

Nova Scotia Birds

A Quarterly Publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society



Spring 2012

Volume 54, Issue 3

NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY Executive 2011-2012



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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, study and protection of the birds of the province and preservation of their habitats.

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Cover photo: The much-watched and extensively photographed BRONZED COWBIRD in the yard of Barbara and Eric Ruff in Yarmouth, was easily distinguished from its BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD companion. [Photo Ron D'Entremont]

Nova Scotia Birds

Winter 2011-12

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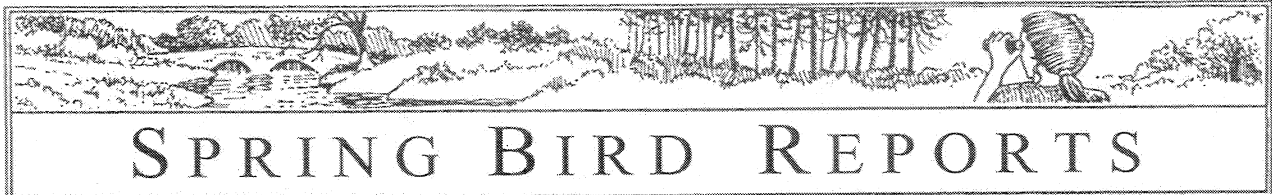
ISSN 0383-0537

Message from the Acting Editor

This is my second attempt at editing, and also the more challenging task of reproducing the traditional organization and layout of your quarterly journal. Readers will have noticed errors of editing and layout (notably the wrong volume number on the cover and a 'phantom' page that interfered with page numbering) in the last issue, and I hope will forgive further lapses in this one as I learn the ropes. With the next, summer-season issue, normally sent out by late fall, but only now being edited, the 2012 volume will be complete. The first 2013 issue (covering the fall 2012 season) will include the Society's annual reports, and also a message on our plans for future changes from David Currie, our President elected in November 2012. Your Board will be soliciting on-line and otherwise for help with preparing the seasonal reports and for copy-editing and the tasks of technical production of this journal. The latter can be simplified in future by using the programs and page templates available to our precious production assistants.

This has been an unusually exciting spring for our members who enjoy the unexpected, whether events like the massive fallout of unexpected birds in late April, or additions to their life lists, like Yarmouth's BRONZED COWBIRD, our first widely 'twitchable' individual of this highly unexpected vagrant – both documented in this issue. But, equally important are the patterns and trends of timing, distribution and abundance of our birds, information that has been recorded in our journal for over half a century. Scientific understanding can be wrested from such a resource, and even more importantly, our habits and laws can be adjusted in response to some of the undesirable changes we humans are imposing on the world. In short, our hobby and the sharing of our finds on these pages are wholly justifiable in themselves, but by membership the Society, and thus supporting publication of this journal, you are augmenting the pleasures and values of birding.

Ian McLaren



NOTE: The following are frequently used abbreviations. In addition, months and most county names are abbreviated, and all are in *italics*. Well known cities and towns are spelled out in full, without their counties and municipalities. Cardinal and ordinal directions are abbreviated (as n., n.e., etc.) and capitalized when part of a place name. Some other widely understood abbreviations may creep in.

General terms

Ad. = adult
 BBS – Breeding Bird Survey
 BNS = Blomidon Natural History Society
ca. = approximately
 f. = female
fide = on the authority of
 imm. = immature
 juv. = juvenile (post-nestling plumage)
 m. = male
 m. obs. – many observers
 n.d. = no details (i.e., unsupported by documentation)
 nr. = near on some tables
 NSMC = Nova Scotia (spring) Migration Count
 ph. = photographed
 pr. = pair
 spec. = specimen
 var. obs. = various observers

Geographical terms and locations

APBS = Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary, *Cum.*

Ann. Roy. Marsh = marshes near Annapolis Royal,
 BPI = Bon Portage (Outer) I., *Shel.*
 Brier I. = Brier Island, *Digby*
 CBI = Cape Breton Island
 CBHNP = Cape Breton Highlands National Park
 CBRM = Cape Breton Regional Municipality
 Hd. = Head (coastal feature)
 HRM = Halifax Regional Municipality
 I. = Island (plural Is.)
 Keji. NP = Kejimikujik National Park
 Keji. NP Adjunct = Kejimikujik NP Coastal Adjunct
 Lr. = Lower
 MTRI = Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute area
 NSNT = NS Nature Trust property bird surveys
 Pk. = Park
 PP = Provincial Park
 PPP, Halifax = Point Pleasant Park in Halifax
 Pt. = Point or Port
 Seal I. = Seal Island, *Yar.*
 Uniacke Pk. = Uniacke Estate Muesum Park, *Hants*

Waterfowl

John Belbin

The NSMC totals are given elsewhere (p. 36), and I tabulate or comment on only high or otherwise unusual counts. The relatively mild weather of 2011-2012 meant that several species were able to overwinter because they could find open water and food sources. As a result, they appeared earlier than normal, with a number of species, for example GREEN-WINGED TEAL found in early March that are often not recorded until late that month.

GRAYLAG GOOSE is always good for an argument because many are kept as domestic barnyard geese. However populations in the wild are increasing their ranges. The complications come from recent escapes of wild types from captivity and wild birds interbreeding with those of domestic or introduced origin. In all forms it is a heavy, big-headed, thick necked grey goose, larger than Greater White-fronted. A strikingly pale forewing is obvious in flight. A Graylag was reported on Lake Milo in Yarmouth by Ronnie D'Entremont, and ELM is sure from the photo that it is not the same bird that he and Anne Mills found in Yarmouth Hbr. Feb. 23, 2011. The **GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE** first seen Feb. 26 at Garden Lots, Lunenburg, remained there during early March, giving others a chance to see and photograph it. Detailed studies indicated that it was most probably of Greenland origin and was not a domestic escape. Another immature Greater White-fronted Goose was observed and photographed by KJM April 3 at Barney's R. Bridge, *Pic.* This is close to the location where a similar bird was photographed 27 Jan. by JOK, and it may well have been the same bird. We appear to have had a small movement of **SNOW GOOSE** through our region in early April. **CANADA GEESE** on the E. Shore, *HRM*, may have lingered from winter, and were found during the NSMC in largest numbers (> 60) in *Colchester, Kings, Hants W., and Richmond.*

Most of the NSMC WOOD DUCKS were in *Kings* (9) and *Pictou* (16). GADWALL is consistently reported in low numbers from *Cumberland* and seems recently to be found more widely throughout most of mainland Nova Scotia. Whether that is due to an expanding range, or because observers are now looking for them, is debatable. There were certainly more **EURASIAN WIGEON** than usual. The largest numbers of AMERICAN WIGEON on the NSMC were in *Cumberland* (27) and *Pictou* (25). All ten NORTHERN SHOVELER on the NSMC were in *Cumberland*, a good number at any time for a species not recorded regularly outside of the Annapolis Royal area. The largest NSMCs of AM. BLACK DUCK were in *Kings* (117) and *Pictou* (144), and over 40% of the NSMC MALLARDS occurred in *Kings*. As usual, most NORTHERN PINTAIL reports came from the Valley region of *Kings* and *Hants*, but there were welcome records from *Cumberland*, *Colchester* and *Pictou*. More than a third (33) of the NSMC GREEN-WINGED TEAL were in *Pictou*.

The drake **REDHEADS** present during winter at Barrington Passage and the sewage ponds in Port Williams, *Kings*, remained well into spring giving local and other birders ample opportunity to see them. Highest NSMCs of RING-NECKED DUCK (29-42) were in *Cumberland*, *Lunenburg*, and *Kings*. Most reports of SCAUP were from the *Pictou-Antigonish* region, although the South Shore had some reasonable numbers. The TUFTED DUCK x SCAUP reported in the last issue lingered into early March. The numbers of report of all merganser species seems to have increased from those of a year ago. By contrast, all the NSMC estimates were smaller than in the past two springs. If there is a trend here, it is not obvious, and it may just reflect the efforts of individual observers. The report (ELM) on the male **KING EIDER** that flew by Western Light, Brier I. with three COMMON EIDERS noted it was "slightly smaller and more compact than the Commons, and with the four distinctive white areas on the black of flanks and wings". The Commons landed, but the King kept going to the n.e. Common Eiders were widely reported this spring, with "many" around Mud I., *Yar.* (RDE), and were "numerous" and on nests May 22-27 on BPI (CLD, JCZ.). However, the NSMC was down considerably from the previous two years, which is somewhat confusing. Scoters, especially WHITE-WINGED, were also down from last year's NSMC. But, SURF and BLACK counts were higher than in 2010; almost half the former, and more than half the latter were found in *Pictou* and *Lunenburg* respectively. LONG-TAILED DUCK numbers fell in April, yet good numbers were on the NSMC, almost all (29) in *Colchester*.

GRAYLAG GOOSE

Mar 19
Lake Milo, *Yarmouth* 1 RDE



This GRAYLAG GOOSE was found Mar. 19 on L. Milo, but not with Canadas as in past occurrences. However, its shortish, largely orange bill was characteristic of birds breeding in Iceland. [Photo Ronnie D'Entremont]

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE 1 sev. obs.
Late Feb.-Mar. 16 Oler Farm Marsh, Lun. 1 (ph.) JAH et al.
Apr 3-7 Barney's River Bridge, *Pic.* 1 imm. (ph.) KJM
Apr 28 East R. *Pic.* 1 (diff.?) KJM

Snow Goose

Apr 1 Windsor sewage ponds 1 Jonathan Young
Apr 5, 7 Branch LaHave, *Lun* 2 JAH
Apr 7 Conrads Estates, *Lun* 1 JIC
Apr 9 Upper Northfield, *Lun* 1 JAH
May 13 Bay St. Lawrence, *Vic.* 1 AAM

Canada Goose

Mar 4 Dayspring, *Lun* 45 JAH
Mar 4 Lawrencetown, *HRM* 1 50 DMW
Mar 5 Berwick, *Kings* 30+ SLH
Mar 10 Cole Hbr., *HRM* 100 Paul Lindgreen
Mar 12 Habitant R. *Kings* 135 JWW
Mar 20 New Minas, *Kings* 6 JCT
Apr 1-3 *Hants, Kings, Pic.* 40+, 28, 300 3 obs.

Brant

Mar 1 CSI sev.100 JON
Mar 4 Hartlen Point *HRM* 8 DGA
Mar 8 Freeport, *Digby*; Brier I.100; 35 ELM, AHM
Mar 11, 14, 18 CSI 2000, 4000+, 100 JON, JON, JAH
Mar 13 Lr. Debert, *Col.* 250 ROH
Mar 17 Truro marsh, *Col* 700 ROH
Mar 17 Nappan area, *Cum.* 150 Karen Mills
Apr 7 Brier I. 200 ELM
May 8, 13 CSI 350 JON
May 12 Antigonish Landing 50 KJM

Wood Duck

Apr 6 Greenfield, *Kings* 6 RIW
Apr 6 Elgin, *Pic.* 4 KJM
Apr 7 French Basin Trail, *Ann.* 2 JAH
May 12 Oakfield PP, *HRM* 2 David Waterfield
May 27 Red Bridge Pond, Dartmouth 1m PLC



Although they didn't overlap in time, these two immature GREATER WHITE FRONTED GEESE were clearly different individuals. The earlier one at left, Mar. 4 at Garden Lots, Lun., was starting to acquire some white adult feathering on the forehead, whereas the one at right, Apr. 2 at Barneys R., Pic., had none.

Gadwall

Mar 1	CSI	2	JON
Mar 2	Falmouth, <i>Hants</i>	3	Ryan Pigeon
Mar 11	E. Passage, <i>HRM</i>	2	TBO
Mar 17	Oler farm Marsh, <i>Lun</i>	1	KLA
Mar 18	Abercrombie, <i>Pic.</i>	3	KJM
Mar 25	Annapolis Royal	no.?	NSBS-BNS
Apr 3	Canard Pond, <i>Kings</i>	1	JWW
Apr 7	French Basin Trail, <i>Ann.</i>	2	JAH
Apr 13	Wallace, <i>Cum.</i>	1	KJM
Apr 26	Brier I.	2	ELM

Eurasian Wigeon

Mar 10	W. Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	2m	DGA
Mar 21	Windsor sewage ponds	1m	ELM
Apr 7	French Basin Trail, <i>Ann.</i>	2	JAH
May 10	Sullivans Pond, <i>HRM</i>	1	JCZ.
May 26	Wallace Bay, <i>Cum.</i>	1	ELM

American Wigeon

Mar 2	Conrad Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	7	DMW
Mar 13, 14	Cornwallis R. <i>Kings</i>	2, 6	AND
Mar 13	Lower Debert, <i>Col</i>	10	ROH
Mar 16	Big Gut Bridge, <i>Pic.</i>	6	KJM
Mar 18	Abercrombie, <i>Pic.</i>	9	KJM
Mar 20	Windsor sewage ponds	14	WPN
Mar 25	Annapolis Royal, <i>Ann.</i>	no.?	NSBS-BNS
Apr 3	Canard Pond, <i>Kings</i>	4	AND
Apr 13	Birch Cove, <i>HRM</i>	6	MZE
Apr 26	Big I. <i>Pic.</i>	6	KJM
May 26	Wallace Bay, <i>Cumb</i>	20+	ELM

American Black Duck

Mar 3	Antigonish	20	KJM
Mar 10	Corkums I. <i>Lun</i>	7	JAH
Mar 13	Cornwallis R. <i>Kings</i>	"hoards"	AND
Mar 13	Lr. Debert, <i>Col</i>	250	ROH
Mar 18	CSI	47	JAH
Apr 17	Belleisle marsh, <i>Ann.</i>	13	JAH
Apr 26	Big I. <i>Pic.</i>	78	KJM

Mallard x American Black Duck

Mar 3	Shubie park, <i>HRM</i>	6	Karen McKendry
Mar 18	Apple River, <i>Cum.</i>	6	KFS

Mallard

Mar 11	Oakland, <i>Lun.</i>	25	JAH
Mar 13	Cornwallis R. <i>Kings</i>	"hoards"	AND
Mar 13	North River, <i>Col.</i>	40	KAM

Blue-winged teal

Apr 7	Belleisle marsh, <i>Ann.</i>	2	JAH
May 21	Cornwallis R. <i>Kings</i>	some	Catherine Craig

Northern Shoveler

Mar 13	CSI	2m, 1f	RDE
Mar 25	Annapolis Royal	some	NSBS-BNS
Apr 3	Belleisle Marsh, <i>Ann.</i>		KEL
Apr 4	Stella's Pond, <i>Kings</i>	2	JCT
Apr 7	French Basin Trail, <i>Ann.</i>	1	JAH
Apr 7	Belleisle Marsh, <i>Ann.</i>	2	JAH
May 26-27	BPI	2, 3	CLD <i>et al</i>

Northern Pintail

Mar 2	Falmouth, <i>Hants</i>	5	Ryan Pigeon
Mar 6, 14, 15	Cornwallis R. <i>Kings</i>	4, 6, 32	AND
Mar 13	Lr. Debert, <i>Col</i>	10	ROH
Mar 17	Brownsville, <i>Pic.</i>	2	KJM
Apr 3	Canard Pond, <i>Kings</i>	4	JWW

Green-winged Teal

Mar 4, 10	Garden Lots, <i>Lun</i>	15	JAH
Mar 25	Annapolis Royal	no.?	NSBS-BNS
Apr 3	Canard Pond, <i>Kings</i>	12	JWW
Apr 7	French Basin Trail, <i>Ann.</i>	14	JAH
Apr 26	Big I. <i>Pict</i>	4	KJM
May 5	River Philip, <i>Cum.</i>	small flock	VIR
May 6	Mud I., <i>Yar.</i>	4	RDE
May 25-27	BPI	up to 3	CLD <i>et al</i>
May 27	Maitland, <i>Hants</i>	5	ROH

Redhead

Feb 11-Mar 9	Pt. Williams sewage ponds	1m	GFO <i>et al.</i>
to at least Apr 13	Barrington Passage	1m	Laura Jones

Ring-necked Duck

Mar 10	Rhodes Corner, <i>Lun.</i>	4	JAH
Mar 20	De Said L. Dartmouth	46	PMU
Mar 20	Starrs Point, <i>Kings</i>	2m	JCT
Mar 23	Miners Marsh, <i>Kings</i>	8	RBS
Mar 25	Belleisle Marsh, <i>Ann.</i>	60+	NSBS-BNS
Apr 1	Windsor sewage pond	no.?	Jonathan Young
Apr 1	Roberts I. <i>Yar</i>	8	JAH
Apr 3	Kidstons Pond, <i>Kings</i>	8	JWW
Apr 6	New Minas water plant	30	ELM
Apr 7	Tucker L. <i>HRM</i>	20	GMU
Apr 7	Belleisle Marsh, <i>Ann.</i>	61	JAH
Apr 7	Caledonia, <i>Queens</i>	14	JAH
Apr 30	Oxford, <i>Cumb</i>	no.?	VIR

May 2	French Basin Trail, <i>Ann.</i>	16	RBS
TUFTED DUCK x SCAUP hybrid			
Mar 3	Pictou causeway	1	KJM
Greater Scaup			
Mar 2	Trenton outflow, <i>Pic.</i>	120	KJM
Mar 4	E. Passage, <i>HRM</i>	170	DGA
Mar 10	Corkums I. <i>Lun</i>	101	JAH
Mar 10	Antigonish	32	KJM
Mar 18	Pictou Causeway	150	KJM
Mar 29	W. River, <i>Pic.</i>	250	KJM
Lesser Scaup			
Mar 3	Pictou Landing	2	KJM
Mar 4	Lunenburg	3	JAH
Mar 11, 14	CSI	4, 3	JON
Mar 11	Roberts I. <i>Yar</i>	3	RDE
May 26	Wallace Bay, <i>Cum.</i>	2	ELM
Common Eider			
Mar 4-18	<i>Guys.</i> to <i>Ann.</i> , <i>-Shel.</i>	6 repts, 13-80 birds	6 obs.
Apr. 1-9	<i>HRM</i> , 3 locs.	57, 89, 92	3 obs.
Apr 26	Big I. <i>Pict</i>	5	KJM
May 1,7	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	35, 65	DAC
May 5	Martinique Bch., <i>HRM</i>	40	BLM
May 25-27	BPI	on nests	JCZ
May 30	Lockeport	flock + 20 juv	DJC
KING EIDER			
Apr 7	Off W. Light, Brier I.	1m	ELM
Harlequin Duck			
Mar 1	Daniels Head, CSI	1	JON
Mar 4	Port George, <i>Ann.</i>	7m	PBG
Mar 4	Chebucto Head, <i>HRM</i>	3m	HAT
Mar 9	Cape Gabarus, <i>CBRM</i>	10	Ian Harte
Mar 13	Sober I. <i>HRM</i>	7	KJM
Mar 17	W. Head, <i>Queens</i>	5	ELM, AHM
Mar 18	Prospect High, <i>HRM</i>	1m	PLC
Mar 18	Centerville, <i>Digby</i>	23	Diane Clapp
Mar 24	Port George, <i>Ann.</i>	12	NSBS-BNS
Apr 17	Port George, <i>Ann.</i>	7	PBG
May 12	Louisbourg, <i>CBRM</i>	9	Ian Harte
May 17	Port George, <i>Ann.</i>	3 m	RBS
Surf Scoter			
Mar 3	Louisbourg	6	BUS
Mar 10	Corkum's I. <i>Lun</i>	14	JAH
Mar 10	<i>Guysborough</i>	20	KJM
Mar 13	Sober I. <i>HRM</i>	20	KJM
Mar 17	Petite Rivière, <i>Lun</i>	20	JAH
Mar 28	Port George, <i>Ann.</i>	20	JOB
Apr 17	Port George, <i>Ann.</i>	15	PBG
Apr 26	Big I. <i>Pict</i>	46	KJM
White-winged Scoter			
Mar 3	Louisbourg Hbr.	4	BUS
Mar 4	Port George, <i>Ann.</i>	5	PBG
Mar 4	MacCormack's Beach, <i>HRM</i>	30	DGA
Mar 10	Corkum's I. <i>Lun.</i>	3	JAH
Mar 17	Petite Rivière, <i>Lun.</i>	6	JAH
Apr 9	Chebucto Head, <i>HRM</i>	6	PMC
Apr 14	Martinique Beach PP, <i>HRM</i>	10	BKW
Apr 15	Conrad's Beach, <i>HRM</i>	8	KJM
Black Scoter			
Mar 3	Louisbourg Hbr.	70+	BUS
Mar 17	Petite Rivière, <i>Lun.</i>	65	JAH
Apr 21	Western Head, <i>Queens</i>	120	ELM
May 17	Port George, <i>Ann.</i>	a few	RBS
May 20	Apple R. estuary, <i>Cum.</i>	25	BLM
Long-tailed Duck			
Mar 3	Louisbourg Hbr, <i>CBRM</i>	3	BUS
Mar 6\	Sinclair's I. <i>Pic.</i>	25	KJM
Mar 10	Graves I. <i>Lun</i>	20	RBS
Mar 11	Lr. Clark's Hbr, CSI	55	JON
Mar 13	Sober I. <i>HRM</i>	29	KJM
Mar 18	Long I. <i>Digby</i>	10	Diane Clapp

