

# Nova Scotia Birds

*A Quarterly Publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society*



**Summer 2009**

**(The Birds of Spring)**

# NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY

Executive 2008-2009



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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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Cover Photo: This SWALLOW-TAILED KITE paused briefly Apr. 7 in Truro. Fortunately, the photographer recognized the rarity of her remarkable find, and obtained several superb images. Only one of our seven or eight records of this bird has had (barely adequate) photographic backup. [Photo Kimberley Forster]

**NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS**

SUMMER 2009

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

ISSN 0383-9537. Publications Mail Reg. No. 09838.

Published four times a year.



Foremost, my thanks to Dorothy Poole for her comprehensive and timely compilation and analysis of the Doves through Woodpeckers section of our seasonal bird reports. I think she is stepping down to spend more time birding during her retirement, and who can blame her. Chris Field, a former President of the Bird Society, has graciously agreed to take on this section, and my thanks to him for agreeing to do so.

Corrigenda: In the last issue the photograph of the Summer Tanager was incorrectly attributed to Mike King, when the photographer was actually Etta Parker. Our apologies, Etta.

And my apologies also to Dave Currie, the Christmas Bird Count Editor. I tried to spice up his life by spelling his surname Curry in the CBC Report. Doing this is no way to curry favour with him...

See you next issue!

Blake Maybank  
Editor



This singing YELLOW-THROATED VIREO, Apr. 30 at Nichols L., HRM, was unlikely to have attracted a similarly "overshooting" female – but some day . . . [Photo Blake Maybank]

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



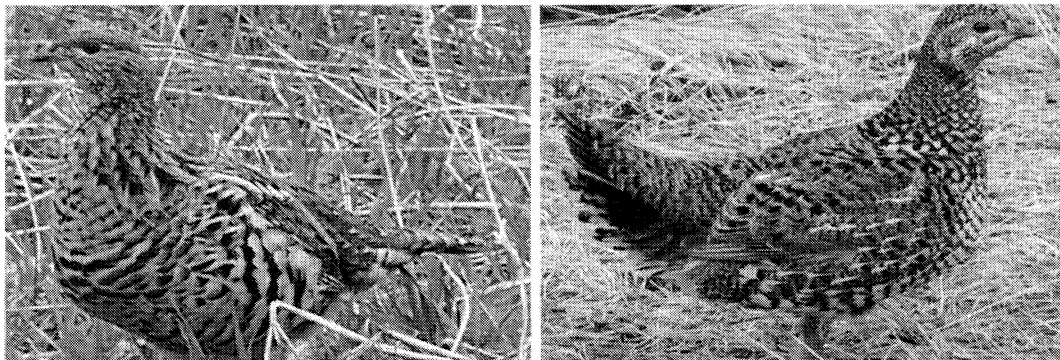
## Executive Nominations

Here are the nominations for the Nova Scotia Bird Society Executive, 2009-2010. Voting will occur during the Society's AGM, scheduled for 7:30 p.m., 22 October 2009, at the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History. Nominations may also be given from "the floor" at that time.

President: Patrick Kelly  
 Past President: Suzanne Borkowski  
 Vice-President: James Cameron  
 Treasurer: Sunetra Ekanayake  
 Secretary: Pat McKay  
 Membership Secretary: Ulli Hoeger  
 Director: Helene Van Doninck (Conservation Chair)  
 Director: Chris Pepper (Field Trip Coordinator)  
 Director: Terry Boswell  
 Director: Kathleen MacAulay  
 Chair, NSBS Sanctuary Trust: Bob McDonald

The following have agreed to serve for 2009-2010 and have been duly appointed by the Executive:

Editor: Blake Maybank  
 Honorary Solicitor: Tony Robinson  
 Honorary Auditor: Ruth E. Smith



Portraits of a RUFFED GROUSE (left, female May 17 at River Bourgeois, *Rich.*), and SPRUCE GROUSE (right, a year-old male with red over eye, at Apple R., *Cum.*) offer a useful comparison. The species can be distinguished at a glance in all post-chick plumages by the barred flanks on the former, and white streaked flanks on the latter. [Photos: left, Anita Pouliot; right, Kathleen Spicer]

## EXECUTIVE PROFILE

### Bob MacDonald - Chair, NSBS Sanctuary Trust

In 2007 Bob MacDonald became the Chair of the Nova Scotia Bird Society Sanctuary Trust and, by virtue of that position, an *ex officio* member of the Executive. Bob was born in Winnipeg, graduated from the University of Manitoba with a B.Sc. (Hons) and a M.Sc. in Chemistry, and followed that with a Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of Toronto. Bob met his wife, Wendy, while in Toronto, and they were married in 1972.

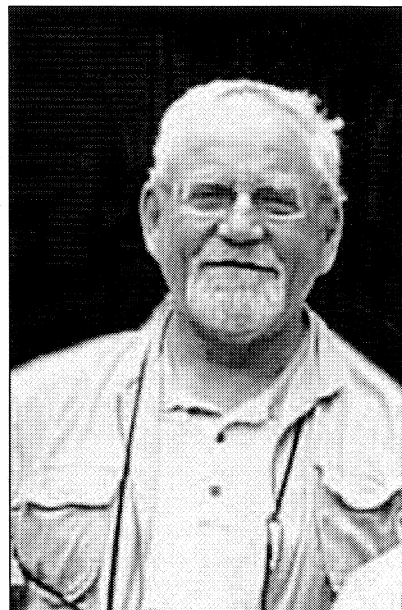
The McDonalds spent their first two years together in the U.K., in Cambridge, where Bob was doing post-doctoral research and teaching. It was there, in the English countryside, that they developed an interest in birding. They joined the Cambridge Bird Club and took monthly coach tours to various birding locations, many of them coastal. They later got a car and explored some areas farther afield, like Scotland, Kent, and Cornwall.

They returned to Canada in 1974 where Bob spent another post-doctoral year at the University of Western Ontario. He participated in his first Christmas Bird Count that year, went on his first visit to Pt. Pelee, and attended a field trip led by a much younger Dave Currie. The next year he accepted a job offer at Mount St. Vincent University in Halifax. One of the first things Bob did after he and Wendy settled in Halifax was to join the NS Bird Society in 1975. He's been an active member ever since, as well as a field trip leader and guest speaker. He was the Society's Field Trip Coordinator from 1986-88.

Bob is well known by many local birders and visiting Birding Pals. Many have been out birding with him. His friendly enthusiasm on field trips is infectious; and his generosity in pointing out birds to beginners is an understated fact. I should know: I'm one of them. Some will remember Bob from chairing the organizing committee that hosted the Nature Canada Conference held here in Halifax in 1994. It was at this conference that our provincial bird, the Osprey, was declared. Still others have travelled with him and Wendy on some of Blake Maybank's foreign birding excursions, such as Portugal and Brazil. The McDonalds have also travelled extensively on their own to such places as Australia, the Antarctic, Ethiopia, Hawaii, Mexico, and Trinidad and Tobago. Some earlier excursions, including all 10 provinces, included their two sons, Chris and Andrew. Most recently Bob and Wendy were presented with the Halifax Field Naturalists' Colin Stewart Conservation Award in recognition of their efforts, along with others, to help bring about the protected status of the Blue Mountain Birch Cove Lakes Wilderness Area, a huge accomplishment, and a work that is still in progress.

Bob still teaches part time at the Mount St. Vincent University, including this past winter when he taught Environmental Chemistry. He also still birds every chance he gets. He's a valued member of the academic community, and a welcome addition to the Executive of the NS Bird Society.

Suzanne Borkowski  
Past President, NSBS



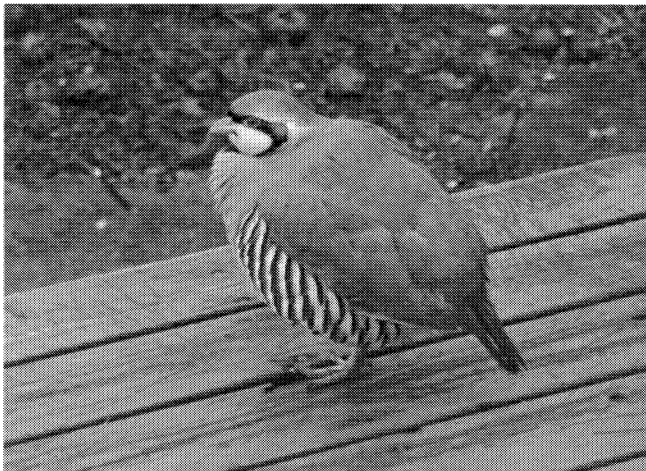
## News from the NSBS Sanctuary Trust

By Bob McDonald, Sanctuary Trust Chair

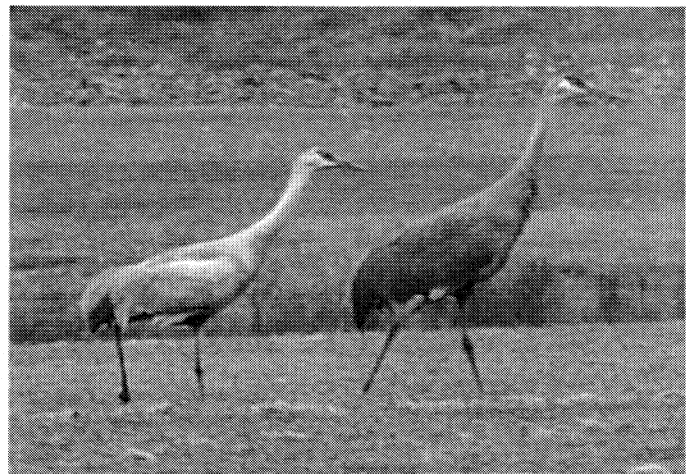
As many of you know the Sanctuary Trust is an arm of the N.S. Bird Society whose primary focus is to take care of the NSBS-owned properties (our "Sanctuaries") around the Province. The Sanctuary Trust pays the property taxes and keeps in touch with a series of wardens who send us periodic reports on the status of many of the properties. In addition, we make donations in support of projects and undertakings designed to study birds, enhance habitat, and aid in the rehabilitation of injured birds. To this end, over the past several years, the Trust has provided financial support to two rehabilitation centres for bird-related projects and to Randy Lauff's fascinating and valuable small owl nest box project.

Essentially, all of our income comes from donations of NSBS members like you. So, if you would like the work of the Sanctuary Trust to continue, please consider making a donation to the Trust when you renew your NSBS membership at the end of the year. Charitable tax receipts will be issued for all donations over \$10.00.

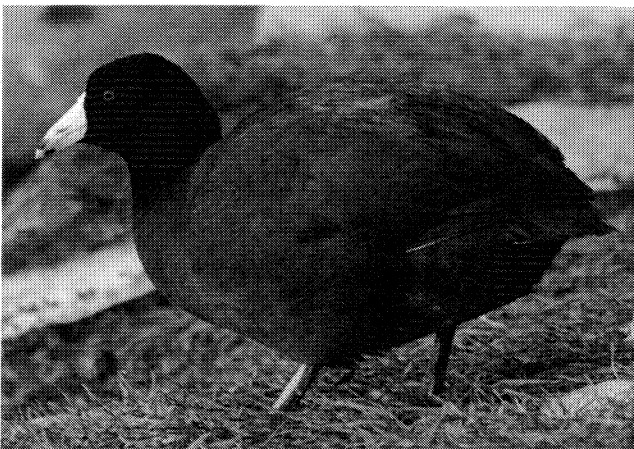
### Photo Gallery - Rails, Cranes and Galliformes



Escaped or released CHUKARS – like the one Apr. 4 at Brookside, HRM, have become more than occasional here. Naturalization is (fortunately?) unlikely for this dryland and mountain partridge of S.E. Europe. [Photo Pamela Smith]



This SANDHILL CRANE twosome near Canard, Kings, might be a pair, but there are indications that they are from different populations. The one at left has distinctly shorter bill, neck, and tarsus, as well as a paler gray nape, not contrasting as much with its white "cheeks." These are features of the tundra-nesting subspecies *canadensis*. The larger, heavily brown-stained bird at right seems not quite as "rangy" as the prairie-boreal subspecies *tabida*, breeding in the continent's centre to S.E. Alaska (and spreading e. in recent years). It might be from the widespread taiga-breeding population, sometimes designated subspecies *rowani*, but which some believe simply represents a broad "cline" of intermediates between *tabida* and *canadensis*. [Photo John Brett]



This plump AMERICAN COOT, Mar. 7 at Sullivans Pond, Dartmouth, seems to have survived winter in good shape. [Photo Bernard Burke]



# SPRING BIRD REPORTS

## Spring 2009 - Introduction

by Blake Maybank

There were two weather-related events (beginning 4 April and 8 April) deserving special mention. (Note: a detailed description and analysis of these events will appear in the *North American Birds* journal, authored by Ian McLaren and James McLaren. The summary here is courtesy of information supplied by Ian McLaren.)

On nights preceding both fallouts there were deep and extensive low-pressure systems in e. N. America, both producing westerlies in the Caribbean region and strong s.w. airflow off the E. Coast. Any bird setting out in early evening from the s.e. U.S.A. or further south could have been propelled far over the ocean, with no wind assistance back to the Atlantic Coast s. of n.e. U.S.A. and Atlantic Canada. But there were distinct differences in the meteorological patterns underlying the two fallouts. On 2 April, birds attempting to cross the Gulf of Mexico to s.e. U.S.A. would have been aided by following winds. On 6 April birds in Mexico or the w. Caribbean might have been discouraged from departure by contrary winds, whereas those setting out from S. America or the Caribbean could later have been forced to make an even wider excursion and a longer flight over the ocean beyond their intended landfalls.

**Event #1.** During mid-to-late afternoon 4 April four unexpected Neotropical migrants (a Yellow-throated and a Worm-eating Warbler and two Indigo Buntings) were discovered in Nova Scotia and reported on-line by the few observers active on a day with fog, bouts of rain, and strong s. to s.e. winds. The reports encouraged more searching next day, and observers found five more Indigo Buntings, a Hooded Warbler, a Summer Tanager, an Eastern Kingbird and two Purple Martins (the latter two species abnormally early). During the next two days there were four new discoveries, including a recently dead Kentucky Warbler. Equal numbers of these early migrants were discovered in both Nova Scotia (18 individuals, nine species) and elsewhere in the Region and from ME to NY (20 individuals, eight species, predominantly Indigo Bunting).

**Event #2.** Beginning 8 April and through the next day, a new wave of early migrants and vagrants was detected both in Nova Scotia (14 birds, including eight Summer Tanagers), and elsewhere in the region (a Summer Tanager and Blue Grosbeak reached Newfoundland, both the earliest of these rare vagrants ever recorded there).

The fallouts had clearly originated well s. of Nova Scotia. Almost all the birds are believed to be trans-Gulf of Mexico and/or Caribbean night-migrants (the Swallow-tailed Kite and the Loggerhead Shrike, both found 10 April in Nova Scotia, might not have been part of Event #2).

Although more unusually early migrants and vagrants were found in the region after mid-April (especially beginning 22-23 April in Nova Scotia, others had lingered from early April (notably Indigo Buntings, tanagers, and grosbeaks at feeders), making later arrival patterns less clear.

**NOTE:** The Seasonal Reports frequently use the following abbreviations (counties are in *italics*):

ad. = adult  
 alt. = alternate plumage, ie, breeding plumage  
 APBS = Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary, *Cumberland*  
 ARM = Annapolis Royal Marsh, *Annapolis*  
 Bch = beach  
 Belleisle = Belleisle Marsh, *Annapolis*  
 BPI = Bon Portage Island, *Shelburne*  
 Brier I. = Brier Island, *Digby*  
*ca.* = *circa*, i.e., approximately  
 CBC = Christmas Bird Count  
 CBI = Cape Breton Island  
 CBRM = *Cape Breton Regional Municipality*

Cherry Hill = Cherry Hill Beach, *Lunenburg*  
 Crystal Crescent = Crystal Crescent Beach P.P., *HRM*  
 CSI = Cape Sable Island, *Shelburne*  
 f. = female  
*fide* = "according to" or "On the authority of"  
 HRM = *Halifax Regional Municipality*  
 I. = Island  
 imm. = immature  
 juv. = juvenile  
 Lawrencetown = West Lawrencetown Marsh, *HRM*  
 m. obs. = many observers  
 m. = male

Seasonal report abbreviations (cont'd):

Martinique = Martinique Beach Provincial Park, *HRM*  
 nd = no details, i.e., unconfirmed by documentation  
 NSMC = Nova Scotia Migration Count  
 o-w = over-wintered  
 P.P. = Provincial Park  
 Pen. = Peninsula  
 ph. = photographed  
 PPP = Point Pleasant Park, *HRM*  
 pr = pair

R. = River  
 Seal I. = Seal Island, *Yarmouth*  
 SP = Sewage Ponds  
 thr. = throughout the season  
 tr. = trail  
 Uniacke = Uniacke Estate Museum Park, *Hants*  
 var. obs. = various observers  
 w. = winter

## Waterfowl

By John Belbin

Sydney River, which is probably the only reliable location in Nova Scotia in which to find numbers of **BARROW'S GOLDEYES**, again proved its worth with 30 being found there in early March. The Armdale **Greater White-Fronted Goose** that was present almost all winter remained during early March and became a city fixture. A "blue" **SNOW GOOSE** was seen on several occasions in South Harbour CB and was still present early in June, showing no inclination to migrate.

The **EURASIAN TEAL** seen in Canning by ELM and photographed by RBS is an apparent hybrid with some of the characteristics of Green Winged teals. Marie Reid photographed a group of Teal on Cow Bay Pond, and analysis of the photo revealed Green-winged, Eurasian, and an uncertain number of hybrids displaying varying characteristics. The Teals are becoming complex! A collar-banded **Canada Goose** was seen in Van Nostrands Pond, *KI* by JCT on 18 April, who was able to record the numbers. It was banded in Greenland and was part of a flock of about 100 birds. Some large flocks were seen about the Province well after local pairs had begun nesting. Presumably they were headed elsewhere.

**Northern Shovelers** were reported in somewhat unusual numbers from the Annapolis Valley and the Fundy shore of Cumberland County. They seem to be moving firmly into the province. A flock of 280 **Long-tailed Ducks** at Liverpool Apr 25 was probably a reflection of our greatly delayed spring weather. This is one of their winter haunts, but they would normally have left well before that time. Small numbers of **BRANT GEESE** appeared at locations well outside their normal CSI locations. An impressively large raft of scoters, mostly **BLACK SCOTERS**, was present in Morden *KI* for several days in early May. The late migrating **HARLEQUIN DUCKS** were still in excellent numbers at Port George at the same time. DJC reported the first **COMMON EIDER DUCK chicks** at Lockeport on May 27, and plenty more have been subsequently seen.

<b>Greater White-fronted Goose</b>			
Mar 1 - 12	Armdale, <i>HRM</i>	1	IAM
<b>Snow Goose</b>			
Mar 8	Wolfville, <i>KI</i>	5	Clarice Muntz
Apr 10	Digby Neck, <i>DI</i>	2	RBS
May 9	<i>CBRM</i>	28	NSMC
May 12, 26	South Harbour Bch, <i>CBRM</i>	1	FMC
<b>Canada Goose</b>			
Mar 7	Port Williams, <i>KI</i>	150	BBT
Mar 9, 12	W. Lawrencetown Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	150, 167	DMW
Mar 17	Port Morien, <i>CBRM</i>	450	BRD
Mar 17	Shelburne, <i>SH</i>	150+	Peter Macleod
Mar 17	Port Williams, <i>KI</i>	800+	JWW
Mar 18	Apple River, <i>CU</i>	24	KFS
Mar 20, 28	Canning, <i>KI</i>	1000, 3000	RBS, ELM
Apr 4	ARM	12	DLO
Apr 8	APBS	74	CIC
Apr 9	New Minas, <i>KI</i>	2	JCT
Apr 18	Van Nostrands Pond, <i>KI</i>	100	JCT
Apr 18	Canning Aboiteau, <i>KI</i>	200	JWW
May 9	var. counties	569	NSMC
May 18	Upper Falmouth, <i>HA</i>	24	JOB
May 24	Margaretsville DU, <i>ANN</i>	2	PBG
<b>Brant</b>			
Mar 21 - 31	CSI	5500	MUN
Mar 21, 2	Hartlen Point, <i>HRM</i>	4, 5	MIK
Apr 4	Port George, <i>ANN</i>	2	PBG
Apr 10	Daniels Head, <i>CSI</i>	small flock	RAH

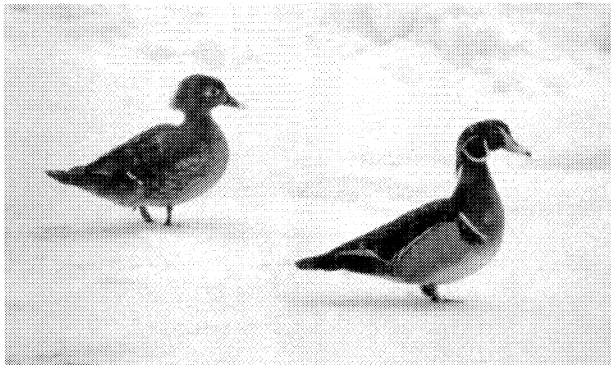


Two **SNOW GEESE** in first-cycle plumage paused Apr. 9 on Digby Neck. Such year-old birds probably won't manage to nest in the overcrowded arctic colonies. [Photo Richard Stern]

Apr 10	Brier I	150	RBS
Apr 27	Port George, <i>ANN</i>	12	GMV
May 9	Shelburne	15	NSMC
<b>Wood Duck</b>			
Mar 28	Canning, <i>KI</i>	1m	ELM
Apr 1	Apple River, <i>CU</i>	2	KFS
Apr 4	Victoria Vale, <i>ANN</i>	2	PBG
Apr 4	Margaretsville DU, <i>ANN</i>	2	PBG
Apr 5	Macaan R., <i>CU</i>	6	CIC
Apr 10	Cornwallis R., <i>KI</i>	2	AND



Apr 10	Palmer Woods, <i>KI</i>	5	AAM
Apr 10	Dempsey Corner, <i>KI</i>	1	AGW
Apr 15	Margaretsville DU, <i>ANN</i>	1	JOB
Apr 18	ARM	4	DLO
Apr 24	Cornwallis R., <i>KI</i>	2	ANS
Apr 26	Chipmans Corner, <i>KI</i>	1	NSBS, BNS
May 9	var. counties	39	NSMC
May 24	Margaretsville DU, <i>ANN</i>	4	PBG



A pair of WOOD DUCKS seeking feeder scraps in snowbound backyard in Westphal, *HRM*, could have been early migrants, or perhaps wandered from a winter duck-feeding site in the Sackville area. [Photo Diane McQueston]

**Gadwall**

Mar 21	The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>	2	MUN
Mar 22	Yarmouth Hbr., <i>YA</i>	10	MUN
Apr 9	Broad Cove, <i>LU</i>	1	JAH
Apr 10	NSPC Trenton, <i>PI</i> (over-wintered)	10	KJM
Apr 11	Truro, <i>CO</i>	1m	ROH
Apr 11	APBS	1	JBO
Apr 18, 19	Fundy shore, <i>CU</i>	10	BLM
Apr 26	Canard Pond, <i>KI</i>	1m	NSBS, BNS
May 9	var. counties	10	NSMC

**Eurasian Wigeon**

Mar 13	Glance Bay, <i>CBRM</i>	1m	BRD
Mar 23	W. Lawrencetown Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	1	DMW
Mar 29	Red Bridge Pond, <i>HRM</i>	1	BBU
Apr 5	Sullivans Pond, <i>HRM</i>	1	BBU
Apr 19	Salt Marsh Trail, <i>HRM</i>	1	PMU
Apr 21	Cow Bay, <i>HRM</i>	1m	IAM

**American Wigeon**

Mar 13	Glance Bay, <i>CBRM</i>	55	BRD
Mar 29	Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	2	DMW
Apr 6	Cornwallis R., <i>KI</i>	4	AND
Apr 8	APBS	6	CIC
Apr 11	Truro, <i>CO</i>	several	ROH
Apr 11	Amherst, <i>CU</i>	numerous	JBO
Apr 15	Canard Pond, <i>KI</i>	several	RBS
Apr 18	Canard Pond, <i>KI</i>	5	AND, JWJ
Apr 18 - 19	Fundy shore, <i>CU</i>	30	BLM
Apr 19	Salt Marsh Trail, <i>HRM</i>	6	PMU
Apr 20	Apple River, <i>CU</i>	5	KFS
Apr 21	Cow Bay, <i>HRM</i>	2	IAM
Apr 26	Harris Pond, <i>KI</i>	2	NSBS, BNS
May 2	Canard Pond, <i>KI</i>	8	JWW
May 9	var. counties	111	NSMC

