

Northern Bobwhite

June-July Lunenburg area 4+ JAH

July 30 Falmouth, *Hants* 2+ Lucy Traves, *fide* JCT

Osprey

Reported throughout the period from all counties in usual numbers

Bald Eagle

Reported throughout the period from all counties in usual numbers

June 13 Apple R., *Cum.* partial albino Mark Elderkin

Northern Harrier

June-July Middle Musquodoboit, *HRM* 1-2 VJH

June 2 Apple R., *Cum.* 1 KFS

June 9 Peggys Cove, *HRM* 1 BLM

June 13 Baleine, *CBRM* female SEM

June 15 Louisbourg male SEM

June 17 Otter Brook, *Col.* 1 BLM

June 25 Upper Branch, *Lun.* 1 MCR

July 5-6 Apple R., *Cum.* 1 KFS

July 6 Prospect Barrens, *HRM* pair BLM

Sharp-shinned Hawk

June 17 Apple R., *Cum.* 1 KFS

June 21 Chester Grant, *Lun.* 1 BLM

Northern Goshawk

June 21 Cole Hbr., *HRM* 1 DHH

June 24 Middle Musquodoboit, *HRM* 1 VJH

June 28 Port Williams, *Kings* 1 RBS

July 9 Apple R., *Cum.* 1 BLM

Broad-winged Hawk

June 22 Brier I. 1 ELM, AHM

American Kestrel

June-July Apple R., *Cum.* 1-2 KFS

June 12 Avondale, *Pict.* 1 BLM

July 3 Middle Musquodoboit, *HRM* 3 VJH

July 4 Catalone, *CBRM* 1 DBM, SEM, DAH

July 5 + 31 Big Lorraine, *CBRM* 1 SEM

July 8 Advocate Hbr., *Cum.* 1 BLM

Merlin

June 4 Wolfville, *Kings* pair JWW

June 25 Prospect, *HRM* 1 BLM

July 3 Louisbourg 3 SEM

Peregrine Falcon

July 8 Port Williams, *Kings* 1 RBS

Virginia Rail

June 18 Amherst Pt., *Cum.* 2+ JAH

Sora

June 2 Apple R., *Cum.* 2 KFS

June 6 Three Fathom Hbr., *HRM* 3 SEM

June 7 Pt. Edward, *CBRM* 1 Paul Bonnar

June 18 Amherst Pt., *Cum.* 3+ JAH

July 3 Scotch Village, *Hants* 1 PKE

July 31 Apple R., *Cum.* 1 KFS

PURPLE GALLINULE

June 22 Windsor, *Hants* 1 PKE

Common Moorhen

June-Aug. Fortress of Louisbourg 1 Becki Duggan, *fide* SEM

June 7-16 Crescent Beach, *Lun.* 1 Lise Cohrs, SJF

June 9 Brier I. 1 CAH

July 23 (since June?) Schooner Pond, *CBRM* 1 SMB

Sandhill Crane

July 10-19 Salmon R., *Digby* 1 KAA

□□□

Shorebirds

By Susann Myers

Southbound migrants were reported in typical numbers this season, but first sighting dates were earlier than average for many species, most by two to nine days. The only species to appear on schedule were Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs and Semipalmated Sandpipers, along with early reports of Pectoral Sandpiper and Dunlin, both uncommon in summer. Heavy rains in June appear to have affected at least some locally breeding species, and observers at CSI noted that full counts of shorebirds were often impossible due to heavy fog.

The unusually large peak of BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS remaining at CSI to June 1 were part of a major influx of northbound migrants brought to NS May 19 to 22 by favourable winds. SEMIPALMATED PLOVERS do not appear to have bred at CSI this year, but were present in their usual abundant numbers by late July.

PIPING PLOVERS had good breeding success on some beaches, most notably at Martinique, where HAT counted 12 juveniles in mid-July. Two pairs nested at Cherry Hill, fledging five young. As often occurs, extra adults (probably failed nesters from other beaches) joined the group there in early July. It is encouraging to receive reports of Piping Plovers at Glace Bay for a

second summer, after an absence of many years. An adult was apparently photographed on a nest with eggs this season, by a visiting birder (fide GEC). GEC notes that their reappearance seems to be the result of a graveled area that has developed after recent storms, and stricter enforcement of laws keeping ATVs off the beach.

The seventh consecutive breeding season for AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHERS at CSI brought good results. Two pairs bred successfully, producing five juveniles, while a third pair lost its three young for an unknown reason (JON). A single adult was found at Sand Hills Beach in mid-June, suggesting some scouting for further breeding sites.

Two of the most interesting sightings of the season were of GREATER YELLOWLEGS. Breeding in HRM was confirmed by BLM, who saw a demonstrative adult calling from treetops at Pollys Cove (near Peggy's Cove) on several dates, and found a juvenile there June 25. He describes the habitat as a shallow pond in fairly extensive barrens, ringed with bog and stunted spruce and fir. Breeding was confirmed in Pict. Co. in 1994 and 2002; hopefully, the Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas will lead to further discoveries of breeding yellowlegs on the mainland, in suitable level barrens and bogs with ponds. The other exciting news was of a Greater Yellowlegs with red legs, photographed by HAT at Martinique July 10. This red-legged form is an uncommon variant that must be kept in mind when birds resembling Spotted Redshanks are found in the province.

Breeding SPOTTED SANDPIPERS appear to have been affected by the high water levels in June; groups of adults were found together at several sites in early July, without young. Southbound RED KNOTS were seen in low numbers typical of recent years.

A record-early BAIRD'S SANDPIPER found by IAM at Three Fathom Hbr. July 7 may have been a failed breeder. Late migrants, Baird's are seldom seen in July, with most occurring from late August to mid-Sept. The juvenile RUFF spotted by CAM and ALM at Schooner Pond July 18 was a good find, the first one reported in three years in the summer season. Ruffs are rare vagrants in NS, with fewer than 30 previous occurrences, and can be easily overlooked.

SIS had the exciting experience of finding two dowitchers at CSI July 14 that he is certain were not SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHERS. He was within eight feet of them and notes that they had "extra-long" bills, were much darker overall than the Short-billeds in the vicinity and were behaving differently. While large numbers of Short-billeds were probing busily on the mudflats, these two were picking at the surface in a dryer area on the upper beach, within about eight feet of beach grasses. Calls were not heard, however, and dowitchers are notoriously difficult to identify to species. This would be a record-early date for Long-billed Dowitcher in NS, and SIS notes that he and BJS plan to be vigilant in documenting future evidence of early Long-billeds on CSI.□

Black-bellied Plover				July 31	Conrad Bch., HRM	50	DMW	
June 1	The Hawk, CSI	ca. 600	MUN					
June 2	Conrad Bch., HRM	2	SEM					
June 4	Three Fathom Hbr., HRM	7 alt., 1 imm.	SEM					
June 5	Windsor Causeway, Hants	1	JCT					
July 2 & 23	Pinkneys Pt., Yar.	1, 4	PRG					
July 6	The Hawk, CSI	47	JON, SAN					
July 11	Pond Cove, Brier I.	1	JUS					
July 19	Windsor Sewage Ponds, Hants	8	JCT					
July 22	Cole Hbr. Saltmarsh Trail, HRM	3	SEM					
July 23	Conrad Bch., HRM	3	DOU					
July 25	Cherry Hill Bch., Lun.	2	SJF					
July 25	CSI	13	BJS, SIS					
July 30	Grand Pré dykes, Kings	several	JCT					
July 30	Morien Bar, CBRM	40+	MCM, SEM					
July 31	Windsor Sewage Ponds, Hants	74	JCT					
July 31	Conrad Bch., HRM	2	DMW					
Semipalmated Plover								
July 2	Pinkneys Pt., Yar.	1	PRG					
July 6 & 25	Heather Bch., Cum.	1, 50	V. Redden					
July 11	Pond Cove, Brier I.	7	JUS					
July 14 & 25	Cherry Hill Bch., Lun.	3, 69	SJF					
July 14 & 25	CSI	20+; 1,345	BJS, SIS					
July 15 & 22	Three Fathom Hbr., HRM	38, 260	SEM					
July 20	Wolfville Ridge, Kings	3	JCT					
July 22	Grand Pré dykes, Kings	ca. 40	JCT					
July 22	Cole Hbr. Saltmarsh Trail, HRM	62	SEM					
July 23	Conrad Bch., HRM some		DOU					
July 23	Melbourne L. Sanctuary, Yar.	10	PRG					
July 23	Pinkneys Pt., Yar.	60	PRG					
July 29	Pond Cove, Brier I.	100+	ELM					
July 30	Wild Cove, CBRM	3	SEM					
July 30	Morien Bar, CBRM	362	MCM, SEM					
				July 31	Conrad Bch., HRM	50	DMW	
					Piping Plover			
				June 16	Martinique Bch., HRM	6 ads.+ 6 juvs.	HAT, RIH	
				June 17; July 8	Sand Hills Bch. PP, Shel.	several; 2	BJS, SIS	
				June 18	Stoney I., CSI	1	BJS, SIS	
				June 26	Cherry Hill Bch., Lun.	3 chicks hatched	S. Abbott	
				June 27	W. Mabou Bch., Inv.	1 ad.+1 juv.	KAC	
				June 30	Pomquet Bch. PP, Ant.	2 ads.+3 juvs.	JWW	
				July 2	Cherry Hill Bch., Lun.	7 ads.+1 juv.	SJF	
				July 9	Glace Bay Bch., CBRM	1 ad.	BBU	
				July 10	Martinique Bch., HRM	20+ (12 juvs.)	HAT	
				July 19	Cherry Hill Bch., Lun.	1 ad.+ 5 juvs.	JRH	
					Killdeer			
				June 5	Queens	some	DPO	
				July 1-3	Brier I.	2 prs. with juvs.	RBS	
				July 2	Pinkneys Pt., Yar.	11 ads.+ 1 juv.	PRG	
				July 2	Cherry Hill Bch., Lun.	2	SJF	
				July 9	Second Peninsula, Lun.	15	JRH	
				July 11 & 19	Windsor Sewage Ponds, Hants	7, 6+	JCT	
				July 12	Frank L., Lun.	1	PMA	
				July 14	Sydney Airport, CBRM	28	RBS, AAM	
				July 23	Pinkneys Pt., Yar.	2	PRG	
				July 24	The Hawk, CSI	1	JON	
					AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER			
				June 5; July 2	CSI	1	JON, SAN; MUN	
				June 17	Sand Hills Bch. PP, Shel.	1	BJS, SIS	
				June 17	CSI	2 nests	BJS, SIS	
				July 6	CSI	2 ads.+ 3 juvs.	JON, SAN, fide G. Swim	
				July 14	CSI	2 prs.+ 5 juvs.	JON (haven't checked 3 rd pr. yet)	
					yellowlegs sp.			
				July 11	Windsor Sewage Ponds, Hants	3	JCT	
				July 15	The Hawk, CSI	25	MUN	
				July 30	Wolfville Hbr., Kings	9	JCT	