Mar 19	Western Head, <i>Queens</i>	25	ROH
Mar 28	Margaretville, <i>Ann.</i>	3	JOB
Apr 26	Big I. <i>Pict</i>	7	KJM
Bufflehead			
Mar 3	Louisbourg Hbr.	13	BUB
Mar 10	Salmon R. <i>Guys.</i>	41	KJM
Mar 11	Queensland, <i>HRM</i>	8	PBG
Mar 11	Robert's I. <i>Yar</i>	10	RDE
Mar 11	Oakland, Mahone Bay <i>Lun.</i>	22, 30	JAH
Mar 18	Baccaro, <i>Shel</i>	14	JAH
Mar 25	Annapolis Royak	100	NSBS-BNS
Apr 6	Mahone Bay, <i>Lun</i>	60	JAH
Apr 7	Annapolis Royal	108	JAH
May 2	French Basin Trail, <i>Ann.</i>	40	RBS
Common Goldeneye			
Mar 3	Antigonish	100	KJM
Mar 4	Garden Lots, <i>Lun</i>	4	JAH
Mar 4	Dayspring, <i>Lun</i>	4	JAH
Mar 4	Conrad Bch., <i>HRM</i>	5	DMW
Mar 7	Cornwallis R. <i>Kings</i>	38	GFO
Mar 7	Pt. Williams sewage ponds, <i>Kings</i>	18	JLC
Mar 10	Salmon R. <i>Guys.</i>	12	KJM
Mar 25	Big I. <i>Pic.</i>	52	KJM
Mar 28	Abercrombie, <i>Pic.</i>	17	KJM
Barrow's Goldeneye			
Mar 3	Pictou causeway	3	KJM
Hooded Merganser			
Mar 1	Minesville Pond, <i>HRM</i>	10	DOU
Mar 4	Lunenburg	5	JAH
Mar 4	Conrad Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	3	DMW
Mar 8	Lr. Barney's R. <i>Pic.</i>	11	KJM
Mar 10	Corkums I. <i>Lun.</i>	17	JAH
Mar 14	Canning, <i>Kings</i>	1m	JWW
Mar 15	New Glasgow	12	KJM
Mar 18	Loch Broom, <i>Pict</i>	10	KJM
Mar 24	W. Margaretville Marsh, <i>Ann.</i>	2	NSBS-BNS
Mar 24	Blanche Pen., <i>Shel</i>	5	JAH
Apr 3	Canard Pond, <i>Kings</i>	2	JWW
Apr 22	Black R. <i>Kings</i>	3	RIW
Apr 22	Mud Lake Bog Trail, <i>Kings</i>	6	RIW
Apr 26	Dauphinees Pond, <i>HRM</i>	4	KLA
Apr 30	Oxford, <i>Cum.</i>	no.?	VIR
Common Merganser			
Mar 1	Sullivans Pond, Dartmouth	9	DOU
Mar 1	Minesville Pond, <i>HRM</i>	8	DOU
Mar 3	Trenton Outflow, <i>Pic.</i>	180	KJM
Mar 4, 10	Lunenburg	4, 10	JAH
Mar 10	Corkums I. <i>Lun.</i>	47	JAH
Mar 12	Habitant R. <i>Kings</i>	2	JWW
Mar 14	Canning, <i>Kings</i>	6	JWW
Mar 17	Truro Marsh	10	ROH
Mar 18	East R. <i>Pic.</i>	35	KJM
Mar 20	Conrad Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	4	DMW
Mar 22	Tucker L. <i>HRM</i>	8	GMU
Mar 28	Lr. Barney's R. <i>Pic.</i>	60	KJM
Apr 6	Canning, <i>Kings</i>	10	ELM
Apr 7	Dartmouth SE	8	Lynn Karchewski
Apr 15	East R. <i>Pic.</i>	58	KJM
Red-breasted Merganser			
Mar 2	Conrad Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	6	DMW
Mar 3	Louisbourg Hbr, <i>CBRM</i>	8	BUS
Mar 4	Port George, <i>Ann.</i>	3	PBG
Mar 10	Rainbow Haven, <i>HRM</i>	a few	Paul Lindgreen
Mar 10	Black Duck Cove Park, <i>Guys.</i>	10	KJM
Mar 10	Corkum's I. <i>Lun.</i>	13	JAH
Mar 11, Apr 7	Oakland, <i>Lun.</i>	4, 6	JAH
Mar 13	Sober I. <i>HRM</i>	23	KJM
Mar 15	Conrad Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	9	DMW
Mar 18	Prospect High, <i>HRM</i>	10	PLC
Mar 18	CSI, <i>Shel.</i>	15	JAH

Mar 18	Long I. <i>Digby</i>	10	Diane Clapp	May 7	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	10	DAC
Mar 28	Port George, <i>Margaretville Ann.</i>	4	JOB	Ruddy Duck			
Mar 29	E. River, <i>Pic.</i>	500	KJM	Apr 21	Waverley Rd, <i>HRM</i>	1 pr	JCR
Apr 2	Abercrombie, <i>Pic.</i>	450	KMJ	May 2	French Basin Trail, <i>Ann.</i>	1	RBS
Apr 26	Big I. <i>Pic.</i>	97	KJM				
Apr 30	Oxford, <i>Cum.</i>	No.?	VIR				

Galliformes

By Ian McLaren

To repeat the assertion in the last issue: “RING-NECKED PHEASANT may seem too commonplace to bother reporting, and RUFFED GROUSE are seldom and SPRUCE GROUSE almost never encountered.” Only the assiduous NSMC participants turned up palpable numbers of the latter two. One self-confessed “not a birder” reported via the NSBS website that a female walked . . . in front of my car” in Clayton Park, and thought “they are relatively unusual, especially in urban settings”. In truth, they’ve become quite at home in urban areas from Cape Breton to Yarmouth. The Cumberland Peninsula seems to be a hotspot for Spruce Grouse, and the NSMC of 11 in *Colchester* was an unusual achievement. NSMC Totals begin on p. 36.

Ring-necked Pheasant

Mar.-May 71 locs., CSI to *Ant.* 118+ indivs. eBird + 6 obs.

Ruffed Grouse

Thru season 43 locs., Brier I. to *Pic.* 60 indivs. all eBird

May 12 (almost half in Kings) 105 NSMC

Spruce Grouse

Mar. 9 E. nr. Apple R., *Cum.* 1 at feeder KFS

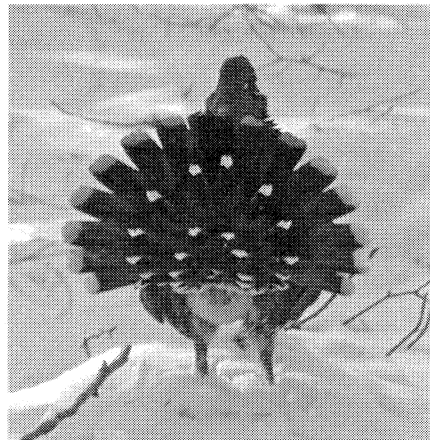
Mar. 12 Economy Pt., *Col.* 1 m., 2 f. H. McLaughlin

Mar. 30 woods, Apple R., *Cum.* 1 m., 1 f. KFS

May 4 Higgins Mt., *Cum.* 2 ROH

May 12 (half in *Col.*) (11) NSMC

May 19, 24 Debert L., *Col.* 1, 1 ROH



Was this SPRUCE GROUSE. early April near Sheffield L., *Kings*, just “Puttin’ on the Ritz” or insulting the photographer? [Photo Rick Whitman]

Loons through Grebes

By John Belbin

Very few RED-THROATED LOONS were reported, not even the usual groups of migrants passing through the area. None were reported from such normal locations as Brier I. and *Cumberland*.

COMMON LOONS have been nesting on Sandy Bottom Lake in Annapolis County for several years, but it usually takes a local resident to know exactly where; Marilyn Delong can predict where they will usually be found. The largest numbers of these birds are found in Sober Island off Sheet Harbour. This location would seem to deserve a lot more attention than it gets – only KJM seems to visit it regularly. No large numbers were reported on the NSMC, although the 27 in *Lunenburg* was reasonable. Total numbers of loons seem to be declining over the years.

The PIED-BILLED GREBES in the freshwater reaches of Wallace Bay, *Cum.*, where they have been in the past and believed to breed, were seen by a Nature NS group led by ELM.

The unusually large group of HORNED GREBES off the Blanche Peninsula indicates this is another location that deserves more attention than it gets for the number and diversity of the species often seen there

Red-throated Loon

Apr 15	Granton, <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM
Apr 26	Big I. <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM
May 2	Hartlen Point, <i>HRM</i>	2	DAC
May 4	Horton Landing, <i>Kings</i>	2	RWH
Common Loon			
Mar 4	Port George, <i>Ann.</i>	5	PBG
Mar 4	Garden Lots, <i>Lun.</i>	2	JAH
Mar 11	Lr. Clark's Hbr., <i>CSI</i>	9	JON
Mar 11	Oakland, <i>Lun.</i>	3	JAH
Mar 13	Sober I. <i>HRM</i>	15	KJM
Mar 18	Prospect High, <i>HRM</i>	4	PLC
Mar 18	<i>CSI, Shel.</i>	3	JAH
Mar 20	Fisherman's Harbour, <i>Guys.</i>	5	KJM
Mar 24	Blanche Peninsula, <i>Shel.</i>	13	JAH
Mar 28	Port George, <i>Ann.</i>	7	JOB
Apr 7	First L. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	4	DHU
May 12	<i>Lunenburg</i>	27	NSMC
May 27	Sandy Bottom L., <i>Ann.</i>	2 nesting	Marilyn Delong
May 27	Bon Portage I. <i>Shel</i>	2	CLD <i>et al</i>
Pied-billed Grebe			
Apr 7	French Basin Trail, <i>Ann.</i>	1	JAH

Apr 17	Elgin, <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM
Apr 25	Westville, <i>Pic.</i>	2	KJM
May 12	Cumberland and Pictou Counties	9, 9	NSMC
May 13	Annapolis marsh, <i>Ann.</i>	2	Debbie Stoddart-Pageau
May 26	Wallace Bay, <i>Cum.</i>	+	ELM
May 26	Publicover L. <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH
Horned Grebe			
Mar 10	Corkum's I. <i>Lun.</i>	2	JAH
Mar 13	Sober I. <i>HRM</i>	3	KJM
Mar 18	<i>CSI, Shel.</i>	1	JAH
Mar 17	Petite Rivière, <i>Lun.</i>	2	JAH
Mar 24	Blanche Pen., <i>Shel.</i>	44	JAH
Apr 3	Pictou Causeway, <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM
Apr 14	Martinique Beach, <i>HRM</i>	6	IAM, NSBS
Red-necked Grebe			
Mar 4	Port George, <i>Ann.</i>	1	PBG
Mar 9	Brier I. <i>Digby</i>	3	ELM, AHM
Mar 10	Canso, <i>Guys.</i>	4	KJM
Mar 13	Sober I. <i>HRM</i>	14	KJM
Apr 7	French Basin Trail, <i>Ann.</i>	1	JAH
Apr 17	Port George, <i>Ann.</i>	4	PBG
Apr 26	Green Bay, <i>Lun.</i>	2	RWH

Tubenoses through Cormorants

By Eric Mills

The first SOOTY SHEARWATER of the year, well documented by Richard Stern during the migration count on May 12, was also unusually far to the east in the Bay of Fundy, and certainly among the few recorded from *Kings*. An estimated 100,000 LEACH'S STORM-PETREL were said to be present during the NSMC at the extensive colony on BPI (not included in the NSMC table, p. 36).

Next, a near-miss. On May 20 a fisherman working in the Grand Manan Basin east of the island, and close to Nova Scotian waters, reported and photographed an immature BROWN BOOBY that came aboard his boat. The photograph, diagnostic and tantalizing, can be seen on Stuart Tingley's Flickr site at <[http:// flic.kr/p/c73wWN](http://flic.kr/p/c73wWN)>. Stuart's comment on the e-mail site, NatureNB, was: "keep in mind that several Brown Boobies showed up in northeastern North America last summer including a freshly deceased specimen in southwestern Nova Scotia, one photographed on a whale watch boat off Portland, Maine, and long-staying birds at Cape May, New Jersey and Cape Cod, Massachusetts. The New Jersey and Massachusetts birds spent much of their time close to shore, perched on buoys, channel markers and breakwaters. Birders on Grand Manan and elsewhere should keep that in mind when out birding!"

Sooty Shearwater

May 12	Huntington Pt., <i>Kings</i>	1	RBS
Leach's Storm-Petrel			
May 25-28	BPI	"numerous"	CLD <i>et al.</i>
Northern Gannet			
(including selected records from eBird)			
Mar. 9	Off Western Light, Brier I.	1	ELM
Apr. 9	Chebucto Hd., <i>HRM</i>	29	SEM, PMC
Apr. 9	Sydney	2	David Williams
Apr. 21	Off Western Head, <i>Queens</i>	1	ELM
Apr. 21	Eastern Shore, <i>HRM</i>	300+ flying NE	DOU
Apr. 26	Off W. Light, Brier I.	1	ELM, AHM
Apr. 28	Caribou lighthouse, <i>Pic.</i>	80+	KJM
May 4	Kingsburg, <i>Lun.</i>	27 flying NE	ELM
May 6	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	25	DAC
May 7	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	20	DAC
May 11	Brier I.	200+ flying SW	ELM, IAM
May 12	mainly <i>CBRM, HRM, Digby</i>	100, 100, 61.	NSMC

May 19, 20	Northern Pt., Brier I.	50+, 10	ELM
May 27	BPI	2	CLD <i>et al.</i>
Double-crested Cormorant			
(including selected records from eBird)			
Mar. 10	Canso area, <i>Guys</i>	3	KJM
Mar. 29	Pictou causeway	5	KJM <i>et al.</i>
Mar. 29	Pictou, Pier B	1	KJM <i>et al.</i>
Mar. 31	Pictou causeway	19	KJM
Apr. 2	Pictou causeway	ca. 50	KJM <i>et al.</i>
Apr. 9	Chebucto Hd., <i>HRM</i>	1	SEM, PMC
Apr. 6	Aboiteau Rd, Canning, <i>Kings</i>	1	AND
Apr. 14	Conrads Bch., <i>HRM</i>	2	DMW
Apr. 15	Pictou Lodge	250	KJM
Apr. 15	Pictou causeway	250	KJM
Apr. 16	Conrads Bch., <i>HRM</i>	16	DMW
Apr. 26	Peters I., Brier I.	50	ELM, AHM
May 7	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	350	DAC
May 11	Brier I.	50+	ELM, IAM

May 12	mainly Brier I., <i>Pic., Rich.</i>	150,148,1086. 176	NSMC
May 19	Brier I.	20+	ELM
Great Cormorant			
(including selected records from eBird)			
Mar. 9-10	Peters I., Brier I.	35+	ELM, AHM
Mar. 10	Canso area, <i>Guys</i>	8	KJM
Mar. 13	Sober I., <i>HRM</i>	24	KJM

Mar. 15-16	Trenton, <i>Pic.</i>	1 imm.	KJM
Mar. 17	Beach Meadows, <i>Queens</i>	35	ELM, AHM
Mar. 17	Front Oler Marsh, <i>Lun1</i>	7	KEL
Mar. 24	Baccaro, <i>Shel</i>	3	JAH
Apr. 6	Peters I., Brier I.	30	ELM
May 12	mainly <i>Digby</i> , with	20	NSMC
May 19	Peters I., Brier I.	4	ELM

Hérons

By Ulli Höger

My personal spring highlight was the GREEN HERON reported in early May at Sullivans Pond, Dartmouth, by Dave Currie. I had previously seen this species in Nova Scotia and down South, where it is more common, but never so close up for extended periods of time. It produced a bit of Everglades-style birding in downtown Dartmouth and a photo op. par excellence! In retrospect it appears that this bird had been seen there for several days by dog walkers and by athletes running around the pond, before DAC spotted and reported it. It was not the first time that excited birders drawn to a certain location by a rare bird were approached by mildly curious locals wanting to find out the identity this weird bird that they had been seeing, before folks with binoculars started to show up. That makes me wonder how many rare birds we miss that have been seen but not recognized for what they are, and/or not reported? And even more so, how many were missed in the past before email, social media, cell and smart phones allowed fast, almost real-time information exchange, and before unknown birds in remote areas could be ID'd by birders based on cell-phone or other posted photos.

The estimated appearance of the Sullivans Pond Green Heron fell in the time window when GREAT EGRET and other uncommon herons and non-herons, showed up in numbers all over the province.

Other than that, the season went pretty much as expected. GREAT BLUE HERONS made their returns on time and, as the Spring Migration Count revealed, some otherwise under-reported species were present and on territory, AMERICAN BITTERN for example.

Note: eBird numbers for April May are maximum counts for given localities

American Bittern

Apr. 27	Annapolis R. outlet	1	Wade Trembley
May 3		present	N. Dowd
May 8-31	3 locs., <i>Inv. to Hants</i>	5 indivs.	3 obs.
Great Blue Heron			
Mar. 22	Corkums I., <i>Lun.</i>	1	N. Dowd
Mar. 23	Yarmouth, <i>Yar.</i>	9	MUN
Mar. 25	Hartlen Point, <i>HRM</i>	1	IAM
Mar. 25	Grand Pré, <i>Kings</i>	1	RIW
Mar. 25	CSI	1	JON, SAN
Mar. 25	Mader's Cove, <i>Lun.</i>	1	ELM
Mar. 31	Garden Lots, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH
April	Widely	18+ locs., 46+ indivs.	Mostly eBird
May	Widely	23 locs., 76+ indivs	eBird

GREAT EGRET

Apr. 21-22	Glance Bay, <i>CBRM</i>	1	BEC
Apr. 24	Lockeport	1	DJC, JQA, et al
Apr. 26	Cole Hbr. Saltmarsh Tr, <i>HRM.</i>	1 ph.	HEK et al.
Apr. 26	Barrington	3	DOC
Apr. 29	Seaforth, <i>HRM</i>	1	DOU
Apr. 29-May 3, 5, 6	Kingsburg, <i>Lun.</i>	1,1,1,2	4 obs.
Apr. 29, May 5	CSI	1	CST, RBS
Apr. 29	Tantallon, <i>HRM</i>	1	Rowena Morrison
May 1-4	Bayhead, <i>Col.</i>	1	Carol Walton
May 4-5	Palmeter Woods, <i>Kings</i>	1	AND
May 5	Hirtles Pond, <i>Lun.</i>	1	ELM
May 5-13	Roach's Pond, <i>HRM</i>	1	AGH
May 6	Hubbards, <i>Lun.</i>	1	PST
May 7	Tancook I. <i>Lun.</i>	2	Hillary Dionne
May 8	Rainbow Haven PP, <i>HRM</i>	1	JUO, JCZ, ABM
May 12	<i>Rich., Yar.</i>	1, 3	NSMC

May 19	Roachs Pond, <i>HRM</i>	2	HAT
May 19	CSI	1 diff?	CST et al.
Late May	Churchville, <i>Pic.</i>	1	Greg Johnson

SNOWY EGRET

Apr. 30	Rockdale area, <i>Rich.</i>	up to 3	BID
May 12	<i>CBRM, Lun.</i>	1, 3	NSMC
May 13	CSI	1	CST
May 13	Brule, <i>Col.</i>	1	Obs?
May 14	Canso	1	TOK

LITTLE BLUE HERON

Apr. 29	CSI	1	CST
May 4-7	Oakland, <i>Lun.</i>	1	KEL, JAH
May 14	Canso	1	TOK
May 15	Miners Marsh, <i>Kings</i>	1	RBS
May 17-29	CSI	1	JON, SAN et al.

TRICOLORED HERON

Apr. 29	CSI	2	JON et al.
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CATTLE EGRET

Apr. 2	Hartlen Point, <i>HRM</i>	1	fide DAC
Apr. 26	Terence Bay, <i>HRM</i>	1	fide PKE

GREEN HERON

Apr. 29, May 5	CSI	1	CST, JAH
May 3-10	Sullivans Pond, <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC
May 2-4	Brier I.	1	fide ELM

Black-crowned Night-Heron

Apr. 7	CSI	1	JON, SAN
May 28	CSI	1	RAH
May 28	BPI	3	CLD et al.

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON

May 23 -June 1	Brier I.	1	CAH et al.
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Two much-enjoyed herons this spring were an elegant adult LITTLE BLUE HERON at Miners Marsh, Kentville (here May 16, dealing with an itchy chin?), and a tame and somewhat comical GREEN HERON hanging around Sullivans Pond in Dartmouth (here May 3). [Photos: left, Richard Stern; right, David Currie]

Diurnal Raptors

By Ian McLaren

Raptors were well reported this spring, especially on eBird. TURKEY VULTURES continue to thrive, with the usual numbers on Brier I., but are also increasing in the Annapolis Valley and w. *Cumberland*. An interesting report on this vulture came from Tracy MacDonald, who was kayaking May 27 on Allains River, *Ann.*, and observed an apparent

“nesting pair in a thicket along the cliff or embankment. One stretched out [its] . . . wings while the other hunkered down in the tall grass. But eventually they both rose to the air and awaited my departure before returning.”

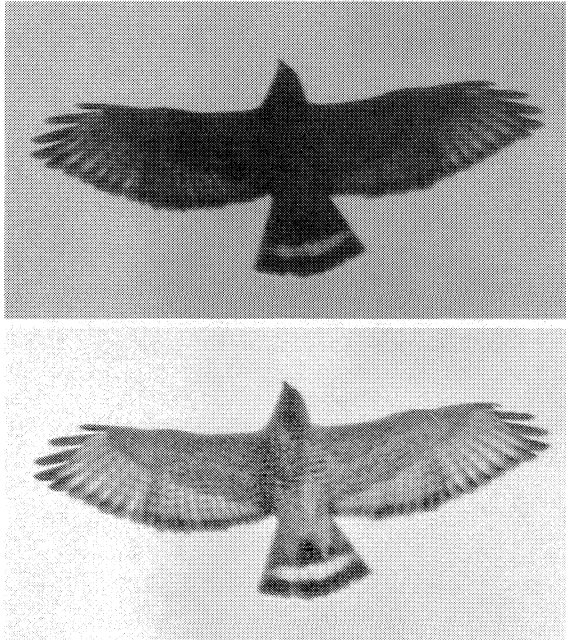
Although short of proof, the report is highly suggestive; who’s going to be first to fully confirm them nesting? The **BLACK VULTURE** that arrived during February at RFL’s carrion feeder in woodsy *Antigonish* stayed briefly into March. Could those that appeared a bit later several times over *HRM* have been the same individual?

Despite declining NSMC effort (no. of observers, hours in field, and total distances walked or driven – see p. 36) over the last three seasons, this year’s NSMC total for OSPREY was the largest yet, possibly reflecting slightly earlier migration or settling on nesting territories. Totals for the equally conspicuous but largely resident BALD EAGLE have been successively lower in the past three years, perhaps did reflecting effort. M.L. Whitehorne reported that on Mar. 22, a NORTHERN GOSHAWK “caught, fought, subdued and was feeding on a crow in the back yard” and that, understandably “other crows set up a fierce racket”. Few others were noted.

The other NSMC hawks, except possibly NORTHERN HARRIER and RED-TAILED HAWK, which roughly reflected effort, were in general too few to offer meaningful trends. A BROAD-WINGED HAWK was photographed Apr. 28 (by RIW) consuming N. Flicker – a most unusual catch for this small buteo. Another May 23 near Prospect, *HRM* (BLM, JED) was carrying a more usual prey, a small snake. One of the two RED-SHOULDERED HAWKS reported (but without exact location) in the last issue was last seen in the vicinity of a possible nest site.