**American Black Duck**

Mar 9, 21, 23, 29	Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	50, 28, 16, 18	DMW
Mar 16	Windsor SP, <i>HA</i>	180	JOB
Apr 8	Avonport Station, <i>KI</i>	8	JOB
Apr 8	Amherst Point, <i>CU</i>	4	CIC

Apr 8	Springhill SP, <i>CU</i>	4	CIC
Apr 18	River Hebert West, <i>CU</i>	14	BLM
Apr 24	Cornwallis R., <i>KI</i>	many	ANS
May 3	Margaretsville DU, <i>ANN</i>	5	PBG
May 9		1189	NSMC

**Mallard**

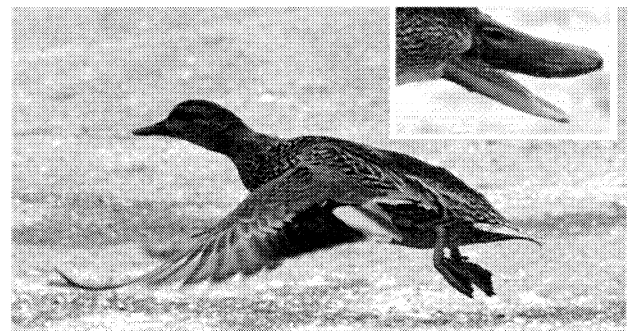
Mar 9, 21, 23, 29	Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	16, 2, 13, 2	DMW
Mar 11,			
Apr 6	Port Williams SP, <i>KI</i>	25, 5	JWW, JCT
Apr 8	Avonport Station, <i>KI</i>	6	JOB
Apr 8	APBS	8	CIC
Apr 24	Cornwallis R., <i>KI</i>	many	ANS
May 9	var. counties	692	NSMC

**Blue-winged Teal**

Apr 10	Lower Barneys R., <i>PI</i>	2	KJM
Apr 18	River Hebert West, <i>CU</i>	3	BLM
Apr 30	Apple River, <i>CU</i>	3	KFS
May 9	mostly <i>CU</i>	100	NSMC
May 10	ARM	6	DLO
May 21	St Peters, <i>CB</i>	1	BID

**Northern Shoveler**

Mar 12	The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>	2	MUN
Mar 28	Canning, <i>KI</i>	2	ELM
Apr 6	Port Williams SP, <i>KI</i>	1	JCT
Apr 8	APBS	5+	CIC
Apr 15, 18	Canard Pond, <i>KI</i>	4, 8	RBS, AND, JWJ
Apr 18	APBS	8	JAH
Apr 18	ARM	8	DLO
Apr 18 - 19	Fundy shore, <i>CU</i>	31	BLM
May 9	<i>CU</i>	40	NSMC



This odd female duck hung around Sullivans Pond, Dartmouth, in March. The whitish tail, gray wing coverts, and largely green speculum suggest Mallard, but its smallish size (in the field), dark upper mandible, black inner greater coverts, and white tertials are anomalous. Best bet: hybrid GADWALL x MALLARD. [Photo Bernard Burke]

**Northern Pintail**

Apr 8	APBS	10	CIC
Apr 10	Cornwallis R., <i>KI</i>	4	AND
Apr 11	APBS	numerous	JBO
Apr 15, 18	Canard Pond, <i>KI</i>	2	RBS, JWJ
Apr 18	Kentville, <i>KI</i>	2	AND
Apr 18	APBS	1f	JAH
Apr 18, 19	Fundy shore, <i>CU</i>	10	BLM
Apr 26	Canard Pond, <i>KI</i>	2	NSBS, BNS
May 9	mostly <i>CU</i>	22	NSMC
May 10	Dominion Beach, <i>CBRM</i>	2	LEL

**Eurasian (common) Teal**

Mar 28	Canning, <i>KI</i>	1m	ELM
Apr 2	Cow Bay, <i>HRM</i>	1	Marie Reid
May 15	Fort Lawrence, <i>CU</i>	1	JBO

**Green-winged Teal**

Mar 22	Cow Bay Pond, <i>HRM</i>	25+	Marie Reid
Mar 28	Canning, <i>KI</i>	5	ELM

Apr 2	Cow Bay, <i>HRM</i>	18	Marie Reid
Apr 8	APBS	1	CIC
Apr 10	NSPC Trenton, <i>PI</i>	5 (o-w)	KJM
Apr 18	Canard Pond, <i>KI</i>	24	JWW
Apr 18	River Hebert West, <i>CU</i>	16	BLM
Apr 19	ARM	10-15	DLO
Apr 26	Canning, <i>KI</i>	5	NSBS, BNS
May 2	Canard Pond, <i>KI</i>	24+	JWW
May 2	Canning Aboiteau, <i>KI</i>	12+	JWW
May 9	var. counties	232	NSMC
May 15	Fort Lawrence, <i>CU</i>	small flock	JBO

**Green-winged Teal / Eurasian Teal hybrids**

Apr 2	Cow Bay, <i>HRM</i>	2-5	Marie Reid
May 11	Three Fathom Harbour	1m	DOU

**Ring-necked Duck**

Mar 22	Port Williams SP, <i>KI</i>	2m	JWW
Mar 29	ARM	22	DLO
Apr 6	Cornwallis R., <i>KI</i>	20+	AND
Apr 8	Avonport Station, <i>KI</i>	2	JOB
Apr 8	Brenton Rd, <i>YA</i>	7	RAH
Apr 10	NSPC Trenton, <i>PI</i>	2	KJM
Apr 14	Maitland, <i>HA</i>	90	KAM
Apr 15	Margaretsville DU, <i>ANN</i>	2	JOB
Apr 16	Apple River, <i>CU</i>	11	KFS
Apr 18	Van Nostrands Pond, <i>KI</i>	5	JCT
Apr 18, 19	Fundy shore, <i>CU</i>	145	BLM
Apr 26	Starrs Point, <i>KI</i>	2	NSBS, BNS
Apr 30	ARM	20+	RBS
Apr 30,			
May 2	Port Williams SP, <i>KI</i>	1 pr	JWW
May 9	var. counties	600	NSMC

**Greater Scaup**

Mar 14	N. Sydney, <i>CBRM</i>	250+	NSBS
Mar 29	Caribou, <i>PI</i>	11	JBO
Apr 4	ARM	2	DLO
Apr 5, 6	First South, <i>LU</i>	300, 202	JAH
Apr 10	Port Williams SP, <i>KI</i>	3	AAM
May 2	Port Williams SP, <i>KI</i>	2	JWW
May 9	mostly <i>CBRM</i>	67	NSMC

**Lesser Scaup**

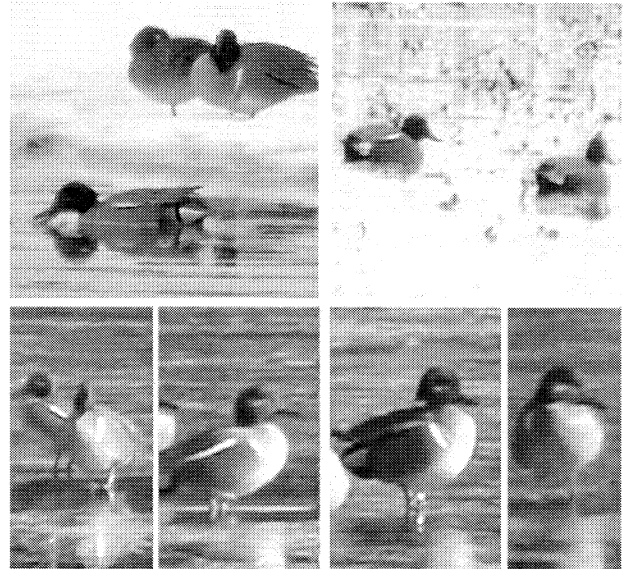
Mar 14	Sydney River, <i>CBRM</i>	8	BRD, GEC
Apr 6	Port Williams SP, <i>KI</i>	2	JCT
Apr 6	First South, <i>LU</i>	2	JAH
Apr 14	Truro, <i>CO</i>	1m	ROH
May 9	<i>CBRM</i>	2	NSMC



The duck in this fine portrait, Apr. 16 on the Kinsmen Pond in Truro, is readily identified as a male LESSER SCAUP from its coarse back vermiculations, restricted black tip on the bill, and above all its peaked and flat-naped head. The original shows its glossy purple head, almost always showing green in the Greater Scaup. [Photo Jeff Ogden]

**Common Eider**

Mar 28	Fox Point, <i>HRM</i>	6	Jane Schlosberg
Apr 4	Port George, <i>ANN</i>	2	PBG



This spring brought an unprecedented number of Eurasian GREEN-WINGED TEAL, and an even more impressive number of hybrids with our native GREEN-WINGEDS. Top left is a hybrid Eurasian X American associating with some "pure" Americans, found by ELM Apr. 9 at the Canning Aboiteau, *Kings*. Note the Eurasian's distinct, but somewhat weak, horizontal stripe and even weaker vertical foreflank stripe. Top right are a Eurasian and male American to compare, found by JBO Apr. 9 at Fort Lawrence, *Cum*. Although the foreflank and face cannot be seen well at this angle, its strong horizontal stripe suggests a "pure" example. Below is a sample from a string of 26 largely drake teal found and photographed 22 Mar. on the waning ice of Cow Bay Lake. Among them were what seems to be a pure Eurasian (left) with strong horizontal and no hint of vertical stripe; note also its marked white line below the eye). The next is clearly a hybrid with different expressions of both horizontal and vertical stripes. The weak vertical stripe on the right-hand bird (and perhaps its fairly distinct white face line?) suggest that it also might be a hybrid. Several other suspect teal in the group were standing at odd angles for clear assignment. Where are these birds headed? [Photos: top left, Richard Stern; top right, Jeff Ogden; bottom, Marie Reid]

Apr 10	CSI	many	RAH
Apr 10	Brier I., <i>DI</i>	many	RBS
Apr 15	Port George, <i>ANN</i>	29	JOB
Apr 15	Margaretsville, <i>ANN</i>	17	JOB
Apr 19	Cape d'Or, <i>CU</i>	22	BLM
Apr 27	Port George, <i>ANN</i>	12	GMV
May 3	Margaretsville, <i>ANN</i>	small group	Larry Bogan
May 5,			
13, 21	Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	10,80,13	DMW
May 9	var. counties	1729	NSMC
May 27	Lockeport, <i>SH</i>	chicks	DJC
<b>Harlequin Duck</b>			
Mar 21-			
May 3	Port George, <i>ANN</i>	max 20	v. obs.
Mar 29	Peggy's Cove, <i>HRM</i>	7	BBU
Apr 10	Baccaro Light, <i>SH</i>	2	RAH
Mar 29	Duncan Reef, <i>HRM</i>	2	HAT

May 9	<i>Ann., SH</i>	17	NSMC	Mar 11,			
<b>Scoter sp.</b>				17, 21	Port Williams SP, <i>KI</i>	6, 3, 8	JWW
May 1	Morden, <i>KI</i>	200	GMY	Mar 15	Sober I., <i>HRM</i>	many	KJM
<b>Surf Scoter</b>				Mar 17	ARM	1	PBG
Apr 15	Port George, <i>ANN</i>	33	JOB	May 9	var. counties	17	NSMC
Apr 15, 27	Margaretsville, <i>ANN</i>	2, 15	JOB, GMY	<b>Barrow's Goldeneye</b>			
Apr 19	Spencers I., <i>CU</i>	4	BLM	Mar 11	Port Williams SP, <i>KI</i>	2	JWW
May 3, 5	Port George, <i>ANN</i>	2	PBG, JOB	Mar 14	Sydney R., <i>CBRM</i>	30	BRB, GEC
May 3	Morden, <i>KI</i>	3	GMY	Mar 17	ARM	1	PBG
May 9	var. counties	367	NSMC	Mar 21	Hartlen Point, <i>HRM</i>	1	MIK
<b>White-winged Scoter</b>				<b>Hooded Merganser</b>			
Mar 14	North Sydney, <i>CBRM</i>	90	NSBS	Mar 21	White Rock, <i>KI</i>	2	?
Apr 15	Port George, <i>ANN</i>	3	JOB	Mar 21	Margaretsville DU, <i>ANN</i>	2	NSBS, BNS
Apr 15, 27	Margaretsville, <i>ANN</i>	5, 10	JOB, GMY	Apr 4	Margaretsville DU, <i>ANN</i>	4	PBG
May 5	Port George, <i>ANN</i>	10	JOB	Apr 10	Dempsey Corner, <i>KI</i>		AGW
May 9	var. counties	77	NSMC	Apr 19	Mahoneys Corner, <i>CU</i>	4	PKE
May 24	Margaretsville, <i>ANN</i>	100+	PBG	Apr 28	Greenfield, <i>KI</i>	1m	ANS
<b>Black Scoter</b>				May 3	Margaretsville DU, <i>ANN</i>	8	PBG
Apr 7	Martinique	several dozen	LUB	May 9	var. counties	42	NSMC
			JOB	May 9	Melville, <i>PI</i>	4	Margaret Earle
Apr 8	Avonport Station, <i>KI</i>	1m	JOB	<b>Common Merganser</b>			
Apr 10	Brier I.	several	RBS	Mar 12,			
Apr 11	Advocate, <i>CU</i>	4	JBO	Apr 1	Apple River, <i>CU</i>	2, 5	KFS
Apr 15	Margaretsville, <i>ANN</i>	14	JOB	Apr 5	First South, <i>LU</i>	8	JAH
Apr 19	Spencers I., <i>CU</i>	1	BLM	Apr 6	Cornwallis R., <i>KI</i>	12	AND
Apr 27	Margaretsville, <i>ANN</i>	8	GMY	Apr 6	CSI	75+	RAH
May 3, 11	Morden, <i>KI</i>	300	GMY	Apr 8	Springhill SP, <i>CU</i>	12	CIC
May 9	var. counties	513	NSMC	Mar 8, 21,			
<b>Long-tailed Duck</b>				27, 29	Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	2, 2, 5, 5	DMW
Mar 10	Port Williams SP, <i>KI</i>	1m	RBS	Apr 18	New Minas DU, <i>KI</i>	3	JWW
Mar 15	Sober I., <i>HRM</i>	many	KJM	Apr 19	Salt Marsh Trail, <i>HRM</i>	12+	PMU
Mar 25	Shag End, <i>HRM</i>	39	BLM	Apr 20	Hubbards Cove, <i>LU</i>	12	PST
Apr 6	CSI	Large flock	RAH	Apr 26	Canard Pond, <i>KI</i>	2	NSBS, BNS
Apr 15	Port George, <i>ANN</i>	2	JOB	Apr 26	Harris Pond, <i>KI</i>	2	NSBS, BNS
Apr 19	Spencers I., <i>CU</i>	5	BLM	May 2	Canning Aboiteau, <i>KI</i>	3f	JWW
Apr 25	Liverpool, <i>QU</i>	280	ELM	May 9		188	NSMC
May 3	Port George, <i>ANN</i>	2	PBG	<b>Red-breasted Merganser</b>			
May 9	var. counties	3	NSMC	Mar 3	Morden, <i>KI</i>	2	GMY
<b>Bufflehead</b>				Mar 8, 21,			
Mar 17, 25	ARM	31, lots	PBG, RBS	27, 29	Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	2, 3, 5, 12	DMW
Mar 26	Martinique	24	LUB	Apr 5, 6	First South, <i>LU</i>	45, 38	JAH
Mar 28	Apple River, <i>CU</i>	3	KFS	Apr 6, 10	Daniels Head, <i>CSI</i>	many	RAH
Apr 18	River Hebert West, <i>CU</i>	2	BLM	Apr 19	Salt Marsh Trail, <i>HRM</i>	2	PMU
Apr 20	Liverpool, <i>QU</i>	42	JAH	Apr 27	Margaretsville, <i>ANN</i>	6	GMY
Apr 30	ARM	100	RBS	May 9	var. counties	792	NSMC
May 9	var. counties	99	NSMC	May 21	St Peters, <i>CB</i>	2	BID
<b>Common Goldeneye</b>							
Mar 8, 11,							
12, 21	Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	4, 6, 4, 2	DMW				

## Galliformes

By Ulli Höger

<b>Gray Partridge</b>				Mar 28	Bayside, <i>HRM</i>	1	BLM
Apr 2	Truro, <i>Cum.</i>	2	Bernard Jackson	Apr	Apple River, <i>Cum.</i>	several	KFS
<b>Ring-necked Pheasant</b>				Apr - May	Higginsville, <i>HRM</i>	4-6	Chris Pepper
All season	Lawrencetown area, <i>HRM</i>	several	DMW	May 3	Mount Uniacke, <i>HRM</i>	1	GMU
Mar 22	Bridgetown, <i>Anna.</i>	1m	MCR	May 9	var. counties	144	NSMC
Apr 10	CSI	several	RAH	<b>Spruce Grouse</b>			
Apr 12	Newport Landing, <i>Hants</i>	2	Lesley Butters	Mar 20	Joggins, <i>Cum.</i>	1m	KFS
Apr 26	Brier I.	5	JUS	Apr 8	Apple River, <i>Cum.</i>	1f	KFS
May 9	var. counties	487	NSMC	Apr - May	Higginsville, <i>HRM</i>	5 max	Chris Pepper
<b>Ruffed Grouse</b>				May 9	var. counties	5	NSMC
Mar 15	Middle Musquodoboit, <i>HRM</i>	1	VJH				

## Loons Through Grebes

By John Belbin

On 10<sup>th</sup> April, PLC reported that almost every inlet and bay in the Tangier region had a pair of **Common Loons**. They were waiting for the ice to melt so that they could move inland and claim a nesting lake. The relatively late spring meant that they could be seen on salt water around the province for some time after that.

The **HORNED GREBES** seen on April 15 were already in full breeding plumage and presumably getting ready to leave.

### Red-throated Loon

Mar 25	Annapolis Royal, <i>ANN</i>	1	RBS
Apr 15	Port George, <i>ANN</i>	3	JOB

### Common Loon

Mar 15	Sober I., <i>HRM</i>	15	KJM
Mar 17	Annapolis Royal, <i>ANN</i>	1	PBG
Apr 10	River Lake, <i>HRM</i>	2	PLC
Apr 10	Grand Passage, <i>DI</i>	12	RBS
Apr 15	Port George, <i>ANN</i>	8	JOB
Apr 26	Brier I., <i>DI</i>	5	JUS
Apr 27	Margaretsville, <i>ANN</i>	4	GMV
May 3	Port George, <i>ANN</i>	2	PBG
May 3	Mount Uniacke, <i>HA</i>	3	GMU

May 24	Margaretsville, <i>ANN</i>	5	PBG
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### Pied-billed Grebe

Apr 18	Amherst area marshes, <i>CU</i>	4	BLM
Apr 19	Belchers Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	1	RSM
Apr 27	Apple River, <i>CU</i>	1	KFS
May 2	Red Bridge Pond, <i>HRM</i>	1	ULH

### Horned Grebe

Mar 15	Beaver Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	2	KJM
Apr 15	Port George, <i>ANN</i>	2	JOB

### Red-necked Grebe

Apr 4, 15	Port George, <i>ANN</i>	3, 1	PBG, JOB
May 3	Margaretsville, <i>ANN</i>	1	Larry Bogan

## Tubenoses through Cormorants

By Eric Mills

A highlight of the season was a small black-and-white shearwater, by description almost certainly **AUDUBON'S SHEARWATER**, seen on the Scotian Shelf or just off it (exact position to be reported later) in mid-April, at a time of strong southerly winds that brought us several other southern overshoots and strays. So far Audubon's Shearwater has not been fully documented in Nova Scotian waters, although there are convincing sight records, including this one.

### AUDUBON'S SHEARWATER ?

Apr 12	Scotian Shelf	1	KAA
May 17	BPI	??	CLD, NSBS

### Leach's Storm-Petrel

Apr 1	CSI	4	MUN
Apr 4	Brier I.	9	ELM
Apr 18	off Western Hd., <i>Queens</i>	4	ELM, AHM, DPO

### Northern Gannet

May 1 - 21	Conrads Bch., <i>HRM</i>	8-55	DMW
May 9	Mainly CBRM, <i>Rich.</i>	147	NSMC
May 17	BPI	2	CLD, NSBS
May 31	Petit Passage, <i>Digby</i>	2	JCZ

### Double-crested Cormorant

Mar 31	Pictou, <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM
Apr 2	Pictou causeway, <i>Pic.</i>	3	KJM
Apr 3	Pictou causeway, <i>Pic.</i>	14	KJM
Apr 11	Pictou causeway, <i>Pic.</i>	250	KJM
Apr 12	Riverport, <i>Lun.</i>	12	JAH
Apr 19	Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	8	PMU
Apr 25	Queens shore	50+ migrants	ELM
Apr 30	Brier I.	50+ migrants	ELM, AHM
May 9	Apple River, <i>Cum.</i>	18	KFS
May 9	var. counties	2586	NSMC
May 10	Apple River, <i>Cum.</i>	45	KFS
May 16, 17	BPI	2-20	CLD, NSBS

### Great Cormorant

Mar 7	Dartmouth Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1 (photo)	BBU
Mar 11	Shag End, <i>HRM</i>	7	SEM
Mar 14	Martinique	6	SEM

Mar 16	Sober I., <i>HRM</i>	13	KJM, CHK
Mar 21	Morden, <i>Kings</i>	1 ad.	WAN, NSBS
Apr 1	Brier I.	5 ad.	ELM
Apr 2, 3	Brier I.	6 ad.	ELM
Apr 24	Kingsburg Hd., <i>Lun.</i>	1 imm.	ELM, AHM
May 9	Mainly CBRM	266	NSMC



This adult GREAT CORMORANT, Mar. 7 in Dartmouth Cove, seems to be having a bad-hair day – no doubt because of its non-waterproof plumage. [Photo Bernard Burke]

# Hérons

By Ulli Höger

Spring 2009 was the time of the big white birds in Nova Scotia. Great Egrets and Snowy Egrets were reported in unusual numbers from all over the province. Along with frequent sightings of white egrets came reports of Tricolored Herons, another species seen more than usual and in more locations than in previous years. Other uncommon heron species like Green Heron and Little Blue Heron were sighted as well, leaving only the Reddish Egret missing in the line-up of reasonable possible North American wader species. Maybe next year?

On the other hand our common Great Blue Herons were mostly back on time by mid-April. Reported first arrival dates were not much different from the previous year. However, in some regions they were approximately a week later. Total numbers compiled by HAT from the 2009 spring migration count show a significant decline of this species in comparison to the 12 year average (i.e. -44%) and recent counts. Only time will tell if this observation is the further manifestation of a trend already seen in more recent years and reason to be concerned for another bird species, or if we are just witnessing long term population fluctuations with future recovery. In any case it's a prime example that shows the value of events like the Spring migration count or the Christmas bird count to spot population trends.