July 31 Windsor Sewage Ponds, <i>Hants</i>	2	JCT	July 30 Wild Cove, <i>CBRM</i>	33	SEM
Greater Yellowlegs			Hudsonian Godwit		
June 4 & 25 Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	4	SEM	June 25 Morien Bar, <i>CBRM</i>	2	CAM, ALM
June 13 <i>Queens</i> some DPO			July 6 & 8 The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>	1, 2	JON, SAN; MUN
June 25 Pollys Cove, <i>HRM</i>	pr. with 1 young	BLM	July 14 & 25 <i>CSI</i>	12, 22	BJS, SIS
July 2 & 23 Melbourne, <i>Yar.</i>	2, 11	PRG	July 22 Cole Hbr. Saltmarsh Trail, <i>HRM</i>	4 alt.	SEM
July 3 Pinkneys Pt., <i>Yar.</i>	17	MUN	July 23 Conrad Bch., <i>HRM</i>	3	DOU
July 8 & 15 Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	a few, 10	IAM; SEM	July 29 Pond Cove, Brier I.	1 alt.	ELM
July 10 Martinique Bch., <i>HRM</i>	1 with red legs	HAT	July 30 Morien Bar, <i>CBRM</i>	4 alt.	MCM, SEM
July 11 Martinique Bch., <i>HRM</i>	100	BLM	July 31 Conrad Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	2	DMW
July 11 Pond Cove, Brier I.	2	JUS	Ruddy Turnstone		
July 14 & 25 Cherry Hill, <i>Lun.</i>	1, 4	SJF	July 14 & 25 Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	4, 5	SJF
July 14 & 25 Cape Sable, <i>CSI</i>	18, 26	BJS, SIS	July 15 & 22 Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1 alt.	SEM
July 19 & 25 Windsor Sewage Ponds, <i>Hants</i>	1, 5	JCT	July 22 Cole Hbr. Saltmarsh Trail, <i>HRM</i>	1 alt.	SEM
July 21 marsh ponds, <i>CSI</i>	lots	MUN	July 24 The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>	18	JON
July 22 Cole Hbr. Saltmarsh Trail, <i>HRM</i>	90	SEM	July 30 Morien Bar, <i>CBRM</i>	1 alt.	MCM, SEM
July 24 The Guzzle, <i>CSI</i>	9	JON	Red Knot		
July 29 Pond Cove, Brier I.	5	ELM	July 14 Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	1	SJF
July 30 & 31 Conrad Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	1, 2	DMW	July 19 <i>CSI</i>	a few	JCZ
July 30 Morien Bar, <i>CBRM</i>	90	MCM, SEM	July 24 Gooseberry I. flats, <i>Shel.</i>	19	JQA, <i>fide</i> SJF
Lesser Yellowlegs			July 25 <i>CSI</i>	22	BJS, SIS
June 12 Conrad Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	3	DMW	July 30 Morien Bar, <i>CBRM</i>	7 alt.	MCM, SEM
June 25 Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	19	SEM	Sanderling		
June 29 The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>	3	JON, SAN, <i>fide</i> G. Swim	June 18 & 28 Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	1 basic	SJF
July 7 & 15 Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	180+, 175	IAM; SEM	July 14 & 25 <i>CSI</i>	16, 15	BJS, SIS
July 11 Pond Cove, Brier I.	3	JUS	July 16 Martinique Bch., <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT
July 11 Martinique Bch., <i>HRM</i>	50	BLM	July 20 Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	24	SJF
July 19 & 25 Windsor Sewage Ponds, <i>Hants</i>	6+, 11	JCT	July 24 The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>	50	JON
July 21 marsh ponds, <i>CSI</i>	lots	MUN	July 31 Conrad Bch., <i>HRM</i>	16	DMW
July 22 Cole Hbr. Saltmarsh Trail, <i>HRM</i>	147	SEM	"peeps"		
July 23 Melbourne, <i>Yar.</i>	4	PRG	July 19 Grand Pré, <i>Kings</i>	ca. 1200	JCT
July 24 The Guzzle, <i>CSI</i>	29	JON	July 19 Windsor Causeway, <i>Hants</i>	1500-2000	JCT
July 25 Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	1	SJF	July 25 Windsor Causeway, <i>Hants</i>	13-15,000	JCT
July 29 Pond Cove, Brier I.	20	ELM	July 27 Sand Hills Bch. PP, <i>Shel.</i>	120	RMC
July 30 Morien Bar, <i>CBRM</i>	160	MCM, SEM	July 31 Windsor Sewage Ponds, <i>Hants</i>	32	JCT
Solitary Sandpiper			Semipalmated Sandpiper		
July 11 Aspy Bay, <i>Vic.</i>	2	FMC	June 4 Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1	SEM
July 27-31 Conrads I, L. Rose Bay, <i>Lun.</i>	1	DAW, JAH	July 6 The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>	150	JON, SAN
Willet			July 7 Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	a few	IAM
June 2 Conrad Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	5	SEM	July 10 Martinique Bch., <i>HRM</i>	30+	HAT
June 4 & 25 Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	2, 6	SEM	July 11 Pond Cove, Brier I.	49	JUS
June 10 <i>Queens</i> some DPO			July 11 The Guzzle, Long I., <i>Kings</i>	44	JCT
June 16 Silver Sands Bch.	12-16	HEK	July 11 Evangeline Bch., <i>Kings</i>	225-250	JCT <i>et al.</i>
June 17 Sand Hills Bch. PP, <i>Shel.</i>	12-15	BJS, SIS	July 14 & 25 Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	58, 30	SJF
June 18 Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	13	SJF	July 14 & 25 <i>CSI</i>	1,100; 3,385	BJS, SIS
July 2 & 25 Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	22, 24	SJF	July 15 & 22 Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	33, 415	SEM
July 3 & 31 Conrad Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	6,8	DMW	July 19 The Guzzle, Long I., <i>Kings</i>	ca. 1200	JCT
July 8 Sand Hills Bch. PP, <i>Shel.</i>	21	BJS, SIS	July 23 Pinkneys Pt., <i>Yar.</i>	80	PRG
July 12 Goose Pt., <i>Shel.</i>	10-15	BJS, SIS	July 29 Pond Cove, Brier I.	1300 ads.	ELM
July 14 & 25 Cape Sable, <i>CSI</i>	43, 48	BJS, SIS	July 30 Morien Bar, <i>CBRM</i>	144	MCM, SEM
July 15 & 22 Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	106, 52	SEM	July 31 Conrad Beach, <i>HRM</i>	29	DMW
July 22 Cole Hbr. Saltmarsh Trail, <i>HRM</i>	138	SEM			
July 23 Melbourne, <i>Yar.</i>	1 ad., 2 juvs.	PRG			
July 23 Pinkneys Pt., <i>Yar.</i>	1 ad., 2 juvs.	PRG			
July 29 Pond Cove, Brier I.	5	ELM			
July 30 Wolfville Hbr., <i>Kings</i>	5	JCT			
July 30 Morien Bar, <i>CBRM</i>	68	MCM, SEM			
Spotted Sandpiper					
June 3 Oakfield PP, <i>HRM</i>	3 prs.	TBP			
June 6-July 31 11 locations, widespread	1 - 2	var. obs.			
June 13; July 2 Baleine, <i>CBRM</i>	6, 5 ads.	SEM			
June 18 Cabot Landing Bch., <i>Vic.</i>	"lots"	FMC			
July 1-3 Pond Cove, Brier I.	4	RBS			
July 7 White Pt., Louisbourg	5 ads.	LAR, SEM			
July 8 Big Pond, <i>CBRM</i>	3 ads.	SEM			
July 10 Aulds Cove, <i>Ant.</i>	6 ads.	DJO, SEM			
Whimbrel					
June 17 Silver Sands Bch.	1	DHH			
July 6 The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>	29	JON, SAN			
July 14 & 25 <i>CSI</i>	20+, 14	BJS, SIS			
July 22 Schooner Pond, <i>CBRM</i>	1	SMB <i>et al.</i>			
July 23 Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	5	IAM			
July 23 Conrad Bch., <i>HRM</i>	2	DOU			
July 30 Morien Bar, <i>CBRM</i>	1	MCM, SEM			



This high-stepping SPOTTED SANDPIPER, soon to fledge, was a solid Atlas "tick" at Cow Bay, *HRM*. [Photo Hans Toom]

Least Sandpiper				June 29	The Hawk, CSI	100+	JON, SAN, <i>fide</i> G. Swim
July 1-3	Pond Cove, Brier I.	several	RBS	July 1-3	Pond Cove, Brier I.	12	RBS
July 2	Melbourne, <i>Yar.</i>	2	PRG	July 2, 14 & 25	Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	5, 17, 68	SJF
July 2, 14 & 25	Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	2, 7, 12	SJF	July 3	Pinkneys Pt., <i>Yar.</i>	300	MUN
July 3	Daniels Hd., CSI	3	MUN	July 6	The Hawk, CSI	2,000	JON, SAN
July 7	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	a few	IAM	July 8	Melbourne, <i>Yar.</i>	75+	R. Smith
July 9-30	9 locations, widespread	1-3	var. obs.	July 11	Martinique Beach, <i>HRM</i>	300	BLM
July 10	Martinique Bch., <i>HRM</i>	20+	HAT	July 14 & 25	CSI	3,490; 6,500	BJS, SIS
July 14 & 25	CSI	80+, 55	BJS, SIS	July 15 & 22	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	791, 400	SEM
July 29	Pond Cove, Brier I.	175 (only 2 imm.)	ELM	July 22	Cole Hbr. Saltmarsh Trail, <i>HRM</i>	738	SEM
White-rumped Sandpiper				July 23	Conrad Bch., <i>HRM</i>	40+	DOU
June 4; July 22	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	2, 12	SEM	July 29	Pond Cove, Brier I.	ca. 300	ELM
July 30	Morien Bar, <i>CBRM</i>	2	MCM, SEM	July 30	Morien Bar, <i>CBRM</i>	159	MCM, SEM
Baird's Sandpiper				July	5 locations, widespread	1-25	var. obs.
July 7	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	ad.	IAM	LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER			
Pectoral Sandpiper				July 14	CSI	2?	BJS, SIS
July 23	Conrad Bch., <i>HRM</i>	1	DOU	American Woodcock			
Purple Sandpiper				June 21	Camp Road, Brier I.	ad., freshly dead	ELM
June 3	Port Morien, <i>CBRM</i>	1	CAM, ALM	July 15	Argyle Hd., <i>Yar.</i>	1	MUN
Dunlin				Wilson's Snipe			
July 25	CSI	2	BJS, SIS	June 5-7	Glace Bay, <i>CBRM</i>	1 on eggs	P. Bonnar
Stilt Sandpiper				July 3	U. Northfield area, <i>Queens</i>	1	JAH
June 25	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1 alt.	SEM	Red Phalarope			
July 15	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1 basic	SEM	June 22	off Brier I.	1 pr., alt.	SBA
July 24	The Guzzle, CSI	5	JON	July 2	Wild Cove, <i>CBRM</i>	1 fem., alt.	SEM
Ruff				July 17	off Brier I.	a few, alt.	SBA
July 18	Schooner Pond, <i>CBRM</i>	juv.	CAM, ALM				
Short-billed Dowitcher							
June 25	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1 alt.	SEM				

Skuas Through Alcids

By Eric Mills

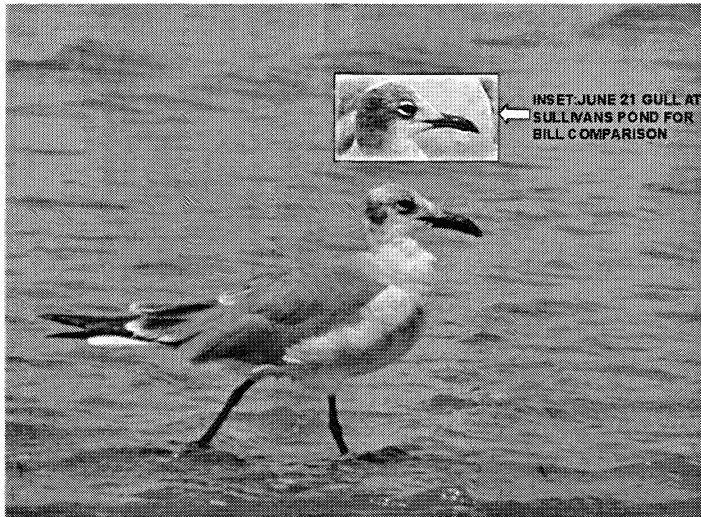
An obliging first-summer **LONG-TAILED JAEGER** two miles SE of Flint I., *CBRM*, June 13, was described by CAM and ALM as follows: "the Greater Shearwater were taking bait from us and the jaeger came in for a look; it called, attracting our attention. It flew around the boat for a few minutes. Smaller in size than the Greater Shearwater, cold gray, short bill, and loud high-pitched call."

LAUGHING GULL reports nearly doubled compared to the same period last year. This species is now so regularly reported that its rarity status should soon be cancelled. In a similar category is **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL**, which, as careful observation is showing, is regular here even in summer. A lone **GLAUCOUS GULL** well inland at Middle Musquodoboit, *HRM*, June 21-22, was decidedly out of place seasonally and habitat-wise.