The report of a **GOLDEN EAGLE** seen a week earlier in the Valley, typically, was not accompanied by a description. Much more exciting was the young one photographed near Amherst a week later – only our second thus confirmed, despite some concern about its possible wild status (see photo and caption, below).

Rather few falcons, large or small, were reported.



The very instructive photo at left of an overhead BROAD-WINGED HAWK was obtained Apr. 20 at Hammonds Plains, HRM. The original (colour) image seemed to indicate a dark morph, very rare in the East. However, brightening the image (below) brings out the characteristic barring of a typical adult; a true dark morph is uniformly blackish, without underlying bars on the body and underwing coverts. This illustrates the importance of adjusting for the brightness of the sky when photographing (or when watching) birds overhead. Nonetheless, the brightened colour image of this bird shows no hint of brown or rufous, so it may have an extra dose of black pigment, or a shortage of brown and red ones (phaeomelanins), [Photo Ian Marshall]

Turkey Vulture

Through season	Bridgetown area, Ann.	up to 14	MCR
Mar. 19	Annapolis Royal	6	G. Saunders
Mar. 18, 30	Lunenburg	2	GEL
Mar. 22	Halifax	2	Chris Kennedy
Mar. 22	Near Middleton, Ann.	2	RBS
Mar. 23	Chester	4	Andrew Breen
Mar. 24	Shelburne	1	JAH
Apr. 5	Yarmouth	3	J. Pothier
Apr. 7	Bridgetown, Ann.	1	JAH, DAW
Apr. 7 n. of Advocate, Cum.		4 "often" there	KFS
Apr. 7, 27	Brier I.	2, 8	ELM
Apr. 8	Beaver Bank, HRM	1	GMU
Apr. 14	Pleasant R., Queens	1	JAH
May 7	Margaretsville, Ann.	1	JAH
May 11, 19-20	Brier I.	5, 2	ELM
May 17	Cambridge Sta., Kings	1	Larry Bogan
May 18	W, Adocate, Cum.	8	BLM
May 19	Cape D'Or, Cum.	1	BLM
May 24	Prospect area, HRM	2	BLM, JED

BLACK VULTURE

To Mar. 12	Fairmont, Ant.	1	RFL
Mar. 18	Burnside, HRM	1	DGA
Mar. 19	PPP, Halifax	1	S. Doane
Apr. 12	Tantallon, HRM	1	AZV

Osprey

Mar. 15	Mount 9-mi. R. 2 perched, E. Hants	n.d.	Terry Chubbs
Apr. 6	Salt March Tr., HRM	1	MZE
Apr. 10	5 locs. Lun., HRM	6 indivs.	eBird
Apr. 11-May 31	Widely	119 indivs.	all eBird

Bald Eagle

Mar.-May	Widely	430+ indivs.	eBird + 14 obs.
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Northern Harrier

Mar. 5	Oler Marm Marsh, Lun.	1	KEL
Mar. 31	Ketch Hbr., HRM	1	N. Dowd
Apr.-May	Inv. to Yar.	30 +	eBird + 3 obs.

Sharp-shinned Hawk

Mar. 1-May 20	Widely	10+ indivs.	eBird + 2 obs.
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Northern Goshawk

Mar. 10	Kings	1	fide JAH
Mar. 22	Lr. Sackville, HRM	1 M.	Whitehorne
Mar. 17-May 7	Front-Centre Rd., Lun.	1 indiv.?	KEL

RED-SHOULDERED HAWK

Mar. 30, 31	Lun.	1	JAH
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Broad-winged Hawk

Apr. 11	Grand Pré, Kings	1	N. Dowd
Apr. 21	Bayers L., HRM	1	RBS
Apr. 21	Maryvale, Ant.	1	BRS
Apr. 28	nr. Black R. L., Kings	1 ph.	RIW
May 23	Prospect area, HRM	1	BLM, JED
18 Apr. 20 May	Pic. to Shel.	12 indivs.	eBird

Red-tailed Hawk

Mar. 3-May 27	Ant. to Yar.	44 rept, 52 indivs.	eBird +
Apr. 1-7	Kings	3 on nests	JWW, RBS

Rough-legged Hawk

Mar. 3	near Windsor.	1	Chris Majka
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GOLDEN EAGLE

Mar. 10	Highway 101, Ann. Valley	1 n.d.	fide JWW
Mar. 18	Nr. Upper Nappan, Cum.	1 ph.	Shawn Miner

American Kestrel

Mar. 17	W. Berlin, Queens	1 f.	ELM
Apr. 13	Wallace, Cum.	1	ROH
Apr. 15	Gaspereau Valley, Kings	1	Catherine Craig
Apr. 19-May 19	Pic. to Brier I	12 indivs.	eBird + 2 obs.
Mid-May	Arlington, Kings	pr. inspected nest box	JED

Merlin

Mar 25-May 29	Pic. to Brier I., BPI	14 indivs.	eBird+5 obs.
Apr. 1	Miners Marsh, Kingston	1 catches bat	B.&W. Naylor
early Apr.	Hantsport	"noisy pair" nesting	JOB
Apr. 11	Wolfville	pr. on territory.	JWW

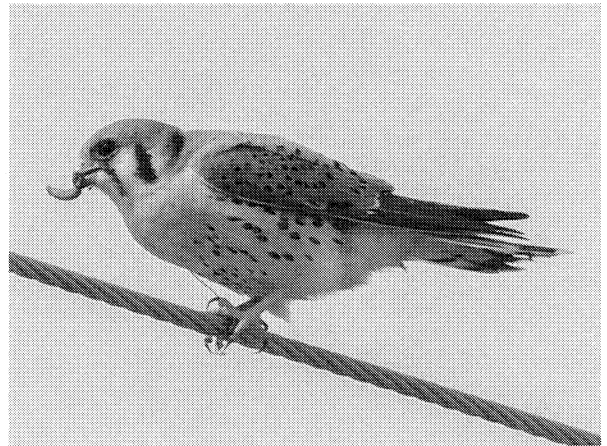
Peregrine Falcon

March-May	Col. To Shel.	4 indivs.	eBird
Mar. 7	Pt. Williams, Kings	1	PMA
Apr. 15	Beaverbank, HRM	1	GMU
May 13	Brier I.	1	ELM
May 18	W. Advocate, Cum.	1	BLM



There are a few 19th century specimens and have been over 50 reports of GOLDEN EAGLE sightings in the province. However, almost no reports have included detailed descriptions (and note the above photo of a Broad-winged Hawk as a warning about all-dark eagles overhead), and only one photograph has been published (1983, *Nova Scotia Birds* 35[2], p. 6). This photo of a year-old eagle, photographed May 18 south of Amherst, thus supplies a first, totally convincing photo record for many years. But note the curious and clearly unnatural rectangle (seeming very pale blue in the original) over its uppertail coverts. An attempt to trace it through known marking programs for this species was unsuccessful. Are we left with the nagging thought that it might signal prior captivity? [Photo Shawn Miner]

The AMERICAN KESTREL (right) is surely the most beautifully patterned of our raptors, especially in full-colour photos. This image illustrates another endearing feature: its frequent choice of insects, some noxious, as prey. This one appears to have tackled a larva whose identity, even in this razor-sharp photo, was debated on-line. [Photo Paul Evans]



Rails through Cranes

By Ulli Höger

‘Vogel’ made it! The COMMON GALLINULE that spent all winter on Red Bridge Pond in Dartmouth survived, likely due to food supplied on a regular basis by its loyal fan club. It eventually disappeared, but no one knows if it took off for good or just turned to a more secretive lifestyle in the local reeds. I am curious to find out if it will reappear later in the year for another winter season in Nova Scotia on a diet of chopped greens and salmon.

Besides SORA, no other rails were reported through the usual channels (NatureNS, NS-RBA, NSBS website, by mail), but the NSMC (see p. 36) had sightings (or hearings) in *Pictou* of our only two VIRGINIA RAILS and almost half the season’s SORAs. Following the SANDHILL CRANES that were reported during the past winter season, our spring sightings of this species are not really surprising.

Sora

Apr. 26	Big I., <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM
Starting	May 2 Miners Marsh, <i>Kings</i>	Several	var. obs.
May 9	Dagger Woods, <i>Ant.</i>	Several	RFL
May 18	Brookfield,	4	BLM

COMMON GALLINULE Red Bridge Pond, Dartmouth

Last seen Apr. 12 GAM

SANDHILL CRANE

Apr. 3	Bellisle Marsh, <i>Ann.</i>	1	<i>fide</i> KEL
May	Villagedale, <i>Shel.</i>	1	JAH

Shorebirds

By Susann Myers

Only small numbers of wintering shorebirds lingered into spring, despite a mild winter. The first migrants of most species returned a few days earlier than average, however, with a couple of very early arrivals. The season's shorebirds were well reported, with good numbers but few rarities.

In total, 577 shorebirds of 13 species were found on the May 12 NSMC (see p. 36), well below the 10-year averages of 1017 individual shorebirds and 18 species. Numbers this low have not been reported since 1994, one of the earliest years of this Spring Count. Comparisons are difficult to make, however, since participation in the count was lower this year, particularly in *Shelburne* County, where some of the largest shorebird numbers are expected.

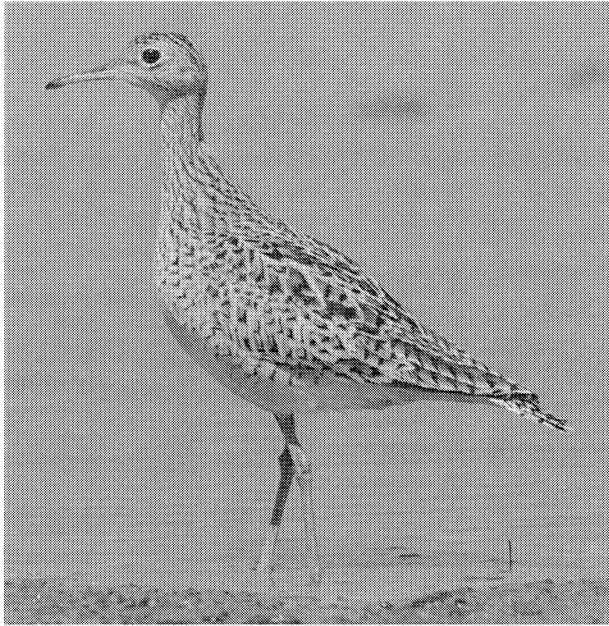
BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS were seen in unusually high numbers this season, thanks in part to counts by Rick Whitman in the Grand Pré area. As usual, very few AMERICAN-GOLDEN PLOVERS dropped into the province on spring migration. A record-early SEMIPALMATED PLOVER was photographed April 2 at Trenton, beating the previous record by four days. The first PIPING PLOVER March 19 was two weeks earlier than average, and provided the earliest record except for an abnormally early bird found in *Richmond County* March 7, 1982. Although only four Piping Plovers were found on the NSMC, good numbers were reported generally at the southwest end of the province this spring. In *Shelburne* alone, 36 were reported May 8 to 31, including a remarkable 15 adults at Crow Neck Beach, and 5 adults and four juveniles at Red Head Beach May 28. Reports on eBird from Avery Nagy-MacArthur, an active volunteer in Bird Studies Canada's Piping Plover monitoring program, provided the majority of these figures.

The first KILLDEER was spotted only two days earlier than average, March 10 at Cherry Hill, but by April 21 a nest in another *Lunenburg* location already held four eggs. AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHERS were recorded in good numbers, thanks in part to a delightful account from Betty June Smith. She and SIS walked Cape Sable May 21 with family members, after being landed by Leslie Smith at the north end of the Cape ("The Radcliffe"). Along with many other shorebirds there, they spotted one Oystercatcher, found a nest of one with a single egg at Steven's Point, and saw three more Oystercatchers at South Point, before being picked up again by boat.

SPOTTED SANDPIPERS arrived on schedule and in good numbers; the NSMC total was 50% above the 10-year average. JOK's account of night calls showed their peak in migration occurring the week of May 13-20. The first GREATER YELLOWLEGS was noted four days later than average, and the NSMC total was well below average. Other numbers reported for the season were normal, however, and Gillian and Jim Elliott noted that three breeding pairs were on their usual territories May 8 near Sheet Harbour. The first WILLET of the season was spotted 12 days earlier than the April 3 average, but numbers thereafter were slow to build, particularly given this year's unusually mild spring weather. LESSER YELLOWLEGS passed through the province in only very small numbers, as usual.

An UPLAND SANDPIPER at Daniel's Head, CSI was a nice find for CST April 30 (and see photo below). This species has been less regular in spring recently than in the 1990s; this is only the fourth spring record in the past 10 years.

Migrant RUDDY TURNSTONES and SANDERLINGS were recorded in higher numbers this spring than in recent years, a welcome change from their steady decline, while RED KNOT numbers remained low. SEMIPALMATED, LEAST and WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPERS moved through in their usual small spring numbers. PURPLE SANDPIPER numbers were also low, except for a group of 42 at Crescent Beach May 3, which JSC noted was an unprecedented late date for this location. Eight of the DUNLIN wintering at Crescent Beach remained in March, and perhaps the same eight were there in bright breeding plumage April 16. Dunlin numbers were modest in most of the province, but they gathered at CSI in late April in good-sized flocks not reported since 2006.



Surely the UPLAND SANDPIPER, this one a rare spring find in late April (here May 3) at Daniels Head, CSI, is our most elegant shorebird. [Photo Ronnie D'Entremont]



Images of breeding-plumage RUDDY TURNSTONE can be used to identify subspecies that could occur here. This one, May 23 at Grand Pré, Kings, has limited black on back and crown and is quite clearly the expected subspecies *morinella*. Birders (and photographers) might be alert to the possibility of Old-World *interpres*, which also breeds in northernmost Nunavut, but normally migrates to Europe. It has more extensive black on back and crown. [Photo Rick Whitman]

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHERS showed the same pattern; they were reported in unusually good numbers not seen since 2006, with the largest flock by far at CSI. The **LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER** that wintered at CSI lingered into March to provide only the fifth spring record for NS since 2004, all from the South Shore.

The first WILSON'S SNIPE of the season was found six days earlier than average, and numbers reported through the spring were average, including on the NSMC. AMERICAN WOODCOCK also arrived slightly ahead of schedule and were found in good numbers, particularly during owl surveys in Pictou County. The large woodcock NSMC, nominally by day, surely must have included some heard in evening.

A WILSON'S PHALAROPE, the final rarity of the season, was reported like the first by CST on CSI. These phalaropes are uncommon fall migrants in NS, but are rare in spring; this is only about the 15th found in the province in that season.

NSMC totals are not tabulated, but counts from some counties are noted.

shorebird species

May 13	The Hawk, CSI	400	JON
May 21	Cape Sable, Shel.	100+	BJS, SIS
Black-bellied Plover			
Mar 10	Cherry Hill, Lun	1	SJF
Apr 19	Martinique Bch., HRM	1	HAT
Apr 25	The Hawk, CSI	47	JON, SAN
May 1	N. Grand Pré, Kings	1	RIW
May 2, 6	Crescent Bch., Lun.	13, 20	JSC
May 8	The Hawk, CSI	79	JON, SAN
May 12	Lun., Col.	7, 12	NSMC
May 18, 27	Cherry Hill, Lun.	5, 18	SJF
May 20-29	5 mainland locs.	23 total	var. obs.

May 20, 23	N. Grand Pré, Kings	5, 24	RIW
May 20, 31	Horton Landing, Kings	5, 53	RIW
May 21	Cape Sable, Shel.	67+	BJS, SIS
May 25	Sand Pt., Col.	20	ELM, ALM
May 27	BPI	9	CLD et al.
American-Golden Plover			
May 18	Cherry Hill, Lun.	1, Basic	SJF
May 20	N. Grand Pré, Kings	1, ph.	RIW
Semipalmated Plover			
Apr 2	Trenton, Pict.	1, ph.	KJM, ELM, ALM, CHK
May 20	Cole Hbr. Trail, HRM	1	MZE
May 21, 30	N. Grand Pré., Shel.	1	A. Nagy-MacArthur

Piping Plover

Mar 19	Daniels Head, CSI	1	JON, SAN
Mar 24; Apr 3	Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	1	SJF
Mar 24	Crow Neck Bch., <i>Shel.</i>	2	JAH, NSBS field trip
Apr 7, 29	Crow Neck Bch., <i>Shel.</i>	6	BJS, SIS
Apr 9; May	Lockeport, <i>Shel.</i>	1	DJC
Apr 15	Conrad Bch., <i>HRM</i>	1	DGA et al.
Apr 19	Martinique Bch., <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT
May 5	CSI	18	JAH
May 8-31	6 locations, <i>Shel.</i>	27 ad.	var. obs.
May 20	E. Port Medway, <i>Queens</i>	2	JAH
May 27	Cherry Hill, <i>Lun.</i>	7	SJF
May 28	Red Head Bch., <i>Shel.</i>	5 ad., 4 juv.	A. Nagy-MacArthur

Killdeer

Mar 10	Cherry Hill, <i>Lun.</i>	1	SJF
Mar 16-20	4 mainland locations	5 total	var. obs.
Apr	4 mainland locations	6 total	var. obs.
Apr 21	Union Square, <i>Lun.</i>	nest, 4 eggs	<i>fide</i> JAH
May	6 mainland locations	8 total	var. obs.
May 25	Sand Pt., <i>Col.</i>	4 ad., juv.	ELM, AHM

American Oystercatcher

Apr 6	CSI	2	RDE, TCD
Apr 25	The Hawk, CSI	4	JON, SAN
May 21	Cape Sable, <i>Shel.</i>	4, + nest with 1 egg	BJS, SIS

Spotted Sandpiper

May 3	nr. Little River L., <i>Anna.</i>	1	RIW
May 6-13	night migrants, <i>Ant.</i>	5	JOK
May 8	<i>Pict.</i>	1	KJM
May 10	Miner's Marsh, Kentville	2	JLC
May 13-20	night migrants, <i>Ant.</i>	26	JOK
May 20-27	night migrants, <i>Ant.</i>	16	JOK
May 20	Western Head, <i>Queens</i>	2	JAH, DPO
May 27	BPI	2	CLD <i>et al.</i>

Greater Yellowlegs

Apr 15	Cape Sable, <i>Shel.</i>	1	RDE
Apr 16	Garden Lots, <i>Lun.</i>	1	KEL
Apr 19-26	6 mainland locations	9 total	var. obs.
Apr 26	Pond Cove, Brier I.	5, new	ELM
Apr 29	St. Peter's, <i>Rich.</i>	2	BID
May 1-13	11 mainland locations	27 total	var. obs.
May 2	Cole Hbr. Trail, <i>HRM</i>	12+	RSM
May 8	Sheet Hbr. area, <i>HRM</i>	3 prs.	JED & J. Elliott

Willet

Apr 3	Woods Hbr., <i>Shel.</i>	2	DOC
Apr 19	Crescent Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	1	JSC
Apr 21	Lockeport	2	DJC
Apr 22	3 Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1	SEM
Apr 25	Port Clyde, <i>Shel.</i>	lots	SAH
Apr 28-29	6 mainland locations	12 total	var. obs.
May 2	Rose Bay, <i>Lun.</i>	15+	AHM
May 5	CSI	11	JAH
May 18, 27	Cherry Hill, <i>Lun.</i>	7, 11	SJF

Lesser Yellowlegs

May 7	E. Passage/Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC
May 12	<i>Cum., Lun.</i>	6, 1	NSMC

UPLAND SANDPIPER

Apr 30-May 5	Daniels Head, CSI	1	CST, RDE, JAH
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Whimbrel

May 18	Crescent Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	1	JSC
May 29	Daniels Head, CSI	2	RAH

Ruddy Turnstone

May 5, 8	The Hawk, CSI	1	JAH; JON, SAN
May 12	<i>Rich.</i>	2	NSMC
May 21	Cape Sable, <i>Shel.</i>	56	BJS, SIS
May 22, 31	N. Grand Pré, <i>Kings</i>	2, 6	RIW
May 27	BPI	2	CLD <i>et al.</i>

Red Knot

May 8	The Hawk, CSI	8	JON, SAN
May 10, 17	Cherry Hill, <i>Lun.</i>	3	SJF

May 12	<i>Col.</i>	1	NSMC
May 21	Cape Sable, <i>Shel.</i>	7	BJS, SIS
May 28	Daniels Head, CSI	2	RAH

Sanderling

Mar 4, 26	Crescent Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	22, 27	JSC
Mar 24	Crow Neck Bch., <i>Shel.</i>	1	JAH, NSBS
Mar 25	Martinique Bch., <i>HRM</i>	35+	DOU
Apr 6	Kingsburg Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	12	KEL
Apr 6	Martinique Bch., <i>HRM</i>	18	IAM, SEM
Apr 16	Crescent Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	17	JSC
May 8	The Hawk, CSI	21	JON, SAN
May 12	<i>Lun. only</i>	2	NSMC
May 14	Martinique Bch., <i>HRM</i>	30+	DOU
May 21	Cape Sable, <i>Shel.</i>	21	BJS, SIS
May 30	Red Head Bch., <i>Shel.</i>	2	A. Nagy-MacArthur

peep species

May 8, 28	Grand Pré, <i>Kings</i>	10, 5	RIW
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Semipalmated Sandpiper

May 21, 30	N. Grand Pré, <i>Kings</i>	1, 17	RIW
May 28	Crow Neck Bch., <i>Shel.</i>	present	A. Nagy-MacArthur

Least Sandpiper

May 8	E. Passage/Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC
May 11	Wolfville Hbr., <i>Kings</i>	6	RIW
May 12	<i>Col. only</i>	1	NSMC

White-rumped Sandpiper

May 28	Red Head Bch., <i>Shel.</i>	1	A. Nagy-MacArthur
May 31	Crow Neck Bch., <i>Shel.</i>	1	A. Nagy-MacArthur

Purple Sandpiper

Mar	6 mainland locations	36 total	var. obs.
Apr	4 locations, widespread	26 total	var. obs.
May 3	Crescent Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	42	JSC

Dunlin

Mar 14	Crescent Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	8	JSC
Mar 25	N. Grand Pré, <i>Kings</i>	ca. 15	<i>fide</i> JWV
Mar 25	Martinique Bch., <i>HRM</i>	50+	DOU
Apr 5	N. Grand Pré, <i>Kings</i>	31	RIW
Apr. 25	The Hawk, CSI	250	JON, SAN
May 8	The Hawk, CSI	280	JON, SAN
May 12	<i>Lun. only</i>	7	NSMC

Short-billed Dowitcher

Apr 25	The Hawk, CSI	2	JON, SAN
May 1, 5	Lwr. Rose Bay, <i>Lun.</i>	4, 3	JAH, DAW; ELM
May 8, 13	The Hawk, CSI	5, 37	JON, SAN
May 10	Wolfville Hbr., <i>Kings</i>	1	RIW
May 14	Crescent Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	1	JSC
May 18, 27	Cherry Hill, <i>Lun.</i>	2, 4	SJF
May 20	N. Grand Pré, <i>Kings</i>	3	RIW

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER

Mar 11	Clark's Hbr., CSI	1	JON, SAN
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Wilson's Snipe

Mar 25	Goose Creek Marsh, <i>Shel.</i>	1	RDE
Mar 25, Apr 1	Westville, <i>Pic.</i>	2	RFE <i>et al.</i>
Apr 13-15	2 mainland locations	singles	var. obs.
Apr 20-May 4	3 owl surveys, <i>Pic.</i>	13 total	var. obs.
May 1-20	3 owl surveys, CBI	7 total	var. obs.
May 12	widely	54 by day, 28 by night	NSMC

American Woodcock

Mar 11, 12	Westville, <i>Pic.</i>	1, 5	RFE, KJM
Mar 22	Dingwall area, <i>Vic.</i>	2	FMC
Mar 23	Debert, <i>Col.</i>	1	M. Forman
Apr 6-17	3 owl surveys, mainland	singles	var. obs.
Apr 20-May 4	3 owl surveys, <i>Pic.</i>	26 total	var. obs.
May 1, 20	2 owl surveys, CBI	3 total	var. obs.
May 12	Most in <i>Col.</i> (day), <i>Pic.</i> (night)	34, 40	NSMC
May 19	Brier I.	1	ELM, AHM

WILSON'S PHALAROPE

May 19	The Hawk Guzzle, CSI	1	CST
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Gulls through Alcids

By Eric Mills

The only **LAUGHING GULL** of the season, an adult, greeted Bob and Wendy McDonald at Martinique Beach, *HRM*, during the Migration Count on May 12 – and it was not far from an Iceland Gull, certainly an unusual juxtaposition.