GREAT EGRETS were unusually numerous this spring, and a number of good photos were available. This trio at Dominion, CBRM, offered a particularly elegant example. [Photo Alan Murrant]

## American Bittern

Apr 26 - 30	Appel R., Cum.	1	KFS
Apr 14	Maitland, Hants	1	AM
Apr 28	Thorburn, Pic.	1	KJM
May 4	Middle Milford, Cum.	1	KJM
May 9	var. counties	18	NSMC
May 11	Lawrencetown	1	MIK
May 20 - 24	Lawrencetown	pair	CHP, MIK

## Great Blue Heron

o-w	CSI	1	MUN
Mar 27	Avonport, Kings	1	SAW
Mar 30	Upper Woods Hbr., Shel.	1	DOC
Mar 30	Dominion Beach, CBRM	1	GEC
Apr 4	ARM	1	DLO
Apr 4	Stonehurst, Lun.	1	JAH
Apr 5	Bayport, Lun.	2	JAH
Apr 5	First South, Lun.	1	JAH
Apr 5	Waterside, Pic.	2	KJM, RFE
Apr 6	Grand Pre, Kings	3	LDE
Apr 6	Apple River, Cum.	1	KFS
Apr 6	Barra Head, Rich.	2	GED, SDI
Apr 8	Haliburton Farm, Pic.	1	JOB
Apr 12	Newport Landing, Hants	3	Lesley Butters
Apr 16	PPP	1	Lesley Butters
Apr 18	Starr's Point, Kings	1	JCT
Apr 19	Salt Marsh Trail, HRM	6	PMU
Apr 24	Prospect, HRM	1	Sue Browne
Apr 27	Seaforth, HRM	3	KAM
May 8	Gasperau Valley, Kings	12	George & Margaret Alliston
May 9	var. counties	196	NSMC

## Great Egret

Apr 6	Canso, Guys.	1	Alexander Crane
Apr 6	Port La Tour, Shel.	3	JON, Vince Brown
Apr 9	Glace Bay, CBRM	1	Bev Crowell
Apr 11 - 14	Back Oler Farm Marsh, Lun.	1	JAH, Earl Meister
Apr 17	Little Hbr., Shel.	1	DHY
Apr 15	Lawrencetown	1	DMW
Apr 20	CSI	1	RAH

Apr 24	Aylesford, Kings	1	Mark Elderkin, George Boyd
Apr 24	Prospect, HRM	1	Sue Browne
Apr 25	Lingan, CBRM	2	CSM, TMM
Apr 25 - 26	CSI	2	JON
Apr 26	Salt Marsh tr., HRM	1	Stephanie Fetinko
Apr 27	CSI	5	MUN
Apr 27	Havre Boucher, Ant.	1	RLF
Apr 27	Seaforth, HRM	1	KAM
Apr 27	St. Peter's, Rich.	1	BID
Apr 27, 28	Lawrencetown	1	Paul Evans
Apr 30	Cape George, Ant.	1	JSH
Apr 30	Greenwich, Kings	1	BBT
Apr 18 - 30	Cow Bay Pond, HRM	1	Marie Reid, var. obs.
Apr 30	Doctor's Cove, Shel.	1	Eileen Hubley
May 2	CSI	1	MUN
May 4	Marriott's Cove, Lun.	1	JAH
May 4	Mahone Bay, Lun.	1	Roberta MacDonald
May 4	Shaw I., Lun.	1	Dan Macintosh
May 9	Dominion Beach, CBRM	2	GEC, Bev Crowell
May 9	Lawrencetown	1	DMW
May 9	Avonport, Kings	1	SAW et al.
May 9	var. counties	15	NSMC
May 9 - 15	Cherry Hill	1	SJF
May 10	Grand Desert, HRM	1	RSM, WEM
May 10	Seaforth, HRM	1	RSM, WEM
May 10	Avonport, Kings	1	SAW, URB
May 9, 10	Roache's Pond, HRM	1	HAT
May 1 - 10	Albert Bridge, CBRM	2	Bill Bussey, LEL
May 22 - 28	Lawrencetown	1	Chris Pepper, var obs.
May 27	CSI	1	RAH
May 24 - 28	Cow Bay Pond, HRM	1	var. obs.

## Snowy Egret

Apr 24 - 28	Avondale, Pic.	1	PKE, Sheila Roberts
Apr 25 - 27	CSI	1	JON
Apr 28 -			
May 3	Peggy's Cove, HRM	1	William Isnor, var. obs.
Apr 30	Doctor's Cove, Shel.	1	Eileen Hubley
May 1	Brier I.	1	ELM

May 2	CSI	1	MUN
Apr 25 -			
May 3	Conrad's Bch, <i>HRM</i>	1	ULH, var. obs.
May 4	Beach Meadows, <i>Queens</i>	1	DPO
May 9	Lingan, <i>CBRM</i>	2	CSM, TMM
May 9	W. Chezzetcook, <i>HRM</i>	1	GDE
May 9	var. counties	4	NSMC
May 25	Conrad's Bch, <i>HRM</i>	1	var. obs.
May 27	Blue Rocks, <i>Lun.</i>	1	Steven Hiltz
May 28	Darden Lots, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH
<b>Little Blue Heron</b>			
Apr 8 - 10	Freeport, <i>Digby</i>	1 ad.	Roger Outhouse
Apr 17	Broad Cove, <i>Lun.</i>	1 ad.	Joshua Bell
May 9	<i>Rich.</i>	2	NSMC
May 9 - 16	River Bourgeois, <i>Rich.</i>	1 ad.	RIV, APO, BBU
May 28	Brooklyn, <i>Yar.</i>	1 ad.	fide HAT
<b>Cattle Egret</b>			
Apr 14 - 18	Port La Tour, <i>Shel.</i>	1	Vince Brown
Apr 26	Louisbourgh, <i>CBRM</i>	1	Diane and Bill Bussey
Apr 26	Port La Tour, <i>Shel.</i>	1	MIK, FLL
May 9	<i>CBRM</i>	1	NSMC
<b>Tricolored Heron</b>			
Apr 27	Pubnico, <i>Shel.</i>	1	CST <i>et al.</i>
May 1 - 24	Brier I., <i>Digby</i>	1	ELM, var. obs.
May 20 - 24	Lawrencetown	1	var. obs.
May 28	Conrad's Bch, <i>HRM</i>	2	Dominic Cormier
May end	Cow Bay Pond, <i>HRM</i>	2	Marie Reid
<b>Green Heron</b>			
Apr 30	Cow Bay Pond, <i>HRM</i>	1	Marie Reid
May 9	var. counties	2	NSMC
May 9 - 12	Stonehurst, <i>Lun.</i>	1	Earl Meister
May 9 - 12	Williams L., <i>HRM</i>	1	FCG
May 24	Brier I.	1	Noel Taussig

**Black-crowned Night-Heron**

Apr 25, 26	CSI	1	JON, MUN
May 16	BPI	1	CLD <i>et al.</i>



TRICOLORED HERON is the least common among our regular "southern" Herons, and seldom photographed so convincingly. This one May 13 at Lawrencetown, *HRM*, was in breeding condition, although with a rather unimpressive white plume on its nape. [Photo Chris Pepper]

## Diurnal Raptors

By Ulli Höger

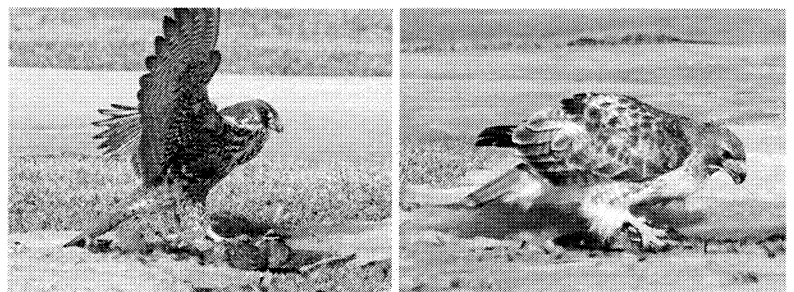
Sightings of **Black Vultures** in Nova Scotia require critical analysis to avoid misidentification with **Turkey Vultures**. Not seeing a red head and perception of a shorter tail alone are not suitable fieldmarks to separate single individuals of the two species in distant aerial views. Perception of colour and body proportions can be easily distorted by light conditions, viewing angle, and a bird's body posture. For the vultures the contrasting wing patterns, that are quite different in both species, are much more suitable for a reliable identification of distant flying individuals.

A **SWALLOW-TAILED KITE** paused briefly on the roof of a house 10 April in Truro, N.S. (Kimberley Forster, ph.). Fortunately, the (non-birder) photographer recognized the rarity of her remarkable find and obtained several excellent images before the kite flew off. Of the seven previous provincial records only one has (barely adequate) photographic documentation. The kite's occurrence might be related to the second April weather event.

For **Golden Eagle** sightings critical review of noticed fieldmarks is advised due to the abundance of immature Bald Eagles in our province, offering the possibility of mistaken identity.

Proper documentation in the form of images or verbal descriptions of observed fieldmarks that led to the identification is greatly appreciated for all uncommon or rare species.

An unusual confrontation was witnessed by RBS on March 20, when a **Red-tailed Hawk** on the ground



"[On 20 Mar.] . . . near Canning . . . I noticed . . . close to the road a Red-tailed Hawk . . . tearing away at the remains of a dead Mallard on the ground. Suddenly a Peregrine came zooming in from the side, whacked the Red-tail on the back, and repeated this several times till the Red-tail gave up and lumbered off. Then the Peregrine took over and tore away at the dead duck - ignoring me and allowing [me] to get within just a few metres, to take all kinds of photos . . . I left . . . but went straight back there with [wife] Liz, and we watched an almost repeat, with the Peregrine again attacking the Red-tail repeatedly, but this time it gave up and flew off, right in front of us, again allowing for some nice flight shots. At the point where we left, the Red-tail was still eating the duck . . ." [Photo Richard Stern]

was bullied by a **Peregrine Falcon** into handing over lunch – the remains of a Mallard. However, a second match-up a short time later had the Red-tail reclaim what was left of the duck. Given the prey spectra of the two raptor species it could have been the Peregrine that claimed a second serving when the Red-tail went after leftovers.

**Turkey Vulture**

All season	Apple River, <i>Cum.</i>	several	KFS
Apr thr.	Brier I.	max 8	v. obs
Apr 11	Sheet Hbr. <i>HRM</i>	1	PLC, SMB
Apr 11	Yarmouth, <i>Yar.</i>	1	RMC
Apr 20	Gold River, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH
Apr 20	West Advocate, <i>Cum.</i>	5	BLM
Apr 25	Halifax, <i>HRM</i>	2	Terry Boswell
Apr 26	Waverley, <i>HRM</i>	3	LPP
May 9	South Mtn, <i>Kings</i>	1	George and Margaret Alliston

May 9	<i>Kings</i>	1	NSMC
May 10	Musquodoboit, <i>HRM</i>	1	SAW
May 16	Hammonds Plains, <i>HRM</i>	2	LOC
May 16, 20	Brier I.	13, 20	RBS, BLF
May 26	Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	2	AGH

**SWALLOW-TAILED KITE (8<sup>th</sup> Provincial Record)**

Apr 10	Truro	1	Kimberley Forster
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**Osprey**

Mar 5	Antigonish, <i>Ant.</i>	1	AAM
Mar 21	New Germany, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH
Apr 6	Liverpool, <i>Lun.</i>	1	DPO
Apr 6	First South, <i>Lun.</i>	1	DAW
Apr 8	L. MicMac, <i>HRM</i>	1	BBU
Apr 10	Bedford, <i>HRM</i>	1	GMU
Apr 10	Beaverbank Rd., <i>HRM</i>	2	LOC
Apr 11	Ross Road, <i>HRM</i>	pair	Helen MacMillan
Apr 14	Shubenacadie, <i>Hants</i>	pair	KAM
Apr 20	Amherst, <i>Cum.</i>	1	BLM
Apr 29	Yarmouth, <i>Yar.</i>	1	RMC
Apr 30	Cow Bay Pond, <i>HRM</i>	1	HEK
May 3	Mt. Uniacke, <i>HRM</i>	1	GMU
May 9	var. counties	91	NSMC

**Bald Eagle**

Mar – Apr	known nests in the Valley area appear occupied by breeding pairs		
Apr 1	Brier I.	3 imm.	ELM, AHM
Apr 19	Salt Marsh tr., <i>HRM</i>	pair	PMU
May 9	var. counties	388	NSMC

**Northern Harrier**

Mar 21	W. Chezzetcook, <i>HRM</i>	1	SEM
Apr 6	Prospect Bay, <i>HRM</i>	1	BLM
Apr 6	Apple River, <i>Cum.</i>	1m	KFS
Apr 7	Brier I., <i>Digby</i>	2	JUS
Apr 16	Wagner's Beach, <i>HRM</i>	1m	BLM
Apr 18	Joggins, <i>Cum.</i>	1m	BLM
Apr 19	Lower Onslow, <i>Col.</i>	1	PKE
Apr 26	Elderbank, <i>HRM</i>	1m	VJH
May 9	Higginsville, <i>HRM</i>	pair	Chris Pepper
May 9	var. counties	45	NSMC
May 10; 17	Brier I.	1	JUS, RBS
May 11	Grand Pre, <i>Kings</i>	1	JWW

**Sharp-shinned Hawk**

all season	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	Several	KFS
Mar 1	Lr. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	1	RIV, APO
Mar 2	Wolfville Ridge, <i>Kings</i>	1	GWT
Mar 6	Lawrencetown	1	DMW
Mar 16	Wolfville, <i>Kings</i>	1	JWW
Apr 5	Back Hbr. Trail, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH
May 9	var. counties	21	NSMC
May 15	New Waterford, <i>CBRM</i>	1	CSM, TMM
May 16	BPI	1	CLD <i>et al.</i>

**COOPER'S HAWK**

Apr 5	Hartlen Point, <i>HRM</i>	1	MIK
May 10	Bedford, <i>HRM</i>	1 poss.	PLC

**Northern Goshawk**

Mar 7	Neil's Hbr., <i>CBRM</i>	1f	AAM
May 1, 6	Milford Station, <i>Hants</i>	1	KAM
May 9	var. counties	4	NSMC

**Broad-winged Hawk**

Apr 20	Truro, <i>Col.</i>	1	JAH
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May 2	Ferry Rd., <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM
May 2	Maryvale, <i>Ant.</i>	1	BRS
May 9	Lapland, <i>Lun.</i>	1	SJF
May 9	var. counties	15	NSMC
May 11	J. Lawrence PP, <i>HRM</i>	pair	HAT
May 13, 17	Brier I.	8, 3	JUS, RBS
May 20	Spectacle L., <i>HRM</i>	1	MIK
May 21	Apple River, <i>Cum.</i>	1	KFS

**Red-tailed Hawk**

Mar 12	Middle Musquodoboit, <i>HRM</i>	1	VJM
Mar 20	Canning, <i>Kings</i>	1	RBS
Mar 22	New Waterford, <i>CBRM</i>	1	CSM, TMM
Apr 7	Lunenburg area, <i>Lun.</i>	many	JAH
Apr 8	Avonport Station, <i>Kings</i>	1	JOB
Apr 14	Shubenacadie, <i>Hants</i>	1	KAM
Apr 26	Starr's Point, <i>Kings</i>	pair	JWW
May 3	Brown's Mtn, <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM
May 9	var. counties	83	NSMC

**Rough-legged Hawk**

Mar 7	Hartlen Point, <i>HRM</i>	1	BBU
Mar 12	Steverman L., <i>Lun.</i>	1	ELM
Apr 4	Lunenburg, <i>Lun.</i>	2	JAH
Apr 10	Brier I.	1	RBS
May 9	var. counties	2	NSMC

**Golden Eagle**

Mar 16	Elderbank, <i>HRM</i>	1 nd	CDA
May 10	Truro, <i>Cum.</i>	1 nd	JCZ

**American Kestrel**

Mar 24	Spa Springs, <i>Kings</i>	1	PBG
Apr 7	Kingsburg, <i>Lun.</i>	1	DAW
Apr 9	Maccan, <i>Cum.</i>	1	KFS
Apr 9	Antigonish, <i>Ant.</i>	1	RLF
Apr 10	Brier I.	1	RBS
Apr 14	Maitland, <i>Hants</i>	1	KAM
Apr 15	Apple River, <i>Cum.</i>	1	KFS
Apr 18	Minudie, <i>Cum.</i>	1	BLM
Apr 19	Parrsboro, <i>Cum.</i>	pair	BLM
Apr 19	Middle Musquodoboit, <i>HRM</i>	1m	VJH
Apr 20	Minudie, <i>Cum.</i>	1	BLM
Apr 30	Sunrise Valley, <i>Vic.</i>	1	FMC



Yet another COOPER'S HAWK, Apr. 5 at Hartlen Pt., *HRM*, surely adds evidence for a change in provincial status. Note its diagnostic clearly graduated tail (despite some confusing feather overlap) and large "hackle" on back of head. This one had the pale yellow eye and fine-streaked underparts of a still-juvenile-plumaged bird. [Photo Mike King]

May 9	var. counties	44	NSMC
May 16	Middle Musquodoboit, <i>HRM</i>	1f	VJH
<b>Merlin</b>			
Mar 20	Coldbrook, <i>Kings</i>	1	AAM
Apr 4	Wolfville, <i>Kings</i>	1m	JCT
Apr 20	Broad Cove, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH
Apr 26	Brier I.	1	JUS
Apr 30	Wolfville, <i>Kings</i>	1m	JCT
May 9	var. counties	27	NSMC

May 10	Wharton, <i>Cum.</i>	2	JCZ
May 20	Stellarton, <i>Pic.</i>	pair	KJM
<b>Peregrine Falcon</b>			
Mar 20	Kentville, <i>Kings</i>	1	AND
Mar 20	Canning, <i>Kings</i>	1	RBS
Apr 24	Kentville, <i>Kings</i>	1	RBS
May 9	var. counties	7	NSMC

## Rails and Cranes

By Ulli Höger

### Virginia Rail

May 3	Middle Milford, <i>Anna.</i>	1	KJM
May 9	<i>Cumb.</i>	1	NSMC

### Sora

Apr 28	Thorburn, <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM
Apr 30	Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	KFS
May 9	var. counties	17	NSMC
May 15	Upper Falmouth, <i>Hants</i>	>1	Cheryl Rutledge
May 17	Westville, <i>Pic.</i>	nesting	KJM

### American Coot

Mar 10, 29	Sullivan's Pond, <i>HRM</i>	2, 1	GAM, BBU
May 9	var. counties		NSMC
May 10	ARM.	1	DLO

### Sandhill Crane

Mar 17, 22	Antigonish, <i>Ant.</i>	1	RLF
May 28	Canard, <i>Kings</i>	2	John Brett



A SORA wandering around in the open was a rare sight 19 May at the Annapolis Royal impoundments. [Photo Richard Stern]

## Shorebirds

By Susann Myers

The spring season brought migrant shorebirds in their usual small numbers and generally on schedule. Breeding Killdeer, Wilson's Snipe and American Woodcock, however, were all first reported a week earlier than average. The season was enlivened by a fair sprinkling of rarities, which included a Wilson's Plover, Black-necked Stilts, a Eurasian Whimbrel, a Marbled Godwit and Long-billed Dowitchers.

Two AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVERS were spotted this season, one in striking breeding plumage and the other a drab first-year bird. These plovers migrate through the flyway in the centre of the continent, but a couple reach NS in most springs. A **WILSON'S PLOVER** was found and photographed at Sable I. in May by ZOL. This is about the 12<sup>th</sup> record for the province, half of which have been reported in spring.

A pair of **BLACK-NECKED STILTS** found at Liverpool in mid-April was enjoyed by birders for two weeks and beautifully photographed by HAT. This is the third spring record since 2005 for these rare vagrants, which have become more regular since 1995.

WHIMBREL are rare spring migrants in NS, with most records from late April to early June. This season brought a total of six, one of which was of the Eurasian *phaeopus* subspecies, with a distinctive wedge of white extending up the back from a white rump. This bird, spotted by ZOL on Sable I., was the thirteenth record for N.S. in spring (IAM). Interestingly, the province's first record of a *phaeopus* Whimbrel was of a bird taken aboard a ship near Sable I. on May 25, 1906 (Tufts).



A WILSON'S PLOVER discovered May 7 on Sable I. was a great find, as only about a dozen have occurred here (of which only four were photographed), with only three since 1985. The large head and bill are unmistakable distinctions from the Semipalmated Plover. [Photo Zoe Lucas]



A **MARBLED GODWIT** at CSI at the end of May was another great find. Rare transients in N.S. at any season, these godwits are very rare in spring, with only five previous spring sightings.

Nineteen species of shorebirds were recorded on the Nova Scotia Migration Count (NSMC) May 9, which is average. Numbers were below average for most species, but poor weather for part of the day throughout the province likely contributed to the declines. Only a single Red Knot and Sanderling were seen, further discouraging news of these threatened species. Four **LONG-BILLED DOWITCHERS** reported in *Shel.* would have been exciting news, and provided the first NSMC record for the species, but unfortunately no details regarding where these birds were seen or by whom. Six **RED-NECKED PHALAROPES** were another good NSMC sighting in *Shel.*, as this species has been spotted in only 2 of the previous 12 years.

**shorebird species**

Apr 7	CSI	small flock	RAH
<b>Black-bellied Plover</b>			
Apr 6 - 12	Conrad I. Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	1	DAW, JAH
Apr 11	CSI	31	MUN
May 9, 18	Cherry Hill	5, 9	SJF
May 9	<i>CBRM, Lun., Shel.</i>	1, 5, 23	NSMC
May 11	CSI	20+	CST, RAH
May 12, 20	Brier I.	3, 1	JUS, BLF
May 16	3 Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	2	SEM
May 21	Cherry Hill	32 (9 alt.)	SJF
May 27, 31	Lockeport, <i>Shel.</i>	1	DJC
May 31	Cherry Hill	9	JAH
<b>American Golden-Plover</b>			
May 21	Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	1, basic	SJF
May 28	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1, alt.	ULH
<b>WILSON'S PLOVER</b>			
May 7	Sable I.	1, photos	ZOL
<b>Semipalmated Plover</b>			
May 26	Seaforth, <i>HRM</i>	1	KAM
<b>Piping Plover</b>			
Apr 9	CSI	1	CST
Apr 14	Sand Hills Bch PP, <i>Shel.</i>	2	
Apr 15	Martinique	3	HAT
Apr 15	Crows Neck Bch., <i>Shel.</i>	pair	J. Smith
Apr 17	Cherry Hill	3	JAH
Apr 18, 25	Martinique	12	ULH
May 9, 18	Cherry Hill	6	SJF
May 9	<i>HRM, Lun.</i>	2, 4	NSMC
May 10	Stoney I., <i>Shel.</i>	1	BJS, SIS
May 12	South Hbr. Bch., <i>Vic.</i>	3	FMC
May 21	Daniels Head, CSI	2	RAH
May 21	Silver Sands Bch., <i>HRM</i>	3	MIK
May 24	Martinique	2 nesting pr.	S. Abbott
May 30	South Side CSI	2 pr. + 2 ad.	BJS, SIS
May 31	Cherry Hill	12	JAH
May 31	Crow Neck Bch., <i>Shel.</i>	2 pr.	BJS, SIS
<b>Killdeer</b>			
Mar 15	CSI	3	MUN
Mar 25	Old Barns, <i>Col.</i>	1	ELM, IAM
Mar 26	Port Williams, <i>Kings</i>	1	RBS
Mar 27	Saxon St. pond, <i>Kings</i>	1	JCT
Apr 5	Plymouth, <i>Pict.</i>	1	KJM
Apr 10	Falmouth, <i>Hants</i>	1	MIK
Apr 18	Ragged Hbr., <i>Queens</i>	2	ELM, AHM, DPO
Apr 25	Kempton, <i>Col.</i>	pr.	KJM
May 9	<i>Hants, Kings; Total</i>	20, 11, 46	NSMC
<b>American Oystercatcher</b>			
Apr 7, 11	CSI	1, 3	MUN
Apr 26	CSI	2	MUN, BJS, SIS
<b>BLACK-NECKED STILT</b>			
Apr 14 - 28	Liverpool, <i>Queens</i>	pr., ph.	DPO, CST <i>et al.</i>
<b>Spotted Sandpiper</b>			
May 3	Tatamagouche, <i>Col.</i>	1	J. McGinity
May 9	<i>Kings; Total</i>	11, 23	NSMC
May 16	BPI	1	CLD <i>et al.</i>
May 16	River Bourgeois, <i>Rich.</i>	2	RIV, APO, BBU
May 17	Tusket R., <i>Digby</i>	4	PRG
May 20 - 22	3 locations	singles	var. obs.
<b>yellowlegs species</b>			
May 2	Wolfville Hbr., <i>Kings</i>	2	JCT