First found near Donkin July 2, a **GULL-BILLED TERN** spent nearly a week in the area of the Glace Bay Sanctuary, *CBRM*. Although only three could be identified definitively, SJF believes that about 15 more **CASPIAN TERNS** were fishing around Gannets off the west end of Cherry Hill Beach, *Lun.*, July 25. **COMMON** and **ARCTIC TERNS** had a very mixed season throughout the Maritimes region. On Machias Seal I., New Brunswick, breeding had failed entirely by June 28, largely due to cold, wet weather and predators. Here in Nova Scotia, the Mahone Bay, *Lun.*, colonies failed for a second season, at least partly due to human interference. On the Brothers Is., *Yar.*, at the same time, TCD estimated 25-35% mortality of **COMMON** and **ARCTIC** TERNS, but relatively good survival of the sheltered **ROSEATE TERN** chicks in a record 67 nests. The success of the birds in the Wrights Cove, Bedford Basin, *HRM*, colony is not known.

A trip to Ram I., *Shel.*, (just E of Lockeport Hbr.) July 11 to confirm **ATLANTIC PUFFIN** nesting was highly successful: at least four young among 10 birds. Also present were about 100 **BLACK GUILLEMOTS**, along with **Double-crested** and **Great Cormorants**. □

Parasitic Jaeger				June 12	Margaree R. entrance, <i>Inv.</i>	ad.	BLM, Dave Tannahill
July 9	W. Baccaro, <i>Shel.</i>	1	MUN	June 19-21	Port Morien, <i>CBRM</i>	2 ads., 1-1st summer	CAM, ALM
July 29	Baccaro, <i>Shel.</i>	1	DPO, JAH	June 21	Sullivans Pd. area, Dartmouth	2 nd -year	BBU
LONG-TAILED JAEGER				June 22	Dartmouth sewage outflow	ad.	BBU
June 13	SE of Flint I., <i>CBRM</i>	1 st -summer	CAM, ALM	June 27	Dingwall, <i>Vic.</i>	2 ads.	Paul Lehman
LAUGHING GULL				Late June	Glace Bay sanctuary, <i>CBRM</i>	2+ ads.	var. obs.
June 5- early July	Pier C, Pictou	imm., continuing	KJM	July 11	Martinique Bch., <i>HRM</i>	2 nd -summer	BBU
June 7	Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	2 ads.	JAH	July 29	The Hawk, CSI	1	JAH <i>et al.</i>
June 11	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	ad.	DOU				



The strikingly flat head profile and monstrous bill of this LAUGHING GULL at Martinique Beach July 10 are most unusual (compare, e.g., insert of one June 21 at Sullivan's Pond, Dartmouth) even if it was mud-coated from probing. [Photos Bernard Burke]

Black-headed Gull

July 23	Conrads Bch., HRM	ad.	DOU
July 31	Conrads Bch., HRM	2	DMW
July 31	Morien Bar, CBRM	3	CAM, ALM

Bonaparte's Gull

June 5	Pier C, Pictou	2	KJM
June 18	Eastern Passage, HRM	2 nd -summer	ELM
July 2	Ballantyne Cove, Ant.	2 imm.	KJM
July 23	Conrads Bch., HRM	ad.	DOU
July 29	Daniels Hd., CSI	ad.	JAH <i>et al.</i>
July 30	Morien Bar, CBRM	ad. + imm.	MCM
July 31	Conrads Bch., HRM	3	DMW

Ring-billed Gull

June 5	Pier C, Pictou	30	KJM
June 18	R. Bourgeois, Rich.	1	BBU

July 2	Wild Cove, CBRM	2	SEM
July 30	Morien Bar, CBRM	12	MCM

Lesser Black-backed Gull

June 11	Sullivan's Pond, Dartmouth	1, 2 nd summer	BBU
June 27	Dingwall, Vic.	1 ad.; 1 4 th year	Paul Lehman
July 6-12	Dartmouth sewage outflow	1-3, 1 st -summer	BBU
July 26-31	Dartmouth sewage outflow area	1 ad.; 1, 1 st -summer	BBU, DOU

Glaucous Gull

June 21-22	Mid. Musquodoboit, HRM	1, 1 st -s.	VJH
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GULL-BILLED TERN

July 2 -ca. July 8	Glace Bay sanctuary, CBRM	1 ad.	CAM, ALM, var. obs.
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Caspian Tern

June 27	Dingwall, Vic.	2	Paul Lehman
July 25	Cherry Hill Bch., Lun.	3+	SJF

Roseate Tern

July 4	Brothers Is., Yar.	67 nests	TCD
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Common Tern

June 29	Wright Cove, Bedford Basin	ca. 200	Dusan Soudek
July 7	White Pt., CBRM	51 ads., nests	SEM, LAR
July 13	Port Hastings, Inv.	12 ads., 2 imm.; nests	DJO
July 23	Eastern Passage, HRM	14	IAM
July 30	Morien Bar, CBRM	20+ ads., nest	SEM, MCM
July 31	Conrads Bch., HRM	2	DMW

Arctic Tern

July 7	White Pt., CBRM	4 prs. Nesting	SEM, LAR
July 23	Eastern Passage, HRM	2+ with Commons	IAM

Tern spp. (Common & Arctic)

June 14	Brothers Is., Yar.	556 nests	TCD
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Razorbill

July 13	Cape Perce, CBRM	4+ prs. still present	CAM, ALM
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Black Guillemot

June 13	Wild Cove, CBRM	10	SEM
June 13	Lorraine Hd., CBRM	10	SEM
June 13	Louisbourg Hbr.	57 ads.	SEM
June 14	Kennington Cove, CBRM	15 ads.	SEM
July 7	White Pt., CBRM	15 ads.	SEM, LAR

Atlantic Puffin

June 5	Off Brier I.	Several	SBA
June 20	Off Flint I., CBRM	1	CAM, ALM
June 22	Off Brier I.	Several	SBA
July 11	Ram I., Shel.	10, incl. juvs.	Jane Alexander, <i>vide</i> SJF

Rock Pigeon Through Woodpeckers

By Ian McLaren

There were few reports of most species in this section; more insights may come after the season's atlassing is done.

Mention of a colour-banded ROCK PIGEON on naturens at Woods Hbr., Shel., led WAN to inform us of standard band codes for "homing pigeons," namely "AU" (Am. Union) or CU (Can. Union) followed by Letter (L) and number (N) codes, e.g. "LLLNNNN" – something to use in tracing wanderers. The province's 35th WHITE-WINGED DOVE (not recorded in time for the last issue) seemed almost ho-hum.

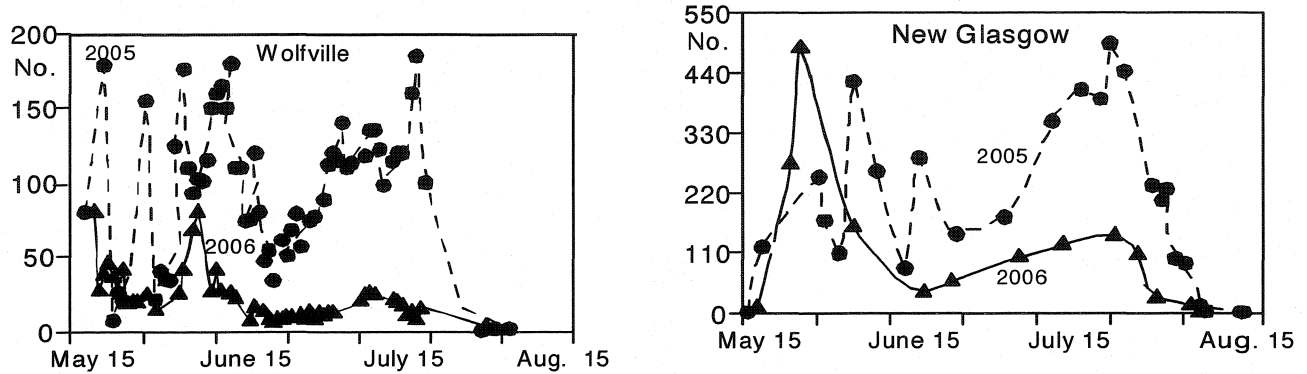
Atlassing yielded a flurry of BLACK-BILLED CUCKOOS in early July. A photo of a seasonally unprecedented YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO was featured in the local newspaper.

Owls seemed greatly under-reported, even for this normally quiet season. Among them, a BOREAL OWL that "around midnight . . . called for a lengthy period" (AAM) was very much outside range and habitat in rural Kings. Although not detailed further, the observer is familiar with their calls.

COMMON NIGHTHAWKS were almost unreported in June. Two of three in mid-July were rated locally "new" for the season, and there was clearly some flocking in late July.

The two regularly monitored CHIMNEY SWIFT roosts (nothing from Truro this summer?) reveal a striking decline compared with last year (graphs below). Spring peaks and lows were not greatly below last year's (the difference between Wolfville and New Glasgow not likely attributable to "Wilma?"), but the steady increase to high levels in July 2005 did not happen in 2006.

Does this reflect very poor success during the very wet breeding season? Is there also some local factor driving the lower Wolfville counts?



Nothing much can be made of the few reports of hummingbirds and kingfishers.

Fred Greig reported periodic visits by a male and fem. **RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER** to his Jollimore, Halifax, yard and it seems fit to record now that a fledgling accompanied them in mid-August – at last, the first evidence of breeding of this species whose range is expanding into Nova Scotia. Reported sightings of regular woodpeckers were paltry, but the previous spring reports gave no reason for concern. There was some discussion on “naturens” of tawny and yellowish underparts and limited white back markings on some **DOWNY** and **HAIRY WOODPECKERS**. Although these were mentioned as features of (sedentary) subspecies from the West and Newfoundland, staining from nest holes (especially poplar per CLS) and seasonal feather wear are known causes. A pair(?) of **AMERICAN THREE-TOED WOODPECKERS** was observed within sight of the Liscombe Lodge and meticulously described by a visitor to the province. □

WHITE-WINGED DOVE

Late May Sable I. At feeder ZOL

Mourning Dove

June-July 3 localities Singles, twos var. obs.
 June 26, Apple R., Cun. 1 ad., 1 juv., feeder KFS

Black-billed Cuckoo

July 2 Lochaber area, Guys. 4 calling KJM
 July 2 Elgin, Pict. 1 JEB
 July 7 Blomidon area, Kings 1 JCT

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO

June 26 Trenton, Pict. 1 window kill Dave MacLean

Great Horned Owl

June 10 Greenwich, Kings nest, 2 young JWW
 July 17 Great Village R., Col. 1 Valerie Meredith

Barred Owl

June 2 Middle Branch, Lun 1 MCR
 June 6 Palmetter Woods, Kings nest, 2 young AAM
 June 10 Millers Pt., Lun. nest, 2 young JAH

BOREAL OWL

July 1 Coldbrook, Kings 1 heard AAM

Common Nighthawk

June 6 Coldbrook, Kings “several” AAM
 June 5 localities 5 inds. 4 obs.
 June 17 Smithfield, Guys 1 BLM
 July 15 Argyle Hd., Yar. 2 MUN
 July 15 Georgefield, Hants 1 ROW
 July 15 Windsor 1 DOU
 July 27 Wilmot, Anna. 5-6 JOB
 July 31 Apple R., Cun. 1 KFS

Chimney Swift

June-July Wolfville * see text fig. JWW
 June-July New Glasgow * see text fig. KJM

June 1 Halifax 1 PLC
 June 3,4 Bear R., Anna. * 30+ MCR
 June 12 Middleton, Anna. * 27 JOB
 June 17 E. Loon L., Guys 2 BLM
 June 20 Middleton, Anna. * 36 CLD
 June 21 Lr. Sackville, HRM 1 PEL

Ruby-throated Hummingbird

June-July Widely Mostly 1s and 2s 7 obs.

Belted Kingfisher

June-July three localities. 4 inds. 3 obs.