At least two **MEW GULLS**, a second year bird and an adult, both photographed, were found by Bernard Burke among the resting gulls on the Shannon Park fields adjacent to Tufts Cove, Dartmouth between the last week of February and the middle of March.

On April 8 an unusual first-winter Herring Gull, too distant to photograph, joined the melee of feeding gulls at high water in Pea Jack Cove on Brier Island. Its features included a general appearance somewhat like a miniature Great Black-backed Gull, sharply and cleanly patterned on mantle, coverts and scapulars, pale on the rump and tail base, with a sharply contrasting tail band, and with a bill about three-quarters black. These were consistent with **EUROPEAN HERRING GULL**, probably *Larus argentatus argentatus* of northern Europe, a taxon that many European birders consider a different species from the North American *L. a. smithsonianus*.

Glance Bay, which has featured a Herring Gull – Great Black-backed Gull hybrid in winter for several years, this year produced a Herring – Lesser Black-backed hybrid, found and photographed by the Murrants at Beacon St. dam in mid-April.

Pondering on plumage variation in ICELAND GULLS in a sizeable group at Hartlen's Point on April 10, Ian McLaren commented as follows. "Many of these appeared to have pure white primaries and some had pale bases to their bills, and this has been true of spring gatherings there in previous years. This is characteristic of 'true' Iceland Gull (the Greenland-nesting nominate subspecies [*Larus glaucooides glaucooides*], although some Nunavut colonies of 'Kumlien's' [*Larus glaucuoides kumlieni*] do include pure white-primaried individuals... However, the mantles of the gulls were all very white, suggesting there had been considerable sun-bleaching of any darkish marks during winter / spring, and some or many of the birds with pale bases to the bill may have been 2nd-cycle (2nd winter) birds, and those I looked at closely were not especially small or small-billed, like many 'true' Icelanders. ... There have been some pretty convincing 'true' Icelanders here, but it may only be safe to consider photos of individuals with small, pale-based bills and pure white primaries taken earlier in winter."

Only one **CASPIAN TERN** was reported this spring, an individual over the gravel-pit pond just south of Highway 104 at North River near Truro on May 29. The **COMMON TERN** found by Ken McKenna in Abercrombie, *Pic*, on April 28 was an exceptionally early arrival.

It was not an alcid winter, as the records below indicate. But by early May the resident species were evident on their colonies. Ron D'Entremont and Sharron Marlor went to the southern Tusket Islands, just north of Seal Island, on May 5. They noted 75 or more **ATLANTIC PUFFINS** on Round Island, at least 25 on Mud Island, and 100+ near Noddy Island, along with numbers of **BLACK GUILLEMOTS**. Puffins appear to be thriving in Southwestern Nova Scotia.

LAUGHING GULL

May 12 Martinique Bch., *HRM* 1 ad. RSM, WEM

Bonaparte's Gull

(including selected records from eBird)

Apr. 26 Blue Rocks, *Lun.* 5 KEL

May 4 Pt. Williams, *Kings* 1 RBS

May 12 mainly *Col.*, *Pic.* 4, 14 NSMC

May 26 Tatamagouche, *Col.* 2, 2nd-yr ELM et al.

Black-headed Gull

(including selected records from eBird)

Mar. 3 Antigonish 20 KJM

Mar. 22 Homeville, *CBRM* 3 CAM, ALM

Apr. 2 New Glasgow 1 ad. KJM et al.

Apr. 14 Crescent Bch., *Lun.* 1 ELM

May 1 Cole Hbr., *HRM* 2 DAC

May 12 *Rich* only 1 NSMC

MEW (COMMON) GULL

Feb 23- Mar 9 Shannon Pk., Dartmouth 1, 2nd-yr ph. BBU et al

Mar 9-19 Shannon Pk., Dartmouth 1 ad., ph. BBU, KEL

Ring-billed Gull

(including selected records from eBird)

Mar. 3 Antigonish 8 KJM

Mar. 8 E. Apple R., *Cum.* 6 KFS

Mar. 8 Windsor sewage ponds 58 John Robertson

Mar. 11 E. Passage, *HRM* 3 TEB

Mar. 13 Lr. Debert, *Col* 50 ROH

Mar. 15 New Glasgow 100 KJM

Mar. 17	Liverpool	6	ELM, AHM
Mar. 17	Big I., <i>Pic.</i>	4	KJM
Mar. 19	E. Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	30	KFS
Mar. 21	Durham, <i>Pic.</i>	80	KJM
Mar. 21-May 7	Birch Cove, Dartmouth	1-15	MZE
Mar. 25	Big I., <i>Pic.</i>	26	KJM
Mar. 31	Captains Pd., <i>Ant</i>	6	JOK
Apr. 2	Brownsville, <i>Pic.</i>	110	KJM
Apr. 2	Caribou I., <i>Pic.</i>	38	KJM
Apr. 7	Dartmouth	24	Lynn Karchewski
Apr. 7	Big I., <i>Pic.</i>	30	KJM
Apr. 14	Rose Bay, <i>Lun.</i>	4	JAH
Apr. 15	E. River, <i>Pic.</i>	70	KJM
Apr. 30	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	2	DAC
May 4	Kingsburg, <i>Lun.</i>	1, 2 nd -yr	ELM
May 4	Port Williams, <i>Kings</i>	3	RBS
May 12	mainly <i>Hants</i> , <i>Vic.</i>	15, 12	NSMC
May 15	Crescent Bch., Lockeport	1 ad.	DJC
May 26-27	Tatamagouche, <i>Col.</i>	2, 2 nd -yr	ELM et al.
May 26	Wallace R. NWMA	1, 2 nd -yr	ELM
Herring Gull			
Apr 6	Brier I. colonies	Hundreds	ELM



This piebald HERRING GULL was an oddity, Mar. 5 in Yarmouth. [Photo Ronnie D'Entremont]

(EUROPEAN) HERRING GULL

Apr 8 Pea Jack Cove, Brier I. 1, 1st-w. ELM

Lesser Black-backed Gull

Feb. 29 Bedford, *HRM* 1 Kevin Moore
 Mar. 9 Grand Passage, Brier I. 1 ad. *graellsii* ELM
 Mar. 26 Upper Canard, *Kings* 1 ad. DOU
 Mar. 30, Apr. 15 Beacon St., Glace Bay 1 ad. CAM, ALM
 Apr. 28 Waterside PP, *Pic.* 1 ad. KJM
 Apr. 28 Windsor sewage ponds 1 ad. RSM, SMB
 May 10 Caribou lighthouse, *Pic.* 1 ad. KJM

Herring x Lesser Black-backed Gull

Apr 15 Beacon St. dam, Glace Bay 1 CAM, ALM

Iceland Gull

(including selected records from eBird)

Mar. 1 Bedford, *HRM* 23 DOU
 Mar. 2 Margaree Hbr., *Inv.* 2 Patrick Wall
 Mar. 3 Antigonish 2 KJM
 Mar. 8 Bayview, *Pic.* 40 KJM
 Mar. 9 Brier I. 35+ ELM
 Mar. 10 Canso area, *Gufs.* 15 KJM

Mar. 3-Apr. 15	Pier C, Pictou	3-15	KJM
Mar. 10	Westport, Brier I.	1, 1 st -w.	ELM
Mar. 11	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	12	TBO
Mar. 16-Apr. 2	New Glasgow	1-30	KJM
Mar. 17	Liverpool	16	ELM, AHM
Mar. 31	Captains Pd., <i>Ant</i>	3	JOK
Until late Apr	Lockeport	Numerous	DJC
Apr. 2	Gull I. & light, <i>Pic.</i>	12	fide ELM
Apr. 4	Purdys Wharf, Halifax	80	DGA
Apr. 6	Brier I.	1, 2 nd -w	ELM
Apr 8	Pea Jack Cove, Brier I.	10, all ages	ELM, AHM
Apr. 10	Hartlen-Pt. area, <i>HRM</i>	135+	IAM
Apr. 14	Liverpool	9, 1 st -w.	ELM
Apr. 14	Crescent Bch., <i>Lun.</i>	1, 1 st -w.	ELM
Apr. 17	Sullivans Pd., Dartmouth	1 imm.	Jane Schlosberg
Apr. 28	Waterside PP, <i>Pic.</i>	2	KJM
Apr. 28	Windsor sewage ponds	1	RSM
May 4	Kingsburg, <i>Lun.</i>	1, 2 nd -w.	ELM
May 7	E. Passage, <i>HRM</i>	10	DAC
May 12	mainly <i>CBRM</i> , with . .	17	NSMC

Glaucous Gull

(including selected records from eBird)

Dec-April 15	Pier C, Pictou	1 imm.	KJM et al.
Mar. 2	Margaree Hbr., <i>Inv</i>	1	Patrick Wall
Mar. 8	Bayview, <i>Pic.</i>	2	KJM
Mar. 10	Westport, Brier I.	1, 1 st -w.	ELM
Mar. 10	Canso	1	KJM
Mar. 13	Duncans Reef, <i>HRM</i>	2, 2 nd -w.	HAT
Mar. 20	Liverpool hbr.	1	ROH
Mar. 21-23	Upper Canard, <i>Kings</i>	1, 1 st -w., ph.	ELM, RBS
Apr. 2	New Glasgow	1 ad.	KJM et al.
Apr. 4	Birch Cove, Dartmouth	1	Brian Sabourin
Apr. 15	Beacon St. dam, Glace Bay	1	CAM, ALM
May 5	Arisaig, <i>Ant.</i>	1	JOK
May 10	Port Williams, <i>Kings</i>	1, 1 st -w.	RBS
May 12	<i>CBRM</i> only	1	NSMC
Great Black-backed Gull			
May 12	mainly <i>Ant.</i> , <i>Inv.</i>	202, 968	NSMC



This COMMON TERN May 3 at Sullivans Pond, Dartmouth, was only going about its business, but offered a striking image. [Photo Rick Whitman]

Caspian Tern

May 29	North River, <i>Col.</i>	1	STV
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Common Tern

(including selected records from eBird)

Apr. 28	Abercrombie, <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM
May 12	mainly <i>Col.</i> , <i>Pic.</i> , <i>Queens</i>	30, 37, 14	NSMC
May 17	Mahone Bay, <i>Lun.</i>	2	KEL
May 18	Sandhills PP, <i>Shel.</i>	20	Avery Nagy-MacArthur
May 23-29	Louis Hd., <i>Shel.</i>	10-40	Avery Nagy-MacArthur
May 25-27	Sand Point, <i>Col.</i>	150 on colony	ELM, AHM
May 26	BPI	6	CLD et al.

Arctic Tern

May 12	<i>Ant.</i> , <i>Col.</i>	1, 3	NSMC
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Dovekie

Mar. 13	Sober I., <i>HRM</i>	1	KJM
Apr. 23	CSI	1 dead	Linda Symonds
May 21	Sambro Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1	Stephen Manuel

Thick-billed Murre

Mar. 9	Northern Pt., Brier I.	5	ELM
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Razorbill

May 12	entirely Northern Pt., Brier I.	25	ELM, IAM
19, 20	Northern Pt., Brier I.	2, 1	ELM

Black Guillemot

Mar. 10	Grand Passage, Brier I.	6	ELM
Mar. 10	Canso, <i>Guys.</i>	15	KJM
Mar. 13-24	Widely, mainland. 9 repts.	27 indivs.	7 obs.
Apr. 7	Pea Jack Cove, Brier I.	1	ELM, AHM
Apr. 10	Purcells Cove, <i>HRM</i>	5	TEB
Apr. 27	Grand Passage, Brier I.	1	ELM, AHM
Apr. 29	Canada Creek, <i>Kings</i>	4	TBO
May 12	All in <i>Digby, Kings, Rich.</i>	4, 3, 2	NSMC
May 19	Grand Passage, Brier I.	3	ELM
May 27	BPI	3	CLD et al.
May 28,31	Crows Neck Bch., <i>Shel.</i>	2	Avery Nagy-MacArthur

Atlantic Puffin

Apr 30			Green I., off CSI
			ca.30 CST
May 5	S. Tusket I., area, <i>Yar.</i>	200+	RDE et al.

Pigeons through Woodpeckers**By Chris Field**

The spring season was quiet in terms of rarities in this group. The only one reported was a **WHITE-WINGED DOVE** seen by Bev and George Crowell in their backyard in Glace Bay during the migration count. Richard Stern reported a WHIP-POOR-WILL on Brier Island on May 18 (see photo), the first migrant of this species for a number of years. Some migrants showed up earlier than usual, such as CHIMNEY SWIFT, RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD and YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER (see tabulations below). RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER continues to be well reported across the province, with many more this spring than last year. By contrast, here were only two reports of RED-HEADED WOODPECKER, probably reflecting their wider decline.

An apparent "Red-shafted" NORTHERN FLICKER was spotted by Ryan Harvey at Jerry Lawrence PP. On May 18 he wrote:

"I spotted this bird a few days [ago] . . . The red [underwings] caught my eye when it took off from the ground the first time . . . I went back and found it in roughly the same area I spotted it a few days earlier. . . at the main parking area . . . This time I followed it in the trees and got to watch it for a few minutes before we continued on to the fishing area. [My] wife watched it as well."

There have been two previous sight records in Nova Scotia of individuals this western subspecies group. However, those sightings and this one did not include information (e.g. lack of red on nape, red moustache) that might exclude the possibility of an intergrade from the region of overlap with the eastern subspecies.

In looking at the reports from the NSMC, there appear to be a few trends over the past 10 years. MOURNING DOVE, NORTHERN FLICKER and DOWNY WOODPECKER were all well below the 10 year mean. YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER, CHIMNEY SWIFT, and RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD were all above their 10 year mean. Other species were close to their means.

The CHIMNEY SWIFT numbers were quite similar to those from 2011. It's encouraging to note reports from two new sites this year, Kentville and Mabou, probably due to the efforts of the Swift Watch Program. My thanks to Jim Wolford for his careful tabulation of the swift sightings.

The NSMC totals for 2010-2012 are given elsewhere (p.36), but some county totals are also tabulated below.

Rock Pigeon

Mar.-May	province-wide, 90 locs.	530 indivs.	eBird
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WHITE-WINGED DOVE

May 12	Glance Bay	1	NSMC
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Mourning Dove

Mar.-May	province-wide, 174 locs.	724 indivs.	eBird
May 12	Not Vic., and max <i>Lun.</i> With	229	NSMC

Great Horned Owl

Mar 22	E. Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1	KFS
Apr 7	Church St, <i>Kings</i>	2	RBS, ELS
Apr 7, May 12	Brier I.	1, 1	ELM, AHM, IAM
Apr 14	Sunny Brae, <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM
May 12	<i>Digby</i> to <i>CBRM</i>	4 day., 4 night	NSMC
May 22-27	BPI	1-2 (nest)	CLD et al.

Snowy Owl			
Mar 6	Bacarro Pt., <i>Shel.</i>	3	JON, SAN
Mar 11, 23	CSI, <i>Shel.</i>	1, 1	JON, CST
Mar 30	Bacarro, <i>Shel.</i>	1	DPO, SJF
Barred Owl			
Mar-May	15 locs, 5 counties	21 indivs	eBird
May 12	7 counties, max. <i>Kings</i> , with	35	NSMC
Northern Saw-whet Owl			
Apr. 17	Benjamin Mills, <i>Hants</i>	3	RBS
May 12	<i>Col.</i> , <i>Hants</i> only	3, 2	NSMC
May 13	Doctors Brk., <i>Ant.</i>	1	JOK
Whip-poor-will			
May 19	Brier I.	1	RBS



A WHIP-POOR-WILL, May 19 on Brier I., was a photo opportunity., [Photo Richard Stern]

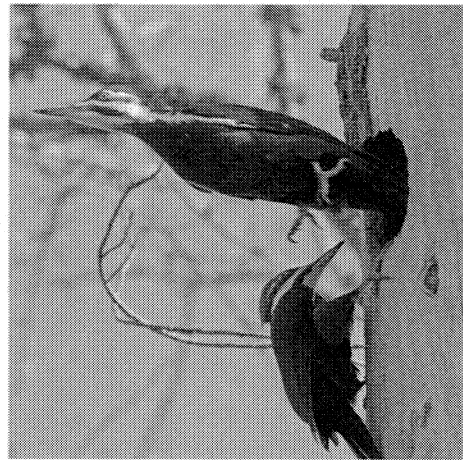
Common Nighthawk			
May	Tobeatic Res. Inst., <i>Queens</i>	1	Brad Toms
May 20	<i>Queens</i>	6	JAH
May 21-31	<i>Kings, Lun., Queens</i>	6 indivs.	eBird
Chimney Swift			
Apr 25	CSI	3	JON, SAN
Apr 28	Halifax	1 fresh dead (ph.)	Bob Farmer
May	<i>Col., Cum., Kings., Queens</i>	6 locs. ca. 125 indivs	eBird
May 9-31	Upper Falmouth, <i>Hants</i>	up to 101	C. Rutledge
May 10-31	RTNC, <i>Hants</i>	up to 105	JWW
May 11-31	New Glasgow	up to 405	KJM, DOU
May 11-31	Middleton, <i>Kings</i>	up to 213	CLD
May 12	mostly <i>King, Pic.</i>	106, 120	NSMC
May 13-31	McGowan L., <i>Queens</i>	up to 98	Brad Toms
May 17	Mines Rd., <i>Kings</i>	10+	Ryan Harvey
May 20-23	St. Bernards, <i>Digby</i>	up to 18	CLD, P. Potter
May 22-24	Kentville	up to 4	N. Munday, K. McKee
May 23	Oxford, <i>Cumb</i>	up to 9	A. Manthorne
May 24	Bible Hill, <i>Col.</i>	3	LHA
May 24	Mabou, <i>Inv</i>	11	K. Potter, et al.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird			
Apr 12	Advocate Hbr., Spencers I, <i>Cum.</i>	2	JAN
May 8	Tremont, <i>Kings</i>	1	SLH
May 10-31	7 counties	60 reports	eBird
May 12	15 counties, max. <i>Kings</i> , with	54	NSMC
Belted Kingfisher			
Mar-May	11 counties	67 indivs.	ebird
May 12	15 counties. max. <i>Pic., Rich.</i>	28, 24	NSMC
Red-headed Woodpecker			
Apr 3	Shubenacadie, <i>HRM</i>	1	D. McGougan
Apr 8	Pleasant R., <i>Queens</i>	1	JAH, DAW
Red-bellied Woodpecker			
Mar-May	<i>Ant., Col., Guys., HRM, Queens</i>	1, 1, 3, 4, 3	eBird
March	Portuguese Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT
Apr 22	Pt. Bickerton, <i>Guys.</i>	3	A Manthorne
May 6	Jollimore, <i>HRM</i>	1	BLM
May 12	<i>Inv., Lun., Kings</i>	2 each	NSMC

May 20	Brier I.	1	ELM
May 27	Lr. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	1	DGA
May 28	Central Halifax	1	PLC
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker			
Apr 11	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1	KFS
Apr 26-May	6 counties	35 reports	eBird
May 12	9 counties, max. <i>Pic.</i> with	58	NSMC
Downy Woodpecker			
Mar-May	11 counties	242	eBird



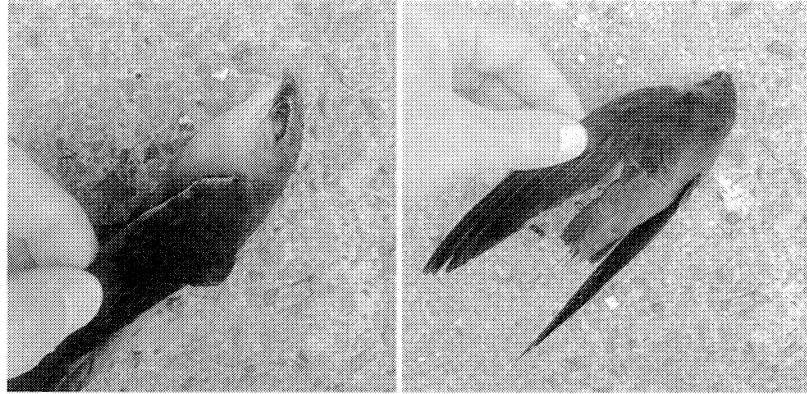
This beautiful all-white DOWNY WOODPECKER was a treat May 5 at Mt. Denson, W. Hants. [Photo Barry Sabean]

Hairy Woodpecker			
Mar-May	13 counties	164	ebird
Black-backed Woodpecker			
Mar-May	<i>Cum., HRM, Kings</i>	1 each	ebird
Mar 23	Mt. Uniacke, <i>Hants</i>	1	HAT
May 12	<i>Col., HRM,</i>	1 each	NSMC



When launching yourself into the air, it helps to deploy your wings [Photo Paul Murray]

Northern Flicker			
Mar-May	13 counties	205	eBird
May 12	17 counties	max. <i>Kings</i> 136	NSMC
Mar-May	11 counties	62	ebird
Pileated Woodpecker			
Mar-May	11 counties	62	ebird
Mar 11, 25	Roberts I., <i>Yar</i>	2	RDE
May 12	11 counties max. <i>Kings</i> with	13	NSMC



This early swift, found dead Apr. 28 on a Halifax sidewalk, has a very pale throat, putting one in mind of VAUX'S SWIFT. Web photos of CHIMNEY SWIFT include some have throats as pale as on that western species, but Vaux's has a much paler rump. Close up, this one's upper tail coverts reach the base of spines of the tail; in Vaux's, they fall short of this. Nonetheless, out-of-season swifts are always worth close attention and good photos. [Photo Bob Farmer]

Flycatchers through Thrushes

By Ian McLaren

Judy Tufts correctly thought that the May 26 timing of her EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE was "about average", although a couple were slightly earlier. Perhaps alarmingly, **no** OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHERS were noted, but *Empidonax* species arrived on schedule and in good numbers. The probable **WILLOW FLYCATCHER** found May 28 by RBS responded to a recorded Willow song, but not to those of LEAST or ALDER. EASTERN PHEOBE arrived on time and seemed exceptionally numerous this spring, with several confirmed or apparent nestings.