**Greater Yellowlegs**

Apr 8	CSI	1	JON, SAN
Apr 18	Salt Marsh tr., <i>HRM</i>	6	PMU
Apr 19	ARM	1	DLO
Apr 23	Cow Bay estuary, <i>HRM</i>	ca. 20	M. Reid
Apr 25	Conrad I. Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	8	JAH
Apr 25 -			
May 31	19 locs, widespread	ca. 67	var. obs.
May 9	<i>CBRM, Pic.; Total</i>	172, 62, 321	NSMC
<b>Willet</b>			
Apr 18	Martinique	1	ULH
Apr 24	CSI	1	FLL, MIK
Apr 25	Lwr Rose Bay, <i>Lun.</i>	2	DAW, JAH
Apr 25	Lockeport, <i>Shel.</i>	3	DJC
Apr 26	CSI	3	BJS, SIS
Apr 27,			
May 2	Wolfville Hbr., <i>Kings</i>	1, 3	JWW, JCT
Apr 28	Up. Woods Hbr., <i>Shel.</i>	6	DOC
Apr 29 -			
May 31	8 locations	23 total	var. obs.
May 3 - 21	Cherry Hill	10-12	SJF
May 9	<i>HRM, Lun., Shel.; Total</i>	32, 57, 72, 289	NSMC
May 21	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	6-10	ULH
<b>Lesser Yellowlegs</b>			
Apr 24	CSI	present	FLL, MIK
May 9	<i>CBRM, HRM, Rich.</i>	3, 7, 1	NSMC
May 12	Lawrencetown	present	C. Pepper
<b>Whimbrel</b>			
Apr 5 - 24	CSI	1	TEC, MUN <i>et al.</i>
Apr 24	Kingsburg Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	1	DAW, <i>fide</i> JAH
May 9,			
18, 21	Cherry Hill	3, 3, 1	NSMC, SJF
<b>WHIMBREL, PHAEOPUS SUBSPECIES</b>			
Apr26+	Sable I.	1	ZOL



The much sought-after twosome (pair?) of **BLACK-NECKED STILTS** at Lunenburg was nicely photographed 18 Apr. [Photo Eric Mills]

**MARbled GODWIT**

May 26 - 31	CSI	1 nd	FLL, MIK, <i>et al.</i>
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**Red Knot**

Apr 24	CSI	present	FLL, MIK
May 2	CSI	present, alt.	MUN
May 9	<i>Shel.</i>	1	NSMC
May 21	Cherry Hill	1, alt.	SJF

**Sanderling**

Mar 14, 26	Martinique	1, 17	S. Abbott, LUB
Apr 5, 25	Martinique	5, ca. 12	IAM, PMC, ULH
May 9	Cherry Hill	1	NSMC, SJF
May 26	Martinique	ca. 25	ULH

**peep species**

May 9	<i>Kings</i>	2	NSMC
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**Semipalmated Sandpiper**

Apr 11	CSI	65	MUN
May 9	<i>Cumb.</i>	6	NSMC
May 26	Seaforth, <i>HRM</i>	2	KAM

**Least Sandpiper**

May 3	Cherry Hill	1	SJF
May 9	<i>Pict.</i>	12	NSMC
May 20, 21	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1, 2	ULH

**Purple Sandpiper**

Mar 13, 22	Pollock Pt., <i>Lun.</i>	22, 12	SJF
Mar 14	North Sydney, <i>CBRM</i>	30	BRD
Mar 21	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	60+	MIK
Apr 3	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	30+	HAT
Apr 15	Port George, <i>Anna.</i>	1	JOB
May 5	West Pennant, <i>HRM</i>	27	HAT, LAE
May 9	<i>CBRM</i>	22	NSMC

**Dunlin**

Mar 7	Crescent Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	17	ELM
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Apr 11	CSI	47	MUN
Apr 13	Crescent Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	15	DAM, CRM
May 9	<i>Lun., Shel.</i>	15, 73	NSMC
May 11	CSI	50+	RAH, CST

**dowitcher species**

May 9	Hants	1	NSMC
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**Short-billed Dowitcher**

Apr 11	CSI	2	MUN
May 9	<i>Queens</i>	2	NSMC
May 12	Crystal Crescent Bch., <i>HRM</i>	1, basic	HAT

**LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER [no details]**

May 9	<i>Shel.</i> , location?	4	NSMC
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**Wilson's Snipe**

Apr 1	Brier I.	1	ELM, AHM
Apr 3	near Springhill, <i>Cum.</i>	1	CIC
Apr 10	Garden of Eden, <i>Pict.</i>	5+	KJM
Apr 19+	7 locs, widespread	10 total	var. obs.
May 9	Peaks in <i>CBRM</i> , <i>Hants</i> , <i>Pict.</i>	83	NSMC

**American Woodcock**

Mar 14	Chester, <i>Lun.</i>	1	<i>fide</i> CJF
Mar 15 - 29	5 locs, widespread	singles	var. obs.
Mar 31	CSI	a lot	MUN
Apr	9 locs, widespread	13 total	var. obs.
Apr 6	4 Atlas squares, <i>Pict.</i>	32	KJM
Apr 10	Atlas squares, <i>Pict.</i>	17	KJM
Apr 24	Moser River, <i>HRM</i>	7	PMC, SEM
May 1	Brier I.	1f., 4 juv.	AHM
May 2	Owl survey, <i>Col.</i>	several	JBO
May 9	var. counties	74	NSMC

**Red-necked Phalarope**

May 9	<i>Shel.</i>	6	NSMC
May 18	off Brier I.	ca. 100	SBA

## Gulls Through Alcids

By Eric Mills

Two **FRANKLIN'S GULLS** were reported, the first undocumented, but the second, an ad., was photographed by MIK along the shore just east of Halifax harbour. That bird was joined by an ad. **LAUGHING GULL** (also photographed), which then appears to have stayed in the area into June. The first Laughing Gulls of the season predated that bird by 1-2 weeks.

**ICELAND** and **GLAUCOUS GULLS** lingered well into May. An ad. Glaucous found by BBU on April 3 was the same size as nearby Herring Gulls, but perhaps just a variant individual. The smallest subspecies of this species is *Larus hyperboreus barrovianus* of western Alaska, which is usually darker backed and has a more intensely-coloured eye-ring than birds from Arctic Canada and Asia.

"Iceland Gulls" remain a problem for more than one reason. In mid April, IAM found a number of very pale Iceland Gulls near Halifax, and commented as follows: "I am ... struck by the number of purely-white-winged Iceland Gulls lingering at the mouth of the harbour. There were six first-cycle birds at the harbour side beach of Hartlen Pt., and an adult on the flats at Eastern Passage. It may be that these are "Kumlien's" bleached by the late winter and spring sun, rather than nominate Iceland Gulls from Greenland, but it's a problem to be solved. Do these northern gulls with limited melanin in primaries bleach more readily than ones with much more?" Or, he might have added, do we get significant numbers of Iceland Gulls from Greenland in our waters?

The ad. **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL** in the Prospect Bay - Shad Bay area, *HRM*, from January through March, seems to have been the same individual seen there last winter.



Four species of gulls Apr. 10 at Harlen Pt., *HRM*, included a classic *graellsii* **LESSER BLACK-BACKED**. Note that it seems even more slender and light on the water than the rather sturdy young **ICELAND GULL** behind on the right. [Photo Bernard Burke]

**Pomarine Jaeger**

May 29 nr Country I., *Guys.* 1 Julie McNight

**FRANKLIN'S GULL**

Mar 2 Port Clyde, *Shel.* 1, 1<sup>st</sup> w. (no details)

SAH

May 21 Hartlen Pt./Cow Bay, *HRM* 1 ad., ph. MIK

**Laughing Gull**

May 8 Broad Cove, *Lun.* 1 ad. SJF

May 9 *Lun.* 1 NSMC

May 16 BPII 1 CLD, NSBS

May 21 Cow Bay, *HRM* 1 ad., ph. MIK

**Black-headed Gull**

Mar 14 Sydney R., *CBRM* 1, 1<sup>st</sup>w., 1 ad. BRD

Mar 23 Conrad's Bch., *HRM* 4 DMW

Mar 29 Conrad's Bch., *HRM* 1 DMW

Apr 5 Hartlen Pt., *HRM* 14 MIK

May 9 Mainly *Vic.* 19 NSMC

**Bonaparte's Gull**

Apr 7 Shannon Park, Dartmouth 1 BBU

Apr 25 Broad Cove, *Lun.* 1 imm. ELM

May 9 *Rich.* 5 NSMC

**Ring-billed Gull**

May 9 Mainly *CBRM, Pict., Vic.* 272 NSMC

**Iceland Gull**

Mar 14 N. Sydney, *CBRM* 150+ BRD

Mar 28 Windsor SP, *Hants* 1 ad. *Kumieni*

ELM

Apr 2 Brier I. 2, 2<sup>nd</sup>-yr ELM, AHM

Apr 18 Liverpool SP, *Queens* 1, 1<sup>st</sup>-w ELM

Apr 19 Hartlen Pt., *HRM* 6, 1<sup>st</sup> yr IAM

Apr 19 Eastern Passage, *HRM* 1 ad. IAM

Apr 23 - 24 Kingsburg Bch., *Lun.* 2, 2<sup>nd</sup>-yr ELM, AHM

Apr 26 Canard, *Kings* 1 imm. JWW, NSBS

May 2 Cow Bay, *HRM* 2 ULH

May 8 Woods Hbr. area, *Shel.* 1 Rebecca Goreham

May 8 Broad Cove, *Lun.* 1 SJF

May 9 Mainly *CBRM, Pict., Rich.* 62 NSMC

**Glaucous Gull**

Feb 28 Shannon Park, Dartmouth 1 ad. BBU

Mar 1 - 29 L. Mic Mac, Dartmouth 1 imm. BBU

Mar 21 Hartlen Pt., *HRM* 1 MIK

Apr 3 Dartmouth, *HRM* 1 small ad. BBU

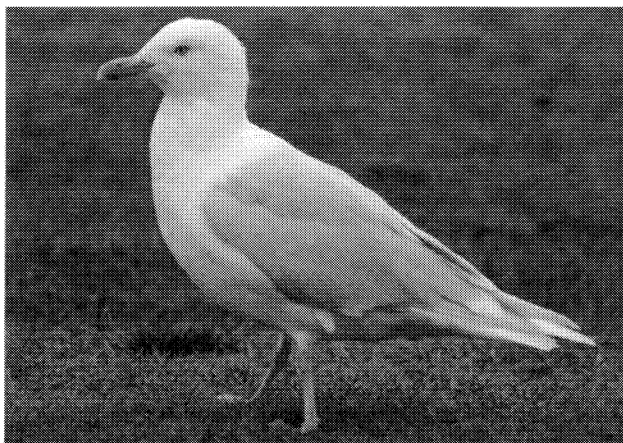
Apr 6 Grand Pre, *Kings* 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> yr. LDE

Apr 11 Eastern Passage, *HRM* 1 MIK

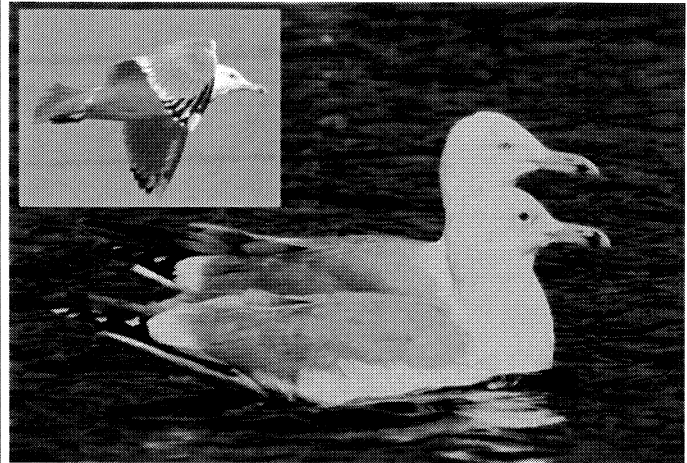
May 8 Eastern Passage, *HRM* 1 imm. AGH

May 9 Mainly *HRM* 36 NSMC

May 31 Cherry Hill 1 JAH



This smallish adult GLAUCOUS GULL lingered into spring at Shubie Park, *HRM*, (here 3 April). The short primary projection (and yellowish orbital ring in the original) are distinctions from Iceland Gull. [Photo Bernard Burke]



Bernard Burke seems unusually adept at finding odd gulls. The closer of these two, present during spring (here Apr. 8) in Dartmouth, has dark eyes, with reddish orbital rings – wrong for our (American) HERRING GULL. Yet that is what it seems to be. It was certainly not a California Gull, since it was pink-legged. The spread wings are more like that of N. European Herring Gull subspecies *argentatus*, but the pale back and dark eyes are equally non-conforming. It has wrong wing-tip markings and was not dark-backed enough for the often dark-eyed Vega (Herring) Gull, which is routine in Alaska, but that gull is notably darker-backed than our Herring Gulls, and shows gray flight feathers on underwings and wing-tips more like a Slaty-backed Gull's. A Thayer's X Herring Gull (an unknown hybrid) might produce similar eyes and wingtips, and rather steep forehead, but should average a darker-mantle than our Herring Gull. Let's leave it at that. [Photos Bernard Burke]

**Glaucous x Great Black-backed Gull**

Mar 4 - 5 Mic Mac Mall, Dartmouth 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> yr (photos) BBU

**Lesser Black-backed Gull**

Mar 20 Windsor SP, *Hants* 1 JCZ

Mar 22 Canard, *Kings* 2 ad. AAM

Jan 9 -

Mar 27 Shad Bay-Prospect Bay, *HRM* 1 ad. BLM

Apr 5 Hartlen Pt., *HRM* 1 MIK

Apr 10 Hartlen Pt., *HRM* 1 ad. *intermedius?*

BBU

Apr 11 Eastern Passage, *HRM* 1 ad. MIK

Apr 15 Canard, *Kings* 1 ad. RBS

Apr 25 Canard, *Kings* 1 ad. RBS

May 9 *Pict.* 1 NSMC

**Black-legged Kittiwake**

May 9 *CBRM* 828 NSMC

**Caspian Tern**

Apr 30 -

May 4 Red Bridge Pd., Dartmouth 1 (ph.) BBU, ULH

May 3 Scott's Bay, *Kings* 1 Dennis Garratt

May 8 Hartlen Pt., *HRM* 1 AGH

May 21 Hartlen Pt., *HRM* 1 MIK

**Common Tern**

May 2 Lyons Brook, *Pict.* 2 KJM

May 3 Red Bridge Pd., Dartmouth 1 ULH

May 9 Mainly *Yar., Lun., Pict.* 167 NSMC

May 13 Conrad's Bch., *HRM* 3 DMW

May 31 CSI 2 ELM, AHM, IAM

**Arctic Tern**

May 16 BPI 5 CLD, NSBS

<b>Dovekie</b>			
Mar 14	N. Sydney, <i>CBRM</i>	1 dead	BRD
<b>Black Guillemot</b>			
Apr 2 - 3	Brier I.	3 ad.	ELM
May 4	Margaretsville, <i>Anna</i> .	1	Larry & Alison Bogan

May 9	Mainly <i>CBRM, Kings</i>	73	NSMC
<b>Atlantic Puffin</b>			
Apr 30	Brier I.	2	AHM

## Pigeons Through Woodpeckers

By Dorothy Poole

Atlassing season for ROCK PIGEONS begins in March, as JWW reported seeing one on a nest mid-month. MOURNING DOVES too were seen mating and cooing in mid March, getting an early start for what might be up to three broods in one year (BLM). The NSMC total (1883) for Mourning Doves was the highest in five years and once again *Kings* led with 380. MIK reported the only BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO of the season.

SNOWY OWLS lingered up to NSMC day in *Shelburne*. Halifax birders were fortunate to have up to four of them in and around Hartlen Pt. until early April. There was one report (KJM) of a NORTHERN HAWK OWL found dead (probably from a window strike) on an unlucky Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> in *Pictou*. MUN reported a SHORT-EARED OWL and a LONG-EARED OWL on the same day at the Hawk, CSI. The first of three BOREAL OWLS was one found injured in mid March and brought to HVD for rehabilitation. The bird was released in the wild after a month of care. SEM and PMC found another BOREAL OWL on their Earlstown owl survey route. There was another one found by Vilis and Magi while doing a 'hooting' survey in their Tatamagouche square. There were few NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWLS this season and only one found on the NSMC.

With this year's early date for the NSMC only two COMMON NIGHTHAWKS were found and 12 CHIMNEY SWIFTS. Any date after May 10 for past counts has had many more Chimney Swifts. The average number of swifts counted in May in New Glasgow\* this year was 216 whereas last year the average for May was 305.

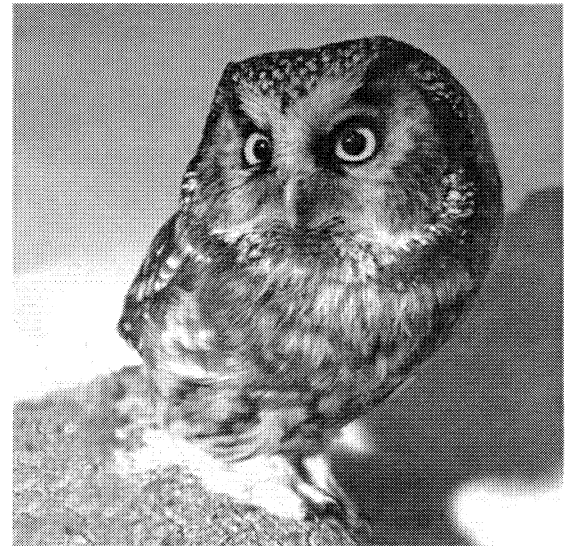
The reports of RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRDS ranged from April 15 to May 24 with many record early arrival dates but for RBS the May 24 arrival was at least a week late. Again *Kings* (42) accounted for almost half this years NSMC. BELTED KINGFISHERS NSMC counts were about the 10 year average, well above last years low count of 177. Again *CBRM* (78) and *Pictou* (28) accounted for 50 percent.

The RED-HEADED WOODPECKER lingered at least until March 26 in New Waterford, *CBRM* (*fide* BLM). The wintering RED-BELLIED WOODPECKERS seemed to have disappeared in mid-May – there were five seen on the NSMC, which is not a record count, as there were six in 2005.

The NSMC is an excellent way to get a more accurate picture regarding our resident and migrant breeding woodpeckers. There were almost twice as many YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKERS this year than last, and *Pictou* (44), *Kings* (33) and *Hants* (25) counties accounted for 90% of them. The DOWNY WOODPECKER total was about the 10-year average, but HAIRY WOODPECKERS numbers were well above average, the second highest in 10 years. Seven BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKERS were reported, six from CBI. NORTHERN FLICKER numbers were up by over 200 from last year, with 60 % of the total (718) found in three counties - *Kings* (170), *Hants* (134) and *CBRM* (111). The 77 PILEATED WOODPECKERS was close to the 10-year average.

<b>Rock Pigeon</b>			
Mar 17	Wolfville	1 on nest	JWW
May 9	15 counties	1024	NSMC
<b>Mourning Dove</b>			
May 9	16 counties, <i>Kings</i> (380)	1883	NSMC
<b>Black-billed Cuckoo</b>			
May 31	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	MIK
<b>Great Horned Owl</b>			
Mar 21	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	MIK

Apr - May	widely, 15 reports	29 ind.	var. obs.
May 9	6 counties, <i>CBRM</i> (3)	9	NSMC
<b>Snowy Owl</b>			
Mar 1 - "			
Apr 11	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	4 max	MIK, var. obs.
Mar 1 - 31	CSI	4 max	MUN
Mar 22	Canard, <i>Kings</i>	1	Robin Whidden, JCT, BLF
Apr 10 - 11	Brier I.	2	RBS



This BOREAL OWL, victim of a collision in April, was taken in for care at Helen Van Doninck's rehabilitation facilities in Truro, and in return posed for its portrait. [photo from Helen Van Doninck]

Apr 17	<i>Pictou</i>	1	Richard Murphy, KJM
May 9	<i>Shelburne</i>	2	NSMC
<b>Northern Hawk Owl</b>			
Mar 13	Green Hill, <i>Pict.</i>	1 found dead	KJM
<b>Barred Owl</b>			
Mar 10	Wolfville	pair courtship	
			BLF, ANS
Mar 16	Fairmont, <i>Ant</i>	1	RFL
Mar 28 -			
May 3	Mid Musquodoboit, <i>HRM</i>	1	VJH
Mar 30	Georgefield, <i>Hants</i>	1	ROW
April	widely, 16 reports	45 ind.	var. obs
May	widely, 12 reports	55 ind.	var. obs
May 9	8 counties, <i>Kings</i> (27)	63	NSMC
Mar - May	Wolfville area, 9 nests	18 young	BLF
Apr 20 -			
May 30	CB (10 owl surveys)	55	var. obs



Atlas findings suggest that BARRED OWLS are more widespread now on Cape Breton I. than in the 1980s. This one calmly studied the photographer near R. Bourgeois, *Rich.* [Photo Bernard Burke]

<b>Long-eared Owl</b>			
Mar 15+	CSI	1	MUN
<b>Short-eared Owl</b>			
Mar 15	CSI	1	MUN
Mar 25	Prospect, <i>HRM</i>	1 o-w	<i>fide</i> BLM
Mar 27	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	MIK
Apr 3	Middle Dyke Rd., <i>Kings</i>	1	RBS
Apr 4	Shore Rd, <i>HRM</i>	1	PLC
<b>Boreal Owl</b>			
Mid Mar	Tatamagouche, <i>Col.</i>	1 rehab.	HVD
May 22	<i>Col.</i> (owl survey)	1	SEM, PMC
May	Tatamagouche (atlas)	1	Vilis, Magi
<b>Northern Saw-whet Owl</b>			
Mar 8	Milford Station, <i>Hants</i>	heard	KAM
Mar 10	Pine Grove, <i>Lun.</i>	1	<i>fide</i> JAH
Mar 10	Wileville, <i>Lun.</i>	dead	<i>fide</i> JAH
Mar 11	Sutton Woods, <i>Kings</i>	1	Nancy Nickerson
Mar 13	Sydney Airport	1	BRD
Mar 25	East LaHave, <i>Lun.</i>	1	<i>fide</i> JAH
Apr 2	Brier I.	1	ELM, AHM
Apr 10	<i>HRM</i> (owl survey)	3	PLC, SMB
Apr 11	Cape D'Or, <i>Cumb.</i>	dead	JBO
Apr 15	Sandy Lake, <i>HRM</i>	1	GMU
Apr 19	<i>Ant.</i> (owl survey)	1	RFL, R. Mash
Apr - May	CBI (2 owl surveys)	1	BID
Apr	<i>HRM</i> (atlassing)	4	SEM, PMC
May 9	<i>HRM</i>	1	NSMC
May 11	<i>Lun.</i> (owl survey)	2	SJF, JAH, DPO

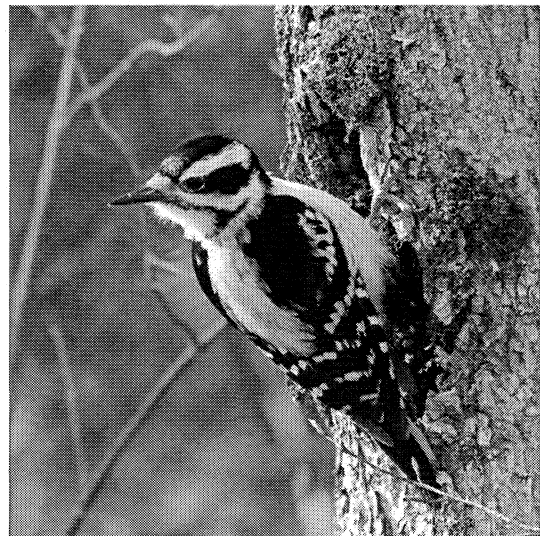


By spring, some of the SNOWY OWLS that arrived in numbers in fall were looking the worse for wear, but this young male (judging from weak limited bars on tail, etc.) seemed lively enough, Apr. 4 at Hartlen Pt. [Photo Ulli Hoeger]