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER

June 12 near Prospect, Kings 1 AAM
 June-July Jollimore, Halifax 1 pair, + 1 juv. FCG

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

June 4, 11 Apple R., Cun. male KFS
 June 17 W. River St. Mary’s, Guys 6 males BLM

Downy Woodpecker

A few mentions on naturens

Hairy Woodpecker

A few mentions on naturens

AMERICAN THREE-TOED WOODPECKER

June 11 Near Liscombe, Guys. male, fem. Barbara Carlson

Black-backed Woodpecker

June e. of White’s L., HRM pair + 1 juv. BLM
 June East Jeddore pair breeding LUB

Northern Flicker

A few mentions on naturens

Pileated Woodpecker

June-July Widely 8 inds. 6 obs.

Flycatchers Through Thrushes

By Hans Toom

A pair of **SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHERS** were found by STB and his family at Philips Hbr., *Guys.*, June 18. Several others from the area were able to view these visitors before they moved on. There does not appear to be any pattern to these visitations to the province as these birds seem to pop up everywhere. Last summer one visited Brier I. and the year before one was found on the south shore.

Cheryl Davis was atlassing in Shubie Park, *HRM*, July 12, when she happened upon a **WARBLING VIREO** nest site near the trail. A young bird was found sitting in a nearby tree while other young were being fed in the nest. As a bonus when the adult vireos went foraging, a female American Redstart began raiding the nest for "good stuff", such as strips of birch bark. This may be the first confirmed nesting of this species in *HRM*. Also while atlassing, FMC found and photographed a **PHILADELPHIA VIREO** in suitable breeding habitat in Sunrise Valley, *Vic.* This tough northern bird is at the southern limit of its breeding range in the Cape Breton Highlands. The song is very similar to the Red-eyed Vireo so it may be mistaken for its more common cousin and thus be underreported.

Sadly no **PURPLE MARTINS** were reported this summer. Competition from starlings or dwindling insect populations may be driving this desirable swallow to extirpation in Nova Scotia. It had been barely holding its own in recent years on the western edge of *Cumberland*.

The remarkable spring irruption of **BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEES** on Brier I. continued into the summer with groups of 100 or more spotted at Northern Pt., *ELM* reported, apparently all non-breeders.

A **CAROLINA WREN** was located June 25 by BLM off Paddys Head Rd. in the north end of Indian Village, *HRM*. This male was heard singing until July 3 but apparently did not find a mate. The spring visitations by this species are becoming more regular.

It was a good summer for **EASTERN BLUEBIRDS** with several sightings and a successful nesting in Lunenburg that was witnessed and photographed by many birders. The parents were observed feeding the young suet on a nearby shed roof. There were also reports from *Kings* and *Cumberland*. □

Olive-sided Flycatcher

June 13	Louisbourg	male	SEM
June 13	French Mt., <i>Inv.</i>	2 males	BLM
June 17	W. River St. Mary's, <i>Guys</i> (BBS)	4 males	BLM
June 21	Sherbrooke L., <i>Lun.</i>	1	BLM
July 3	Louisbourg	male	SEM
July 8	Big Pond, <i>CBRM</i>	male	SEM, JWM
July 8	Advocate Hbr., <i>Cum.</i>	2 males	BLM
July 11	Mid. Musquodoboit, <i>HRM</i>	1	VJH

Eastern Wood-Pewee

June 1	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
June 17	E. Loon L., <i>Guys</i>	2 males	BLM

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher

June 6	Mineville, <i>HRM</i>	5 males	SEM
June 9	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
June 13	Louisbourg	3 males	SEM
June 13	French Mt., <i>Inv.</i>	7 males	BLM
June 17	Mid. Musquodoboit, <i>HRM</i>	1	VJH
June 17	W. River St. Mary's, <i>Guys</i> (BBS)	8 males	BLM
July 4	Bateston, <i>CBRM</i>	2 males	SEM
July 7	Louisbourg	3 males	SEM

Alder Flycatcher

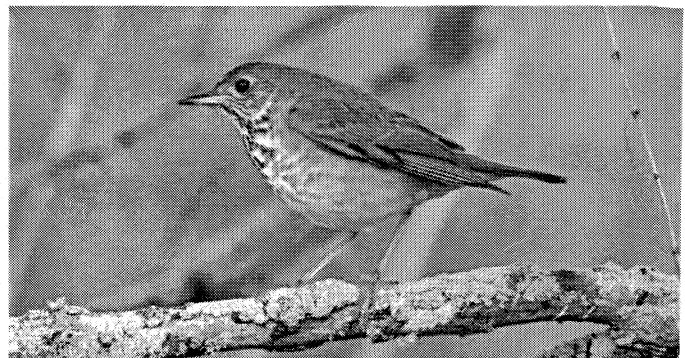
June-July	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	2	KFS
June 1	Mid. Musquodoboit, <i>HRM</i>	1	VJH
June 1	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
June 2	W. Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	2 males	SEM
June 2	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	2 males	SEM
June 10	W. Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	3 males	SEM
June 13	Louisbourg	10 males	SEM
June 13	French Mt., <i>Inv.</i>	23 males	BLM
June 17	W. River St. Mary's, <i>Guys</i> (BBS)	13 males	BLM
July 7	Louisbourg	2 males	SEM
July 30	Louisbourg	5 males	SEM

Least Flycatcher

June 1	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
June 17	W. River St. Mary's, <i>Guys</i> (BBS)	6 males	BLM

Eastern Phoebe

June 2	Greenwood, <i>Shel.</i>	1	SLH
June 16	Paradise, <i>Anna.</i>	1	Linda Hankinson



Discriminating **BICKNELL'S** from **GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH** is not easy. There is no doubt that this bird's cold gray flanks and other features, photographed June 6 on *CSI*, is one of that "difficult" twosome. It has features evident on the colour original that indicate Gray-cheeked, and particularly the more warmly coloured Newfoundland subspecies *minimus*, which has been found several times during early June on *Sable I.* It is quite gray, except for chestnut tones on primaries and tail; the pale section of the lower bill, although extensive, is fleshy, not bright yellow; and its legs are pale flesh gray, rather than dusky purple as in *Bicknell's*. [Photo Garvin Swim]



This PHILADELPHIA VIREO, photographed July 9 near Sunrise, Vic., was not far from the only site of confirmed breeding of the species in Nova Scotia in the 1986-1990 Atlas. Hopefully, more will be found this time 'round. [Photo Fritz McEvoy]



It has been many years since EASTERN BLUEBIRDS, like this one near Lunenburg July 6, have been found breeding along the South Shore. [Photo Hans Toom]

Eastern Kingbird			
June 12	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
July 9	Avondale, <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM, DOU
SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER			
June 18	Philips Hbr., <i>Guys.</i>	2	STB <i>et al.</i>
Blue-headed Vireo			
June 1	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
June 17	W. River St. Mary's, <i>Guys</i> (BBS)	11 males	BLM
June-July	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1+	KFS
WARBLING VIREO			
July 12	Shubie Park, <i>HRM</i>	nesting pair Cheryl Davis <i>et al.</i>	
Philadelphia Vireo			
July 10	Sunrise Valley, <i>Vic.</i>	1	FMC
Red-eyed Vireo			
June 1	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
June 9	Prince Arthur Field, <i>HRM</i>	3+	KGI
June 17	W. River St. Mary's, <i>Guys</i> (BBS)	32 males	BLM
Gray Jay			
June 24	Dollar L. PP, <i>HRM</i>	2 ads, 1 juv.	BLM
July 3	Louisbourg	6	SEM
July 11	Mid. Musquodoboit, <i>HRM</i>	3	VJH
July 21	Porters L., <i>HRM</i>	3	SEM
Tree Swallow			
June-July	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	10+	KFS
June 6-July 3	415 Conrad Rd., <i>HRM</i>	1-6	DMW
June 6	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
June 18	Bear R., <i>Anna.</i>	2 in nest	MCR
June 28	Bear R., <i>Anna.</i>	5 eggs abandoned	MCR
Bank Swallow			
June 6	New Salem, <i>Cum.</i>	2+	KFS
Barn Swallow			
June 2	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
June 2	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	2	KFS
June 4	Bear R., <i>Anna.</i>	5	MCR
June 14	Louisbourg	15+ nests	SEM
June 16	New Salem, <i>Cum.</i>	6+	KFS
June 16	West Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1+	KFS
June 17	Main-a-Dieu, <i>CBRM</i>	6	SEM
July 8	Louisbourg	27+ nests	SEM
July 11	Bear R., <i>Anna.</i>	5	MCR
July 31	Conrad Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	5	DMW
Cliff Swallow			
June 6	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
June 6	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	2+	KFS
June 14	Louisbourg	112 nests	SEM
July 7	Louisbourg	108 nests	SEM
July 8	Mid. Musquodoboit, <i>HRM</i>	16 nests on school	VJH
July 10	Mid. Musquodoboit, <i>HRM</i>	4 nests on house	VJH
July 29	Halifax Airport, <i>HRM</i>	150	DHH
Black-capped Chickadee			
June-July	Brier I.	100+	ELM

Boreal Chickadee			
June 13	Louisbourg	4	SEM
June 25	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1	SEM
July 2	Louisbourg	3	SEM
Red-breasted Nuthatch			
June 1	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
White-breasted Nuthatch			
June 11	Seffernsville, <i>Lun.</i>	1 carrying food	BLM
June 27	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
July 4	Wolfville Ridge, <i>Kings</i>	1	JCT
July 28	Cambridge, <i>Kings</i>	4 fledglings	Bill & Bernice Naylor, <i>fide</i> JCT
July 29	Hebert R. Trail, <i>Hants</i>	1	BLM
Brown Creeper			
June 2	Prospect, <i>HRM</i>	1 male	BLM
June 9	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
June 11	Chester Grant, <i>Lun.</i>	1 male	BLM
July 8	Advocate Hbr., <i>Cum.</i>	2 males	BLM
CAROLINA WREN			
June 25-July 3	Paddys Hd., <i>HRM</i>	male	BLM
Winter Wren			
June 1	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
June 2- July 14	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1+	KFS
June 6	Mineville, <i>HRM</i>	5 males	SEM
June 17	W. River St. Mary's, <i>Guys</i> (BBS)	5 males	BLM
June 25	Three Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	3 males	SEM
July 7	Louisbourg	3 males	SEM
July 21	Porters L., <i>HRM</i>	6 males	SEM
Golden-crowned Kinglet			
June-July	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	2+	KFS
June 11	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
July 3	Louisbourg	4	SEM
July 16	Mineville, <i>HRM</i>	4	SEM
Ruby-crowned Kinglet			
June 1	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
June 2-3	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1+	KFS
June 6	Mineville, <i>HRM</i>	male	SEM
June 13	Louisbourg	19 males	SEM
Eastern Bluebird			
June-July	Lunenburg nesting	pair	JAH
Early June	Wolfville, <i>Kings</i>	1	<i>fide</i> JCT
Early June	Gaspereau Valley, <i>Kings</i>	1	<i>fide</i> JCT
June 19	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	pair	KFS
July 7-31	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1-2	KFS
Veery			
June 3	Bear R., <i>Anna.</i>	1	MCR
June 12	Petite Etang, <i>Inv.</i>	1 male	BLM
June 15	Bear R., <i>Anna.</i>	1	MCR
June 21	Sherbrooke L., <i>Lun.</i>	1 male	BLM
June 25	Upper Branch, <i>Lun.</i>	1	MCR
July 3	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
July 16	Aspotogan Trail, <i>Lun.</i>	1 male	BLM
July 20	Clementsvalle, <i>Anna.</i>	1	MCR



A formerly more extensive colony of BANK SWALLOWS along dune edges of Martinique Beach PP has been reduced to a few nests in recent years. This adult on July 10 emerges with a fecal sac, wrapped in a membranous layer of strong mucus to maintain sanitation, especially important in a cavity nest. [Photo Bernard Burke]

July 29	Hebert R. Trail, <i>Hants</i>	4 (family group)	BLM
Swainson's Thrush			
June-July	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1-2	KFS
June 2	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
June 13	French Mt., <i>Inv.</i>	13 males	BLM
June 17	W. River St. Mary's, <i>Guys</i> (BBS)	24 males	BLM
June 18	Bateston, <i>CBRM</i>	4 males	SEM
June 22	Jeddore Oyster Ponds, <i>HRM</i>	1	LUB, KGI
July 7	Louisbourg	7 males	SEM
July 8	Big Pond, <i>CBRM</i>	4 males	SEM, JWM
July 9	Avondale, <i>Pic.</i>	1	DOU, KJM
Hermit Thrush			
June-July	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1-2	KFS
June 1	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
June 13	Louisbourg	6 males	SEM
June 13	French Mt., <i>Inv.</i>	28	BLM
June 16	Mineville, <i>HRM</i>	9 males, 1 fem.	SEM
June 17	W. River St. Mary's, <i>Guys</i> (BBS)	14 males	BLM
July 8	Big Pond, <i>CBRM</i>	8 males, 1 fem.	SEM, JWM
July 9	Avondale, <i>Pic.</i>	1	DOU, KJM
July 21	Old Mineville Rd., Porters L., <i>HRM</i>	10 males	SEM
July 30	Louisbourg	2 males	SEM

□□□

Mimics Through Warblers

By Ken McKenna

Early reports from the breeding bird atlas project indicate very few mimic thrushes reported. GRAY CATBIRDS were the most numerous and widespread. The June 19 report below would seem to indicate that catbirds start housekeeping soon after they arrive. NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRDS continue in lower numbers than in the recent past. A BROWN THRASHER with fledged young reported in early August at North Wallace by Dwayne Sabine indicates the bird was breeding in this report period and is the most northern report of this recent addition to the NS list of breeding birds.