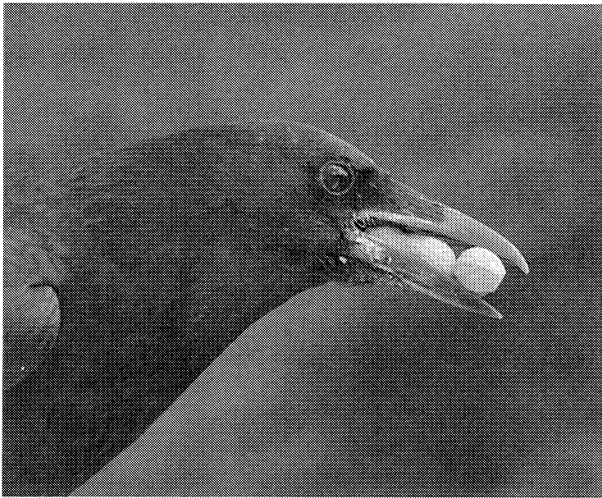
This EASTERN PHEOBE, its bill laden with nesting material on 25 April at Black River L., Kings, was one of several found nesting this spring. [Photo Rick Whitman]



The colour original of this EASTERN KINGBIRD, May 20 at Hartlen Pt., HRM, reveals a strong wash of yellow from breast to crissum. Is this a vestige of past hybridization or expression of an ancestral trait? [Photo Dennis Garratt]

The pair of GREAT-CRESTED FLYCATCHERS in Kentville was to become a summer's pleasure for its "owners" and others. Although eight EASTERN KINGBIRDS were logged on the (Saturday) NSMC, might the gap between those and the bulk arriving a week later have been a 'weekend effect'?

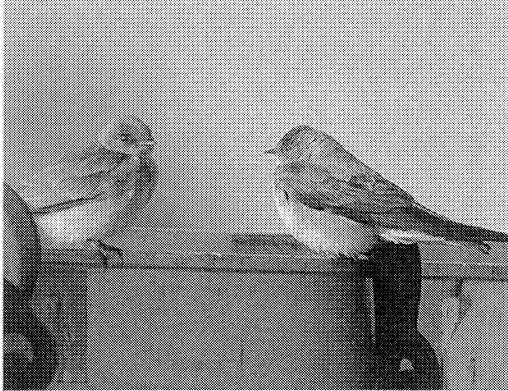
Our two regular vireos were well recorded, especially the early-arriving BLUE-HEADED on the NSMC; both have increasing substantially on the provincial BBS. The WARBLING VIREO sighting on the NSMC was not detailed. An AMERICAN CROW was giving its "incubation call" and another seen with nesting material Apr. 5 in *Antigonish*; so nesting there was "in full swing" (JOK). Again there is a hint in the eBird results that crows and ravens may partially emigrate after March, or at least display themselves less. Maxine Quinton writes from home in the Chester area, *Lun.*, that "a very timid [NORTHERN RAVEN] who is picked on by Blue Jays and squirrels . . . spends much time following our dog and me around our little bit of land . . . watching us from low branches until one of the aforementioned critters chases him away. And now it's become so used to us that it soars down to the deck and fills its gullet with peanuts almost as quickly as we put them there. When we're not up early enough in the morning, it will gently glide in circles over our heads to remind us about its peanuts, until we finally go outside." This raven is contrasted in the images below with a less benign one.



The relatively tame, peanut-addicted NORTHERN RAVEN at left was something of a backyard pet near Chester. But, the one at right, May 4 in Dartmouth, was observed actually killing a pigeon and photographed while it munched on its prey. [Photos: left, Maxine Quinton; right, Bernard Burke]

The PURPLE MARTIN is now extirpated here as a breeder species, and the martin found May 20 on CSI (see p. 45) suggests that all those wandering here should be looked at closely. The NSMC birds in *Richmond* were out of normal range. TREE SWALLOWS were early, but not earliest recorded, and quickly got down to business. One was "on territory" Apr. 3 at Gaspereau, *Kings* (RIW) and the one inspecting a nest box Apr. 7 on Brier I. was "record-early" for that island (ELM), although they only "arrived in force" at Sunrise Valley in Cape Breton on May 11 (FMC). Large gatherings over wetlands are tabulated below separately. The **ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOWS** on Brier I. heralded their later nesting, as we shall see in the summer issue. BANK and BARN SWALLOWS seem to continue to decline, with only a couple of large gatherings (50 or more) of the former, and one such of the latter.

Considering the large numbers turned up during the NSMC, our resident chickadees, nuthatches, and BROWN CREEPER seemed under-reported, even with eBird seasonal totals. The first "feebee" song of BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE, and singing WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH and BROWN CREEPER were noted respectively on Mar. 8 (JAH), Mar. 7 (Jeff MacLeod), and Mar. 22 (JKM). The WINTER WRENS first found singing Mar. 12 in the Kentville Ravine, and Mar. 23 at Sheffield L., *Kings*, might have overwintered in the region as the previous record early arrival of an assumed migrant is Mar. 31.



This twosome of the rarely photographed ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW May 20 at Westport, Brier I., was presumably a pair that later nested along the Grand Passage waterfront; more on that novel event will be in the next issue. [Photo Richard Stern]

This extraordinarily long-billed RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH frequenting feeders on Marvins I., Lun., nonetheless seemed to be contending with its serious deformity. [Photo Brenda Franklin]



A few Eastern BLUEBIRDS again frequented the south of the province, but the unsettled pair in northern Cape Breton was a surprise. The Apr.18 SWAINSON'S THRUSH, if confirmed, matches our previous earliest record. Otherwise, it and VEERY, but not HERMIT THRUSH seemed very scarce this spring. The only WOOD THRUSH reported this spring was nicely confirmed by a photograph. It has been steadily decreasing (to about half its 1960s level) throughout its breeding range and Nova Scotia, at the fringe, may be even more affected by this decline. Reports of AMERICAN ROBIN included some of large flocks through the season, mostly recorded on eBird. In time, some sense might be made of such data, but it would be useful if future observers could try to sort out migratory and overwintering components, perhaps by reporting on waves of clear arrivals in our southern counties. It was noted by IAM *et al.* that, in late March, there were large flocks on lawns around Yarmouth, but not in *Queens* or *HRM*, and that none appeared to be "black-backed". But that does not really settle the issue of migrant vs. overwintering birds among these flocks.

A report of a **FIELDFARE** Apr. 1 at Tucker L., Beaverbank, *HRM*, is very intriguing. It was said to have been "watched for 15 minutes at close range [and] compared to field guides and internet pictures" (Butch Galvez). A photo might be required for wide acceptance of such an extreme rarity from across the Atlantic (our seventh reported, but only one was fully described, and one photo'd).

In the table below, total individuals recorded during specified periods include only the maximum eBird counts during those periods from repeatedly surveyed locations.

Eastern Wood-Pewee

May 22	Sunken L., Kings	1	RIW
May 23	Shubenacadie, Col.	1	Sheila McCarthy
May 26	Wolfville Ridge	1	JCT
May 26	Lunenburg	2	JAH
May 27-31	Brier I. to Kings.	9 indivs.	6 eBird + 2 obs.

WILLOW FLYCATCHER

May 28 nr. Pt. Williams, Kings 1 "probable" RBS

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher

May 12 Wilson Meadow, Ann. 1 BKW
 May 16 Keji NP, nr. Weather Sta. 1 Megan Crowley

Alder Flycatcher

May 12 Meander R., *Hants* only 1 NSNT

May 13	Shebenacadie, Col.		1	
	Sheila McCarthy			
May 19-29	13 locs., <i>Pic. to Shel.</i>	24 indivs.	11 eBird + 2 obs.	
Least Flycatcher				
May 3	Rte 12, nr. Little River L, <i>King</i>	1	RIW	
May 8	Palmeter Woods, <i>Kings</i>	4	JLC	
May 8	Greenwood-Crocker Rd., <i>Kings</i>	2	G. Mastromateo	
May 8	White Rock, <i>Kings</i>	1	RIW	
May 11	Mount Merrit Rd., <i>Queens</i>	2 prs.	Brad Toms	
May 12-31	13 locs., <i>Pic. to Brier I.</i>	37 indivs.	eBird + 3 obs.	
Eastern Phoebe				
Mar. 24	Miners Marsh, Kentville	1	Nancy Nickerson	
Mar. 24	Baccaro, <i>Shel.</i>	1	NSBS, JAH et al.	
Mar. 26	Kentville (nr. Res. Sta.)	1	JCH	
Mar. 27	Miners Marsh, Kentville	2 (a pr.?)	AND	
Apr. 14	MacLellans Brk. Area, <i>Pic.</i>	3 prs.	KJM	
Apr. 14	Tombruk, <i>Ann.</i>	1	WPN	
Apr. 16	Miners Marsh, Kentville	pr.	JLC	
Apr. 19	Walker Brk., N. Kingston	pr.	PBG	
Apr. 19	nr. Melvern Square, <i>Ann.</i>	pr.	PBG	
Apr. 23-May 30	14 locs., <i>Pic. to Shel.</i>	26 indivs.	11 eBird + 4 obs.	
Great Crested Flycatcher				
May 21 +	Kentville	pr. nesting	Devin Johnstone	
Eastern Kingbird				
May 12	Most in <i>W. Hants</i> , with	3	NSMC	
May 13	Brier I.	1 "newly arrived"	ELM, IAM	
May 18-31	<i>Pic. to Brier I.</i>	10 indivs.	8 eBird + 3 obs	
Northern Shrike				
Mar. 20	Pt. Hilford, Guys.	1	KJM	
Mar. 31	Ketch Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1	N. Dowd	
Apr. 2	Waterside PPP & Otter Rd., <i>Pic.</i>	2	KJM et al.	
Blue-headed Vireo				
Apr. 26	Tobeatic Res.Inst., <i>Queens</i>	1 singing	Brad Toms	
Apr. 27	Gaspereau R. Trail, <i>Kings</i>	1 singing	RIW	
May 2	Wolfville Ridge	1 singing	JCT	
May 3	Lr. Rose Nay, Lun.	1 singing	ELM	
May 3	Sunrise Park Cemetary, <i>HRM</i>	1	NSNT	
May 4	Mills Falls, <i>Ann.</i>	1 singing	<i>fide</i> Brad Toms	
May 6-31	52 locs., Brier I. to <i>Inv.</i>	119 indivs.	24 eBird obs+ 7 obs.	
Red-eyed Vireo				
May 7	E. Dalhousie, <i>Kings</i>	1	N. Dowd	
May 11	Jerry Lawrence PP, <i>HRM</i>	1	Bryan Sabourin	
May 16-31	26 locs., <i>Inv. to Brier I.</i>	48 indivs.	eBird + 3 obs.	
WARBLING VIREO				
May 12	<i>Pictou</i>	1 n.d.	NSMC	
Gray Jay				
Mar. 2-May 6	8 locs., <i>Lun. to Guys.</i>	20 indivs.	eBird + 1 obs.	
Blue Jay				
March	76 locs., <i>Inv. to Ann.</i>	394 indivs.	eBird	
April	50 locs., <i>Ann to Guys.</i>	151 indivs	eBird+4 obs	
May	81 locs., Brier I. to <i>Inv.</i>	402 indivs.	eBird+6 obs.	
May 20	Brier I.	ca. 100	PMC	
American Crow				
March	84 locs., <i>Inv. To Brier I.</i>	720 indivs.	eBird + 2 obs.	
April	76 locs., <i>Ant. to Ann.</i>	490 indivs.	eBird + 6 obs.	
May	74 locs. <i>Ant. ro Brier I.</i>	436 idivs.	eBird+ 1 obs.	
Northern Raven				
March	36 locs., <i>Pic. to Ann.</i>	169 indivs	eBird.	
April	36 locs., <i>Ant. to Yar.</i>	109 indivs.	eBird	
May	45 locs., <i>Inv. to Shel.</i>	106 indivs..	eBird	
Horned Lark				
No reports!				
Purple Martin				
May 17	Brookfield, <i>Col.</i>	1	Dennis Steubing	
May 20	CSI	1 probable	JON, IAM	
Tree Swallow				
Mar. 30	Miners Marsh, Kentville	3	RBS	
Mar. 31	Northfield & area, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH	
Apr. 3	nr. Gaspereau, <i>Kings</i>	1	RIW	

April 7	Brier I.	1	ELM	
Apr. 7	Bellisle Marsh, <i>Ann.</i>	19	JAH	
Apr. 11	Broad Cove, Lun.	4 at nest boxes	SJF	
Apr. 11	Maccan, <i>Cum.</i>	40+	JAN, MAM	
Apr. 12	Lockeport	2	DJC	
Apr. 14	Deep Brk. Bog, Queens	26	Brad Toms	
Apr. 22, 28, 30	Windsor sewage ponds	42, 225, 250		
			John Robertson, RSM	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30	Windsor sewage ponds	250	ELM	
May 2	French Basin Tr., <i>Ann.</i>	150	RBS	
Apr. 27	Brier I.	ca. 30 migrants	ELM	
Apr. 30				

May 26-29	13 locs., BPI to HRM		16 indivs.
			eBird +2 obs.
Hermit Thrush			
Apr. 15	Minamkeak Lake, Lun.	no.?	N. Dowd
Apr. 16	Long L., HRM	1 calling	Bob Farmer
Apr. 18	Lovett L., HRM	10, most "heard"	Chloe Malinka
Apr. 19	nr. MacLellans Brook, Pic.	2	KJM
Apr. 19	nr. Little River L., Kings	3	RIW
Apr. 20-30	12 locs., Brier I. to Pic	18+ indivs.	eBird + 1 obs.
May	57 locs. Shel. to Inv.	130+ indivs	eBird + 3 obs.
WOOD THRUSH			
May 15	Porters L., HRM	1 (ph.)	CHP
FIELDFARE			
Apr. 1	Beaverbank, HRM	1 reported	(See text)
American Robin			
Through season BPI-Inv 600+ repts, 4000+ indivs. mostly eBird			



The season's only **WOOD THRUSH** was found May 15 in Spruce Woods near Porters L., HRM. [Photo Chris Pepper]

Mimids through Wood Warblers

By Ken McKenna

Reports were received of all three of our local mimids this spring. GRAY CATBIRDS in the last week of April in Eastern Passage and Lunenburg were likely carried here by the weather system of April 22-23 (see p. 42), and the earlier one in Wolfville might have been a local winter survivor. By mid-May, the normal arrival of catbirds, the NSMC (see p. 26) was on par with the last couple of years. NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD numbers continue on the low side, and the only one on the NSMC was in Cape Breton. All six BROWN THRASHERS reported were in May. EUROPEAN STARLINGS are still very numerous, especially on eBird reports, but the NSMC total, although similar to those the last few years, is only half the number on this count from the previous decade. There were only a few AMERICAN PIPIT reports, but Rick Whitman noted the pipits he looked at May 5 on the Grand Pré dykelands, had entire the breast pink and buff, almost identical to the Sibley Guide's "paler adult", but with a more defined eyebrow. BOHEMIAN WAXWINGS lingered only until about mid-March. A few flocks of CEDAR WAXWINGS on the other hand stayed from winter into early spring, making it a little hard to define when migrants arrived.



We don't associate either of these two Wood Warblers with spruce trees, but during migration (here May 19 on Brier I.) anything goes. [Photos Richard Stern]

It was an interesting spring for warblers, with 28 species recorded, some very early. By May 1, 12 species had been reported and 20 species were noted May 12 on the NSMC. Included in this report are some results from nocturnal audio monitoring in Doctors Brook, *Ant.*, as interpreted by JOK.

There were a couple of late April observations of OVENBIRD, and a record migration count exceeded last year's record by 65. However, none were reported from Cape Breton. NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH is usually one of our early warblers, but not so this year, I did not receive any reports from prior to May 8, and the numbers on the NSMC were below last year's (which was a new high). An Apr. 15 report of a singing BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER in *Richmond* was early, but there have been earlier reports in the past. For the second spring in a row we had PROTHONOTARY WARBLER, and this year there were two reports from either side of Halifax Harbour. Near Trafalgar close to the *Pictou-Guysborough* border, a number of TENNESSEE WARBLERS were found in an area with larch that seemed to be turning a reddish colour, perhaps from the Larch Casebearer. The presence of a number of these warblers in a diseased area may indicate some feeding on the insect. Most of our sightings of ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLERS are in fall, so three this spring were unusual. MOURNING WARBLER is among our latest-arriving warblers, and a few were only noted singing on territory at higher altitude areas of *Pictou* in the last days of May (KJM, not on table). Some observers of this spring's March and April COMMON YELLOWTHROAT felt these were early migrants and, if so, they were well ahead of the earliest date of April 25 in Tuft's (*Birds of Nova Scotia*, 1986). As in the last couple of decades, CAPE MAY WARBLERS were barely detected this spring.

A hot spot for rare birds this spring was the Halifax Public Gardens and DEG was rewarded with an observation of a female CERULEAN WARBLER, May 18, but not seen by others who went to seek it after he posted his observation to the NS-RBA. The NORTHERN PARULA Apr. 13 in Kingston (PBG) was a very early and earlier than the earliest on April 17 in *Birds of Nova Scotia* (Tufts 1986). The May 1 observation (HAT) of a singing BLACBURNIAN WARBLER is 6 days earlier than the earliest date in Tufts. The April 19 YELLOW WARBLER report seemed early, but there are three records earlier than this date, one an early "overshoot" on Brier I., Mar. 28, 1965 by W. Lent. CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER is known to have a number of songs, and AAM on May 21 had an interesting audio treat of hearing three birds, all with different songs, at Palmeto Woods, *Kings*. At Brier I., ELM had a PALM WARBLER on Apr. 6, one day earlier than his earliest record there.

With a somewhat mild winter, one might have expected more observations of spring PINE WARBLERS, but there was only the single observation of a singing bird May 21 at Laurie Park, *HRM* (LOC). Nocturnal audio recordings of spring migrants by JOK at Doctors Brook, *Ant.*, indicate that YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER migration is a drawn-out affair, stretching from early April into the last week of May. For the second year in a row, the number of Yellow-rumped was low on the NSMC.

Sharron Marlor and Ron D'Entremont were lucky observers of this spring's only YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER, likely a product of the big blow of April 23, which brought a number of more southern birds to NS (see p. 42). Thanks to many updates by Giselle D'Entremont, the YELLOW-BREADED CHAT in Halifax was observed to at least April 15 and can be considered to have successfully survived the winter.

Gray Catbird

Apr 4	Wolfville	1 on suet feeder	<i>vide</i> JWW
Apr 28	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC
Apr 29	Lunenburg	1	M L Whitehorne
May 1	Coldbrook, <i>Kings</i>	1	AND, L. Dean
May 1	The Hawk, CSI	1	CRM, DAM
May 12	mostly in <i>Digby, Lun., Kings</i>	6, 5, 7	NSMC
May 13-31	widely		var. obs.