May 14	<i>Col.</i> (owl survey)	1	SEM, PMC
May 22	Conns Mills, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	Jim Taylor
May 22	<i>Col.</i> (owl survey)	2	SEM, PMC
May 29	Higginsville, <i>HRM</i>	1	Chris Pepper
<b>Common Nighthawk</b>			
May 9	<i>CBRM</i>	2	NSMC
May 20	Dartmouth	1	BBU
<b>Chimney Swift</b> (*=usual chimney roost counts)			
May 3	CSI	1	MIK
May 3	Volgler's Cove, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH
May 9	<i>Kings</i>	12 (low)	NSMC
May 16 - 19	BPI	1	CLD <i>et al.</i>
May 9	Wolfville*	12	JWW <i>et al.</i>
May 11 - 23	Wolfville*	53+ max.	JWW <i>et al.</i>
May 24 - 31	Wolfville*	100+ max	JWW <i>et al.</i>
May 11	New Glasgow *	75	KJM
May 19 - 24	New Glasgow *	424 max	KJM, RFE
May 12,			
19, 26	Middleton, <i>Anna.</i> *	81, 121, 282	CLD <i>et al.</i>
May 14	Truro*	17	LHA, ROH
May 16 - 27	Truro*	0 (!)	LHA, ROH
May 15,			
19, 26	Upper Falmouth	40, 95, 45	Cheryl Rutledge/JOB
May 16,			
30, 31	McGowan L., <i>Queens</i>	116, 171, 140	PEH/Megan Crowley, Brad Toms
May 19	Oxford	20	JUP
May 26	Milford Station, <i>Hants</i>	3	DOM
<b>Ruby-throated Hummingbird</b>			
Apr 15	Long Island, <i>Digby</i>	1+	Loretta Crocker <i>fide</i> CCA, AMO
Apr 22	White Pt., <i>Queens</i>	1	MMI
Apr 28	Scots Bay, <i>Kings</i>	1	Ian McKay
Apr 28	Hall's Hbr., <i>Kings</i>	1m. (early)	Mike McCall
Apr 30	Alpena, <i>Anna.</i>	1 (early)	Shelley & Larry Gaul, <i>fide</i> JWW
Apr 30	Carleton, <i>Yar.</i>	1m.	RAH
May 3	Tremont, <i>Kings</i>	1m.	SLH
May 3	Woods Hbr., <i>Shel.</i>	1m.	DOC
May 3	Kingston	1 (early)	PBG
May 4	Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	KFS
May 4	Granville Ferry, <i>Anna.</i>	1	Jon Percy
May 4	Lower Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	1m.	LOC
May 6	River Bourgeois, <i>Rich.</i>	1	BID, SDI
May 6	Lower Rose Bay, <i>Lun.</i>	1m.	ELM, AHM
May 8	Kentville, <i>Kings</i>	1m.	Laurie Marshall

May 9	13 counties <i>Kings</i> (42)	100	NSMC
May 10 - 31	widely	1-4 per report	21 obs.
<b>Belted Kingfisher</b>			
Mar 23	Jeddore Oyster P, <i>HRM</i>	1 m., o-w	LUB
Apr 3	Black R., <i>Cumb.</i>	1	CIC
Apr 6	Sambro, <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT
Apr 9	Kentville, <i>Kings</i>	1	AND
Apr 11	Sandy Lake Park, <i>HRM</i>	1	GMU
Apr 13	Haliburton Gut. <i>Pict.</i>	1 o-w	KJM
Apr 15+	widely	1-4 per report	var. obs
May 9	16 counties <i>CBRM</i> (78)	212	NSMC
<b>Red-headed Woodpecker</b>			
Mar 26	New Waterford, <i>CBRM</i>	1 o-w	Bernie Van Doninck
<b>Red-bellied Woodpecker</b>			
Mar-	Mahone Bay, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JOA
Mar -			
late May	Liverpool, <i>Queens</i>	1	<i>fide</i> MMI
Mar -			
May 20	Lr. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	1m.	LOC
Mar -			
May 10	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1m.	DPO
Mar 11	Newellton, <i>CSI</i>	1	CST
Mar 11	MSV University, Halifax	1	KAM
Mar 11	central Halifax	1	PLC
Mar 27	Sable River, <i>Shel.</i>	1	GLG
Apr 5, 30	Granville Ferry, <i>Anna.</i>	1	Jon Percy, RBS
Apr 5	Shelburne	1 f.	Peter McLeod
Apr 12	Hantsport	1	MFU
Apr 18	Brooklyn, <i>Queens</i>	1m.	ELM, AHM, DPO
Apr 30,			
May 16	Brier I.	1 f.	ELM, RBS <i>et al.</i>
May 1	Bridgewater, <i>Lun.</i>	1	D. Holmes
May 9	4 counties <i>HRM</i> (2)	5	NSMC
May 13	Apple R., <i>Cumb.</i>	1	KFS
<b>Yellow-bellied Sapsucker</b>			
Mar 12	Centerville, <i>CSI</i>	1	MUN
Apr 19	Mill Cove, <i>Lun.</i>	1	ELM
Apr 26	Sunrise Valley, <i>Vict.</i>	1m.	FMC
Apr 26	<i>Ant.</i>	1	RFL
Apr 26	<i>Col.</i>	1	KJM
Apr 27	Musquodoboit Valley	1	KAM
Apr 29	White Pt., <i>Queens</i>	1	MMI
May 9	7 counties	112	NSMC
May 1 - 31	Tremont, <i>Kings</i>	1	SLH
May 16	BPI	1	CLD <i>et al.</i>
<b>Downy Woodpecker</b>			
May 9	15 counties	419	NSMC
Mar - May.	Widely	1-4 per report	var. obs.
<b>Hairy Woodpecker</b>			
May 9	16 counties	272	NSMC
Mar - May	widely	1-3 per report	var. obs.
<b>Black-backed Woodpecker</b>			
Mar 10	Bible Hill, <i>Col.</i>	1	ROH

Apr 10	Liscomb Game Sanc.	1 pr	MAB
May 9	<i>CBRM, Vict. HRM</i>	7	NSMC
May 20	White's Lake, <i>HRM</i>	1	BLM
May 22	Uniacke	1	HAT
<b>Northern Flicker</b>			
Mar 15	Port Williams, <i>Kings</i>	1+	RBS
Mar 17	Lr. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	1	LOC
Mar 23	Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	2	DMW
Mar 24	Windsor	2	Louis Coutinho <i>fide</i> JWW
Mar 27	Boutilliers Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	Suzanne Townsend
Mar 27	Halifax	1	PLC
Mar 28	Bayside, <i>HRM</i>	1	BLM
April	widely, 15 reports	many	var. obs
May 9	16 counties	718	NSMC
<b>Pileated Woodpecker</b>			
Mar 2	Coldbrook, <i>Kings</i>	1m., f.	AAM
Mar 10	Apple R. <i>Cumb.</i>	2	KFS
Mar 21	Springfield, <i>Anna.</i>	1	JAH, DAW
Mar 27	Pugwash Jct., <i>Cumb.</i>	1	SAW
Mar 28	Bayside, <i>HRM</i>	1	BLM
Mar 29	Little R. Falls, <i>Kings</i>	1	ANS & son
April	widely, 18 reports	23 ind.	var. obs.
May 9	13 counties	77	NSMC



A fine portrait of a female HAIRY WOODPECKER in April at Jerry Lawrence PPP, *HRM*, shows why we shouldn't ignore the commonplace. It has a smudge of ochre-yellow above its bill; pairs that excavate nest cavities in poplars often become widely stained with brownish yellow. [Photo Hans Tom]

## Flycatchers Through Thrushes

By Hans Toom

The **WHITE-EYED VIREO** is an annual but rare reverse migrant regularly seen in the fall, but now springtime sightings appear to be increasing, suggesting that nesting may become a possibility in future years. LUB found one in his neighbour's woodlot near the Jeddore Oyster Ponds, *HRM*, April 28 and was able to photograph the bird. TEP found the second one of the year at Hartlen Point, *HRM*, May 2, which was seen by others the following day, including possibly a second one seen by ELM. The adult White-eyed Vireo is the only white-eyed perching bird to visit Nova Scotia so it is easy to identify, but the yellow spectacles are always present, even in the juveniles.

A **YELLOW-THROATED VIREO** was singing on the Nichol's Lake trail, *HRM*, April 30, high in flowering maples. BLM heard and then photographed the bird. The song of this bird is easily learned and it sings continuously much like its cousin, the

Red-eyed Vireo. This is only the second time this species has been heard singing in the province.

Birders tallied a record-high 11 **NORTHERN SHRIKES** on the NSMC, May 9. Usually this bird is gone by the end of April and many NSMC's have recorded none at all. The Northern Shrike feeds primarily on small birds, not large flying insects like its cousin the Loggerhead Shrike, so the Northern Shrike's population appears to be stable, whereas the primary food source of the Loggerhead Shrike has been devastated by insecticides, so it has disappeared as a breeder from Nova Scotia.

On an evening stroll, April 10, along Sandy Cove Road, *HRM*, *HAT* and *LAE* saw a silhouette high on a spruce, a silhouette that resembled a large-headed shrike species. It was distant, but the hooked bill and black mask made the species identification certain, but they both agreed that the shrike was unusually small for a Northern Shrike, which is usually absent from this area of Nova Scotia by this time of year. Then the shrike began to sing, and the song was a perfect rendition of the song of the **LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE**, a repeated series of buzzes and trills, three to four buzzes or trills at a time. Due to the extreme rarity of this species confirmation was needed and it came the next morning when *FLL* and *MIK* were able to get better views of the bird and confirm the record. Unfortunately because of the distance and backlighting conditions good photographs were not obtained but it bore resemblance to the migratory subspecies, *mexicanus*, which breeds in Florida. The bird could have been an unfortunate passenger of the recent storm influx of southern birds that occurred on April 4. Many Nova Scotia birders were able to see this bird over the next few days, but it did stop singing so finding it became more difficult, and it also began to wander further from its first sighted location, making patience a necessary prerequisite for viewing success. Loggerhead Shrikes used to nest in Nova Scotia, with the last probable nesting in King's county in 1969.



There have been only eight reports of **LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE**, and only one photo, Since Tufts' "Birds of Nova Scotia" (1984). So these distant images of the much-ticked bird that arrived 10 Apr. at Sandy Cove, *HRM*, supply worthwhile confirmation. The similar tones of gray on back and underparts and the near lack of white in the scapulars above the black wing suggest that it belonged to the migratory subspecies *mexicanus*, which was last found nesting here in 1969. It was first found Apr. 10 and might have arrived with the second wave of overshooting vagrants on Apr. 8; these winter into s. Mexico and were recorded migrating along the Gulf of Mexico Coast in early April. [Photo Hans Toom]

This was a good spring for **PURPLE MARTIN** with several sightings. Remarkably one turned up on Sable Island, April 6, as reported by *ZOL*. Another one appeared April 5, at The Hawk, *CSI* and on April 26 at Daniel's Head, *CSI*, as reported by *MUN*. *JAH* found two more at Broad Cove, *Lun*. *JAH* reported that, "*The martins yesterday had spent the night side by side in the shelter of a small covered feeder with a peak roof, which I find interesting. They also were checking out a chickadee bird house, of which I've not heard of this occurring before as the bird house is really close to the ground as compared to a martin house*". The Purple Martin has been decline in Nova Scotia throughout the last several decades and it has been at least four years since any have been confirmed as nesting here. In the past it has suffered through population declines after devastating weather and food shortages but had always recovered after a year or two. Sadly, it is now only an annual transient. The lack of insects to feed their young is a possible reason for their decline.

On May 31 *PKE* reported that Becky Stewart heard a **SEdge WREN** singing near the Whale Cove Campground near Tiddville. *SMB*, *RAS* and Simone Smith, and others followed up *PKE*'s report and revisited the location. They heard the Sedge Wren singing from the edges of the Tiddville marsh. The song of the Sedge Wren is easy to learn, a two-part series of snaps with the second part faster. It prefers habitat that floods and dries periodically so it is often found alongside roadside ditches. It is also among the tamest of the wrens and will tolerate a close approach providing you remain silent. This is the sixth May report for this species. Look for the cinnamon rump when separating this bird from the similar Marsh Wren.

A **NORTHERN WHEATEAR** was reported by Dr. Bill McCormick, March 18, at Martinique Beach Provincial Park, about halfway along the beach. It flushed and flew from the beach dunes into the grasses beyond and then into the forested area further south. The bird was well described. An over-wintering bird is a possibility though unlikely considering all the competent birders that visit this park year round. An off course normal transatlantic migrant is another possibility. Another was found a bit earlier at St. Pierre, which suggests a small migratory movement was involved.

Earl MacDonald, who lives within sight of Oak Hill Lake, Dartmouth, reported a male **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD**, May 10. The bird was studied for five minutes and well-described. The species has a reputation for wandering from its western mountain home during the winter.

JON reported a **WOOD THRUSH** at the Pubnico Golf Course, *Yar*, April 26. The Wood Thrush is a common yard and golf course bird in the south eastern states so to find it on a golf course here in Nova Scotia is as it should be.

A female **VARIED THRUSH** arrived at George Lynch's property at Mount Denson, *Hants*, Jan 22. This was a very shy bird and would hunker in the thicker portions of the local trees for long periods. Patience and silence was necessary before the bird would come out to be seen as it fed alongside Ring-necked Pheasants and other passerines. IAM believed it to be, "*of the expected subspecies meruloides, which breeds from AK and w. Yukon s. at least to inland n. B.C., and surely not of the browner-backed and rich orange female of subspecies naevius which breed closer to the coast from s.e. AK to n. CA*". This is geographically hardly surprising, but there is another possibility in the disputed subspecies *godfreii*, said to breed from s. interior of BC s. to w. MT and e. ID. It is reckoned as somewhat intermediate in plumage tones to the above two". The bird was last seen March 14, and was well-seen and photographed by many Nova Scotia birders who visited the Lynches, and enjoyed their hospitality.

**Olive-sided Flycatcher**

May 12 Amherst Head, *Cumb.* 1 James Taylor  
May 22 Conns Mills, *Cumb.* 1 James Taylor

**Eastern Wood Pewee**

May 22 Conn Mills, *Cumb.* 1 James Taylor  
May 27 Lake Echo, *HRM* 1m Chris Pepper

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**

May 19 White's Lake, *HRM* 1 m BLM

**Alder Flycatcher**

May 24 Apple River, *Cumb.* 1 KFS  
May 25 Apple River, *Cumb.* 4 KFS

**Least Flycatcher**

May 9 Lapland, *Lun* 2 SJF  
May 9 var. counties 48 NSMC  
May 11 Amherst, *Cumb.* 1 James Taylor  
May 19 Apple River, *Cumb.* 1 KFS

**Eastern Phoebe**

Apr 9 - 23 Apple River, *Cumb.* 1 KFS  
Apr 29 Brier I. 1 ELM, AHM  
May 9 var. counties 38 NSMC  
May 21 Amherst, *Cumb.* 1 James Taylor  
May 21 Conns Mills, *Cumb.* 1 James Taylor  
May 31 Torbrook, *Kings* 1 DOM

**Eastern Kingbird**

Apr 5 The Hawk, *CSI* 1 TEC  
May 9 var. counties 3 NSMC  
May 14 Amherst, *Cumb.* 1 James Taylor  
May 31 Cherry Hill, *Lun* 1 JAH

**Northern Shrike**

Mar 19 Big I., *Pic* 1 Karen and Lincoln MacLeod  
Apr 1 Brier I. 1imm ELM  
May 9 var. counties 11(record high) NSMC

**Loggerhead Shrike**

Apr 10 - 16 Sandy Cove's Beach, *HRM* 1 HAT, LAE, others

**White-eyed Vireo**

Apr 28 Jeddore Oyster Ponds, *HRM* 1 LUB  
May 2 - 4 Hartlen Pt., *HRM* 1 TEP, *et al.*

**Yellow-throated Vireo**

Apr 30 Nichol's L. Tr., *HRM* 1 singing BLM

**Blue-headed Vireo**

Apr 28 Uniacke 1 HAT  
Apr 30 Palmetter's Woods, *Kings* 3+ JCT  
Apr 30 Brier I. 1 ELM  
May 7 Apple River, *Cumb.* 1 KFS  
May 9 Wolfville Ridge, *Kings* 1 JCT  
May 9 var. counties 450 NSMC

**Red-eyed Vireo**

May 18 Wolfville Ridge, *Kings* 1 JCT

**Gray Jay**

Mar 1 - 31 Apple River, *Cumb.* 1-3 KFS  
May 17 River Bourgeois, *Rich* 2 RIV, APO, BBU

**Horned Lark**

Apr 2 Brier I. 1 ELM  
May 9 Centreville area, *Kings* 9 MAG, *fide* JCT

**Purple Martin**

Apr 5 CSI 1 TEC  
Apr 5 - 10 Broad Cove, *Lun* 2 JAH, AIM

Apr 6 Sable I. 1 ZOL  
Apr 10 Broad Cove, *Lun.* 2 JAH  
Apr 26 CSI 2 MUN

**Tree Swallow**

Mar 10 Eastern Passage, *HRM* 1 DBR  
Apr 6, 21 Apple River, *Cumb.* 4, 6 KFS  
Apr 9 Kentville, *Kings* 2 AND  
Apr 15 New Salem, *Cumb.* 1 KFS  
Apr 15 Ridge Stile Park, *Kings* 2 JCT  
Apr 19 Mid. Musq., *HRM* 1 VJH  
Apr 24 Conrad Rd, *HRM* 1 DMW  
Apr 24 -  
May Wolfville Ridge, *Kings* 3 JCT  
May 5 River Bourgeois, *Rich* 5 GED, SDI  
May 9 var. counties 1252 NSMC



A NORTHERN SHRIKE, somehow trapped 13 Mar. in a porch at Moshers Corner, *Ann.*, give opportunity for a closeup when it displayed its striking tail. [Photo Harriet Barkhouse]

**Northern Rough-winged Swallow**

May 24 Bisset L., *HRM* 1 MIK

**Barn Swallow**

Apr 7 Shearwater Airport, *HRM* 1 IAM  
Apr 9 Second Peninsula, *Lun* 1 JAH, Glen Rhodenizer  
May 5 Conrad Rd, *HRM* 5 DMW  
May 9 var. counties 236 NSMC  
May 16 BPI 1 CLD *et al.*

**Cliff Swallow**

May 9 var. counties 58 NSMC  
May 31 Elderbank, *HRM* Several nest building VJH

**Black-capped Chickadee**

Mar - May Tremont, *Kings* 6-8 most days SLH



Mar - May	Portuguese Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1-10 every day		Apr 25	Bayport, <i>Lun</i>	1	JAH
			HAT, LAE	Apr 25	East LaHave, <i>Lun</i>	1	JAH
May 9	var. counties	3175	NSMC	Apr 28	Uniacke	12	HAT
<b>Boreal Chickadee</b>				Apr 29	Camp Rd., Brier I.	1	ELM
Apr - May	Higginsville, <i>HRM</i>	1-4 most days		Apr 30	Palmetter's Woods, <i>Kings</i>	2	JCT
			Chris Pepper	Apr 30	Brier I.	3	ELM
Apr 25	Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	6	KFS	May 9	var. counties	538	NSMC
May 9	var. counties	70	NSMC	May 16	BPI	3	CLD <i>et al.</i>
<b>Red-breasted Nuthatch</b>				<b>NORTHERN WHEATEAR</b>			
Mar - May	Tremont, <i>Kings</i>	1 most days	SLH	Mar 18	Martinique Bch, <i>HRM</i>	1	Bill McCormick
Mar - May	Portuguese Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1 daily	HAT, LAE	<b>Eastern Bluebird</b>			
Mar - Apr	Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	1-3 daily	KFS	Apr 23	Port Medway, <i>County</i>	No	Observer
Mar - Apr	Wolfville Ridge, <i>Kings</i>	1-2 daily	JCT	May 2	Elgin Yard, <i>Pic.</i>	1m	fide KJM
Mar 4 -				May 8	Dayton, <i>Yar.</i>	1 morbid	Elizabeth & John Ainsworth
Apr 10	Lr. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	1	RIV, APO	May 24	Lr. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	pair	John Murphy
May 9	var. counties	271	NSMC	May 27	Watervale, <i>Pic.</i>	pair	fide KJM
May 17	BPI	1	CLD <i>et al.</i>	<b>MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD</b>			
<b>White-breasted Nuthatch</b>				May 10	Oak Hill L., Dartmouth	1	Earl MacDonald
Mar - May	Tremont, <i>Kings</i>	1 most days	SLH	<b>Swainson's Thrush</b>			
Mar - Apr	Wolfville Ridge, <i>Kings</i>	1-2 daily	JCT	May 9	var. counties	23	NSMC
May 9	var. counties	76	NSMC	May 23	Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	KFS
<b>Brown Creeper</b>				<b>Hermit Thrush</b>			
Mar 7 - 31	Tremont, <i>Kings</i>	1 some days	SLH	Apr 26	Blockhouse, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH
Mar 22	Wolfville Ridge, <i>Kings</i>	1	JCT	Apr 26	Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	KFS
Apr 2	Wolfville Ridge, <i>Kings</i>	1	JCT	Apr 28	Uniacke	6	HAT
Apr 28	Uniacke	10	HAT	Apr 29	Camp Rd., Brier I.	1	ELM, AHM
May 9	var. counties	24	NSMC	May 9	var. counties	271	NSMC
<b>Sedge Wren</b>				May 28 - 9	Higginsville, <i>HRM</i>	2 nests	Chris Pepper
May 31+	Tiddville Marsh, <i>Digby</i>	2	PKE, others	<b>Wood Thrush</b>			
<b>Winter Wren</b>				Apr 26	Pubnico Gold Course, <i>Yar.</i>	1	JON
Apr 28	Mt. Uniacke, <i>Hants</i>	6	HAT	<b>American Robin</b>			
May 9	var. counties	106	NSMC	Mar 27	Port Williams, <i>Kings</i>	30+	SLH
May 16	BPI	5	CLD <i>et al.</i>	Mar 28	Windsor, <i>Hants</i>	abundant	ELM
<b>Blue-gray Gnatcatcher</b>				Mar 28	Canning, <i>Kings</i>	abundant	ELM
May 4	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	MIK	Apr 11	Second Peninsula, <i>Lun.</i>	54	JAH
May 15	Heather Bch, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	James Taylor	May 9	var. counties	4095	NSMC
<b>Golden-crowned Kinglet</b>				<b>Varied Thrush</b>			
Apr 25	Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	5	KFS	>Mar 14	Mt. Denson, <i>Kings</i>	1 f o-w	George Lynch, m. obs
May 5	Conrad Rd., <i>HRM</i>	2	DMW				
May 9	var. counties	155	NSMC				
<b>Ruby-crowned Kinglet</b>							
Apr 20	Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	2	KFS				

## Mimics Through Warblers

By Ken McKenna

A few mimic thrushes may have over-wintered, but weather patterns in early April brought a few very early migrants. At least one GRAY CATBIRD made it through the winter into March in Rockingham, *HRM*. By mid-May, a new wave of Catbirds hit the province spreading out from off-shore islands. Once again NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRDS continue to be in low numbers, but there were a few more BROWN THRASHER reports this spring including one at Hartlen Pt., part of the early April arrival of birds that normally breed further south. The number of EUROPEAN STARLINGS was 33% off the average number usually seen on the NSMC.

With an amazing 29 species of warbler noted for this report period, spring observers were treated to good numbers of both regular nesters as well as a handful of rarer warblers. The number of warbler species seen on the provincial spring migration count was 21 species up from 17 from last year and the numbers of individuals (4059) was almost double last years total of 2341.

An ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER made it through the winter in Halifax. A few more TENNESSEE WARBLERS showed this spring but the numbers still do not seem to be enough to fill the many empty atlas squares of the current breeding bird atlas project. Last year there were no reports of CAPE MAY WARBLER so it was nice to see a few were found this year, but numbers still continue to be very low.

The first few days of April brought a nice collection of southern warblers including YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER to Hartlen Pt., and for the second time this species was also recorded for the NSMC, that report coming from Hants Co. BLACK-POLL WARBLERS were almost missed on migration to the province this year with only a single bird recorded at the APBS on May 9 but a good number of 16 recorded at BPI May 16 indicated a start date for migration to the province.

Another good find this spring was a **WORM-EATING WARBLER** found turning over leaves in an East Jeddore garden making for somewhat easy photography for LUB who posted photos to the NS-RBA website. Five days later, DOU found a second Worm-eating Warbler while searching for other rarities at Hartlen Pt. During the same time period, JON was able to find a **KENTUCKY WARBLER** at The Hawk on CSI. Possibly the same bird was found dead later and photographed by MUN. The photo was posted on April 15 by BBU.



This **WORM-EATING WARBLER**, found and photographed Apr. 4 at Jeddore, *HRM*, was far beyond its breeding range and our earliest ever, and was among the first signs that something unusual was happening. [Photo Lucas Berrigan]

As usual, **MOURNING WARBLERS** are late migrants with the only report one day earlier than the average arrival date of May 26 posted in Tufts "Birds of Nova Scotia" (1986). The **COMMON YELLOWTHROAT** found at Hartlen Pt. Apr. 8 was likely one caught in the weather system that brought in all the southern species including the adult male **HOODED WARBLER** seen for at least two days at Hartlen Pt. **CANADA WARBLER** is currently considered a species at risk and special efforts are being taken in the current breeding bird atlas project to pin-point squares that have this species. In three days at the end of May, Chris Pepper was able to find 16 of this species near Higginsville, *HRM*. Ten of these were found along two km. of logging road that passed through young tamarack-spruce bogs and alder thickets and others were found at the edge of "choppings". A good number of Canada Warblers are being found in similar habitats in nearby Pictou and Antigonish counties.