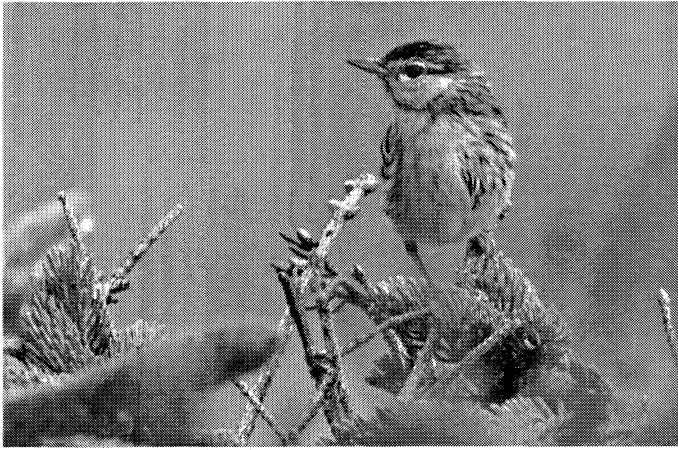
All 22 species of the usual breeding warblers were noted this breeding season. A good number of reports were received for some species, but it is hard to conclude a great deal from the observations. Once data collected on the 2006 BBA project is entered into the database, a much better picture of the distribution of our breeding wood warblers in the province will be available.

In the early days of June FMC noted TENNESSEE WARBLERS were arriving daily in the Sunrise Valley, *Vic.* and he wondered if this could be related to last year's outbreak of Black-headed Budworm. He heard 4-8 males singing in an area of less than two square kilometres. No females were located, but he felt the birds were breeding there. Elsewhere in the province this species was in quite low numbers. SEM noted they were scarce in Louisbourg this summer. MAGNOLIA WARBLERS were likely close to the most common warbler.

In mid-July, Cheryl Davis observed an avian theft as a female AMERICAN REDSTART helped herself to birch bark from a rarely seen Warbling Vireo nest in Shubie Park, *HRM*. The parents were away from the nest at the time.

On June 25, BLM heard a song suggestive of a KENTUCKY WARBLER at Polly's Cove, *HRM*. He originally felt it was a Mourning Warbler but it did not sound right. It would be quite unusual at this time of year to have this relatively rare species singing in NS and given that the bird was not seen, it would be hard to ID the bird with this slim evidence. □

Gray Catbird				July 8	New Salem, <i>Cum.</i>	3 males	BLM
June 19	Woodside, <i>Kings</i>	family group	<i>fide</i> JWW	Nashville Warbler			
Northern Mockingbird				June-July	widely	5 reports of 14 birds	var. obs..
June 5	Halifax	1	JCT	Northern Parula			
June 13	The Hawk, CSI	1	JON	June-July	widely	9 reports of 27 birds	var. obs.
June 17	St. Peters, <i>Rich</i>	1	T. Burke <i>fide</i> JSH	Yellow Warbler			
July 3	Windsor	1 singing at night, pair?	Joyce Norris	June-July	widely	8 reports of 19 birds	var. obs.
European Starling				Chestnut-sided Warbler			
June-July		widely	var. obs.	June-July		3 reports of 3 birds	var. obs.
Cedar Waxwing				Magnolia Warbler			
June 7	Seabright, <i>HRM</i>	15-25 eating holly berries	Eleanor Lindsay	June-July	widely	9 reports of 111 birds	var. obs.
June 7	Halifax	40	ANM	Cape May Warbler			
June-July	Apple River, <i>Cum.</i>	10+	KFS	June 1	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	2	KFS
Tennessee Warbler				June 17	W. River St. Mary's, <i>Guys</i> (BBS)	1 male	BLM
June 2	Prospect area, <i>HRM</i>	2 (1 singing)	BLM	July 8	Eden L., <i>Pict.</i>	1 singing like Bay-breasted	KJM
July 3	Louisbourg, <i>CBRM</i>	1 singing	SEM				



By midsummer the crisp plumage of spring warblers is becoming a little tattered, as on this male BLACKPOLL WARBLER, still on territory 30 July at Martinique Beach PP. [Photo Hans Toom]



An adult male YELLOW WARBLER carrying food, July 7 at Lewis Lake PP, serves to confirm a nearby nesting. [Photo Hans Toom]

Black-throated Blue Warbler

June 22	Chaswood, HRM	1	VJH
June 2	Queens	1	DPO
June 18	Bateston, CBRM	male	SEM
June 11	Chester Grant, Lun.	1 male	BLM
July 9	New Yarmouth, Cum.	1 male	BLM

Yellow-rumped Warbler

June-July widely 12 reports of 57 birds var. obs.

Black-throated Green Warbler

June-July widely 7 reports of 27 birds var. obs.

Blackburnian Warbler

June-July 4 reports of 14 birds var. obs.

Palm Warbler

June-July widely 7 reports of 17 birds var. obs.

Bay-breasted Warbler

June 1	Queens	1	DPO
June 17	W. River St. Mary's, Guys (BBS)	3 males	BLM
June 22	Chaswood, HRM	male singing	VJH
July 13	Pipeline Rd, HRM	1 male	BLM
July 8	Big Pond, CBRM	male	SEM, JWM

Blackpoll Warbler

June 6	Three Fathom Hbr., HRM	2 males	SEM
June 13	French Mt., Inv.	5 males	BLM
June 17 & July 31	Louisbourg	2 males	SEM

Black-and-white Warbler

June-July widely 8 reports of 23 birds var. obs.

American Redstart

June-July widely 8 reports of 43 birds var. obs.

Ovenbird

June 3	Palmer Woods, Kings	25	AAM
June-July	widely	8 reports of 24 birds	var. obs.

Northern Waterthrush

June 3	Palmer Woods, Kings	2	"low number"	AAM
June-July	widely	3 reports of 3 birds	var. obs.	

KENTUCKY WARBLER

June 25 Pollys Cove, HRM 1 heard only BLM

Mourning Warbler

June 3 South Victoria spring arrival BSK
June-July widely 10 reports of 27 birds var. obs.

Common Yellowthroat

June-July widely 11 reports of 68 birds var. obs.

Wilson's Warbler

June 6	Three Fathom Hbr., HRM	male	SEM
June 13	Louisbourg	male	SEM
June 17	W W. River St. Mary's, Guys (BBS)	1 male	BLM

Canada Warbler

June 3	Palmer Woods, Kings	2-3	AAM
June 5	Louis Head Bch., Shel.	1	Gloria Gilbert
June 8	Chester Grant, Lun.	1 male	BLM
June 11	Queens	1	DPO
June 24	Mines R., HRM	1 male	BLM
July 3	Minesville Rd., HRM	male	DHH

□□□

Tanagers Through House Sparrows

By David B. McCorquodale

Along the Mira R. in early June, Mark Sajatovich observed a male SUMMER Tanager and provided a good description to SEM.

CHIPPING SPARROWS seemed scarce to BLM on the mainland and as usual they were scarce on CBI. Both SAVANNAH and NELSON'S SHARP-TAILED SPARROWS were widespread on beaches, grassy dunes and nearby *Spartina* marshes.

Most of us see FOX SPARROWS at feeders during spring migration, but not in nesting habitat through the summer. This summer reasonable numbers were reported in their nesting areas in the coastal spruce woodlands (from Bon Portage and CSI in the south to HRM and Louisbourg) and the windswept spruce-fir forests of the Cape Breton plateau. A couple of late migrant WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS lingered at feeders in Sunrise Valley, Vic. until the first of June.

A male NORTHERN CARDINAL and a male INDIGO BUNTING both spent some time at Blaine Spicer's feeder in Apple R. in June. Reports of cardinals in Cumberland and Colchester have been more frequent in the past few years, perhaps presaging nesting before the atlas project is complete.

Only two reports of RUSTY BLACKBIRDS were received, both from habitat where they would be expected to nest. Perhaps atlas fieldwork will provide more reports and a better understanding of population status.

PURPLE FINCHES were widespread and in reasonable numbers in June and early July. Several observers noted a drop in numbers in late July. Despite a reasonable cone crop on White Spruce and Balsam Fir in many regions, there was no influx of WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILLS. It is likely that good cone crops in Ontario and further west have delayed the build up here. □

SUMMER TANAGER

June 8 Hills Rd., Mira, CBRM male Mark Sajatovich, *fide* SEM

Chipping Sparrow

June 6 Milton, *Queens* 1 DPO
 June 21 Sherbrooke L., *Lun.* 1 BLM
 June 27 Antigonish 1 BLM
 July 7 Lewis L. PP, *HRM* 1 HAT
 July 9 Advocate Hbr., *Cum.* 1 BLM
 July 12 Dundee, *Rich.* 1 BBU
 July 16 Wallace Bay, *Cum.* some NSBS, LUB
 July 26 Black Rock, *Kings* pair Jackie Porter

Savannah Sparrow

June-July beaches in *HRM & CBRM* many var. obs.
 July 11 Pond Cove, Brier I. 2 JUS
 July 19 Cape Light, *CSI* many JCZ
 July 31 Conrad I., *HRM* 20 JAH, DAW

Nelson Sharp-tailed Sparrow

early June Cherry Hill, *Lun.* up to 5 JAH
 June 6 -July *HRM* several var. obs.
 June 17 River Bourgeois, *Rich.* 1 BBU
 Mid-June Prospect, *HRM* 1 male BLM
 July 19 Cape Light, *CSI* several JCZ
 July 31 Conrad I., *Lun.* 14 JAH
 July 31 Morien Bar, *CBRM* 3 males SEM, MCM

Fox Sparrow

June 13 French Mt., *CBHNP* several BLM
 June 13 - July 3 Louisbourg up to 3 males SEM
 June 16 Prospect, *HRM* 8 males BLM
 Mid-June Peggy's Cove, *HRM* 1 male BLM
 June 17 W. River St. Mary's, *Guys (BBS)* 1 male BLM

Song Sparrow

June-July widespread common var. obs.

Lincoln's Sparrow

June 13 French Mountain, *CBHNP* several males BLM
 June 13-mid-July Louisbourg area several SEM
 June 17 Amherst 1 JAH
 June 2 Prospect, *HRM* 1 male BLM
 July 2 Upper Northfield, *Lun.* 1 JAH
 July 3 Pipeline Rd., *HRM* 1 male BLM
 July 14 River Bourgeois, *Rich.* 2 BBU
 July 30 North Mountain, *CBHNP* several WAN
 July 30 Second Peninsula, *Lun.* 1 JAH, DAW
 July 31 Lower Rose Bay, *Lun.* 1 JAH, DAW

Swamp Sparrow

June 13 French Mt., *CBHNP* several males BLM
 June 13-late July Louisbourg ad. + young SEM
 June 18 Cole Hbr. 1 PLC
 July 2 Goose Creek Marsh, *Yar.* several PRG
 July 15 Three Fathom Hbr., *HRM* 1 SEM
 July 16 Wallace Bay, *Cum.* some NSBS, LUB
 July 22 Schooner Pond, *CBRM* 1 SMB

White-throated Sparrow

June-July widespread common var. obs.