Northern Mockingbird

Mar 3, 10	Antigonish	1	KJM
Mar 15-Apr. 19	Portuguese Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT
to Apr 16	Lockeport	1-2	DJC
Apr 5	W. Long I. <i>Kings</i>	1	RIW
May 1	Baccaro, <i>Shel.</i>	1	CRM, DAM
May 11	Brier I.	1	ELM, IAM
May 13	Rockingham, <i>HRM</i>	1 singing all night	<i>vide</i> CJF
May 18-21	BPI	1	JCZ

Brown Thrasher

May 1	Kingsburg, <i>Lun</i>	1 at feeder	DAW
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May 12	<i>Col., Ann.</i> , with	1, 1	NSMC
May 13	Blandford, <i>Lun</i>	1	<i>vide</i> CJF
May 19 to May 28+	MacLellans Brk., <i>Pic.</i> ,	1	Steve MacLean
May 20	The Hawk, CSI	1	CST

European Starling

Mar 1- May 31	182 locs. <i>Inv.</i> To BPI	4500 indivs.	eBird
May 12	esp. <i>Kings, Lun., Pic.</i>	805, 392, 589	NSMC

American Pipit

Mar 31	Meisners Bch., <i>Lun</i>	1	KEL
Apr 6	Kingsburg, <i>Lun</i>	1	KEL
Apr 28	Brier I.	6	ELM
May 5, 8	Grand Pré, <i>Kings</i>	2	RIW
May 10	Waterside PP, <i>Pic.</i>	10	KJM
May 12	<i>Pic.</i> only	3	NSMC
May 25	Second Peninsula, <i>Lun.</i>	1 present 3 weeks	<i>vide</i> JAH

Bohemian Waxwing

Mar 1	Bedford, <i>HRM</i>	35+	DOU
Mar 1	Kentville	20-30 mixed with a few Cedars	JCT
Mar 9	Lunenburg	80	JAH

Mar 8	Windsor	200	John Robertson	
Mar 12	Bridgewater	20	<i>fide</i> JAH	
Mar 20	E. Apple River <i>Cum.</i>	1	KFS	
Cedar Waxwing				
Mar 1- May 31	32 locs., <i>Pic.</i> to <i>Shel.</i>	376 indivs.	eBird	
Mar 6	Tremont, <i>Kings</i>	40+	SLH	
Mar 10	Coldbrook, <i>Kings</i>	flock	<i>fide</i> JCT	
Mar 13, 17	Wolfville area, <i>Kings</i>	30, ca.10.	JWW	
Mar 28	Lockeport	20	DJC	
Apr 3	Halifax 30 drinking from yard pond		DAM	
Apr 25	Kingston, <i>Kings</i> 5 on Japanese yew		PBG	
May 7	Back Centre, <i>Lun.</i>	2	JAH	
May 10	Lower Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	1	LOC	
May 12	(mostly <i>Kings</i>)	(103)	NSMC	
Lapland Longspur				
Mar 12	Sullivan's Pond, Dartmouth	2	Bryan Sabourin	
Snow Bunting				
Mar. 1	Rainbow Haven PP	40+	DOU	
Mar 8	Big I., <i>Pic.</i>	40	KJM	
Mar 10	Fox I. Main, <i>Guys.</i>	30	KJM, CHK, RFE	
Mar 18	Brier I.	2	Diane Clapp	
Mar 22	Caribou I., <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM	
Mar 25	Big I., <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM	
Apr. 17	Aspy R., <i>Inv.</i>	1	FMC	
Ovenbird				
Last week Apr	Keji NP	1	JLC <i>fide</i> JAH	
Apr 26-27	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	1 recorded night	JOK	
May 8	J. Lawrence PP, <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT	
May 10	Argyle Head, <i>Yar.</i>	1	RDE	
May 10	Mountville, <i>Pic.</i>	4	KJM	
May 10	Churchville, <i>Pic.</i>	3	KJM	
May 12	mainland only, esp. <i>Kings</i> with	198	NSMC	
May 13-20	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	28 recorded night	JOK	
May 20-27	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	13 recorded night	JOK	
Northern Waterthrush				
May 6-13	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	2 recorded night	JOK	
May 8	Jerry Lawrence PP, <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT	
May 9	W. Caledonia Rd. <i>Queens</i>	1	Megan Crowley	
May 10	Plymouth, <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM	
May 12	highest in <i>Pic.</i> , with	29	NSMC	
May 13-20	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	10 recorded night	JOK	
May 13-May 31	widely	13 reports of 18	eBird	
May 20-27	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	2 recorded night	JOK	
Black and White Warbler				
Apr 15	Lynches River, <i>Rich.</i>	1 singing	BID	
Apr 24	Bridgewater	1 singing	JAH	
Apr 29	Port Joli, <i>Queens</i>	1	JOA	
May	Widely, 62 locs.	163	eBird	
May 6	The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>	1	CST	
May 6-13	Doctors Brook	11 recorded night	JOK	
May 7	Chebogue, <i>Yar.</i>	1	RDE	
May 7	Back Centre, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH	
May 12	mostly <i>HRM.</i> , <i>Kings</i> , <i>Pic.</i>	71, 66, 76	NSMC	
May 13-20	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	33 recorded night	JOK	
May 20-27	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	1 recorded night	JOK	
PROTHONOTARY WARBLER				
Apr 24	Portuguese Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1 f.	HAT	
May 1	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1 f. high on birches	DAC	
Tennessee Warbler				
May 12	<i>Hants W.</i> only	1	NSMC	
May 18	Halifax Public Gardens	1	DEG	
May 19	Butler Rd., <i>Kings</i>	1	AAM	
May 21	Trafalgar, <i>Pic.</i>	3	KJM	
May 21, 24	Brookville, <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM	
May 22	Meadowville, <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM	
May 26	St. Margarets Bay Tr., <i>HRM</i>	1	D. Waterfield	
Orange-crowned Warbler				
Apr 25	Jolimere, <i>HRM</i>	1 her first spring record	PLC	
May 2	Barrington Passage, <i>Shel.</i>	1	RDE	
May 8	Spryfield, <i>HRM</i>	1	Brian Sabourin	
May 12	<i>Lun.</i> only	1	NCMC	
Nashville Warbler				
Apr 21	Lunenburg	1	Megan Crowley	
May 1	Palmett Woods, <i>Kings</i>	1 singing	AAM	
May 6	Pleasant Valley, <i>Pic.</i>	1	STV	
May 7	Back Centre, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH	
May 8, 24	Brookville, <i>Pic.</i>	1, 2	KJM	
May 8	MacElmons Pond, <i>Col.</i>	1	KAM	
May 8	Jerry Lawrence PP, <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT	
May 8-31	widely, 16 locs.	26 indivs.	eBird	
May 12	most in <i>HRM</i> , <i>Hants E.</i>	52, 39	NSMC	
Common Yellowthroat				
Mar 20	Broad Cove, <i>Lun.</i>	1 bright male	SJF	
Mar 25	Goose Creek Marsh, <i>Shel.</i>	1	RDE	
Apr 15	The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>	1	CST	
Apr 18	Lovett L., <i>HRM</i>	4	Chloe Melinka	
May 3, 8	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC	
May 6-13	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	2 recorded night	JOK	
May 12	Most in <i>Col.</i> , <i>HRM</i> , <i>Hants E.</i>	10, 15, 13	NSMC	
May 19	Brier I.	30+, major arrival	ELM, AHM	
May 13-20	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	21 recorded night	JOK	
May 20-27	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	22 recorded night	JOK	
May	Widely, 32 locs.	62 indivs.	eBird	
American Redstart				
May 12	most in <i>Pic.</i> , <i>Kings</i>	17, 22	NSMC	
May 19, 20	Brier I.	40+ each day	ELM, AHM	
May	Widely, 45 locs.	90+ individ.	eBird	
Cape May Warbler				
May 12	<i>Col.</i> , <i>Inv.</i>	1, 1	NSMC	
May 20-27	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	1 recorded night	JOK	
CERULEAN WARBLER				
May 18	Halifax Public Gardens	1 fem.	DEG	
Northern Parula				
Apr 13	Kingston	1	BPG	
Apr 20	Bridgewater	1	<i>fide</i> JWW	
Apr 29- May 6	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	1 recorded night	JOK	
May 4	Wolfville Ridge	1 singing	JCT	
May 6-13	Doctor Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	15 recorded night	JOK	
May 7	Chebogue, <i>Yar.</i>	1	RDE	
May 7	Mills Falls, <i>Ann.</i>	1	Brad Toms	
May 12	widely, 15 counties	455 new high	NSMC	
May 13-20	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	20 recorded night	JOK	
May 20-27	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	7 recorded night	JOK	
May	Widely, 51 locs.	118 indivs.	eBird	
Magnolia Warbler				
May 1	Wolfville Ridge	1	JCT	
May 8	Jerry Lawrence PP, <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT	
May 8	Hartlen Pt.	1	JCZ, et al.	
May 8	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC	
May 12	most in <i>Hants E.</i> , <i>Kings</i> , <i>Lun.</i>	22, 29, 24	NSMC	
May	Widely, 46 locs.	94 indivs.	eBird	
Bay-breasted Warbler				
May 13-20	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	1 recorded night	JOK	
May 19	Great Village, <i>Col.</i>	1	BKW <i>et al.</i>	
May 19	Lewis L. PP, <i>HRM</i>	1	Nick Fieldsend	
May 20	downtown Halifax	1 singing	PLC	
May 20-27	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	3 recorded night	JOK	
May 21	Caledonia area, <i>Guys.</i>	several	KJM	
May 24	Brookville, <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM	
Blackburnian Warbler				
May 1	St. Margarets Bay Trail, <i>HRM</i>	1 singing	HAT	
May 8	Kentville Ravine, <i>Kings</i>	1	JLC	
May 8	J. Lawrence PP, <i>HRM</i>	present	HAT	
May 10	Argyle Head, <i>Yar.</i>	2	RDE	
May 10	Mt. William, <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM	
May 12	mainland only, most <i>HRM</i> , <i>Pic.</i>	7, 9	NSMC	
Yellow Warbler				
Apr 19	Little Brook	2	BPG	
Apr 25	Shubie Pk, <i>HRM</i>	1	MZE	
May 5	Brier I.	1	Laura Titus	

May 10	White Rock, <i>Kings</i>	1	RIW
May 11	Berwick, <i>Kings</i>	2	JLC
May 11	Pictou Landing, <i>Pic.</i>	2	KJM
May 11	Halifax Public Gardens	1	DOU
May 12	mainly mainland, incl. <i>Kings</i>	67	NSMC
May 19	Brier I.	40+	ELM, AHM
May	Widely, 43 locs.	141 indivs.	eBird
Chestnut-sided Warbler			
May 8, 11	MTRI	1, 1	Brad Toms
May 8	Jerry Lawrence PP, <i>HRM</i>	present	HAT
May 10	Pictou Landing	1	KJM
May 11	Brier I.	1	ELM, IAM
May 12	Mainland, mostly <i>Kings, Pic.</i>	48, 19	NSMC
May	Widely 15 locs.	19 indivs.	eBird
Palm Warbler			
Apr 6	Earliest by 1 day for Brier	1	ELM
Apr 13	Spencers I., <i>Cum.</i>	1	JAN, MAM
Apr 14	E. Dalhousie, <i>Kings</i>	1	N. Dowd
Apr 15	CSI	1	RDE
Apr 15	<i>HRM, Lun.</i>	1, 1	GDE, PMC
Apr 16	Maple L., <i>Pic.</i>	6 singing	KJM
Apr 14-May 31	widely, 21 locs.	48 indivs.	eBird + var. obs.
May 12	Widely, esp. <i>HRM</i>	82	NSMC
Pine Warbler			
May 21	Laurie Pk., <i>HRM</i>	1 heard and seen	LOC
Yellow-rumped Warbler			
Mar 11	Goose Creek Marsh, <i>Yar.</i>	1	RDE
Mar 12	CSI	12	Mike Drenth
Mar 24	Blanche Pen., <i>Shel.</i>	13	NSBS
Apr 14-21	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	7 recorded night	JOK
Apr 14	Rose Bay, <i>Lun.</i>	1	JAH
Apr 14	Meisners Beach, <i>Lun.</i>	2	KEL
Apr 15-May 31	widely		var. obs.
Apr 22-29	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	5 recorded night	JOK
Apr 29-May 6	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	25 recorded night	JOK
May 6-13	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	107 recorded night	JOK
May 12	province-wide	see p. 36	NSMC
May 13-20	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	11 recorded night	JOK
Apr.-May`widely, 124 locs.		480+ indivs.	eBird + var. obs.
YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER			
Apr 24	W. Pubnico, <i>Yar.</i>	1	RDE
Black-throated Green Warbler			
May 2	Wolfville area, <i>Kings</i>	1	PHT
May 5	Wolfville Watershed	1	BKW <i>et al.</i>
May 6-13	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	12 recorded night	JOK
May 7-31	Widely, 48 locs.	108 + indivs.	eBird + 2 obs.
May 12	Widely, esp. Hants E., <i>Kings</i>	108, 107	NSMC
May 13-20	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	1 recorded night	JOK
May 19	Brier I.	30+	ELM, AHM
Blackpoll Warbler			
May 12	All in <i>E. Hants, Lun.</i>	4, 1	NSMC
May 15	<i>Kings</i>	1	eBird
May 17	Brookville, <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM
May 19, 20	Brier I.	2, 8 singing	ELM, AHM
May 19	Halifax Public Gardens	1	PLC
May 24-30	3 locs.	4 indivs.	eBird + 1 obs.

May 14-21	Widely, 16 locs.	33 indivs.	eBird
Black-throated Blue Warbler			
May 5	Cranberry Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1	Chloe Malinka
May 7	E. Dalhousie, <i>Kings</i>	1	N. Dowd
May 8	Jerry Lawrence PP, <i>HRM</i>	present	HAT
May 11	Brookville, <i>Pic.</i>	5	KJM
May 12	Half in <i>Kings</i>	5	NSMC
May 6-13	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	10 recorded night	JOK
May 13-20	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	16 recorded night	JOK
May 20-27	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	3 recorded night	JOK
May 31	Brookville, <i>Pic.</i>	nest with 1 egg	KJM



CANADA WARBLER is one of our more secretive birds, and having it pause and pose (here May 14 along Trefry Rd., *Yar.*) is a rare treat. [Photo Ronnie D'Entremont]

Canada Warbler

May 8	J. Lawrence PP, <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT
May 12	<i>E. Hants</i>	1	NSMC
May 19, 20	Brier I.	1, 1	ELM
May 20	Kentville	1	JLC
May 21	Palmeto Woods, <i>Kings</i>	1	AAM
May 21	Brookville, <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM

Wilson's Warbler

May 6-13	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	1 recorded night	JOK
May 11	Stellarton, <i>Pic.</i>	1 m.	KJM
May 12	<i>Cum., Pic., Kings</i>	1 each	NSMC
May 13	nr. Victoria Junction, <i>CBRM</i>	3	Jessica Klein
May 19-26	Brier I. to <i>Pic.</i> , 4 locs.	6 indivs.	e-bird

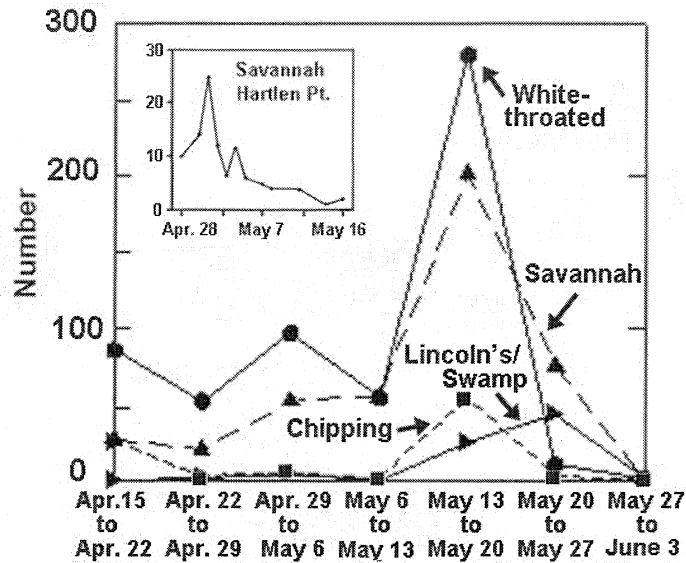
Yellow-breasted Chat

Mar 11- Apr 15	Halifax	1 overwintered	GDE
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Sparrows to House Sparrow

By Ian McLaren

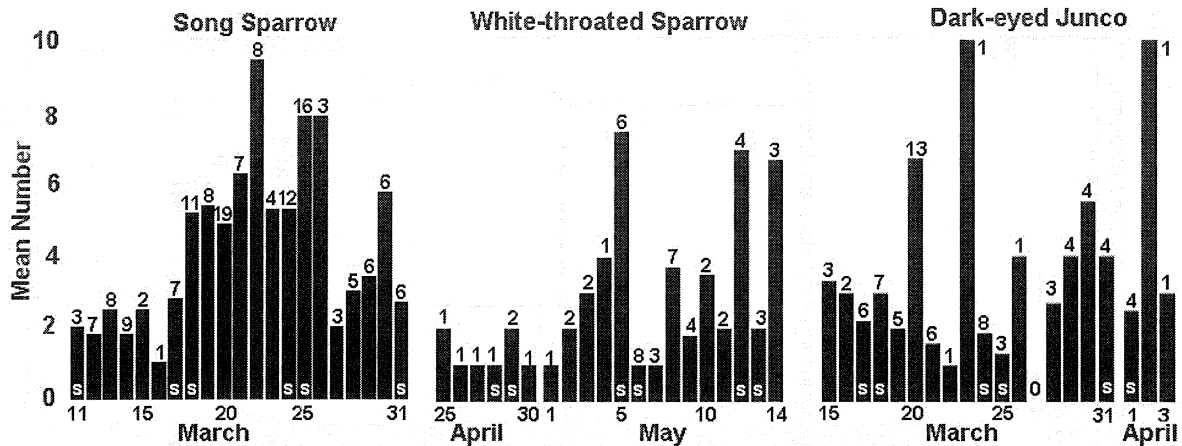
Migrations of some of our regular sparrows are not well captured by casual records. Overwintered individuals may wander in March, so their appearances at new places may not be meaningful. John Kearney's regionally novel estimates of numbers of overhead night migrants from recording and identification of their calls will certainly prove increasingly valuable. Sparrows are often thought to be day migrants, but are clearly also on the move at night. The species in this graph are considered below in their systematic order.



Numbers of overhead migrants recorded during weekly intervals (Sunday a.m. to Saturday p.m.) at Doctors Brook, *Ant.* The insert shows SAVANNAH SPARROW counts during near daily circuits by DAC of Hartlen Pt., *HRM.*

Most AMERICAN TREE SPARROWS were last recorded at feeders in mid-April, with only the NSMC to indicate later lingering. Clearly migrant CHIPPING SPARROWS arrived in late April, but appeared to peak only in mid-May (see above graph of night-migrants). Our locally nesting SAVANNAH SPARROW are known to begin arriving in numbers in late April, as shown in near-daily counts at Hartlen Pt., yet night migration peaked strongly only mid-May (above graph). Were these later birds on their way to the vast Ungava-Labrador breeding range of that species? Most of our previous records of darkish-plumaged birds typical of that breeding range are from May. March 26 would have been considered early for arrival of "IPSWICH SPARROW" a few decades ago. Occurrence of NELSON'S SPARROW on CSI "from about May 7" (RAH) was unusually early; the late May reports from around Wolfville were as expected. Likewise mid-March would have been early in past decades for arriving FOX SPARROW.

The common Sparrows gave another opportunity to analyze patterns in the turnover between overwintering birds and arriving migrants. Overnight calls after mid-April (see above graph) clearly missed the main time of arrival soon after mid-March (see bar graph below); Tufts (1981) gives a later average date of Mar. 25. WHITE-THROATED SPARROW is known to be a later migrant. Tufts (1981) gives Apr. 16 as average arrival date, but this year there were few reports from few observers until early May. Also notable was the peak of overhead night-migrants in mid-May (see above graph). Large counts of DARK-EYED JUNCO occurred irregularly from late March (Tufts gives an average of Mar. 25). Unlike Song Sparrows, overwintering and migrating White-throateds and juncos often occur in flocks, which may explain the irregular counts of the latter two (see bar graph below). Note that the higher mean counts did not appear to be driven by a 'weekend effect'; there clearly tended to be more observers out on Saturdays and Sundays, but the largest mean counts were mostly during weekdays.



Mean daily numbers of three common sparrows during apparent times of arrival of migrants. Combined totals from eBird and other submissions on each date are divided by number of observers, shown above each bar. Sundays and Saturdays are labelled “s”.

The lack of any reports of LINCOLN’S SPARROW other than the paltry NSMC may not be a reason for concern, as the late-May peak of night-migrating “Lincoln’s/Swamp” Sparrow (see above graph their calls are difficult to discriminate) was probably all or mostly of Lincoln’s. SWAMP SPARROW seemed to arrive on schedule beginning early April, and nothing much happened through May at Hartlen Pt.

NORTHERN CARDINAL was slightly down on the NSMC, but more were seen through the season (on eBird and by others), so probably they were not greatly changed in numbers.

There were almost unprecedented numbers of overshooting INDIGO BUNTINGS and other cardinalids (including early ROSE-BREADED GROSBEAKS) in the late-April fallout (see p. 39 in this issue), and those first found (mostly at feeders) into at least early May were probably from that event.

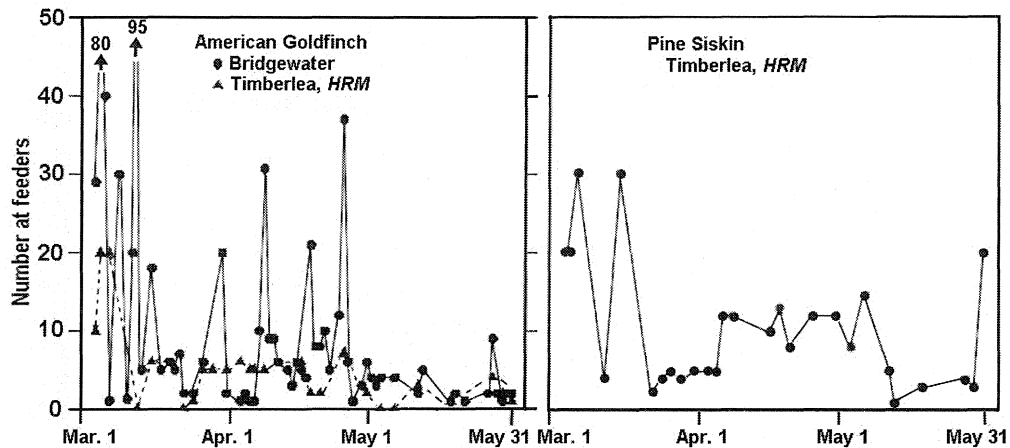


Some fallout birds, including the male INDIGO BUNTINGS at left (Milton, *Queens*, Apr. 24; blue in original), were almost unsullied and seemingly unfazed by their long over-ocean displacement. Others, like an unusually tame, rather messy-feathered BLUE GROSBEAK at right, on seaside boulders Apr. 26 at Hartlen Pt., HRM, were clearly stressed. [Photos: left, Dorothy Poole; right, David Currie]

Our first “twitchable” BRONZED COWBIRD is fully documented elsewhere (p. 39) in this issue.