Birding is a learning experience and it takes a bit of a keen ear and lots of time in the field to learn when something new is around. On May 20, young birders KGI and LUB were on the Musquodoboit Trailways when they heard a somewhat unfamiliar call. They could pin-point the sound in the alders near the river, but could not see the bird even when they returned from their hike. Since it had a bit of a varied vocal repertoire, they felt it might be a mimic thrush. On a repeat visit to the location on May 25, LUB was able to finally see his mystery bird and was able to photograph and record a singing **YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT**. This is a first for N.S. for both the past and current breeding bird atlas project and a very nice find as the Chat has a number of similar song phrases to a Northern Mockingbird. Congratulations to all the observations of our young birders who are making significant contributions to the avian knowledge of Nova Scotia.

#### Gray Catbird

Mar 3 - 6	Rockingham, <i>HRM</i>	1 o-w	JEH
Apr 10, 26	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	MIK
Apr 25	Kingsburg, <i>Lun.</i>	1	DAW, JAH
Apr 30	Brier I.	1	ELM
May 3	CSI	1	JON, SAN
May 7	Lower Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	1	DCO
May 9	var. counties	3	NSMC
May 11	Shelburne	1	Peter MacLeod
May 16	Amherst Shore, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	James Taylor
May 16, 17	BPI	1, 3	CLD <i>et al.</i>
May 16	Palmer Woods, <i>Kings</i>	2	JCT
May 17	Brier I.	all over the island	
			RBS
May 25	Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	KFS
May 31	Coldbrook, <i>Kings</i>	10	AAM

#### Northern Mockingbird

Mar 17	Halifax	1 o-w	DAM
Apr 30	Brier I.	1	ELM
May 1	Brier I.	2	JUS
May 4	Grand Pre, <i>Kings</i>	2	<i>vide</i> JCT
May 9	Kentville, <i>Kings</i>	1	<i>vide</i> JCT
May 9	var. counties	1 the <i>Kings</i> bird	
			NSMC
May 17	Brier I.	1	RBS <i>et al.</i>

#### Brown Thrasher

Apr 5	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	MIK
May 1	Brier I.	1	ELM
May 3, 4	Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	KFS
May 8	Wolfville, <i>Kings</i>	1	JCT, BLF <i>et al.</i>
May 9	var. counties	3	NSMC
May 9	CSI	1	MUN
May 12 - 24	Port Williams, <i>Kings</i>	1 ph. & video	
			ELS, RBS

#### European Starling

Mar 26	Bridgetown, <i>Anna.</i>	nest 1 egg	MCR
May 9	var. counties	3081	NSMC

#### American Pipit

May 9	Tony River, <i>Pict.</i>	12	KJM, JMC
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#### Bohemian Waxwing

Mar 14	Lyons Brook, <i>Pict.</i>	35	KJM
Mar 18	Apple River <i>Cumb.</i>	10	KFS
Mar 23	Jeddore Oyster Ponds, <i>HRM</i>	22	LUB
Mar 24	River Bourgeois, <i>Rich.</i>	26	GED, SDI
Mar 31	Aylesford, <i>Kings</i>	?	SLH
Apr 8	Avonport Station, <i>Kings</i>	12	JOB
Apr 12	Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	KFS

#### Cedar Waxwing

Mar 24	Bridgetown, <i>Anna.</i>	25	MCR
May 22	Second Peninsula, <i>Lun.</i>	15	JAH
May 23	South Lochaber, <i>Ant.</i>	several	KJM
May 24	Port Shoreham, <i>Guys.</i>	several heard	

May 24	Dartmouth	10-15	GAM
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May 31	New Waterford, <i>CBRM</i>	10	CSM, TMM
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#### Tennessee Warbler

May 11	Jerry Lawrence PP, <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT
May 18	Lorne, <i>Pict.</i>	1	KJM
May 18	Brier I.	1	DAM
May 24	Milford Station	1	KAM
May 24	Port Shoreham, <i>Guys.</i>	1	KJM
May 24	Hadleyville, <i>Guys.</i>	1	KJM
May 25	Kemptown, <i>Col.</i>	1	KJM

#### Orange-crowned Warbler

>Apr 14	Elm. St., Halifax	1 o-w	PLC
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#### Nashville Warbler

May 9	var. counties	100	NSMC
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May 11, 16	Jerry Lawrence PP, <i>HRM</i>	1, 3	HAT
May 14	Musquodoboit Hbr, <i>HRM</i>	9	LUB
<b>Northern Parula</b>			
Apr 30	Brier I.	1 male	ELM
May 3	Palmetur Woods, <i>Kings</i>	1	AAM
May 9	var. counties	308	NSMC
May 11	Jerry Lawrence PP, <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT
May 11, 13	Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	1, 3	KFS
May 14	Musquodoboit Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	5-6	LUB
May 16 - 17	BPI	1	CLD <i>et al.</i>
<b>Yellow Warbler</b>			
May 4	CSI	1	MUN
May 9	var. counties	79	NCMC
May 11	Lunenburg Co.	3	JAH
May 11	Shelburne	1	Peter MacLeod
May 13	Lockeport, <i>Shel.</i>	1	DJC
May 14	Musquodoboit Hbr.	6+	LUB
May 16 - 17	BPI	2	CLD <i>et al.</i>
May 18	Lorne Station, <i>Pict.</i>	1	KJM
May 21	Antigonish	1	BRS
May 22	Lunenburg Co.	widespread	JAH
<b>Chestnut-sided Warbler</b>			
May 9	var. counties	19	NSMC
May 10	Port Mouton, <i>Queens</i>	1	Ken MacAulay
May 11	<i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH
May 13	Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	KFS
May 16	BPI	1	CLD <i>et al.</i>
May 18	Hopewell, <i>Pict.</i>	1	KJM
May 20 - 27	widespread mainland	4 reports	var. obs.
<b>Magnolia Warbler</b>			
Apr 26	East Lahave, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH, DWA
Apr 28	Jeddore Oyster Ponds, <i>HRM</i>	1	LUB
Apr 28	Mt. Uniacke, <i>Hants</i>	1	HAT
May 9	var. counties	46	NSMC
My 11 - 20	widespread mainland	5 reports	var. obs.
<b>Cape May Warbler</b>			
May 9	APBS & Fort Lawrence, <i>Cumb.</i>	2	JBO
May 9	var. counties	2	NSMC
May 21	Spectacle L., <i>HRM</i>	1	MIK, CLS
May 24	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	1	MIK
May 24	Hadleyville, <i>Guys.</i>	1	KJM
<b>Black-throated Blue Warbler</b>			
May 5, 11	Jerry Lawrence PP, <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT
May 9	APBS	1	JBO
May 9	var. counties	10	NSMC
May 9	Jerry Lawrence PP, <i>HRM</i>	2	BLM
May 16 - 17	Tusket R.	very common	PRG
May 23	Blomidon PP	1	JWW
May 21	<i>Cumb.</i>	1	James Taylor



This obliging male BLACK-AND WHITE WARBLER posed during a NSMC foray in *Cumberland*. [Photo Maureen Mills)

<b>Yellow-rumped Warbler</b>			
Mar 22	Portuguese Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1 m. o-w	HAT
Apr 5	Hartlen Pt.	2	MIK, CLS
Apr 5	Back Hbr. Trail, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH
Apr 23	Kentville	1	AND
Apr 24	CSI	12	MIK, FLL
Apr 24	Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	KFS
Apr 25 - 30	widely on mainland	20 reports	var. obs.
May 9	var. counties	2426	NSMC
<b>Black-throated Green Warbler</b>			
May 3	Wolfville Ridge, <i>Kings</i>	2	JCT
May 5, 11	Jerry Lawrence PP	1	HAT
May 9	var. counties	226	NCMC
May 11	Jeddore Oyster Ponds, <i>HRM</i>	1	LUB
May 11	Higginsville, <i>HRM</i>	1	Chris Pepper
May 14 - 20	widely		var. obs.
<b>Blackburnian Warbler</b>			
May 9	var. counties	2	NSMC
May 11	Amherst Head	1	James Taylor
May 18	Hopewell, <i>Pict.</i>	1	KJM
May 22 - 25	widely	4 reports	var. obs.
<b>YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER</b>			
Apr 4, 5	Hartlen Pt.	1 on beach	EGI, SGI
May 9	<i>Hants</i>	1 nd	NSMC
<b>Pine Warbler</b>			
>Apr 5	Halifax	1 o-w	ANM
>Apr 6	PPP	1 o-w	Gail Bruhm
Apr 24	CSI	1	MIK, FLL
May 9	<i>CBRM</i>	1	NSMC
<b>Palm Warbler</b>			
Apr 21	Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	KFS
Apr 24	Prospect Peninsula, <i>HRM</i>	1	BLM
Apr 25	Broad Cove, <i>Lun.</i>	a few	ELM
Apr 25	Western Head, <i>Queens</i>	2 singing	ELM
Apr 25	Frog Pond, <i>HRM</i>	a few	Noel Taussig
Apr 25	Kempton, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	KJM
Apr 26+	widely	11 reports	var. obs.
May 9	var. counties	338	NSMC
<b>Bay-breasted Warbler</b>			
May 9	var. counties	3	NSMC
May 13	Greenwich, <i>Kings</i>	1	?
May 17	West River Station, <i>Pict.</i>	1	KJM, RFE
May 19	Daniels Head, <i>Shel.</i>	1	CST
May 21	Hartlen Pt. area	1	MIK
May 22	Uniacke	1	HAT
May 24	Port Shoreham, <i>Guys.</i>	1	KJM
May 24	Hadleyville, <i>Guys.</i>	1	KJM
May 25	Jerry Lawrence PP, <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT
May 25	Kempton, <i>Col.</i>	1	KJM
<b>Blackpoll Warbler</b>			
May 9	APBS <i>Cumb.</i>	1 NAMC	JBO
May 16	BPI	16	CLD <i>et al.</i>
May 30	downtown Halifax	1	PLC
<b>Black-and-white Warbler</b>			
Apr 25	Ellershouse, <i>Hants</i>	1	GMU
Apr 26	Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	KFS
May 1	Westville, <i>Pict.</i>	1	STV
May 3	Kentville	1	RBS
May 4	Jeddore Oyster Ponds, <i>HRM</i>	1	LUB
May 5	Jerry Lawrence PP	1	HAT
May 9	var. counties	298	NSMC
May 11 - 16	widely	3 reports 6 birds	var. obs.
<b>American Redstart</b>			
May 9	var. counties	1	NSMC
May 11	Jerry Lawrence PP, <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT
May 14	Musquodoboit Hbr. <i>HRM</i>	1	LUB
May 18	Port Williams, <i>Kings</i>	1	RBS
May 20	Spectacle L., <i>HRM</i>	1	MIK
May 20	Conns Mills, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	James Taylor
May 22	Second Peninsula, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH
<b>WORM-EATING WARBLER</b>			
Apr 4	East Jeddore, <i>HRM</i>	1	LUB

Apr 9	Hartlen Pt.	1	DOU	May 20 - 25	widely	4	mainland reports
<b>Ovenbird</b>							var. obs.
May 9	var. counties	111	NSMC	<b>HOODED WARBLER</b>			
May 11	Jerry Lawrence PP, <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT	Apr 5 - 6	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	male MIK, <i>et al.</i>
May 13	Palmeter Woods, <i>Kings</i>	almost to peak #'s	AAM	<b>Wilson's Warbler</b>			
			PBG	May 9	var. counties	3	NSMC
May 15	Kingston. <i>Kings</i>	singing in woods		May 13	Northport, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	James Taylor
<b>Northern Waterthrush</b>				May 17	BPI	1	CLD <i>et al.</i>
May 3	Palmeter Woods, <i>Kings</i>	2	AAM	May 20	Musquodoboit Hbr. Tr.	1	male LUB, KGI
May 9	var. counties	42	NSMC	May 21	Amherst Shore, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	James Taylor
May 14	Musquodoboit Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1	LUB	May 24	Eastern Passage	1	MIK
May 15	Maryvale, <i>Ant.</i>	1	BRS	<b>Canada Warbler</b>			
May 20	Conns Mills, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	James Taylor	May 13	Northport, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	James Taylor
May 22	Second L. PP, <i>HRM</i>	1	RIV	May 23	S. Lochaber, <i>Ant.</i>	1	KJM, JMC, H. MacMillan
<b>KENTUCKY WARBLER</b>				May 24	Hadleyville, <i>Gays.</i>	1	KJM
Apr 6	The Hawk, CSI	1	JON	May 25	Jerry Lawrence PP, <i>HRM</i>	1	but 3 May 27 HAT
<b>Mourning Warbler</b>				May 25	Kemptown, <i>Col.</i>	1	singing 4 locales KJM
May 25	Kemptown, <i>Col.</i>	1	KJM	May 29 - 31	Higginsville, <i>HRM</i>	16	Chris Pepper
<b>Common Yellowthroat</b>				<b>Yellow-breasted Chat</b>			
Apr 8	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	LUB	May 20, 25	Musquodoboit Hbr. Trailway	1	ph. & song record LUB, KGI
May 9	var. countiess	36	NSMC				
May 13	Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	1	KFS				
May 14	Musquodoboit Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	4	LUB				
May 16	BPI	1	CLD <i>et al.</i>				

## Tanagers Through House Sparrows

By Ian McLaren

Pertinent to this section is the recent response by the Am. Ornithologists' Union (AOU) Checklist Committee to firm genetic evidence that our tanagers are not really related to "true" tropical tanagers, but to the Cardinals, buntings, and related grosbeaks. We'll let our heading remain as is for the moment. The AOU has also sensibly renamed our sharp-tailed sparrow to "NELSON'S SPARROW" (and to "SALTMARSH SPARROW" for the coastal U.S. species).

Of course the great excitement this spring was caused by the early "fallouts" of Neotropical migrants and vagrants, among which INDIGO BUNTINGS were most prominent in the first episode, beginning Apr 4, and SUMMER and SCARLET TANAGERS conspicuous in the next, beginning Apr 8. These "indicator species" also seemed to have another spurt of arrivals around 22-23 April, and perhaps some arrived later as well. The earliest of these "blues and reds" were not record-early, but they, along with a few BLUE GROSBEAKS and many ROSE-BREADED GROSBEAKS, as well as yellow and orange orioles, gave perhaps the best ever colourful show at feeders around the province.

The many reports of the regular spring arrivals, heavily condensed in the table, give impressions of times and peaks of arrivals. For trends, the NSMC, which showed no marked changes in the regular sparrows, is more useful. With respect to the sparrows' arrival time, the SONG, WHITE-THROATED, and juncos arrived in mid-March as usual, "IPSWICH" SAVANNAHS followed sharply in early April, and CHIPPING, SAVANNAH, LINCOLN'S, SWAMP, and WHITE-CROWNED somewhat later. A Savannah Sparrow Mar 21 at Apple River and an exceptionally early NELSON'S SPARROW on the NSMC may have wintered in the region. There was a sprinkling of somewhat rare sparrows, among which the LARK SPARROWS may also have wintered regionally.

Clearly our N. CARDINALS are well established and spreading, with the most ever on the NSMC. Among the Reds and Blues mentioned above, it would not be surprising if more Indigo Buntings and Scarlet Tanagers stayed to breed this summer. One male grosbeak at MMI's feeder at White Pt., *Queens*, seemed to have puzzling features suggesting a hybrid of some sort; not quite fitting the known examples of Black-headed X Rose-breasted.

The icterids showed only one notable surprise (see below). There were gratifying hints that BOBOLINKS may be doing better: although the NSMC didn't show this, good numbers were reported after mid-May. The only meadowlark was not identified to



A non-"Ipswich" SAVANNAH SPARROW appearing 31 Mar. at KFS's feeder in Apple R., *Cum.*, was particularly early, and may have wintered in the region. [Photo Kathleen Spicer]

species – again, we can't assume all are Eastern. The regular blackbirds continue to decline (NSMC), the RUSTY, regrettably, and the BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD (which doesn't "belong" here) less regrettably. It was also gratifying to see some Baltimore Orioles nurtured through winter in Halifax.

The blackbird of the year, surely, was our first reported **BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE**. We have a previous photo-confirmed record of Great-tailed (late fall, winter, 1983-84), but three other large grackles were not reported in enough detail to determine the species involved. This one turned up first May 21 in JON's backyard on CSI. Two days later, what was presumably the same bird was found in the salt marsh of nearby Daniel's Head, by CLS, CSS, and RAH. The report on naturans by CLS is given here in full.

"... the bird in question was a dark-eyed adult male. On May 23 at Daniel's Head (see initial posting for earlier details) this bird was feeding in the company of Common Grackles, and in the scope, the contrasting yellow eyes of the Common Grackles leaped out, while the dark eyes of the Boat-tailed were very difficult to see. Colorwise another hint to its identification was the body & head plumage of this individual. Compared to a Common Grackle there was much less contrast between the head and body. This was because the bird lacked the bronze or multicolored body of the Common, instead showing the much darker greenish-blue iridescence of the Boat-tailed. Structure-wise there were a number of features that pointed towards Boat-tailed Grackle. The first time we observed the grackle it was under heavy heat haze and the bird kept disappearing into the crevices of the saltmarsh. We had to wait a couple of hours for the rising tide to force it out into the open where it could be easily viewed. At the time it re-emerged, it was feeding in close proximity to Common Grackles, a Black-bellied Plover and a Willet and appeared longer than all of them. We were also able to compare the grackle's size to a number of American Crows that were feeding throughout the marsh all of which were longer and heavier. This was another feature that favoured Boat-tailed over Great-tailed.

Four different parties all came to the same conclusion, independent of one another, that the size of this bird was much larger than a Common Grackle but smaller than an American Crow. Another structural feature that tipped the scales towards Boat-tailed Grackle was its large rounded tail, which was clearly not wedge-shaped. Anyone watching for this bird should also be able to pick it out from Common Grackles even at a great distance by its longer legs which cause it to stand taller than the Common Grackles."

On May 25, a large grackle at the feeder of Aileen and Pat Smith in Barrington Passage, *Shel.*, was observed briefly by AIS and Julie Smith, who photographed it. It was partly hidden by foliage, alas, but the image shows a strongly iridescent blue back (unlike either Common or Great-tailed Grackle) and a broad tail, rounded rather than strongly graduated, of about the right size for Boat-tailed. The bird may have earlier been seen briefly by others on nearby North East Pt., CSI (fide AIS) The only unexpected feature in CLS's description is the dark eye, as the expected migratory subspecies *torreyi*, breeding from Florida n. (rarely) to Connecticut, has yellow eyes, CLS has noted (e-mail to IAM) the eyes seen at some distance might have had a bit of yellow showing. AIS indicated that their bird had pale eyes, but not so pale as a Common Grackle's. (The summer-season issue will detail another Boat-tailed Grackle June 4 at Freeport, *Digby*, which had the expected pale eyes.)

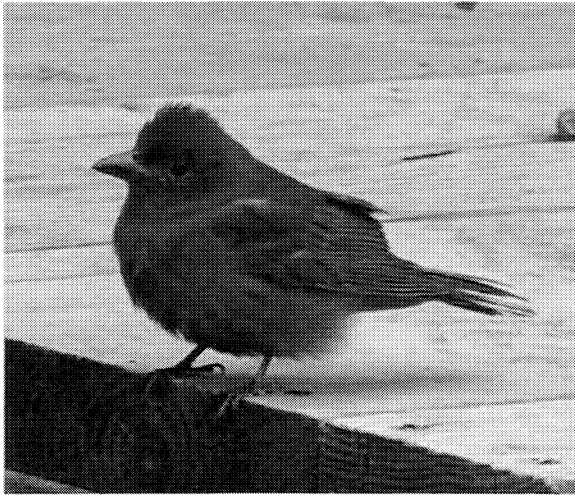
[Ed. Note -- I am dismayed that, despite the bird having been "easily viewed" by "four different parties" of birders, no one other than the second feeder-owner photographed the bird, and only the one written report (printed above) was received. A sighting of a bird this rare deserves better attention to detail. The record awaits review by the Nova Scotia Birds Records Committee.]

Finally, we come to the finches. We expect ups and downs in this group, and numbers of most, especially as indicated by the NSMC, seemed within recent limits. But not the PINE GROSBEAK, of which none were reported other than the paltry seven on the NSMC, the fewest ever. The BBS trends also indicate that the bird, along with other primarily boreal species, is distressed in Nova Scotia. Forestry? Climate change? Also noteworthy were the numbers of COMMON REDPOLLS – we might have expected alternate-year scarcity following the 2007-08 bonanza. HOUSE FINCH was undoubtedly under-reported (but gratifyingly from *CBRM*), but the NSMC may signify trouble. Eye disease was reported in PURPLE FINCH this spring, and House Finch is known to be susceptible. HOUSE SPARROW continues to dwindle.



Amelanistic finches (lacking black pigments) are fairly regular, but one of these male AMERICAN GOLDFINCHES on Brier I. during the May Long Weekend was axanthic – lacking all yellow pigment. This is apparently quite rare in birds. [Photo Judy O'Brien]

## Spring Colours - The Blues and The Reds



This spring brought record numbers of the regularly “overshooting” Blues and Reds,” mostly at feeders. One SUMMER TANAGER 8 Apr. at Morden, *Kings* (upper left), was unhappily over-stressed by its long travel and died next day. A SCARLET TANAGER Apr. 25 at Kingsburg, *Lun.* (upper right), arrived later and seemed lively enough. Most BLUE GROSBELLS reported were young (2<sup>nd</sup> year) males; this one (lower right) was blue-headed, but otherwise brown. Among many INDIGO BUNTINGS, this was a long-staying one of several in April (here Apr. 29) at Granville, *Ann.* [Photos: upper left, Gary Myers; upper right, David Walmark; lower left, Hughie Manthorne; lower right, Richard Stern]



**Summer Tanager (dates 1<sup>st</sup> found)**

Apr 5	Cornwallis, <i>Ann.</i>	1 ad. m.	<i>fide</i> EGI
Apr 8	Burnside, Dartmouth	1 ad. m. (taken into care)	<i>fide</i> Hope Swinimer
Apr 8	Morden,	1 ad. m. (died Apr 9)	Joan Bradley <i>et al.</i>
Apr 8	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1 ad. m. (died Apr 12)	MIK <i>et al.</i>
Apr 8	Lr. Northfield, <i>Lun.</i>	1 m.	<i>fide</i> JAH
Apr 8 - 14	Broad Cove, <i>Lun.</i>	1 m.	JAH <i>et al.</i>
Apr 9	Kentville	1 m.	<i>fide</i> JCT
Apr 9 -			
May 1	Bedford	1 m.	<i>fide</i> BLM
Apr 10	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1 ad. m. (different)	DOM <i>et al.</i>
Apr 11	Big Pond, <i>CBRM</i>	1 m.	JAM
Apr 18	Sambro, <i>HRM</i>	1 m.	Vicky Hollenburg
Apr 21	Louisbourg	1 m.	<i>fide</i> SEM
Apr 23	Brier I.	1 m.	JUS
May 18	Brier I.	1 f.	NSBS

**Scarlet Tanager (dates 1<sup>st</sup> found)**

Apr 8	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1 ad. m.	MIK
Apr 10	Pictou Landing	1 ad. m.	Tim Brennan
Apr 23	E. Port Medway, <i>Lun.</i>	1 Ad. m.	<i>fide</i> JAH
Apr 24	Kingsburg, <i>Lun.</i>	1 ad. m.	DAW
May 10	Kingsburg, <i>Lun.</i>	1 diff.(?) m.	JAH
May 12	CSI	1 m.	MUN
May 12	Brier I.	1 m.	JUS
May 16	Jollimore, Halifax	1 m.	Sunny Marche
May 21 - 24	2 <sup>nd</sup> Peninsula, <i>Lun.</i>	1 ad, 1 2 <sup>nd</sup> -yr m.	<i>fide</i> JAH
May 31	Hartlen Pt.	1 ad, 1 2 <sup>nd</sup> -yr m.	MIK

**Eastern Towhee**

Jan. 4 to ?	Sheet Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	late rep. 1 (ph.)	Patricia Batstone
May 9	(NSMC) CSI	1 m.	MUN.

**American Tree Sparrow**

March	widely	sev. repts	var. obs.
early April	widely	sev. repts..	var. obs.
Apr 26 - 28	widely	6 repts, 9+ total.	