White-crowned Sparrow

May 31-June 1 Sunrise Valley, *Vic.* 2 FMC

Dark-eyed Junco

June to July widespread common var. obs.

Northern Cardinal

June 1-2 *CSI* feeding young MUN
 June-July Brier I. 2 pair + young DAP, ELM
 June-July *Kings* several pairs var. obs.
 June 30 Apple R., *Cum.* Male Blaine Spicer, *fide* KFS

Rose-breasted Grosbeak

June 12 South Greenwood, *Kings* male JOB
 June 18 Cole Hbr. 1 PLC

Indigo Bunting

June 6 Apple R., *Cum.* Male Blaine Spicer, *fide* KFS

Bobolink

June 2 South Alton, *Kings* many AAM
 July 8 Big Pond, *CBRM* male SEM, JWM

Red-winged Blackbird

June-July Apple R., *Cum.* up to 15 KFS
 June 2 W. Lawrencetown, *HRM* 2 males SEM
 June 6 Three Fathom Hbr., *HRM* 8 males in 2 km SEM
 July 2 Goose Creek Marsh, *Yar.* many PRG
 July 3 Scotch Village, *Hants* some PKE
 July 16 Wallace Bay, *Cum.* some NSBS
 July 31 Catalone, *CBRM* ad. + young SEM

Rusty Blackbird

June 6 Pollys Cove, *HRM* 1 BLM
 June 13 French Mt., *CBHNP* 1 BLM

Common Grackle

June to July widespread common var. obs.

Brown-headed Cowbird

June 3 North Kentville 2 AAM

Baltimore Oriole

June Port Williams, *Kings* male Marg Russell, *RBS*

Pine Grosbeak

June 18 Cole Hbr. pair PLC
 June 17 W. River St. Marys 1 male BLM
 July 31 Catalone, *CBRM* 1 SEM
 July 14 Shad Bay, *HRM* 2 (pair) BLM

Purple Finch

June 1 Pembroke pair DMO
 June 1-July 10 Apple R. 10+ KFS
 June 1-July 10 Mid. Musquodoboit up to 10 VJH
 June 3 North Kentville 1 AAM
 June 6-July 3 W. Lawrencetown, *HRM* up to 3 DMW
 June 18 Cole Hbr. some PLC

House Finch

June-July Halifax some FCG, JOW, DHU

Red Crossbill

June 1 Aylesford L., *Kings* 1 AAM
 June 4-5 Apple R., *Cum.* 2 KFS
 June 8 Chester Grant, *Lun.* 1 BLM
 June 21 Franey Corner, *Lun.* 1 BLM
 June 29 Apple R., *Cum.* 1 KFS

White-winged Crossbill

June 18 Cole Hbr. some PLC
 July 31 Catalone, *CBRM* 3 SEM

Pine Siskin

June 1 Apple R., *Cum.* 1 KFS

American Goldfinch

June to July widespread common var. obs.

Evening Grosbeak

June 11-July 3 Apple R., *Cum.* up to 5 KFS
 June 18 Mid. Musquodoboit pair VJH
 June 17 Trafalgar BBS 5 BLM
 June 21 Franey Corner, *Lun.* 1 BLM

House Sparrow

June-July Brier I. some ELM, AHM

□□□

List of Contributors

Thanks to all of our contributors.

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□□□



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Weather Report and comment - Summer 2006

by Larry Bogan

Selected Monthly Climate Data - Summer 2006
Atlantic Food and Horticulture Research Centre - Kentville, N.S.

	Temperature			Total	Total
	Max (C)	Min (C)	Mean (C)	Rain fall (mm)	Bright Sunshine hours
June	22.3	14.0	18.1	222	137
45 yr avg	21.9	10.2	16.0	67	212
July	26.7	16.3	21.5	129	226
45 yr avg	25.0	13.6	19.4	69	231
August	23.1	12.5	17.8	65	234
45 yr avg	24.3	13.3	18.8	88	230
Season	24.1	14.3	19.1	416	597
45 yr avg	23.8	12.4	18.1	224	673

Look at the rainfall and total bright sunshine for June in the table above. Notice that we had our season's quota of rain in that one month. Note also that June also received only 2/3 of expected bright sunshine.

In general, it has been a warmer than average summer but that has been true for most summers in the last few years. This year, the low temperatures for the days were higher than the maximum temperatures. I certainly do remember a lot of warm nights in June and July. To illustrate this, I have made a table of the differences between the mean minimum and mean maximum temperatures and the long term averages.

- Differences Table -

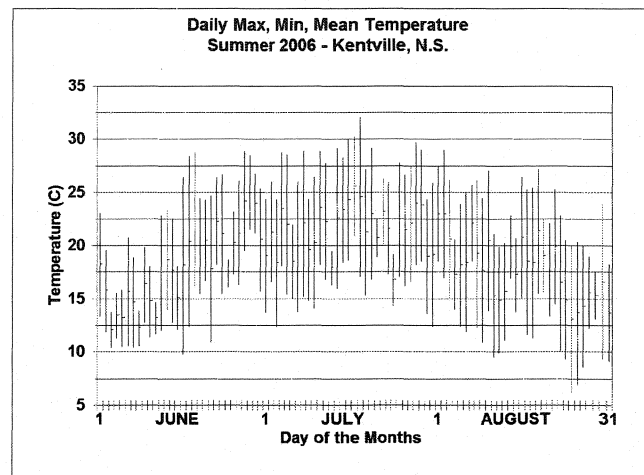
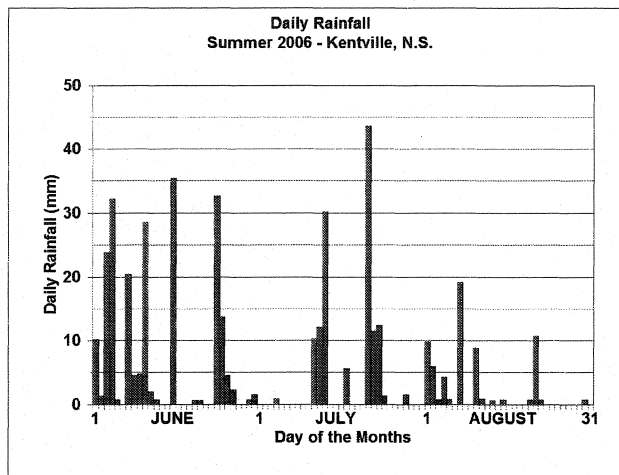
	Minimum Temp	Maximum Temp
June	+3.8C	+0.4C
July	+2.7C	+1.7C
August	+1.1C	+1.2C
Season	+1.9C	+0.3C

If the days are overall warmer then both the maximum and minimum would be equally above average but here we see that June and July had significantly higher minimums than maximums. As a result, on a whole, the summer season was warmer by 1 C mostly because of the warmer nights.

Warm nights usually mean humid or cloudy weather and we certainly had that. Rainfall in June was 3 times normal and July twice normal. Only August was 'dry' with slightly below normal rainfall. The whole season 85% more rain than a 'normal' summer. I have included the rainfall graph to show how well distributed the watering of our lawns was this summer. The soils on my property are droughty sands and my lawn this year is unusually green for late summer conditions due to the abundance of rain.

Very seldom have I seen such a low fraction of bright sunshine hours in a Summer month as we had in June. July was a bit below and August a bit above average in sunshine hours but by so little that they would still be considered normal in that category. It was June entirely that gave the season its below average (88%) of bright sunshine hours.

Now that summer is coming to an end we have the normal cool nights and warm days that I think of when I remember Nova Scotia summers. ☐



Conqerual Mills

10 June 2006, Leader: James Hirtle

Today was a write off in regards to my intended field trip. Four people came, but we were subjected to thunder, lightning and heavy rain. Birds were very quiet and I called it quits early on.

I took one of the group further along and we saw the Common Moorhen at Crescent Beach. It was out in the open swimming along and then went up on land on the other side of the pond. It went off into the wooded shrubbery area and if we had not seen it when we did it could not have been found again.

At Cherry Hill Beach there was a female black duck with a sixteen young bringing up the rear. There are about four or five Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows back on Cherry Hill now. In all only about twenty-six species of birds were observed.

Cumberland County

17 June 2006, Leader: Clarence Stevens, Sr.

Thank you to Clarence Stevens for a good outing and to Terry Paquet for his persistence with the Lincoln sparrow resulting in our great view of it. It was a grand day with myself and three others tallying about 56 species, plus a number that were heard only. The highlight of the day was four Black Terns.

I spoke to the man who lives on Victoria Street in Amherst that has the Purple Martin boxes. He only had three males arrive this year and thus has no breeders. A sorry state of affairs, and this could possibly mean the extirpation of breeding Purple Martins in NS. We'll have to keep our fingers crossed for next year.

Besides the Lincoln sparrow we heard one Mourning Warbler only. At Amherst Point, near the end of the day, I had a number of rails in view. I do not know how many as it was hard to count them. I know for sure that there were at least two separate Virginia Rails and maybe three Soras. The Virginia Rails and Soras were together or close by one another and the Soras were

scolding heavily. Two Soras were seen and heard as were two Virginia Rails at almost the same time. As per norm a number of American Bittern were seen. There was an Eagle there with two chicks, some Pied-billed Grebes with young; and a single Gadwall was observed.

-James R. Hirtle

Dawn Chorus on the Salt Marsh Trail 18 June 2006, Leader: Cindy Staicer

Ten people turned out for this early-morning field trip in the Eastern Passage/Cole Harbour area, on Dartmouth's outskirts. The route we took was actually the Bissett Road Trail, a rails-to-trails path that leads from Caldwell Road to Bissett Road, roughly parallel to Dyke Road. It is clearly marked in the [Nova Scotia Atlas](#) (2001). There is also a description and map on the Trails Nova Scotia site <http://www.trails.gov.ns.ca/SharedUse/hx066.html>. (The Salt Marsh Trail is the name of the part which continues on from Bissett Road to West Lawrencetown Road.) However, if you start at the Caldwell Road end, as we did, a large sign with map in the parking lot calls this the "Shearwater Flyer", with a western extension that leads to the Shearwater air force base. Rather confusing.

Unlike the Salt Marsh Trail, the route we took passes through the forested interior, crossing fresh water along the way. The level graveled trail is about 5 k long, sheltered from the wind, and lightly used. Three sturdy bridges, all built within the last year, cross the outflow streams of DeSaid Lake, Morris Lake, and Bissett Lake. There are also some boggy areas, and a cattail marsh around the Morris Lake bridge. This is an area of youngish mixed woods, with quite a lot of more mature hardwood in places. Many big conifers came down with Hurricane Juan, and have been rather aggressively "cleaned up" - no leaning tree anywhere near the trail escaped being chipped. This was the first time I've been on this trail, and I was glad of the opportunity to get to know it; it's worth a return visit. There are good parking lots at both ends, so some cars were left at each, thus we didn't have to retrace our steps. We met a few cyclists and one jogger later on in the morning, but no ATV's and no dog-walkers. We met at 0430 on a mild, overcast and foggy morning full of birdsong. Robins, Alder Flycatchers, Redstarts and White-throated Sparrows were already in full song; Mourning Doves, Crows, Magnolia Warblers, and Song Sparrows started soon after. The fog horn (from Devil's Island?) began about 5 a.m. Sunrise was at 5:29. One man who had at first parked at the Salt Marsh Trail parking lot on Bissett Road reported that it had been full of fireflies around 4 a.m! I wish I'd seen them. The dampness highlighted many cup-shaped cobwebs in the shrubs, and the fog muffled the sound a bit.