Flocks of RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD and some other blackbirds wintered in a number of localities, and indeed, BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD was more often reported during winter than in this spring. I have tried to tabulate from the welter of spring records of blackbirds what I thought were genuine spring arrivals, although some could have been regional wanderers. Most NSMCs were similar to last year's, with COMMON GRACKLE down by about 1/3; a doubling of the RUSTY BLACKBIRD count over last year's might not be significant, given their small numbers, even on the NSMCs. In Bridgetown, *Ann.*, one grackle carrying nesting material on Apr. 27 and another taking material from an abandoned robin's nest on May 14 (MCR), were possibly second nesters. In more localities than ever, well cared-for BALTIMORE ORIOLES survived winter; one at Pictou started to sing at the end of March (*fide* KJM). The Halifax orioles left mid-April, one female remaining until 22 Apr. (SUM). Others clearly arrived in the late-April fallout.

PINE GROSBEAK continues its slow decline. There seemed to be a spurt of presumed migrants of PURPLE FINCH in early March. About twice as many were reported as during last winter, but they weredown by about a third from last year's NSMC. HOUSE FINCH really seems to be on the wane; Brenda and Eric Ruff's feeder flock in Yarmouth clings to the original beachhead of the species in Nova Scotia. It was clearly not a peak year for either crossbill. Among the other finches, only PINE SISKIN showed a sharp change from last year – twice as many on this spring's NSMC as last year. The EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH at a Sherbrooke, *Guys.*, feeder, was a pretty sight, albeit not 'life-listable'. Another opportunity to think about comings and goings of siskins and AMERICAN GOLDFINCH comes from well-watched feeders in Timberlea and Bridgewater (see graph below). Interestingly, there is a hint of wider patterns: both species occurred in largest numbers at both feeders during early March, and settled down subsequently. But goldfinches at JAH's Bridgewater feeders fluctuated wildly, whereas they and siskins seemed more regular at Debbie Stoddart-Pageau's in. It would be good to know what this difference means; maybe there are more "competing" feeders in the Bridgewater area.



Numbers of AMERICAN GOLDFINCH and PINE SISKIN counted at feeders on various days during March through May. Counts are via e-Bird at Timberlea from Debbie Stoddart-Pageau and at Bridgewater from James Hirtle.

HOUSE SPARROW numbers were paltry – slightly more than half as many as on last year's NSMC. They were extirpated from Brier I., where there was a hopeful female migrant Apr. 28 (ELM).

The tables below do not include all-county NSMC totals numbers (see p.36), but does have some county totals of interest. As of numbers of resident species actually observed during the given intervals, I selected only the maximum of repeated counts at the same location from eBird and other submissions.

EASTERN TOWHEE

Apr. 1	Lr. Clarks Hbr., CSI	1 m. singing	CST
Apr. 22	Centreville, CSI	1 different?	CST
Apr. 26-30	Duncans Cove, HRM	1 f	DGU, HAT.

American Tree Sparrow

March to mid-Apr.	E. Apple R., Cum.	Up to 11, feeder	KFS
March	Front Centre, Lun.	Up to 7, feeder	KEL

Apr. 6	Brier I.	3 singing	ELM
Apr. 15-25	Pic., Lun., Cum.	Indivs. still at feeders	sev. obs.
May 12	CBRM, Inv, only	2, 4	NSMC
Chipping Sparrow			
Feb. 17	Port Howe, Cum	1 not prev. rep.	Victoria Redden
Mar. 24	Victoria Vale, Ann.	1 wintered locally?	WPN
Apr. 16	Apple R., Cum.	1	KFS

Apr. 21-30 6 locs. 7 indivs., 6 first seen 7 obs.
 May Widely 10 locs., 12 indivs. eBird + var. obs.

FIELD SPARROW

May 19 Brier I. 1 singing ELM

Savannah Sparrow (mainland subsp.)

Apr. 6, 14 Martinique Bch, HR 3, 3 IAM, SUM, NSBS

Apr. 6 Kingsburg, Lun. 5 KEL

Apr. 15-May 31 7 locs., 205+ indivs. eBird + var. obs.

Savannah (Ipswich) Sparrow

Mar. 26 Martinique Bch, HRM 6 fide DOU

Apr. 3 Cherry Hill Bch., Lun. 1 SJF

Apr. 6 Kingsburg 1 KEL

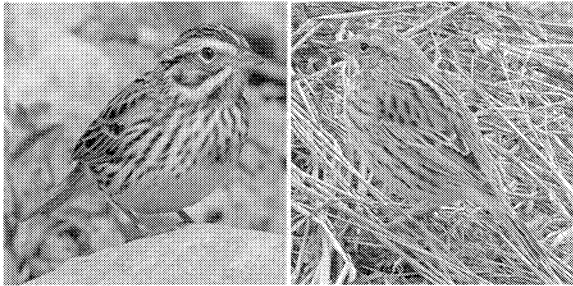
Apr. 6, 14 Martinique Bch., HRM 10, 7 IAM, SUM, NSBS

Apr. 15 Conrad Bch., HRM 5 NSNT

Apr. 18 Horton Landing, Kings 1 (ph.) RIW

May 2, 5 Hartlen Pt., HRM 2. 6 DAC

May 19-20 (late) BPI 1 JCZ et al.



The SAVANNAH SPARROW (left, May 13, Shubenacadie, Col.) is at home in a range of environments, from hayfields to bog meadows, whereas the 'IPSWICH SPARROW' (right, Apr. 18, near Grand Pré, Kings) is clearly adapted to its almost exclusively beach-grass habitat. [Photos: left, Pam Mills; right, Rick Whitman]

Nelson's Sparrow

May 7+ CSI "Daily from about May 7" RAH

May 26, 31 Wolfville area 1 singing Catherine Craig

Vesper Sparrow

May 12 Kings only 1 NSMC

Fox Sparrow

Mar. 11 Broad Cove 1 wintered, last seen SJF

Apr. 1 Front Centre, Lun. 1 wintered, last seen KEL

Mar. 12 Debert, Cum. 1 new, feeder Marion Forman

Mar. 14 CSI 1 new, feeder JON

Mar. 16-18 E. Apple R., Cum. 1 new, feeder KFS

Mar. 18 Louisbourg 1 fide BUS

Mar. 19 Crystal Crescent PP, HRM 1 singing HAT

Mar. 20-31 5 locs. 7+ indivs. eBird + var. obs.

April 3 locs. 4 indivs. eBird + var. obs.

Song Sparrow

See text

Lincoln's Sparrow

May 12 Half in Cum.; no other reports NSMC

Swamp Sparrow

Apr. 6-28 10 locs. 1-4+ indivs. Mostly e-Bird

May Widely Mostly e-Bird, NSMC

White-throated Sparrow

Many overwintered, for arrivals, see text.

May 12 esp. Col., HRM, Pic. 155, 140, 226 NSMC

White-crowned Sparrow

30 Apr. Near Kentville 1 ad. (had wintered as imm.) RBS

May 2 McGraths Cove, HRM 1 G. Saunders et al.

May 12 Half in Cape Breton 4 NSMC

May 19 Apple R., Cum. 1 ph. KFS

Dark-eyed Junco

Many overwintered, for arrivals, see text.

SUMMER Tanager

(Dates first seen only. Sex given when reported.)

Apr. 15 Albert Bridge, CBRM 1 m Laura Saunders

Apr. 25 Halifax 1 m. DOU

Apr. 27 W. Dublin, Lun. 1 m. M. Froyer

Apr. 28 East River, Lun. 1 m. fide JAH

May 5 W. Dublin, Lun. 1 m. JAH

May 10 Blanche Pen., Shel. 1 m. B. Blackmore, H. Jones

May 11 Sherbrooke, Guys. 1 m. R. Fralic-Fanning

May 18 Timberlea, HRM 1 m. (ph) D. Stoddart-Pageau

May 21 Ragged Hbr., Queens 1 m. JAH

Scarlet Tanager

Apr. 24 W. Pubnico 1 m. TCD

Apr. 25 CSI, Kentville 1 m. 1 f. CST, JLC

Apr. 27 Dartmouth 1 m. Gail Ripley

May 2 White Pt., Shel. 1 m. (ph.) D. Chapman

May 27 Lr. Sackville, HRM 1 m. DEG

Northern Cardinal

Mar.-May Widely ca. 40 repts, ca. 70 indivs. eBird + var. obs.

May 12 Largest count in Kings 31 NSMC

Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

(Dates first seen only for April. Age/sex given when reported.)

Apr. 23 Front Centre, Lun. 1 KEL

Apr. 24 W. Lawrencetown, HRM 3 DMW

Apr. 24 Front Centre, Lun. 1 imm. m. KEL

Apr. 25 Shel. to Pic.+ Lun. 8 m., 3 f., 6? + "lots" var. obs

Apr. 25 Duncans Cove, HRM 5 DGU

Apr. 26-30 Yar. to Rich. 19 m., 3 f., + 4 var. obs.

May Shel. to Ant.. 6 repts., 6 indivs. var. obs.

May 12 Largest count in Kings 35 NSMC

BLUE GROSBEEK

(Dates first seen only. Sex given when reported.)

Apr. 24 Sandy Cove, HRM 4 m., 4 f. HAT

Apr. 24 Hartlen Pt. 6 m., 6 f. DAC

Apr. 25 Woods Hbr., Shel. 1 m. DOC

Apr. 25 Hebbville, Lun. 1 D. Battcock

Apr. 25 CSI 1 JON

Apr. 25 Conrad Bch, HRM 1 dead Martin Gibling

Apr. 28 Shubie Pk., HRM 1 m (ph.) fide RIV

Apr. 29 E. Chezzetecook, HRM 1 m. RIW

May 2 Mineville, HRM 1 Kate Steele

May 2 Metegan R., Yar. 1 M. Guptil

May 6 New Minas, Kings 1 m fide RBS

May 6 Tancook I., Lun. 1 m. Hilary Dionne

May 11 Apple R., Cum. 1 f. KFS

May 12 Cum. only 1 NSMC

May 14 Jollimore, Halifax 1 fide AGH

INDIGO BUNTING

(Dates first seen only. Sex given when reported.)

(Reports from Lunenburg, fide JAH, are given separately.)

Apr. 22 Canning, Kings 1 m (ph) Ellie Kennard

Apr. 22 Port Joli, Queens, 1 m. J. Allen

Apr. 22 I. Madame, Rich. 1 m. fide K. Roy

Apr. 24 Brier I. to HRM; 12 m (2 dead), 7 f., + 13 var. obs.

Apr. 25 Yar. to Rich.; Lun. 14 m., 7 f., +9; 32+ var. obs.; JAH

Apr. 26 Shel. to Rich.; Lun. 6 m., 1 f. +1; 16+ var. obs.; JAH

Apr. 27 Yar. to Pic. 3 m, 2 f., + 11; 7 var. obs.; JAH

Apr. 28-30 Mostly Lun. 22, mostly unsexed var. obs.; JAH

May 1-5 Shel.-Rich. 6 m., 6. f. + 2; 15 var. obs.: JAH

May 6-15, Yar. to CBRM 21 indivs NSMC + var. obs.

PAINTED BUNTING

May 25 West Pennant, HRM m, 1 day feeder Cheryl Doucette

DICKCISSEL

Early March Pt. Hawkesbury 1 overwintered, last seen DJO

Mar. 6 Pt. Hawkesbury diff one arrived DJO

Mar. 20 Halifax 1 overwintered, last seen SUM

Mar. 31 Port Hawkesbury 1 newly arrived DJO

Apr. 4 Halifax 1 f.? DEG

Bobolink

May 11	most in <i>Ann., Kings, Pic.</i>	4, 6, 4	NSMC
May 14	Big. I., <i>Pic.</i>	2	KJM
May 14-31	Horton Landing – East Pt., <i>Kings</i>	2-5	RIW
May 21	Smileys PP	nos?	SUB
May 25	Brule Pt. area, <i>Ant., Col.</i>	ca. 20 singing m.	ELM, AHM
May 26	Grand Pré, <i>Kings</i>	1 “tatty” m.	RIW

Red-winged Blackbird

Mar. 3	Brier I.	arrived	Laura Titus
Mar. 8	Apple R., <i>Col.</i>	2 arrived, feeder	KFS
Mar. 10	Coldbrook, <i>Kings</i>	nos. arrived	<i>fide</i> JCT
Mar. 11	Roberts I., <i>Yar.</i>	2 m. singing	RDE
Mar. 11	Port Williams, <i>Kings</i>	arrived	<i>fide</i> JWW
Mar. 12	Apple R., <i>Col.</i>	8 at feeder	KFS
Mar. 12	Plymouth, <i>Pic.</i>	2 arrived	KJM
Mar. 15-May 31	200+ repts.	2400+ indivs.	e-Bird, NSMC, etc..

EASTERN MEADOWLARK

Mar. 10	Conrad Bch., <i>HRM</i>	1 had wintered	DGA
May 12	<i>Kings</i>	1 at feeder n.d.	NSMC

Rusty Blackbird

Apr. 2	nr. S. Milford, <i>Ann.</i>	2	JAH
Apr. 7	Brier I.	1 m.	ELM
Apr. 7	Butler Rd., <i>Kings</i>	2	RIW
Apr. 7	Virginia/Clements, <i>Ann.</i>	2	JAH
May 12	<i>CBRM</i> , mostly at feeders	32 n.d.	NSMC

Common Grackle

Mar. 9	<i>Pictou</i>	arrived	<i>fide</i> JKM
Mar. 10	Middle Dyke Rd., <i>Kings</i>	2	RBS
Mar. 10	Coldbrook, <i>Kings</i>	12 in house yard	<i>fide</i> JCT
Mar. 10	Apple R., <i>Col.</i>	1 at feeder	KFS
Mar. 12	8 locs., <i>Lun.-Ant.</i>	Total 13+ arrivals	7 obs.
Mar. 13-19	<i>Lun to Pic.</i> , 11 repts.	30+ indivs.	eBird + other obs.
Mar. 20-May 31	Widely	1550+ indivs.	e-Bird + other obs.

BRONZED COWBIRD

Mar. 28-Apr. 7	Yarmouth	see write-up, p. 42
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Brown-headed Cowbird

March	Halifax	2 overwintered at feeder	SUM
Mar. 23	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1 m. arrived at feeder	KFS
Mar. 28	Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	2	DMW
Apr. 1	Yarmouth	4	JAH
Apr. 9	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	2 f.. arrived at feeder	KFS
Apr. 22-May 20	Widely	66 indivs.	eBird + sev. obs
May 12	Mostly in <i>Kings</i> , with 24 at feeders, + 2		NSMC

ORCHARD ORIOLE

May 1	Brier I.	1	Laura Titus
May 12	Brier I., Halifax	3 f., 1 m.	NSMC
May 26	Pt. Hawkesbury	1 imm m.	DJO

Baltimore Oriole

Overwintered	Pictou, Halifax,	1, 7,	KJM, SUM
Overwintered	Lr. Sackville, Seabright, <i>HRM</i>	3, 1	LCO, ELI
Mar. 17	Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1 wandering?	DEJ
Mar. 24	S. end Halifax	1 ad m. wandering?	CHE
Apr. 1-18	Front Centre, <i>Lun.</i>	1 wandering?	KEL
Apr. 24	W. Pubnico, <i>Yar.</i>	1 arrived	TCD
Apr. 24-25	Woods Hbr., <i>Shel.</i>	3 m., 1 f. arrived	DOC
Apr. 25	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1 m. arrived	DAC
Apr. 29	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1 arrived	DGU
Apr. 29-May 2	Kileys Cove	1 imm. m. arrived	Kathlyne Smith
May 2	CSI	1 m.	DCM
May 5	CSI	1 m.	JAH
May 6-31	widely	9 repts., 17 indivs.	var. obs. incl. eBird
May 12	Half on Brier I., namely	6	NSMC

Pine Grosbeak

Mar. 30	Brookfield Rd., <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM
Apr. 1	Inverness	No.?	N. Dowd

Purple Finch

Mar.-May	Widely ~280 repts..	725+ indivs.	e-Bird + 11 obs.
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House Finch

Apr. 1	Yarmouth	5	JAH
May 12	<i>HRM</i> only	2	NSMC

KJM

Red Crossbill

Apr. 7; 6, 30	May <i>Lun</i>	7; 3, 4	JAH
Apr. 12	Lr. Rose Bay, <i>Lun.</i>	2-3 after none in winter	ELM
May 12	All but 3 in <i>Lun.</i>		NSMC

White-winged Crossbill

Mar. 8-20	Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>	1-2	KFS
Mar. 4	Deepdale. <i>Inv.</i>	10	KJM
Mar. 6	Abraham L. Trail, <i>HRM</i>	12	KJM
Mar 6	Perch L., <i>Pic.</i>	2	KJM
Mar. 30	Macperson L., <i>Pic.</i>	1	KJM
Apr. 23	Meadows Rd., <i>CBRM</i>	1 m.	Charlene Rogers
May 12	Most (21) in <i>Cum.</i>		NSMC

Common Redpoll

Mar. 3	<i>Col.</i>	5	ROH
May 12	<i>Inv. Ann.</i>	6, 2	NSMC

Pine Siskin

Mar-May	widely	111 repts, ca. 600 indivs.	eBird and others
May 12	most in <i>Inv., Lun.</i>	94, 76	NSMC

European Goldfinch (escape)

May 7-9	Sherbrooke, <i>Guys.</i>	1 m. at feeder (ph.)	<i>fide</i> RFL
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A visiting EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH, this one May 8 at Sherbrooke, *Guys.*, is always a treat, even if not ‘tickable’. [Photo Jocelyn Ellis]

American Goldfinch

Mar.-May	Widely	526 repts, ca 3330 indivs.
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House Finch

Apr. 1	Yarmouth	5	JAH.
May 12	<i>HRM</i> only	1	NSMC

Evening Grosbeak

Mar.-May	Widely	64 repts, ca. 240 indivs.	eBird and others
May 12	most in <i>Inv., Pic.</i> , at feeders	65, 62	NSMC

House Sparrow

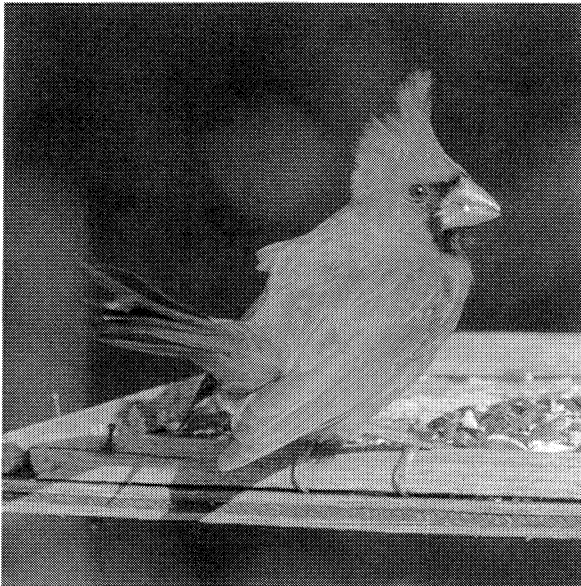
Apr. 26	Westport, Brier I.	1 f. migrant	ELM
May 12	Most <i>CBRM, HRM</i>	41, 35	NSMC

List of Those Contributors Usually Represented by Initials.

Names of other contributors are spelled out in full in the seasonal reports. Thanks to all.

AAM	MacLean, Angus	EMU	Murphy, Ethelda
AGH	Horn, Andrew	FMC	McEvoy, Fritz
AHM	Mills, Anne	GAM	Gayle MacLean
ALM	Murrant, Allan	GDE	D'Entremont, Giselle
AND	Dean, Andy	GFO	Forsythe, George
BBU	Burke, Bernard	GMU	Murray, Gary
BEC	Crowell, Beverly	HAT	Toom, Hans
BID	Digout, Billy	HEK	Hank Kwindt
BJS	Smith, Betty June	IAM	McLaren, Ian
BKW	Brad K. Woodworth	JAH	Hirtle, James
BLF	Forsythe, Bernard	JAN	Mills, Jane
BLM	Maybank, Blake	JCT	Tufts, Judith C.
BUS	Bussey, Bill	JCZ	Czapalay, Joan
CAH	Carl Haycock	JED	Edsall, Jim
CAM	Murrant, Cathy	JIC	Comolli, Jill
CDA	Davis, Cheryl	JLC	Churchill, James
CHE	Chris Helleiner	JOA	Allen, Joyce
CHK	Kendell, Charlie	JOB	Belbin, John
CJF	Field, Chris J.	JOK	Kearney, John
CLD	Diggins, Claire	JON	Nickerson, John
CHP	Pepper, Chris	JRU	Rubin, John
CST	Stoddard, Clyde	JSC	Cohrs, Shirley
DAC	Currie, David	JSH	Shermerhorn, Jeannie
DAM	MacNeill, Don	JUO	Obrien, Judy
DAW	Walmark, David	JVA	Vandermuelen, Josh
DGA	Garratt, Dennis	JWW	Wolford, Jim
DGU	Gusset, Dominique	KAM	MacAuley, Kathleen
DHU	Hughes, David	KEL	Lantz, Kevin
DHY	Young, David H.	KFS	Spicer, Kathleen
DJC	Crosby, Donna J.	KJM	McKenna, Ken J.
DJO	David Johnston	LOC	Codling, Lois
DMW	Welch, Dottie M.K.	MAM	Mills, Maureen
DOC	Cameron, Dorothy	MCR	Rice, Maggie
DOU	Doull, Elizabeth	MIK	King, Michael
DPO	Poole, Dorothy	MMC	McCall, Mike
eBird	eBird Online Checklist	MUN	Newell, Murray
ELI	Eleanor Lindsey	MZE	Zelenietz, Marty
ELM	Mills, Eric L.	PBG	Giffin, Patrick & Barbara
ELS	Stern, Elizabeth	PKE	Kelly, Patrick

PLC	Chalmers, Patricia L.	SAN	Nickerson, Sandra
PMC	McKay, Pat	SCY	Yetman, Scott
PMU	Murray, Paul	SEM	Myers, Susann
PST	Stowe, Peter	SIS	Smith, Sid
RAH	Hoogenbos, Rachel	SJF	Fullerton, Sylvia
RBS	Stern, Richard	SLH	Hulford, Sheila
RDE	d'Entremont, Ron	STV	Vines, Steve
RFE	Ferguson, Rick	TCD	D'Eon, Ted
RFL	Lauff, Randy F.	TOK	Kavanagh, Tom
RIW	Whitman, Rick	VIR	Redden, Virginia
RJS	Speirs, Robert J. N.	WEM	MacDonald, Wendy
ROH	Hall, Ross	WMA	MacPhail, Weldon
RSM	McDonald, Robert S.	WPN	Neily, Wayne
SAH	Hiltz, Sandy		



Left: NORTHERN CARDINAL has become a familiar sight throughout much of the province. But, when a beautiful male turns up at a feeder, like this one Mar. 24 in Kingston, you will probably spend a lot of time looking out the nearest window. [Photo Richard Stern]

Right: PINE SISKINS appeared in numbers in February, and remained unusually common at feeders during spring (here Mar. 17 in Hammonds Plains, HRM). [Photo Paul Murray]





Summary of Nova Scotia Migration Count (NSMC) for Spring 2010, 2011, and 2012

Compiled by Patrick Kelly

The 2010 and 2011 results were not included in previous issues of Nova Scotia Birds, and are given here for comparison with totals given in tabulations of the spring 2012 NSMC. The "nt." (night) counts, included many 'day' species heard or seen after dark, and are therefore included in the 'regular' ("Reg.", i.e. counted by day) column. An estimate of 100,000 Leach's Storm-Petrel in 2012 on BPI, which would greatly distort the estimated all-individuals total, is not included.