May 9	var. counties	24	var. obs. NSMC
May 12	Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	2 latest	DMW

**Chipping Sparrow**

Apr 7	Bayport, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH
Apr 20	Lr. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	2	RIV
Apr 29 -			
May 1	Brier I.	4+ migrants	AHM, ELM
Apr 30	Granville Ferry, <i>Ann.</i>	1	RBS
Apr 30	Tremont, <i>HRM</i>	1 arrived	SLH
Apr 30	St. Peters, <i>Rich.</i>	1 arrived	BID
May 1 - 26	widely	sev. repts.	var. obs.
May 9	var. counties	249	NSMC

**Clay-colored Sparrow**

Winter to			
early Apr	Canso	1 at feeder, o-w	TOK

**Field Sparrow**

Apr 28	Woods Hbr.	1 arrived	DOC
May 9	CSI, Doctors Cove, <i>Shel.</i>	2	MUN, NSMC
May 15 - 19	Port Joli, <i>Queens</i>	1	JOA

**Lark Sparrow**

Mar 23	CSI	1 (o-w locally?)	MUN
Mar 29	Lr. Canard, <i>Kings</i>	1 arr. at feeder	HAF

**Savannah Sparrow**

Mar 24	Conrad Beach, <i>HRM</i>	1 (o-w?)	DMW
Mar 31	Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	1 arrived at feeder	KFS
Apr 26 - 30	Brier I. to <i>Vic.</i>	10 indivs.	6 obs.
Apr 30	St. Peters, <i>Rich.</i>	arrived	BID

May 5 - 31	widely	5 repts, 12+ total	var. obs.
May 9	var. counties	596	NSMC

**Savannah (Ipswich) Sparrow**

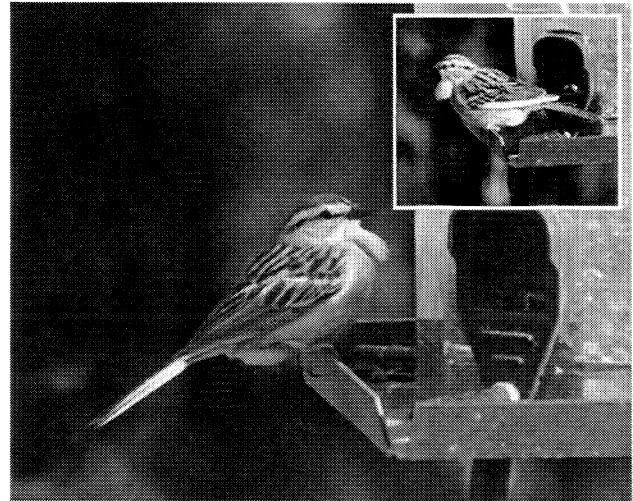
Apr 1	Martinique	1 (arrived?)	HAT
Apr 2	Brier I.	1	ELM
Apr 6	Martinique	13	LUB
Apr 6	Chebucto Hd., <i>HRM</i>	4	HAT
Apr 6	CSI	1	RAH
Apr 8	Martinique	~25	HAT
Apr 12 - 30	beaches, <i>HRM</i>	3 repts., 5 indivs.	var. obs.
May 9	var. counties		NSMC
May 30	CSI	1 f.(?), breeding?	AHM, ELM, IAM

**Nelson's Sparrow**

May 9	(NSMC) Kingston area, <i>Kings</i>	1 (very early)	Roger Short, <i>fide</i> SLH
May 24	W. Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	1	MIK

**Fox Sparrow**

Mar 16	Sheet Hbr., <i>HRM.</i>	1	KJM
Mar 16	BPI	12	CLD <i>et al.</i>
Mar 20 -			
Apr 8	mainland, widely	28 repts., 48+ total	var. obs.
Apr 4	Sunrise, <i>Vic.</i>	1 arrived	FMC
Apr 5	New Waterford, <i>CBRM</i>	3 arrived	CSM, TMM
Apr 10	Lr. Prospect, <i>HRM</i>	6 singing on terr.	BLM
May 9	var. counties	34	NSMC



The startling "beard" on this otherwise normal CHIPPING SPARROW 25 May at a feeder in E. Montrose, *Col.*, judging from Web information, could reflect a local mutation or, less comforting, a tumour. [Photo Fr. Joseph Christensen]

**Song Sparrow**

Wintered,			
March	widely	4 reports, sev. indivs.	var. obs.
Mar 24	Tremont	1 <sup>st</sup> arrival?	SLH
Apr 1	Halifax	1 attacking car mirror	PLC
Apr 4	Sunrise, <i>Vic.</i>	1 arrived	FMC
Apr 17	Milford Stn., <i>HRM</i>	1 banded (last year's?)	KAM
May 9	var. counties	2343	NSMC
Apr - May	widely	mostly casual repts.	var. obs.

**Lincoln's Sparrow**

May 29 - 31 Higginsville, *HRM* up to 7 Chris Pepper



This exceptionally obliging Lincoln's Sparrow was photographed 16 May near Higginsville, *HRM*. [Photo Chris Jiggins]

**Swamp Sparrow**

Apr 19 East R. beach, *Lun.* 3 singing ELM  
 Apr 20 Apple River, *Cumb.* 1 arrived KFS  
 Apr 24 Kingsburg Pond, *Lun.* 8+ singing ELM  
 Apr 26 through  
 May widely numbers var. obs.  
 May 9 var. counties 186 NSMC

**White-throated Sparrow**

Wintered,  
 March widely 5 repts. 15+ total  
 var. obs.  
 Mar 11 Pt. Williams, *Kings* 1<sup>st</sup> singing JWW, RBS  
 Mar 17 - 23 Bridgetown, *Ann.* 3-4 arrived MCR  
 Mar 24 Lawrencetown, *HRM* 1 (arrived?) DMW  
 Mar 28 Lr. Rose Bay, *Lun.* 1 arrived ELM, AHM  
 April widely 6 repts., 20+ total  
 var. obs.  
 Apr 29 Brier I. 20+ migrants ELM  
 May widely casual repts. var. obs.  
 May 9 var. counties 1675 NSMC

**White-crowned Sparrow**

Mar 14 -  
 Apr 16 Wolfville 1 ad. *leucophrys* at feeder  
 JWW  
 Apr 24 CSI 1 MIK  
 Apr 26 Wolfville 1 ad. (new?) at feeder  
 JWW  
 Apr 30 -  
 May 18 widely 12 non-NSMC repts, 15 indivs.  
 var. obs.  
 May 9 var. counties 29 NSMC  
 May 24 Sunrise Valley, *Vic.* 4 FMC

**Dark-eyed Junco**

Winter into  
 March widely 8 repts, 60+ total  
 var. obs.  
 Mar 11 Apple River, *Cumb.* arrived KFS  
 Mar 13 Lawrencetown, *HRM* 5 arrived? DMW  
 Mar 15 Avonport, *Kings*,  
 Long. L. PP singing ALM, SAW  
 Mar 18 Antigonish area 2 arrived BRS  
 Apr 1 Tremont 6 arrived SLH  
 Apr 12 Apple River, *Cumb.* Influx, 25+ KFS  
 Apr 13 St. Peters, *Rich.* influx, 20 -> 55  
 BID  
 Apr 20 -  
 May widely few casual repts.  
 var. obs.

May 9 var. counties 2115 NSMC  
**Lapland Longspur**  
 Apr 5 Grand Pré many small flocks  
 RBS

Apr 9 Schooner Pt., *CBRM* 1 BES

**Snow Bunting**  
 Mar 15 Prospect Hd., *HRM* 1 BLM

**Northern Cardinal**

Through  
 season Brier I.,  
 CSI to *Kings & HRM* 22 repts. 38+ total  
 var. obs.

Through  
 season Pictou area nos.? var. obs.

Apr 4 Lr. Sackville, *HRM* 1 m. arrived LOC

May 9 var. counties 66 NSMC

May 23, 24 Wolfville nest, 2, 3 eggs  
*fide JWW*

May 28 Canning, *Kings* 1 fledgling being fed  
 MAG

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak (dates of 1<sup>st</sup> appearances)**

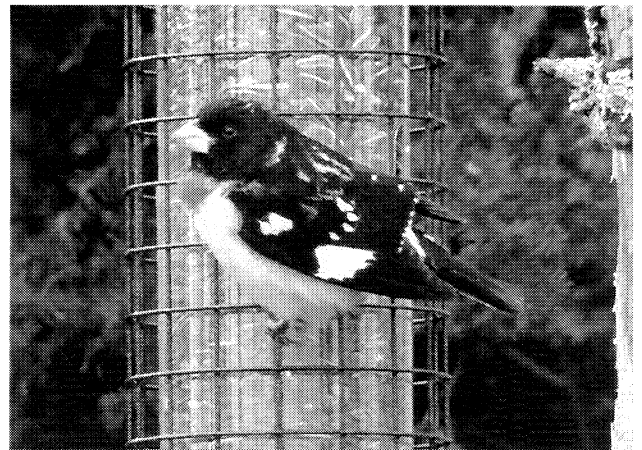
Apr 7 CSI 1 m. JON, TEC

Apr 23 -

May 24 widely, mainly feeders 39 repts, 70+ total  
 var. obs.

May 9 var. counties 49 NSMC

May 19 Palmett Woods, *Kings* 6+ m. on terr.



This ad. male ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK at Bickerton W., *Guys.*, was one of possibly our greatest spring "show" ever of the species. [Photo Hughie Manthorne]

*fide JCT*

**Blue Grosbeak (dates 1<sup>st</sup> found)**

Apr 8, 9? 2<sup>nd</sup> Peninsula, *Lun.* 1 subad. m. *fide JAH*

Apr 21,  
 25, 26 Liverpool 1 f., 2 subad. m.  
 Peter Davies

Apr 23 Bickerton W., *Guys.* 1 m. (ph) Hughie Manthorne

Apr 26 E. LaHave, *Lun.* 1 subad. m. DAW

Apr 26 Forbes Pt., *Shel.* 1 subad. m. R. Goreham

Apr 28 E. LaHave, *Lun.* 1 new f. DAW

Apr 28 Spectacle L., Darmouth 1 m. MIK

May 22 Sandy Cove, *HRM* 1 m. HAT

May 25 - 27 Lr. Sackville, *HRM* 1 2<sup>nd</sup>-yr. m. LOC, DOC

**Indigo Bunting (dates 1<sup>st</sup> found)**

Apr 4 Brier I. 1 m. ELM

Apr 4 Halifax 1 m., FLL, PLC

Apr 4 Woods Hbr., *Shel.* 1 subad. m. DOC

Apr 4 Conrad Bch., *HRM* 1 subad. m. *fide IAM*

Apr 4 Lawrencetown, *HRM* 1 subad. m. *fide PKE*

Apr 5 Atwoods Brook, *Shel.* 1 m. *fide DOC*

Apr 5 Carleton, *Yar.* 1 m. RAH



Apr 5	Feltzen S., Riveroort, Lun.	2 m.	<i>fide</i> JAH
Apr 8	Lr. Northfield, Lun.	1 m.	<i>fide</i> JAH
Apr 14	Heatherton, Pic.	1 m.	<i>fide</i> KJM
Apr 14	Donkin, CBRM	1 m.	GEC, BES
Apr 18	Gardner Mines, CBRM	1 m.	m. Vassallo
Apr 22 - May 27	Yar.-Shel. To Vic.	38 repts., 63+ incl. m.+ f.	

May 9 var. counties 7 NSMC

**Dickcissel**

Through winter

May 13 Portuguese Cove, HRM 1 f. HAT

**Bobolink**

Apr 24	Beach Meadows, Queens	1	DOC
May 9	var. counties	6	NSMC
May 14	CSI	1	AIS
May 14	Mid. Musquodoboit, HRM	1 m.	VJH
May 14	S. Bar, CBRM	1	CSM, TMM
May 14, 15	Wolfville Ridge	several	JCT
May 16 - 24	widely	7 repts, 13+ indivs. + nos.	var. obs.

**Red-winged Blackbird**

17 Mar Kentville 1<sup>st</sup> m. on territory  
AND

Mar 18 - 29 Mar	widely	13 1 <sup>st</sup> repts	var. obs.
Apr-May	widely	many reports	var. obs.
May 9	var. counties	1588	NSMC

**Meadowlark sp.**

Mar 25 CSI 1 CST

**Rusty Blackbird**

Apr 1	Brier I.	1 2 <sup>nd</sup> -yr. m.	ELM, AHM
Apr 10	Woodfield, Pic.	1	KJM <i>et al.</i>
May 9	var. counties	15	NSMC

**Common Grackle**

Mar 18 - 29	widely	6. 1 <sup>st</sup> repts., flocks up to 40	var. obs.
Apr - May	widely	many repts	var. obs.
May 9	var. counties	3504	NSMC

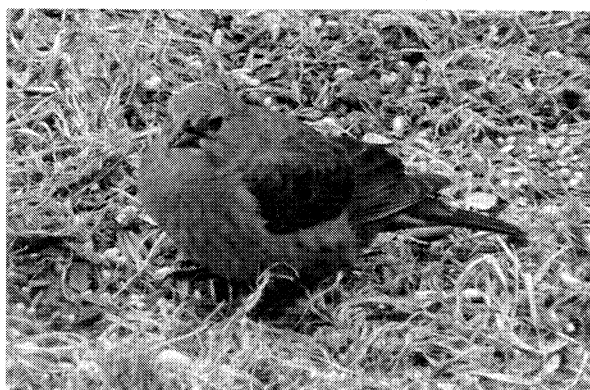
**BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE**

May 21 -  
25 CSI, Barrington 1 m. (see text)  
JON, CLS, CSS, AIS

**Brown-headed Cowbird**

Winter to

Mar 17	Lr. Sackville, HRM	3 fems., 3 m.	LOC, DCO
Apr 2 - 12	widely	7 1 <sup>st</sup> repts., mostly m.	var. obs.



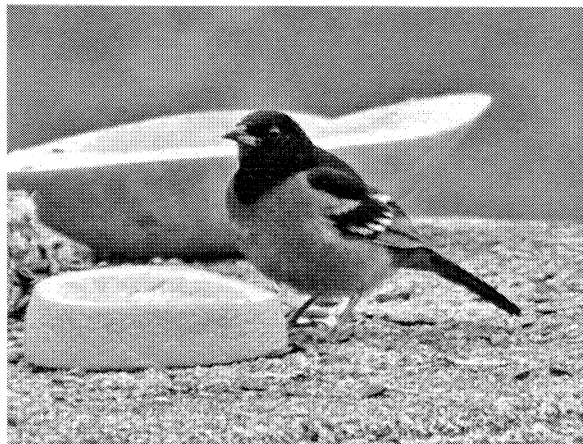
The BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD (this one a year-old female 23 Apr. at Crowes Mills, Cum.) is now only about one-fifth as common here as in the mid-1960s (Breeding Bird Surveys). It arrived in the East with extensive clearing and livestock, and perhaps its dwindling is not so regrettable. [Photo Al Lusk]

Apr 15 -  
May widely 8 repts, 16+ indivs.  
var. obs.

May 9 var. counties 33 NSMC

**Orchard Oriole (dates first found)**

May 3	CSI	imm m.	JON
May 4	Sandy Cove, HRM	1 ad. m.	HAT, <i>et al.</i>
May 8	Forbes Rd., Shel.	1 subad. m.	Rebecca Goreham
May 9	Braod Cove, Lun.	1 f.	SJF
May 10	Brier I.	1 m., 1 f.	JUS
May 11	Woods Hbr., Shel.	1 ad, 1 subad. m.	DOC
May 17	Brier I.	1 ad. m.	RBS
May 23	Isle Madame, Rich.	m., f.	Karen Roy
May 25	Dartmouth	1 f. (ph)	Louise Currie



Citrus slices lured a number of ORCHARD ORIOLES to feeders this spring. This male was on Brier I. May 15. [Photo Richard Stern]

**Baltimore Oriole**

To mid-Apr	Halifax	at least 4, ranging	<i>fide</i> PLC
Apr 24	Halifax	1 (singing) m.	remains PLC
May 9	var. counties	11	NSMC
May 1 - 31	widely	19 repts., 38+, mostly m.	var. obs.

**Purple Finch**

Feb. 22	Wolfville	1 <sup>st</sup> since fall	AAM
Mar 8, 22	Tremont	1 m., 2 m.s + 1 f.	SLH
Mar 22	St. Peters, Rich.	1 <sup>st</sup> since fall	BID
Mar 28	Grnite Springs Golf Crs., HRM	1 m. singing	BLM
Mar 29	Georgefield, Hants	1 <sup>st</sup> in months	ROW
Mar 30	Apple River, Cumb.	1 m., arrived	KFS
Apr 1 - 15	widely	5 1 <sup>st</sup> repts, incl. "flocks"	var. obs.

Apr 16 -  
May widely 7 repts, 1-37+  
var. obs.

Early May Hay Cove, Rich. 1 "leucistic" m.  
JSH

May 9 var. counties 1782 NSMC

**House Finch**

March 2	Wolfville	pair	BLF
March	Barrington	2 pairs	RMC
March-April	Halifax-Dartmouth	8 +	var. obs.
May 10	New Waterford, CBRM	1 m., 3 fems.	CSM, TMM
Late May	downtown Halifax	several	PAC

**Red Crossbill**

Mar 2 Barrington few RMC

Mar 21 - thr. Lr. Rose Bay, <i>Kings</i>	pr, feeders	ELM, AHM
Apr 10 Lr. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	1	LOC
May 9 var. counties	23	NSMC
<b>White-winged Crossbill</b>		
Mar 2 Barrington	few	RMC
Mar 11, 17 Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	1, 4	KFS
Mar 20 Enfield, <i>HRM</i>	1 m., 1 f.	Nancy, Wayne Smith
Mar 20 - thr. Lr. Rose Bay, <i>Kings</i>	1 m., 2 f.	ELM, AHM
Mar 21 Inglisville, <i>Ann.</i>	5	JAH
Mar 28 Windsor	13	Louis Cotinho
Apr 1 - 15 widely	4 repts, incl. "flocks"	var. obs.
May 9 var. counties	4	NSMC
May 24 Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	1 f.	DMW
<b>Common Redpoll</b>		
March widely	13 repts, 100s	var. obs.
Apr 3 - 16 widely	9 repts., 400+ total	var. obs.
May 6 Sunrise Valley, <i>Vic.</i>	6	FMC
May 9 NSMC, Kingston area	9	S. Antoniuk, <i>fide</i> SLH
<b>Hoary Redpoll</b>		
Mar 13 Higginsville, <i>HRM</i>	1 (ph)	Chris Pepper
Mar 22 Wolfville Ridge	1 feeder	BLF
<b>Pine Siskin</b>		
Mar 8 Wolfville Ridge	peaked to 100	JCT
March elsewhere, widely	5 repts., 1-20+ total	var. obs.

Apr - mid-May	widely	4 repts., 1-30+ total	var. obs.
May 9	var. counties	472	NSMC
May 21	Apple River, <i>Cumb.</i>	1 gathering	dog hairs KFS
<b>American Goldfinch</b>			
March - May	widely	19 repts, 1-50+ & "100s"	var. obs.
May 9	var. counties	3632	NSMC
<b>Evening Grosbeak</b>			
Mar 20	Carleton, <i>Yar.</i>	Largely gone	RAH
March	widely	6 repts, 1-60+ total	var. obs.
Apr 1 - 31	widely	7 repts, 1-60+ total	var. obs.
May 9	var. counties	446	NSMC
May 13	Carleton, <i>Yar.</i>	7 late migrants?	RAH
<b>House Sparrow</b>			
Through season	Brier I.	Down to 2+ pairs	ELM
May	New Waterford, <i>CBRM</i>	8	CSM, TMM
May 9	var. counties	350	NSMC

## List of Contributors

Thanks to all of our contributors, including:

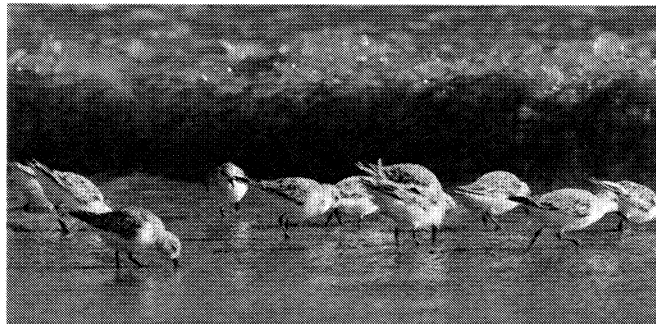
Sorted by initials

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Stevens, Clarence R. Sr.	CSS	Van Donick, Helene	HVD	Millard, Margaret	MMI

## List of Contributors (cont'd)

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Abbott, Sue		MacLeod, Lincoln	Whitman, Rick
		MacLeod, Peter	

SANDERLINGS, this group found 26 Apr. at Martinique Beach, HRM, are particularly adept at dashing out of the way before waves crash over them. [Photo Ulli Hoeger]



## Photo Gallery - Herons and Egrets



One GREAT EGRET found respite on a research vessel, Apr. 11 over the Gully, n. of Sable I. It might well have been part of the wind-displacement of many "southern" migrants during early April, and one wonders how many were lost at sea. [Photo Hilary Moores]



This LITTLE BLUE HERON, May 16 near River Bourgeois, *Rich.*, was among the good show of "southern" herons this spring. [Photo Rita Viau]



This GREEN HERON appeared briefly Apr. 30 at Cow Bay marsh, *HRM*, where it characteristically favoured the shoreline thickets. [Photo Marie Reid]



Peggy's Cove attracts visitors from all over, including this handsome adult Snowy Egret, found by William Isnor Apr. 28, and photographed by Hans Toom during its six-day stay. [Photo Hans Toom]



## Weather - Eastern Annapolis Valley - Spring 2009

By Larry Bogan

### Monthly Averages of Weather Data Kentville, Nova Scotia 2009

(from the Canada Food & Horticulture Research Centre, Kentville, N.S.)

	Average Temperature (C)			Snow (cm)	Prep (mm)	Bright Sunshine (hours)
	Max	Min	Mean			
<b>March</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>-6.2</b>	<b>-1.8</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>152</b>
<i>48 yr avg</i>	<i>3.3</i>	<i>-5.2</i>	<i>-0.9</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>133</i>
<b>April</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>203</b>
<i>48 yr avg</i>	<i>9.3</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>4.6</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>83</i>	<i>154</i>
<b>May</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>160</b>
<i>48 yr avg</i>	<i>16.2</i>	<i>5.0</i>	<i>10.6</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>80</i>	<i>187</i>
<b>Season</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>22.5</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>514</b>
<i>48 yr avg</i>	<i>9.6</i>	<i>-0.1</i>	<i>4.8</i>	<i>56.8</i>	<i>267</i>	<i>474</i>

There was quite a change in the weather at the beginning of April this year. The temperatures warmed and the snow on the ground disappeared. March was a colder month, while April and May were warmer, making the season as a whole warmer than normal. This was actually a very pleasant spring in which growth was 'ahead' by a week or two.

#### Temperatures:

As you can see from the data in the table above, March was, on average, a degree below normal but both April and May were nearly 2°C above the long-term average for the month. At the Agricultural Centre in Kentville, where data is collected, the last frosts were on the April 26th (min T = -1.2°C) and April 29th (min T = -0.7°C), with no minimums below zero in May. That is earlier than usual to have no frost. It depends where you are, because in Cambridge on April 29th the low was -4°C and on May 10th it got to -1°C, while Kentville was +0.6°C.