Cindy Staicer led us along the trail, pointing out the songs of the birds as we heard them and helping us to distinguish the sound-alikes. Cindy gave a talk to the Bird Society several years ago, about her researches into bird song patterns. Some of the warblers, in particular, have a "dawn" song as well as a more familiar, and often totally different, song which is used most of the day. Those of us who do bird surveys need to learn those dawn songs as well, which aren't necessarily on the song tapes. This was a great opportunity for learning which I thoroughly enjoyed. The emphasis for this trip was on hearing the birds (what else could we do, in the dark?) but as the morning progressed we occasionally took time to actually track them down and see them.

We detected about 55 species of birds, most of which were seen by at least some of us. This included 14 warbler species :

Nashville Warbler	Palm Warbler
Northern Parula	Black-and-white Warbler (carrying food as it dropped down to a hidden nest)
Yellow Warbler	American Redstart
Chestnut-sided Warbler	Ovenbird (only one, and not seen)
Magnolia Warbler	Common Yellowthroat
Yellow-rumped Warbler	Canada Warbler (several of this elusive species)
Black-throated Green Warbler	
Blackburnian Warbler (great looks, as it sang right over our heads!)	

Highlights were seeing some of the birds of deeper woods, such as the female Pileated Woodpecker which Clarence Stevens Sr. found at work near the trail, and the pair of Pine Grosbeaks which were singing from the top of one of the tall spruces. White-winged Crossbills and Purple Finches were also heard. We watched a Ruby-crowned Kinglet singing, while its whole body shook with the force of its song. A Broad-winged Hawk, perched back in the woods, was the subject of much analysis, but we heard two more before finally having clear looks at them, circling and calling, over Bissett Road near the parking lot. We had several sightings of Hermit Thrushes, and their songs followed us for much of the walk. We detoured on a side trail to a boggy area where we saw a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher as well as a Hermit Thrush. A bold Swamp Sparrow completely ignored us while sitting at the edge of a wetland alongside the main trail, and singing in full view. Olive-sided Flycatchers were heard several times, as were Swainson's Thrushes, and a Rose-breasted Grosbeak, but I don't think these last three species were seen.

I was particularly impressed with the number of Winter Wrens and Canada Warblers which we heard. In fact at some points along the trail the wrens drowned out everything else, and it seemed as though other birds only sang when the wrens briefly stopped. As Cindy remarked in sympathy with the other birds, "It must be tough to have a Winter Wren in your territory, because you can't just sing when you want to!" We found at least five Canada Warblers along the route - there seemed to be one near every bridge.

One of the most lively spots was about 2 kilometres from our starting point on Caldwell Road. Here two bridges (Morris Lake and Bisset Lake) are within sight of one another, and that short stretch between them seemed particularly productive.

Wild Irises, Lambkill, Yellow Water Lilies and Blue Toadflax were just coming into bloom, the first I have seen this year. Leszek Borkowski spotted some sweet, ripe wild strawberries - a sure sign of summer - and shared them with me. Lichens were abundant, including several *Usnea* species, which don't tolerate air pollution well. Cindy pointed out some *Usnea strigosa*, which she said is particularly sensitive to pollution and so an indicator of air quality; it was quite common growing on Red Maples along the trail. Years ago when I learned to identify this lichen, the leader commented that the distinctive disc-shaped fruiting bodies were like little flying saucers, so I have thought of it as "Flying Saucer Lichen" ever since.

Mammals seen included a Red Fox, a Snowshoe Hare, and a number of Red Squirrels; there were Deer tracks in several places. We didn't see another human being for almost three hours.

-Patricia L. Chalmers

Wallace Bay 16 July 2006, Leader: Paul MacDonald

Eight of us met at the government wharf in Wallace and decided, first off, to look for some Cliff Swallows. We drove to Drysdale's Meats where we got a nice, but not close up view of some of these rare Nova Scotia nesters.

We next headed down towards the Wallace bridge look-off. There was nothing except a few dozen Bonaparte's Gulls, Willets and Yellowlegs due to the high tide, so we drove to the Wallace Bay Wildlife Area finding it very shady with all the grey birch. The beginning of the trail had quite a few fledgling Song Sparrows that drew our attention, maybe too many times. At one point, though, we came upon a bird that looked a bit different. I think it was a juvenile Yellow-rumped Warbler, but for now there is no verdict.

A few Pied-billed Grebes showed themselves and I accidentally flushed a Horned Grebe from the shore. Broods of Ring-necked Ducks were seen way across the water plus a single brood of Wood Ducks, but the looks weren't very good.

An amazing Sora was peeping away seeming not to care much about showing itself. It was one of, if not the best, views everyone had outside of the Sackville Waterfowl Park. It just would not stop making noise, plus it followed us around.

We finished the day with 30 species.

-Lucas Berrigan

Pictou County 29 July, 2006, Leader: Ken McKenna

At our new meeting place along the Sampson Trail, we had a great view of the MacLellan Marsh and the East R. of Pictou flowing through New Glasgow. Yellow Warblers were busy in the hawthorns, and we caught a sight of a large brood of Common Mergansers in the river. Alder Flycatchers perched for a scope view and Grey Catbird and Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were distantly heard just before we left for our second stop in Churchville. Here the skies opened and in the pouring rain all we could see were a Belted Kingfisher and a Great Blue Heron. We decided to change our regular route to use the rain time to drive to Big Island. We took the Mountville Road, and at the road's summit we had a very nice flock of mixed swallows including Tree, Barn, and Cliff. Also en route we made a little stop at a road-side pond at the old mattress shop near Coalburn. A Wood Duck and a brood of Hooded Mergansers entertained us in the rain.

By the time we arrived at Big Island the rain had stopped and we spent most of the rest of the day there. A total of 13 species of shorebird were noted - Least, White-rumped, Semipalmated, Pectoral, Spotted and Solitary Sandpiper, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Willet, Whimbrel, Short-billed Dowitcher, Ruddy Turnstone, and Semipalmated Plover. Bank and Tree Swallow were abundant and at the first turn to the island young swallows were on the gravel roadside giving great close-up views and nice comparison of juvenile Tree and Bank Swallows. Both Common Loon and Northern Gannet were viewed on the

Northumberland Strait. There were a good number of Common Terns, but only 4-5 Bonaparte's Gulls, although they were in full alternate plumage. Along wooded sections we were able to coax out a few groups of warblers including a family of Northern Waterthrush.

A brood of Green-winged Teal and 3-4 broods of American Wigeon were sprinkled across Galt Pond at Camp Geddie. Another mixed flock of warblers and kinglets were pished out of the roadside trees, including a Blackburnian Warbler, which offered nice views. Near the Presbyterian church in Merigomish Eastern Kingbirds were observed fly-catching from power lines. At our last stop in Egerton a Veery was calling and singing despite the 32°C temperature. The pond had a family of Ring-necked Ducks and a male Bobolink in the surrounding field. Thanks to the eight who stayed for the trip despite the poor forecast. The 75 species observed was a respectable total given that we skipped some habitats.

Point Michaud

19 August 2006, Leader: George Digout and Billy Digout

Yesterday was a beautiful day at Point Michaud beach for the annual field trip. 29 birders, including eight young adults, some new birders and visitors from Toronto and Florida saw a total of 47 species including 30 Ruddy Turnstones on the road, a Merlin stalking Sandpipers and seven Red Knots. There were 13 species of Shorebirds seen. All but two observers came to River Bourgeois afterwards for food and a lot of socializing.

-George Digout

Cherry Hill Beach

27 August 2006, Leader: Eric Mills

The weather was perfect, but the tide was not too cooperative for 15 participants in today's field trip to Cherry Hill Beach, Lunenburg County. Hot-footing it to the west end of the marsh to beat the rising tide, we found all the seasonally-expected shorebird species, including four Red Knots and a small group of White-rumped Sandpipers. A young Merlin kept them all stirred up, and after only a short time all the waders were off to roosts in places unknown. In the dune grasses we saw a number of juvenile and adult Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows, and on the way back, almost at the parking area, Dave Walmark, Dominic Cormier and Clyde Stoddart found a juvenile male Yellow-headed Blackbird. It proved a bit elusive for a few minutes, then emerged from the tangles of Beach-pea and Marram grass to give us wonderful views at close range as it foraged in the low vegetation.

Shortly before noon we moved on to the ponds along the Beach Road in Broad Cove, where Solitary Sandpipers had been staked out in the westernmost one. Two put on a good display, and we had the opportunity also to compare Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers at very close range.

After lunch at the Stevens establishment in Petite Riviere, some of the group moved on for some land-birding in the LaHave Islands, finishing with scans of the wader flocks along Crescent Beach as the tide began to fall. A lone Willet attracted our attention, and although it was hard to make a definitive call, it appeared in most respects to be a Western Willet. While we were watching it and discussing its field marks, a lone juvenile Buff-breasted Sandpiper appeared out of nowhere along the water's edge and by stages came closer and closer on the dry upper beach. At point-blank range, it was a lifer for at least some of the group, as the Yellow-headed Blackbird had been.

The annual Cherry Hill Beach field trip has everything - a wonderful environment, the opportunity to contribute to the welfare of the local mosquito population, lots of waders, and, traditionally (borne out again this year) some gratifying surprises. So it was again!

Editor's Field Trip

Power's Lake and Pollys' Cove

09 September 2006, Leader: Blake Maybank

There was but a modest turn-out for the inaugural Editor's field trip, but Suzanne sensibly suggested that it would have helped if the editor of "Nova Scotia Birds" had not forgotten to include the trip announcement in the magazine.

After our rendezvous at the White's Lake legion, we drove to the unmarked parking area for the Powers Lake Trail, off Hwy 333 between Blind Bay and McGrath's Cove. The weather was lovely, and we encountered several small flocks of migrant passerines, dominated by Blackpoll Warblers. A Warbling Vireo was the rarest bird we encountered, but the most appreciated

sight was the family group of Gray Jays. Everyone seemed to enjoy this trail, and it was new for everyone in the group, save myself.

Our second destination was Pollys Cove, just east of Peggy's Cove. Migration was light, but the scenery was superb, as always. A Bald Eagle and a Sharp-shinned Hawk flew by, and a Semipalmated Plover was a locally rare discovery.

A pleasant field trip, and I promise to advertise it next time. □



Parrots of the World: An Identification Guide, by Joseph M. Forshaw, illustrated by Frank Knight
Princeton University Press 2006, 172 pages, 120 colour plates. ISBN 0-691-09251-6

On visits to various warm countries I have been fascinated by the often spectacularly gaudy parrots, but unless I had a knowledgeable guide, often puzzled about their identity. This lavish book provides information about all of the world's ± 350 species of parrots. Forshaw is a noted Australian expert, who has written extensively on this subject. It is an *identification* guide, but definitely not a *field* guide. (It weighs 2.3 kg, and measures 22 x 31 cm.) The author's objective is to help people like myself, who encounter parrots in the wild, and also officials confronting the task of identifying potentially illegal importations of parrots. (Smuggling of rare and endangered parrots as cage birds is a serious problem).

The book has a magnificent colour illustration of every species and many subspecies, accompanied on the opposite page by a brief description and a range map. Almost all the birds are shown in life-poses; the pictures match my recollections of (for example) the characteristically different stances of cockatoos, lorikeets and rosellas. In a few instances species with very subtle distinctions are shown as study skins. In my experience, one very often sees parrots in flight, and then is left puzzled when they disappear into dense trees. The page of flight silhouettes of about 20 diverse kinds of parrots is therefore very useful. In addition, many of the colour plates include pictures of birds in flight, seen both from below and above. The information in the pictures is amplified in the text pages, with descriptions of habitat, status, behaviour and similar species. For every species there is also a list of suggested locales where one could expect to see the birds. In addition to the scientific and "standard" English names, alternative English names are listed, but no names in local languages.

I have only one complaint: the index is difficult to use. The index of scientific names lists both genus and species, but the English index omits group names. So when I tried to look up Hanging Parrots, I had to go to another book to find their genus name, *Loriculus*, and go to the relevant pages. The English index listed only Green, Yellow-throated, Olive-fronted, etc. Hanging Parrots – not very useful.

This is a splendid book. It will take its place beside my other books on parrots and other tropical birds, and will be browsed often. Sadly, I'm not likely to be able to use it to identify parrots in Nova Scotia.

-Christopher Helleiner

Birds of a Feather: Tales of a Wild Bird Haven, by Linda Johns
Goose Lane 2005, 19.95 CDN (paperback), ISBN 0-86492-430-5

"And to think that when I was a child, adults predicted I'd grow out of all this. That maturer interests would prevail. That a pet rabbit would no longer lope through the living room with a posse of cats. To give those people credit, one change could indeed be detected: the present day rabbit loped through the house with a hen." So begins Linda Johns' latest book *Birds of a Feather: Tales of a Wild Bird Haven* in which the author recounts her life as an artist and rehabilitator of wild birds of all descriptions.

For those primarily accustomed to enjoying birds through the spotting scope, Johns' work provides an opportunity for vicarious enjoyment of wild birds in a more intimate setting. Johns' light-hearted and humorous tales are, however, veined with seriousness that will be familiar to birders and conservationists generally.

Johns is an articulate critic of the many hazards which face birds, an expression made clearer by personal experience. In the pages of this book the reader meets Kiwi and Starr, unreleasable starlings, both victims of human action. Johns' account of the

rescue of Kiwi, in particular, is an indictment of a well-meaning, yet ill advised, attempt to keep a wild bird as a cage-bound house pet: "In a way, Kiwi was two-year-old fledgling...It was fascinating to watch him taking charge of his own life by making choices. Even what would have been a minor decision for a free bird, such as hopping onto a low branch to preen, was a major one for him."

Birds that fell as unnecessary victims to cats, or to impacts with vehicles, were often amongst the convalescents in the author's northern Nova Scotia home. Readers share the story of "Stella" the duck from Stellarton whose impact broke the windshield of an eighteen wheeler who, nevertheless, survived to return to the wild.

Johns' earlier writing is characterized by an ability to capture the symbolic transcendence that birds have represented across cultures through much of human history. This book is no exception. Further, she captures an essence of rural life and timelessness that is becoming rarer, both provincially and nationally. Of her own and her partner's experience in that regard, she concludes: "Both Mack and I have spent earlier years in cities – times that we consider now to have been a blessing. For by their very contrast, such memories keep us aware of our present good fortune, with nature's marvels all around us by day or by night."

Birds of a Feather: Tales of a Wild Bird Haven is a book which appeals to a wide audience, birders and naturalists, indeed anyone with an interest in nature. Johns' lyrical narrative is fast-flowing offering an enjoyable tale for readers of all ages.

-Jennifer Gerrits



On Aug. 24, 2005, Garvin Swim found a very messy, moulting meadowlark on Baccaro Pt., Shel., that was also seen next day and understandably reported as an Eastern (see Winter 2006 issue). Fortunately Garvin had obtained a photograph, but it sat unnoticed in his photo website until closer scrutiny revealed it as a WESTERN MEADOWLARK. This is only the second to be reported from the province, and the first to be photographically confirmed. Diagnostic features, indicated by arrows (and supported by Peter Burke, coauthor and illustrator of *New World Blackbirds?*), are: A) pale crown (darker in Eastern) and, below it, a thin eyeline; B) yellow feathering on malar area, which on the original is rich yellow at the back becoming paler in front (at arrow tip), and whitish at the base of the bill (party whitish malars are typical of females, but also of newly moulted males); C) new back feathering (arrow tip on a scapular) is brown with much paler margins, giving a 'frosty' look (darker overall on Eastern); and D) finely barred central tail feathers (bars broad and confluent in Eastern). [Photo by, and congratulations to, Garvin Swim]

(Continued from back cover)

Thu 22 Mar 2007 – Regular Meeting

NSMNH, 1747 Summer Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, 7:30 p.m.
Studying Swifts – Jim Wolford will give us an historical overview of the numbers and behaviour of Chimney Swifts at the Robie Tufts Nature Centre Roosting Site in Wolfville.

Sat 31 Mar 2007 – Baccaro & Blanche Peninsula

Leader: Donna Ensor 875-4269
E-mail: smokeytow@yahoo.com

Early spring birding with Donna. 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. Rain date Sun 01 April.

Sat 14 April 2007 – 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.

Sun 23 Apr 2007 – Wolfville Area

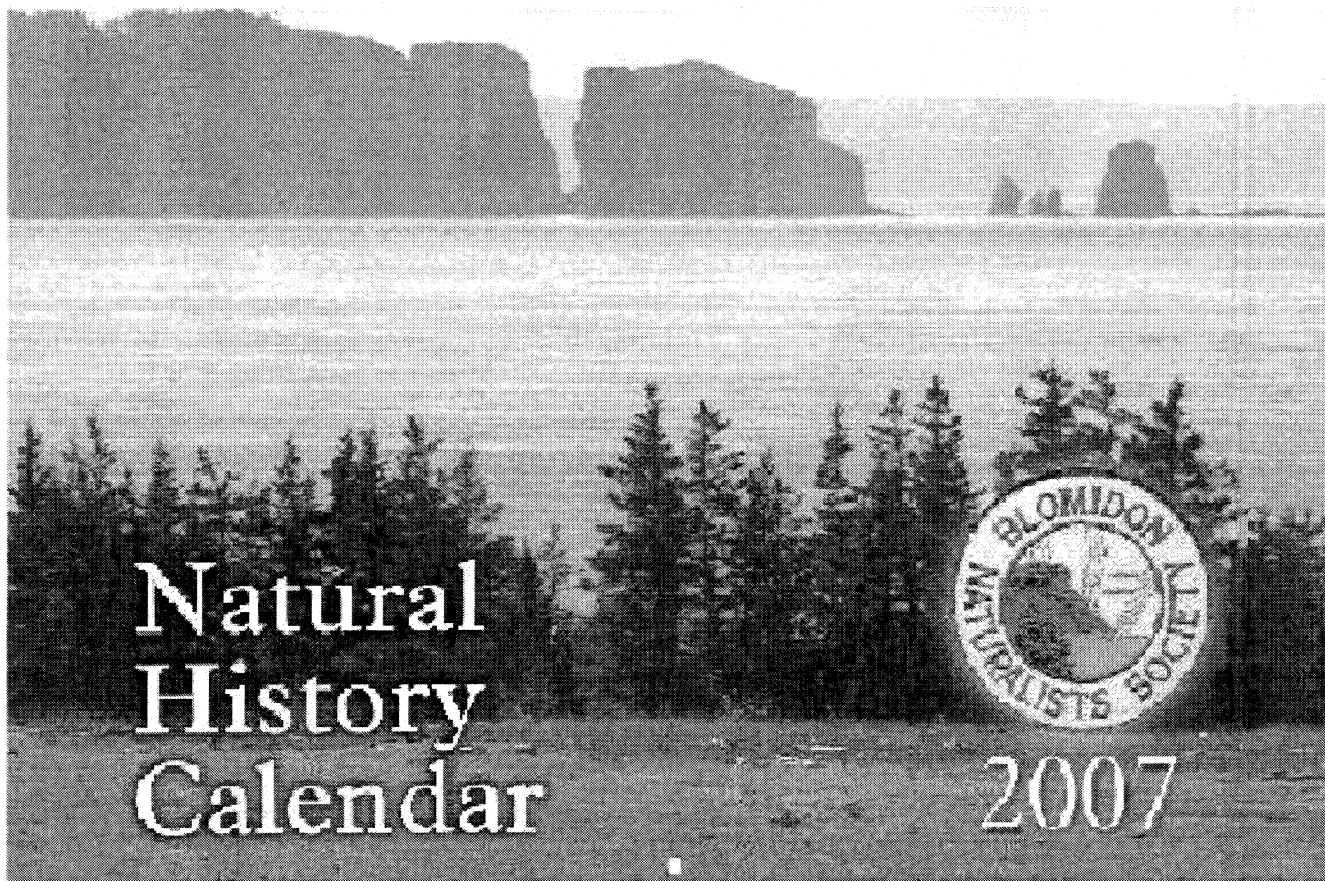
Leader: Jim Wolford 542-9204 E-mail: jimwolford@eastlink.ca
This will be a joint trip with the Blomidon Naturalists Society, pond hopping for ducks and early migrants. Meet at the town wharf off the east end of Front Street in Wolfville at 10:00 a.m. Dress warmly and bring a lunch. No rain date.

Thu 26 Apr 2007 – Regular Meeting

NSMNH, 1747 Summer Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, 7:30 p.m.
“Hawks – Up Close and Personal”. Christopher Hawkins will give a talk on using hawks to keep the airways clear at CFB Shearwater. This practice is essential to prevent bird collisions with planes taking off and landing. He’ll be bringing a couple of his hawks with him for you to meet and photograph.

Sat 05 May 2007 - Cape Sable Island

Leader: Murray Newell 745-3340
E-mail: dowitcher@esatlink.ca
Meet at Tim Horton’s in Barrington Passage at 7:45 a.m. We will bird the Cape Sable Island hot spots for spring migrants. Bring waterproof footwear and a lunch. No rain date. □



This years 2007 Blomidon Naturalists Society Calendar includes wonderful nature photos by local photographers and is packed with natural history information and tide times for the Minas Basin. The price of the calendars is \$15. They can be purchased in popular outlets in the Valley, e-mail harold.forsyth@ns.sympatico.ca, or write to Box 2350, Wolfville, NS B4P 2N5. Cost of mailing is \$2 for 1, \$3 for 2,3 or 4, and \$5 for any number thereafter.



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: suzanneborkowski@yahoo.ca

Remember 2006 is a "Big Year". Keep track of species tallied by county as well as by province!

Sat 02 Dec 2006 – Metro "Hot Spot" Birding

Leader: Terry Paquet 452-3622 E-mail: terrypaquet@hotmail.com

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Sullivans Pond and dress warmly. We will check local sites for rarities and unusual birds as a prelude to the Christmas Bird Counts. Great way to start your winter list! Storm date: Sun 03 December.

Sun 03 Dec 2006 – Cape Sable Island

Leader: James Hirtle 693-2104 E-mail: jrhbirder@hotmail.com

This trip, introduced by Murray Newell, is a great opportunity to get some rare and unusual birds on your winter list, especially lingering shorebirds. Meet at Tim Hortons in Barrington Passage at 9:00 a.m. Bring proper clothes, sturdy footwear and a lunch. No storm date.

Thu 14 Dec 2006 to Wed 03 Jan 2007 – 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 website: <http://nsbs.chebucto.org> or type the following website address into your browser: <http://www3.ns.sympatico.ca/maybank/other/ns.cbc.htm>

Sun 07 Jan 2007 – Sewer Stroll I – 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. No storm date.

Thu 25 Jan 2007 – Skills Workshop and Members' Slide Night
NSMNH, 1747 Summer Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, 7:30 p.m.

"Distinguishing Flycatchers" Fulton Lavender will give us some excellent tips on recognizing Empids and other flycatchers. 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 27 Jan 2007 - Glace Bay and area "Harbour Hop".

Leaders: George Crowell and Bev Sarty (849-5317)

Meet at 9:00 am at the Fishermen's Memorial Park, Glace Bay. We'll be checking a number of birding sites in and around the community for a chance to see our winter ducks and gulls, and to get out and enjoy a winter day.

Sat 27 Jan 2007 – 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 28 Jan.

Wed 14 Feb 2007 – Cape Breton Chapter Meeting

The Lyceum, 225 George Street, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 7:30 p.m.

Dr. Alex Mills of Cape Breton University will have us thinking warm thoughts with his presentation on "Studies of Migration of Canadian Birds to the Neotropics". This will be a joint meeting with the Cape Breton Naturalists.

Sat 17 Feb 2007- Sewer Stroll II – 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 18 February.

Thu 22 Feb 2007 – Regular Meeting

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

Viva Mexico! Blake Maybank will tell us all about the Maritime Nature Travel Club's trip to the west coast of Mexico in January of 2006.

Sun 18 Mar 2007 – 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 Cottage Cove, Annapolis Royal and Digby to the ferry terminal. Dress warmly and bring a lunch. No storm date.

(Continued on inside back cover)