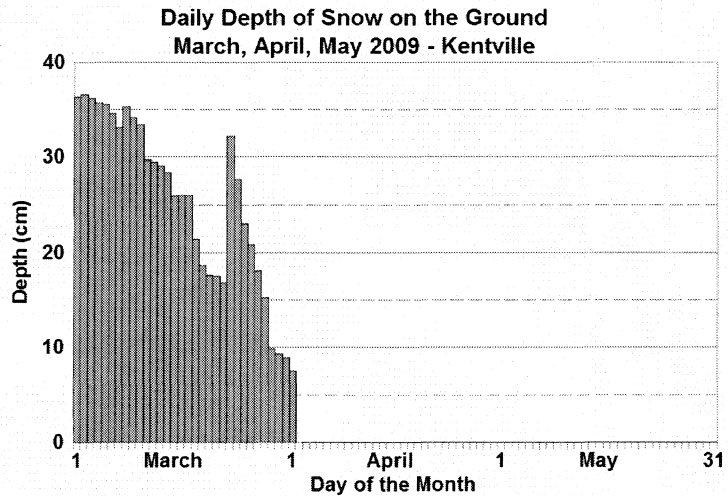
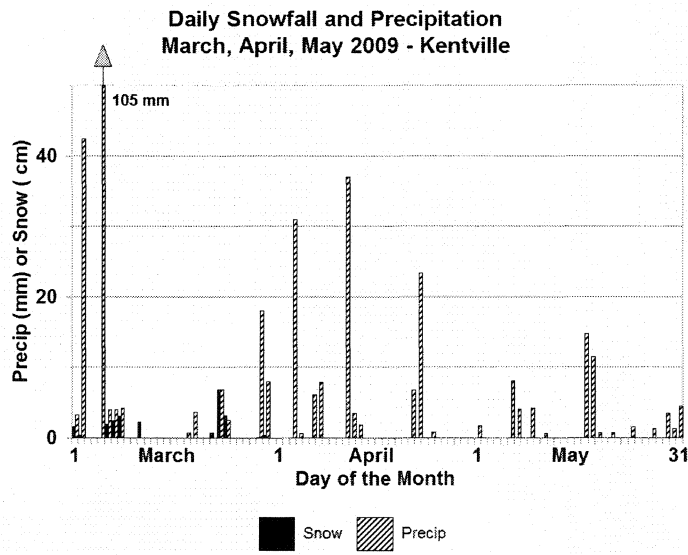
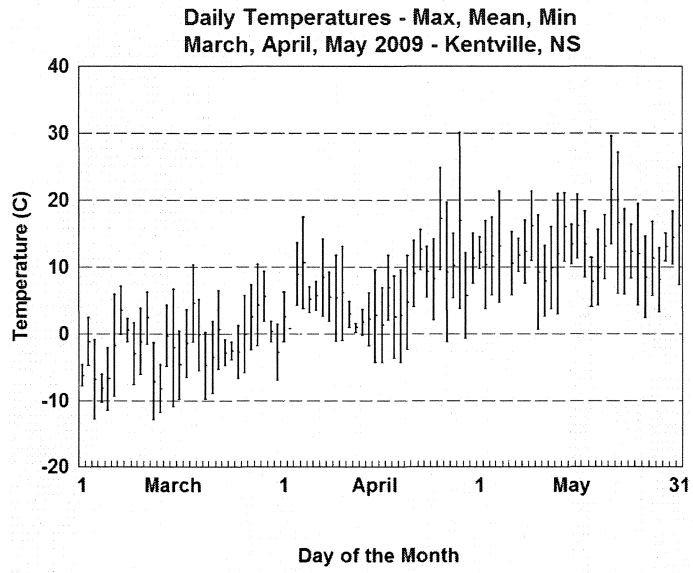
#### Precipitation:

The ground was snow covered the whole month of March to an average depth of 25 cm, more than the normal 11 cm. This cover was maintained by the colder temperatures plus some snowfall (23 cm for the month, normally 42 cm). There was a lot of rain that month, with nearly twice the usual 104 mm falling. The amazing thing is that in the first five days of March there was over 150 mm of rain, most of the month's accumulation. April had no snowfall but abundant rain, 119 mm compared to the normal 83 mm. May was a bit dry with only 3/4 of the normal rainfall. The season overall was above average for precipitation by 40%.

#### Sunshine:

Amazingly enough, despite the precipitation in the early spring, it also had above average bright sunshine hours. Usually there is an inverse relationship between the two (i.e. more rain = less sunshine). But as we saw in March the rain came in sudden falls rather in long rainy periods. April was by far the sunniest with 202 hours of bright sunshine, more than May. May, on the other hand, was cloudier than normal, but had lower rainfall. In this case the rainfall came frequently in small amounts with more cloud cover. In fact March had nearly as many sunny days as May did. Overall the season was about normal, with only 8% more bright sunshine than the long-term average.

See the graphs on temperature and precipitation for daily details.



## Roseate Terns - The Highlight at the 2009 Tern Festival

By Bernice d'Entremont

The sighting of the Roseate Tern at the 5th Tern Festival, June 26, 27, 28 in West Pubnico, made the weekend a success. The clouds that threatened to dampen the atmosphere were burned away by the sun, and all events were on time.

Common and the Arctic Tern were spotted, but the endangered Roseate Tern sighting in West Pubnico was what birders came to see. They saw Roseates at Pond Road, West Pubnico, opposite the Brothers Island, two tiny islands supporting tern colonies, about 1 km west of Lower West Pubnico, Nova Scotia, Canada. Because these islands host the largest and the most stable Roseate Tern population in Canada, Bird Studies Canada designated the islands an Important Bird Area in 1999.

More than 75 people participated at the Tern Festival. Forty registered for all or parts the weekend for the birding nature walks, while others participated to the conferences, the photo and basket exposition, went on the boat tour, and viewed the carving decoys on display at the Musée Acadien.

The birdwatchers at the Tern Festival came from Germany, New York, Halifax, Dartmouth, Bedford, South Ohio, Port Maitland, Argyle, Cape Sable Island, Clare, Yarmouth, Clyde River, and Pubnico.

Over 50 different species of birds and ducks were seen during the weekend, including a nesting pair of Eastern Bluebirds, rarely seen in Pubnico. Also a White-tailed deer swimming across the Pubnico Harbour made for interesting conversation.

Next year's event is scheduled for June 25, 26, and 27, 2010.

For more info contact Bernice d'Entremont -762-3380

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## Nova Scotia Migration Count -- May 9, 2009

By Hans Toom

The Nova Scotia Migration Count was held on May 9, 2009, as always on the second Saturday in May, International Migratory Birds Day. The weather was variable, but most everyone in the province had a portion of their day under good birding conditions. 557 birders submitted their data, recording 203 species (a total slightly above average) and more than 74,000 individual birds.

The rarest bird of this year's count was a "Common" Green-winged Teal, found and photographed by Jeff Ogden at Amherst Marsh. This is only the second record of this subspecies on the twenty year history of the count. Other rarities included four American Oystercatchers on Cape Sable Island, and a near record-high five Red-bellied Woodpeckers.

Great Blue Heron numbers were down 44%, but in compensation it was the best year ever for Great Egrets, with 15 birds counted, smashing the previous high of five in 2005. Surf and White-wing Scoter numbers were down 45% and 80% respectively. There was only one Sanderling found in the entire province, the lowest number in 14 years. The total of thirty-eight Eastern Phoebes was a record high, but unfortunately the swallows showed a terrible decline: Tree Swallows were down 56%, Bank Swallows 92% (only 7 birds reported); Cliff Swallows 45%; and Barn Swallows 55%. Blue-head Vireo numbers were up 89%, representing the best year ever on a per-observer basis. Northern Parulas numbers were up considerably by 141%, and was the count leader among all warbler species except for the always numerous Yellow-rumped Warbler. Winter Finches were in short supply everywhere with numbers way down, although this is not unusual as their populations roam, rise, and fall erratically. House Sparrows continue to decline, but the decline in Evening Grosbeak's numbers seems to be abating. We all wish this beautiful bird success and a future population recovery.

Let's do this all again on May 8, 2010, the 21<sup>st</sup> year of the NSMC. My thanks to all the participants.

\*All statistical comparisons of the current year are to the previous 12 year per-observer average.

To view the 2009 count results by County, go to the following web site:

<http://hanstoom.com/NSMC2009County>

To view how the 2009 results compare with those of earlier years, go to the following web site:

<http://hanstoom.com/NSMCAnnual>

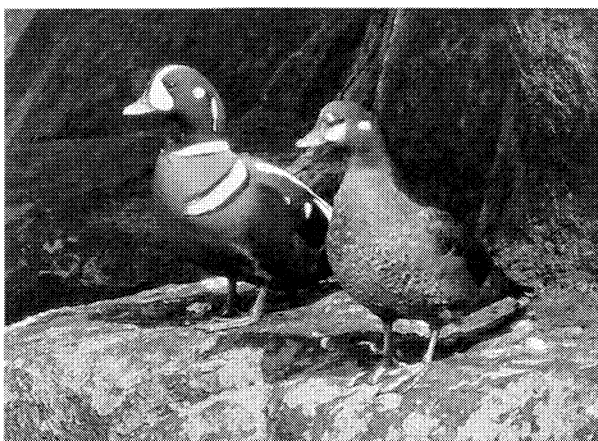
## Photo Gallery - Waterfowl



The thronging BRANT stopover on CSI is well known, but good numbers also frequent the flats and seaweed beds of Brier I. (here Apr. 10), where there are advantages of high ground and some cover for good viewing. [Photo Richard Stern]

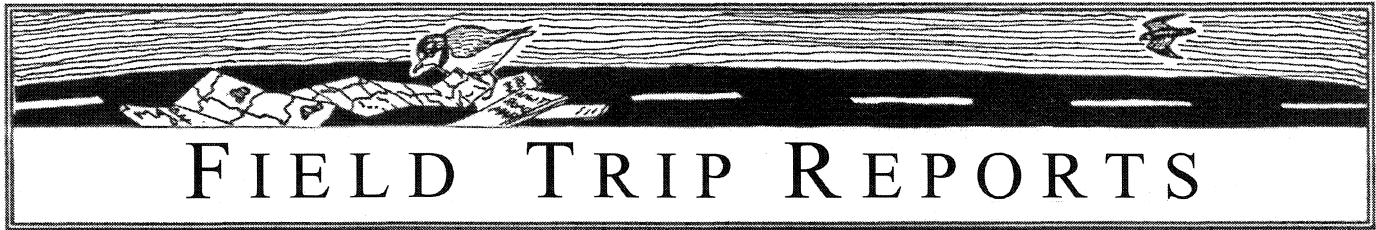


Several observers monitored a tightly packed flock of BLACK SCOTERS off Morden, Kings, through early spring (here May 7). Most were males, all with bright orange bill knobs. Observers should keep an eye out for the Eurasian subspecies or species *nigra*, which nests in Iceland. It has a largely black bill. [Photo Richard Stern]



Port George, Ann., is much favoured by wintering HARLEQUIN DUCKS, and this pair (or good friends) lingered there for a portrait on Apr. 28. [Photo Andy Dean]





**16 May 2009, Beginning Birders' Trip – Halifax**  
**Leader: Suzanne Borkowski**

This trip was well attended: 22 participants in all, mostly beginners, but also a few experienced birders who simply wanted to check out Jerry Lawrence Provincial Park.

The morning was cloudy but the rain held off, and towards noon the sun came out - and so did the birds! After a very slow start, we finally got great close-up looks at Black-and-white Warblers, Black-throated Green Warblers, Yellow-rumped, Chestnut-sided, and Nashville Warblers. We watched a Hairy Woodpecker fly from tree to tree, saw a pair of loons swimming and diving in the lake, and heard lots birds singing around us.

The best treat of the day was getting to see a male Black-throated Blue Warbler foraging on the ground about 10 feet in front of us. A close second was an Ovenbird foraging in the same general area!

We were shown a Flicker nest by one of the participants, in a section of birch that had blown down, and we heard baby birds calling from a newly erected Tree Swallow nest box by the parking lot. Since it was too early for baby swallows, I'm thinking it may have been European Starlings. We tallied 22 species in total. Thanks to Mark Butler, Noel Taussig, Bob McDonald, Elizabeth Doull and my husband, Leszek, for their help in pointing out birds to the group.

Suzanne Borkowski

**18 May 2009 - Historic Hants County**  
**Leader: Suzanne Borkowski**

Despite the threat of rain this trip was more than satisfactory. Five participants joined me in the parking lot of Mount Uniacke Estate Park: Bob and Wendy McDonald, Clarence Stevens, Sr., Dennis Hippern, and Barb McLaughlin.

We spent the first hour exploring the grounds of Mount Uniacke House, venturing a little ways up into the woods. The best bird here was a stunning male Blackburnian Warbler. At our next few stops, we picked up several more warbler species and a Least Flycatcher. On the way to Smiley's Provincial Park we got great looks at a Broad-winged Hawk perched on a branch overhanging the road. An American Kestrel posed very cooperatively on a clothesline for us. We also got to see Bobolinks, and both Evening and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks.

We birded a few different spots in Windsor that afternoon, including the Windsor Sewage Ponds and the Shell Environmental Park. We ended the day with 66 species.

Suzanne Borkowski

**20 May 2009 - The Fred Dobson Warbler Walk**  
**Leader: Patricia Chalmers**

Six of us met at 6 a.m. at the intersection of Hwy 3 and Hwy 333 on the outskirts of Halifax for this field trip. It was a lovely calm, clear morning, and rather cool after frost warnings last night. Joan Waldron met us but unfortunately wasn't able to come along. However most of us had been on the trip before, with Fred Dobson and with Joan, and knew the way and what to expect.

The traffic on the Prospect Road was already building up, and although we heard some birds singing as we walked along the Big Indian Lake Road, we didn't linger to investigate them as we were anxious to get into the woods and beyond the sound of the traffic. I was wearing thin gloves, which I often wear to keep off black flies, but I needed them to keep my hands warm! Bird activity was limited for the first few hours, probably due to the temperature and the low insect activity. However even later in the morning when it warmed up and the black flies became irritating, we felt that some expected species were missing entirely and

others were unusually scarce. There was one beginning birder in our group: I hope she was not discouraged by our wistful reminiscences of past field trips, and comments about what we ought to be seeing!

The forest along the old Nova Scotia Power Commission road is mixed growth, in which there is a large component of dead or dying coniferous trees. We speculated about the reasons for the decline. Rich Peckham suggested that perhaps it was an even-aged forest created by bad forestry practices or a forest fire years ago. These trees are fallen and collapsing into dense tangles of rotten wood, covered in mosses and lush *lobaria* and *usnea* lichens. Hurricane Juan knocked down a lot of the standing dead wood and there is a dense growth of young Balsam Fir coming up through the deadfalls. The undergrowth was full of White-throated Sparrows and Dark-eyed Juncos. The early part of the walk was highlighted by the exuberant singing of Winter Wrens, remarkably abundant here in what must be prime habitat for them. Black-throated Green Warblers were the "warbler of the day", the first, most common, and frequently heard. There were several Northern Flickers calling, and perhaps also a Pileated Woodpecker, although we saw only the former. Ovenbirds and Ruffed Grouse were absent, and we missed hearing the songs of Hermit Thrushes, Black-and-white Warblers, and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, which are usually common here - we only heard one of each, briefly.

During the walk down the long hill to Big Indian Lake, which is lined with hardwoods, we began to find more birds, including Magnolia Warblers and Blue-headed Vireos. A pair of Red-breasted Nuthatches were chattering softly to one another and keeping close company. Clarence Stevens Sr. was lucky to have a brief glimpse of a Blackburnian Warbler. We all enjoyed seeing a Brown Creeper, which Dennis Hippert spotted. Down at the lake, a pair of Common Loons kept their distance, a pair of Common Mergansers flew overhead, and a single Spotted Sandpiper flushed and flew low over the water. Indian Pear, Leatherleaf, Goldthread, Bluets, and Small White Violets were in bloom.

We walked slowly back up the hill, and then took the road in the other direction towards Drysdale's Bog. A lively pair of Palm Warblers and a richly-singing Lincoln's Sparrow were the hoped-for highlights in this habitat, as well as Common Yellowthroats. Clarence found a roughly-cut trail through the woods and across the bog, which allowed us to skirt the deep pool which cuts off the far end of the road, so we were able to go further than usual. Liz Doull spotted a thrush, and we found a few Yellow-rumped Warblers and Purple Finches. The morning traffic noise from Highway 103 was louder than I remembered.

No one had to go to work after the trip, so we did not hurry back. On the return walk we finally heard and saw a Parula Warbler, singing in a birch alongside a handsome pair of American Goldfinches. Liz saw a Boreal Chickadee. At the last house on the road, a Snowshoe Hare sat watchfully on the lawn. There were Ruby-throated Hummingbirds at the first house, where there are lots of bird houses and feeders. The homeowner reported that he has not had any Tree Swallows yet this year. He also told us of a recent sighting of Ring-necked Pheasants, new to the area.

It was almost 11 a.m. when we reached the parking lot of the Goodwood United Church. A raptor flapped heavily and then soared circling overhead. Although it was able to fly well, it was in bad shape, missing a number of its primaries and a few tail feathers. Was it moulting or had someone taken a shot at it? After much discussion we agreed it was an immature Red-tailed Hawk.

Not everyone saw everything, but nearly 40 species were found in all. It was a lovely morning, on an interesting trail which would be worth visiting again later in the season. These places are getting scarcer, so close to the city.

Patricia L. Chalmers

### **30-31 May 2009 - NSBS May Meeting/Atlas Workshop**

**Speakers: Becky Stewart & Patrick Kelly**

The May NSBS meeting, combined with an Atlas Workshop, was held at the Mountain Gap Inn this year. Although attendance was lower than usual (only 20 people participated), everyone was pleased with the talks outlining how to complete your square, how to conduct point counts, and when and how to move on to a new square or squares.

During our owl prowls on Saturday night, after frantically searching for suitable habitat, we finally heard a Barred Owl calling, and a distant Northern Saw-whet Owl hooted briefly. The next morning, bright and early, Becky Stewart led us about the grounds of the Inn to let us practise our point count skills.

Field trips were led by Patrick Kelly (Region 16) and Suzanne Borkowski (Region 17). Most of us took a little side trip down Digby Neck to look for the Sedge Wren discovered by Becky and her assistant, Olivier, the previous day. A few of us heard it calling, but did not catch sight of it that day.

Suzanne Borkowski



# 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](mailto:suzanneborkowski@yahoo.ca)

## Sat 12 Sep 2009 - Cape Breton Shorebirds

Leader: Susann Myers 431-9123 E-mail: [myerss@eastlink.ca](mailto:myerss@eastlink.ca)

Meet at the Sydney Airport (at the fence to the right of the terminal building) at 9:00 a.m. Experience a great variety of species, both shorebirds and others, at Sydney Airport and nearby sites. This is our annual opportunity to get out on the airport runways and see good numbers of Buff-breasted Sandpipers, American Golden-Plovers and others in the company of birding friends. Bring a lunch.

Rain date: Sun 13 Sept.

## Fri 18 Sep to Sun 20 Sep 2009 – Brier Island Weekend

Leaders: James Hirtle 766-4642 E-mail:

[jrhbirder@hotmail.com](mailto:jrhbirder@hotmail.com); and Wayne Neily 765-2455 E-mail: [neilyornis@hotmail.com](mailto:neilyornis@hotmail.com)

For all bird outings meet in the parking lot of the Brier Island Lodge.

Birding Schedule:

Friday evening 8:30 pm – owling.

Saturday morning 6:00 – 8:00 am – Early birding.

Saturday 9:00 am – Birding the Island Hot Spots.

Saturday 12:30 pm or 1:30 pm – Whale and Seabird Cruise.

Please make your own reservation at: <http://www.novascotiawhalewatching.ca>

to book with Mariner Cruises (12:30 pm departure) or: <http://www.brierislandwhalewatch.com>

to book with Brier Island Whale and Seabird Cruises (1:30 pm departure).

Those who don't wish to take a pelagic cruise are free to bird the island on their own.

Sunday 6:00 – 8:00 am – Early birding

Sunday 9:00 am – More birding

The ferry leaves Digby Neck for Long Island every hour on the half hour. The second ferry leaves Long Island for Brier Island every hour on the hour. Ferries are timed so you can drive comfortably from one to the other without missing it. However, you may want to take an extra hour to do some birding on Long Island. Please note, on the return trip, the ferry leaves Brier Island every hour at twenty minutes past the hour.

For weekend accommodations try:

Brier Island Hostel: [www.brierislandhostel.com](http://www.brierislandhostel.com)

The Brier Island Lodge: (NSBS members get 10% discount) [www.brierislandlodge.com](http://www.brierislandlodge.com)

The Dock & Doze Motel: <http://www.brierisland.org>

Bay of Fundy Inn: <http://www.brierislandwhalewatch.com>

## Thu 24 Sept 2009 – Regular Meeting

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

*Piping Plovers in Nova Scotia: What we know and don't know, and why there's hope for recovery -*

Guest Speaker: Sue Abbott

Sue Abbott has worked for over ten years on bird monitoring, research and conservation projects – from seabirds to shorebirds to songbirds. Understanding the effects of human disturbance on birds and habitats and using outreach as a tool to mitigate this threat are two common threads that link much of her past and present work. Sue is a program coordinator for Bird Studies Canada, a national non-profit dedicated to increasing the appreciation, understanding and conservation of Canada's birds. She currently coordinates the Piping Plover Conservation Program and the Important Bird Area Program in Nova Scotia.

## Sat 26 Sep 2009 – Editor's Field Trip - Peggy's Cove Loop.

Leader: Blake Maybank 852-2077 E-mail:

[maybank@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:maybank@ns.sympatico.ca)

Explore some little known trails and birding sites between White's Lake and Indian Harbour. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the White's Lake Legion parking lot (junction of Rte 333 and Prospect Village Rd) – 30 minutes from downtown Halifax. No rain date.

## Sat 03 Oct 2009 – New Birders' Walk

Meet in the Lower parking lot at the end of Point Pleasant Drive by the wall overlooking Black Rock Beach at 9:30 am. Trip Leader to be announced. We'll take a leisurely walk around part of the park to look for birds in their natural habitat on land and on the water. Duration: 2 hours.

## Sat 17 Oct 2009 - Cheticamp Island Field Trip

Leader: Gordon Delaney 224-2490 E-mail:

[gordon.delaney@pc.gc.ca](mailto:gordon.delaney@pc.gc.ca)

Meet at 9:00am at the Visitors' Centre, C.B. Highlands National Park Headquarters.

Join us for a tour of Cheticamp Island where we will see migrating seabirds and shorebirds, as well as do some forest birding.

Rain Date: October 24.

**Thu 22 Oct 2009 – Regular Meeting of the NS Bird Society**  
**Please Note: The Annual General Meeting Will be Held in November This Year!**

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

*Adventures in Bird Banding: from Manitoba to Central America*  
 Guest Speaker: Becky Stewart.

A look into bird banding and what it is all about (believe it or not, there's more to it than just giving birds silver bracelets). Becky Stewart is certified by the North American Banding Council and has banded in Manitoba, Mexico, California and Costa Rica. She'll share her adventures and show us why a bird in the hand is really worth two in the bush. Becky is currently the Atlas Coordinator for the Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas.

**Sat 07 Nov 2009 – New Birders' Walk**

Meet in the Lower parking lot at the end of Point Pleasant Drive by the wall overlooking Black Rock Beach at 9:30 am. Trip Leader to be announced. We'll take a leisurely walk around part of the park to look for birds in their natural habitat on land and on the water. Duration: 2 hours.

**Sat 07 Nov 2009 - Port Hawkesbury**

Leaders: David Johnston 625-534 E-mail:

[dwj.jem@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:dwj.jem@ns.sympatico.ca) and Dave McCorquodale 563-260 E-mail: [david\\_mccorquodale@capebretonu.ca](mailto:david_mccorquodale@capebretonu.ca)

Meet at 9:00 am at the Tourist Information Building in Port Hastings.

At the Canso Causeway there are frequently concentrations of gulls, eagles and gannets that are feeding on migrating skipjacks (aka billfish) in mid-November. In addition we will check out the waterfront for loons, grebes, alcids and waterfowl, feeders

for lingering migrants, and a few fields and creek valleys for sparrows and warblers. Lunch will follow at David and Mary Johnston's home.

Rain Date: November 14.

**Thu 27 Nov 2009 – NSBS Annual General Meeting**

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

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

**Sat 28 Nov 2009 – Canso and Area**

Leaders: Tom Kavanaugh 366-3476 E-mail:

[terri.crane@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:terri.crane@ns.sympatico.ca)

and Steve Bushell 366-2527

Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Chapel Gully Trail parking lot in the town of Canso, Guysborough County. Come down Main Street, turn right onto Union, go past the Marina and take the next right onto Wilmot. The parking lot is at the top of the hill. Fall migration is in full swing on Canso at this time of year, so be prepared for almost anything!


No rain date.

**Sun 29 Nov 2009 – Antigonish Coastal Waters**

Leader: Randy Lauff 867-2471 E-mail: [rlauff@stfx.ca](mailto:rlauff@stfx.ca)

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Dragon Fly Café on the TCH #104, just east of exit #35 (Lower South River). This trip covers the waters of St. Georges Bay and Antigonish Harbour. We'll end the day at Ogdens Pond which has hosted thousands of gulls, ducks and, in some years, inland gannets.

No rain date.



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