	2910	2011	2012
Total Indivs.	64,872	88,033	57,005
Total Species	180	186	189
Earliest start	04:00	00:00	00:00
Latest finish	21:10	23:10	18:36
No. reg. obs.	281	192	172
Total reg. hrs.	422	374	658
Reg. car km	5372	5073	4646
Reg. ft. km	564	451	469
Owling obs.	15	8	18
Owling hrs.	10	10	22
Owling km	185	65	205
Feeder obs.	327	330	251

Species	2010		2011		2012	
	Reg. + Nt.	Yard	Reg. + Nt.	Yard	Reg. + Nt.	Yard
Brant	75	-	54	-	3	-
Canada Goose	560	32	755	33	489	138
Wood Duck	30	6	40	3	36	-
Gr.-winged Teal	112	-	123	-	95	-
Gadwall	2	-	4	-	9	-
Am. Wigeon	95	-	77	-	75	3
Eur. Wigeon	-	-	4	-	3	-
Am. Black Duck	852 + 3	32	821	23	666 + 3.	35
Mallard	421	62	458	69	674	31
Northern Pintail	4	-	-	-	6	-
Bl.-Winged Teal	28	-	25	-	25	-
N. Shoveler	3	-	-	-	10	-
Redhead	-	-	-	-	4	-
Ring-neck. Duck	275	8	377	2	168	5
Greater Scaup	11	-	19	2	4	-
Lesser Scaup	-	-	-	-	11	-

Scaup species	9	-	-	-	-	-
Common Eider	1324	-	6883	-	837	2
Harlequin Duck	-	-	27	2	9	-
L.-tailed Duck	3	-	36	-	31	-
Black Scoter	313	-	6276	-	825	-
Surf Scoter	53	-	417	-	123	-
Wh.-w'ed Scoter	82	-	440	-	32	-
Scoter species	8	-	523	-	523	-
Com. Goldeneye	16	-	11	-	2	-
Bufflehead	2	-	251	-	3	-
Hooded Merg.	44	-	60	-	14	-
Common Merg.	245	2	179	3	113	-
Red-br. Merg.	488	-	970	2	348	7
Duck species	34	-	33	-	43	1
R.-n'd Pheasant	283	74	281	51	238	37
Chukar	2	-	-	-	-	-
Spruce Grouse	11	-	9	1	21	-
Ruffed Grouse	123	9	114+ 1	4	132	9
Red-thr. Loon	-	-	-	-	2	-
Common Loon	-	-	-	-	103+ 2	5
Pied-bill. Grebe	-	-	-	-	21	-
Red-n'kd Grebe	1	-	13	-	-	-
Horned Grebe	-	-	1	-	-	-
Sooty Sh'water	-	-	-	-	1	-
N. Gannet	194	-	1078	-	316	-
Great Corm'ant	22	-	95	-	27	-
D'le-cr. Corm'nt	1878	-	3488	18	1991	21
Am. Bittern	19+2	-	34+1	1	19+1	-
Gr. Blue Heron	101	25	214	3	147	15
Great Egret	-	-	5	-	4	-
Lit. Blue Heron	-	-	1	-	4	-
Bl.-cr. N. Heron	-	-	3	-	-	-
Turkey Vulture	8	-	17	-	12	-
Osprey	51	3	65	7	78	2
Bald Eagle adult	129	15	157	53	-	-
Bald Eagle imm.	41	5	45	-	-	-
B. Eag. Not aged	126	11	73	3	177	27
N. Harrier	43	2	31	1	28	1
Sh.-sh'ed Hawk	14	3	16	6	14	2
Cooper's Hawk	-	-	-	-	1	-
N. Goshawk	3	2	4	-	3	-

Red-sh.. Hawk	-	-	1	-	-	-
Br'd-w'd Hawk	11	1	5	-	10	-
Red-T'd Hawk	48	6	48	10	25	11
R.-Leg'd Hawk	2	-	-	-	-	-
Buteo species	6	1	2	-	-	-
Am. Kestrel	39	4	36	1	13	-
Merlin	20	3	28	-	12	3
Per. Falcon	3	-	4	-	4	-
Raptor species	6	-	4	-	14	-
Virginia Rail	-	-	1	-	-	-
Sora	17	-	18+1	-	33+1	2
Com. Gallinule	1	-	-	-	-	-
American Coot	-	-	1	-	-	-
Sandhill Crane	-	-	-	-	1	-
Bl.-bell. Plover	17	-	52	-	19	-
Piping Plover	12	-	9	-	4	-
Killdeer	42	2	34	2	41	4
Gr. Yellowlegs	134	2	102	-	59	-
Les. Yellowlegs	10	-	13	-	7	-
Sol. Sandpiper	-	-	3	-	-	-
Eastern Willet	169	10	249	-	185	2
Spot. Sandpiper	35	-	32	-	37	-
Rud. Turnstone	-	-	-	-	2	-
Red Knot	-	-	-	-	1	-
Sanderling	1	-	-	-	-	-
Semi. Sandpiper	2	-	-	-	-	-
Least Sandpiper	2	-	12	-	1	-
Wh.-rump' San..	1	-	-	-	-	-
Purp. Sandpiper	44	-	30	-	-	-
Dunlin	8	-	9	-	7	-
Wilson's Snipe	43 +13	1	52 +23	-	40+ 38	4
Am. Woodcock	18 +41	1	33 +50.	-	50 +64	-
Shoreb'd species	26	-	-	-	4	-
Pomarine Jaeger	-	-	1	-	-	-
Bl'-headed Gull	8	1	38	2	1	-
Bonap'te's Gull	-	-	10	-	28	-
Ring-Billed Gull	46	-	129	6	35	-
Herring Gull	7109	79	10271	78	4883	150
Iceland Gull	25	8	44	-	17	1
Les. Bl.-b'd Gull	-	-	2	-	-	-
Glaucous Gull	1	-	2	-	1	-
Grt. Bl.-b'd Gull	1319	83	5154	4	1970	149
Bl-leg. Kit'wake	-	-	85	-	-	-
Gull species	187	26	785	12	124	6
Caspian Tern	1	-	-	-	-	-
Common Tern	40	-	102	2	103	-
Arctic Tern	-	-	-	-	4	-
Dovekie	-	-	1	-	-	-
Common Murre	1	-	3	-	-	-
Razorbill	11	-	2	-	25	-
Black Guillemot	37	-	76	-	9	-
Rock Pigeon	606	249	700	289	530	218
Wh.-w'ed Dove	-	-	-	-	-	1
Mourning Dove	732 +2	647	1016 +1	633	759 +3	590
Gr. Horned Owl	5+6	-	20	-	4+4	-
Barred Owl	24+ 15	3	30 +10	5	42+ 11	11
Long-eared Owl	1	-	-	-	-	-
N. S.-whet Owl	7+1	1	2	-	4	4
Com. Nt.hawk	1	-	-	-	-	-
Chimney Swift	115	-	211	-	230	1
Ru.-thr.H'bird	6	25	38	106	64	165
B'ted Kingfisher	161	8	139	12	127	7

Red-bel. W'p'er	3	-	3	-	3	3
Yel.-bell. Saps.	127	5	123	9	100 +7	15
Dow. W'pecker	205	223	179	196	127	147
Hairy W'pecker	141	128	148	125	89	114
Bl.-b. W'pecker	3	-	2	1	2	-
N. Flicker	432	49	621	38	413	34
Pil. W'pecker	42	11	49	6	37	22
W'pecker spec.	12	1	4	-	12	2
E. Wood-Pewee	-	-	3	-	-	-
Yell.-bell. Fly'er	1	-	1	-	1	-
Alder Flycatcher	3	-	18	-	1	-
Will. Flycatcher	-	-	1	-	-	-
Least Flycatcher	37	-	29	-	79	10
Flycatcher spec.	-	-	2	-	8	-
Eastern Phoebe	19	-	22	2	23	4
E.Kingbird	8	-	16	-	5	3
Northern Shrike	-	-	1	-	-	-
Bl.-headed Vireo	348	1	336	-	394	7
Phila. Vireo	1	-	-	-	-	-
Red-eyed Vireo	16	-	25	1	12	6
Vireo species	7	-	10	-	-	-
Horned Lark	1	-	2	-	-	-
Tree Swallow	1360	175	1145	68	944	61
Bank Swallow	18	-	21	2	46	7
Cliff Swallow	21	-	20	12	17	10
Barn Swallow	734	-	477	65	403	39
Swallow species	2	-	-	-	-	-
Gray Jay	82	6	26	7	20	10
Blue Jay	1033	679	905	536	740	570
American Crow	2999	-	-	-	2302	-
Common Raven	+16	603	2680	593	+3	555.
Black-cap.	599	53	454	85	360	61
Ch'dee	2048	897	1754	973	1257	703
Bor. Chickadee	90	3	52	4	57	-
Chickadee sp.	13	-	27	3	-	-
Red-br. Nuthatch	153	66	111	100	102 +1	66
W.-br. Nuthatch	20	57	23	63	10	46
Brown Creeper	14	1	36	-	24 + 1	--
Winter Wren	97	-	72	-	128	1
Wren species	-	2	-	-	-	-
Golden-cr. K'let	202	16	94	-	193 +5	2
Ruby-cr. K'glet	580	23	451	1	415	4
Blue-gr. Gnat'er	3	-	-	-	-	-
E. Bluebird	3	-	-	-	-	1
Veery	1+1	-	12	1	5	2
Gray-ch. Thrush	1	-	-	-	-	-
Bicknell's Thr.	1	-	-	-	-	-
Swainson's Thr.	4+1	1	16	-	15	-
Hermit Thrush	368 +15	8	354	15	487 +47	9
Thrush species	-	-	-	-	15	6
American Robin	3581 +42	550	3629 +72	387	2909 +9	-
Gray Catbird	17	-	25	1	24	-
N. Mockingbird	2	2	1	2	-	1
Brown Thrasher	-	-	-	-	1	1
Boh. Waxwing	-	-	15	-	-	-
Cedar Waxwing	77	18	11	-	89	17
Eur. Starling	2954	720	3155	735	3040	770
Tenn. Warbler	3	-	-	-	-	1
Or.-cr. Warb.	1	1	-	-	1	-
Nashville Warb.	216	-	177	-	142	-

			+ 2			
Northern Parula	398	6	423 + 2	3	429 + 3	23
Yellow Warbler	83	-	199	-	125	39
Chestn.-s. Warb.	10	-	28	-	77	3
Magnolia War.	47	-	64	-	160	3
Cape May War.	-	-	3	-	2	-
Bl.-th. Bl. Warb.	12	-	18	-	10	-
Yellow-rumped Warbler	2061 +6	60	1292	14	1435 + 6	41
Bl.-th. Gr. Warb.	306	1	430	1	560	11
Bl'burn. Warb.	8	-	9	-	28	-
Yell.-thr. Warb.	5	-	-	-	-	-
Pine Warbler	4	-	-	-	-	-
Prairie Warbler	-	-	-	-	2	-
Palm Warbler	383	-	204	-	208 + 3	-
Bay-br. Warbler					6	-
Blackpoll Warb.	1	-	1	-	5	-
Bl.-and-Wh. Warb.	369	4	424	1	405 + 2	13
American Redstart	76	-	20	-	67	9
Ovenbird	273	6	444+ 2	4	482 + 3	30
N. Waterthrush	27+3	-	75+1	-	51	-
Common Yellowthroat	89+2	1	71	5	79 + 6	-
Wils.'s Warbler	-	-	-	-	3	-
Canada Warbler	-	-	-	-	1	-
Eastern Towhee	-	-	-	1	-	-
Am. Tree Spar.	11	1	6	3	6	8
Chipping Sparrow	143	67	163	37	133 + 1.	50
Vesper Sparrow	-	-	4	-	1	-
Savannah Sparrow	351 +5	59	338 + 2	28	306 + 1	33
"Ipswich" Spar.	1	-	-	-	-	-
Nelson's Sparr.	-	-	1	-	-	-
Fox Sparrow	8	7	4	19	3+ 9.	12
Song Sparrow	1805 +8.	329	1844	245	1658 + 26	251
Lincoln's Sparr.	4	-	6	-	8	
Swamp Sparrow	138 +	3	155	-	180 + 5	-

White-thr. Spar.	947 + 36	144	1212	108	980 + 45.	80
White-cr. Spar.	7	22	4	4	3	5
Dark-eyed Junco	917 + 8	275	934	480	640 + 8	246
sparrow species	50	24	15	8	37	45
Scarlet Tanager	-	-	1	-		
Sum. Tanager			3	1		
N. Cardinal	26	24	71	27	40	24
Rose-br. G'k.	12+1	21	39	11	36	47
Blue Grosbeak	-	-	1	-	1	1
Indigo Bunting	-	1	1	3	12	4
Dickcissel	1	-	-	-		
Bobolink	20	-	10	1	19	2
Red-winged Bl-bird	1296	219	1387 +2	258	1050	338
E. Meadowlark						1
Rusty Blackbird	47	35	4	14	13	24
Common Grackle	2101	737	2734	675	1521 +2	617
B't-tailed Grackle ¹	-	1	-	-	-	-
Br.-h. Cowbird	12	14	30	14	13	35
blackbird sp.	-	22	2	9	-	-
Orchard Oriole	-	-	-	-	4	-
Baltimore Oriole	4	4	1	-	9	2
Pine Grosbeak	2	-	4	14	2	7
Purple Finch	498	671	823	922	414 + 4	603
House Finch	-	-	3	10	1	1
Red Crossbill	4	8	21	23	29	14
Wh. -w Crossbill	59	12	59	17	33	
Com. Redpoll	-	6	-	6	-	8
Pine Siskin	78	78	39	137	148	287
Am. Goldfinch	2138	1903	1649	1236	1605 + 1	1874
Eve. Grosbeak	161	181	176	204	60	198
Finch species	2	-	2	-	12	14
House Sparrow	143	177	198	171	104	63
Unidentified sp.	-	-	24	1	-	-

¹ No data were submitted in support of the Boat-tailed Grackle

Field Trip Reports, Spring 2012

Only two reports were submitted from the several Society field trips held this spring, but we can assume that most of the birds seen were otherwise reported. However, these two accounts each give some of the flavor of these group experiences: sometimes successful, sometimes less so.

May 23: The Fred Dobson Warbler Walk, HRM, by Leader Joan Waldron

This traditional trip was very damp and foggy. Only Chris Pepper and I and one other were there. Most of the birds were heard only – I think they were as damp as we were. We had 34 species, 10 of which were warblers. WINTER WRENS were singing, but not showing. Chris heard a BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER, and we had glimpses of it, confirming it as a first for this traditional trip. If it hadn't been for Chris' superb sound-identifying skills, the trip would have been a real washout. Oh yes, and the bugs did not mind the damp and were out in full force.

May 21: The Historic Hants County Field Trip, by Leader Suzanne Borkowski

We had a glorious day (14-18°C) for this annual field trip, which started at Mount Uniacke House on Victoria Day, when about 20 people set out along the trails close to the Museum. We heard a few warblers there and saw a PILEATED WOODPECKER close to the parking lot. There were no loons or grebes on the lake, but there was a SWAMP SPARROW at its edge and the woods were full of kinglets.

Subsequent stops produced more warblers, the best perhaps being a NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH at the bottom of Elliott Road. Our best stop, however, was McKay Section, just before we turned the corner and headed into Smileys Provincial Park. That stop produced BOBOLINKS, TREE and BARN SWALLOWS, a Chimney SWIFT, a HOODED MERGANSER, a WILSON'S SNIPE, a BALD EAGLE, YELLOW WARBLERS, RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS, and another SWAMP SPARROW. We picked up a YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER and EVENING GROSBEAKS at Smileys and a GRAY CATBIRD in Windsor. There were some NORTHERN SHOVELERS in the second sewage pond in Windsor.

I decided to skip College Road this year since most residents had taken down their feeders. Clarence Stevens offered to take a quick look for us and, when he rejoined the group, he reported CLIFF SWALLOWS in the field across from the Nursing Home! That'll teach me to skip stops!

All in all we tallied 69 species for the day, which included 13 warbler and 5 woodpecker species.

The Bronzed Cowbird in Yarmouth, March-April 2012

By Eric and Barbara Ruff

On Wednesday, March 28th, 2012, while we were sitting in our sunroom eating lunch I noticed a strange 'Grackle' with a red eye. Further attention revealed that the glossy blue of the Common Grackle's head was missing and that it appeared, instead, on his wings and tail. I knew that one of the Grackles did not have a yellow eye at some stage and thought we should investigate. Out came the guides and it became readily apparent that we had a **BRONZED COWBIRD** in front of us. He seemed to be favouring one leg – but that, of course, wasn't diagnostic! He was feeding on the ground and would occasionally take some water before disappearing into our tangle of bushes. He spent more time hiding than feeding and drinking, so we felt that he might not have been in the best condition. He did appear to improve over the time that he was with us – and his leg also seemed to get somewhat better.

Knowing that this was a rarity, I emailed both Ian McLaren and Blake Maybank thinking that one of them might add it to the Nova Scotia Rare Bird Alert list. Ian, with his return email, quite properly entitled "Apparent Bronzed Cowbird", seemed not entirely convinced – until I forwarded a poor-quality photo which showed both the red eye and the glossy blue wings.

Next morning, at 7.45am, we received a phone call from Eric Mills, Ian McLaren and David Currie who had driven from Halifax to Yarmouth the night before and stayed overnight. Snow covered the ground – probably not to the liking of the bird, whose normal territory is near and below the US-Mexico border. After about an hour's patient waiting the bird showed up and revealed himself to the Halifax group. All had observed the bird before – but in Florida, Texas and California – so this was a new bird for their Nova Scotia lists.

Word got out in a hurry. Later that day Al McTavish arrived and was able to see his 540th bird in Canada, which put him into the lead (by one) over a BC competitor. As well, several other birders managed to see the bird that day – including Ron d'Entremont who captured the bird in several marvellous photographs. Two birders from Halifax arrived late in the day and did not see "Toro" (our name for this Mexican resident of the 'cowbird' species, with a red eye!)

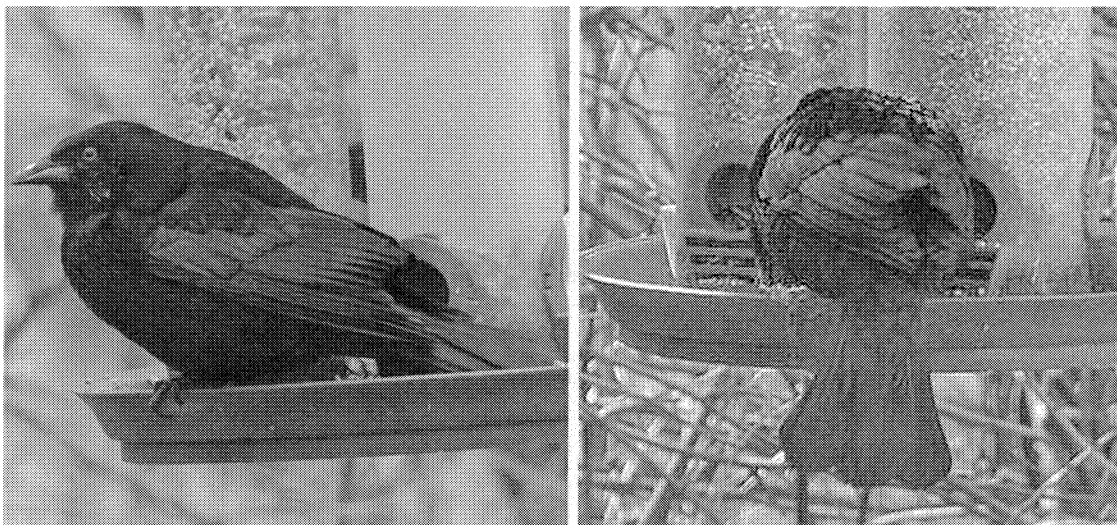
The two last-mentioned birders arrived back in Yarmouth the next day. They waited in our sunroom and searched the neighbourhood near and far with no success. He did not appear at our feeder that day.

On Saturday, March 31, he was back. So too were the two keen birders from Halifax – this time they saw their bird; as did about six local birders.

Sunday, April 1st, was a big day at our Alma Street residence. About twenty birders from Halifax, the South Shore and the Annapolis Valley congregated here – and were all, eventually, able to get good looks at the bird. His habit of hiding in the ‘tangle’ and coming out occasionally for food and drink was maintained although, by this time, he had discovered a hanging feeder which he defended strongly – even attempting to drive off ROCK PIGEONS. Five of our visitors were from Acadia University’s Ornithology program.

Most visitors were treated to an occasional visit by a male Red-bellied Woodpecker as well as our resident flock of HOUSE FINCHES (first noticed at our feeder on April 15, 1978 – the second observation for Nova Scotia). Also, many of our out-of-town visitors were able to observe Yarmouth’s flock of EASTERN BLUEBIRDS just south of the town.

The Bronzed Cowbird graced our feeder, almost daily, from March 28 until April 7, 2012.



Two fine examples of the many photographs (see also the cover) obtained (left Mar, 29, right Apr. 1) of the BRONZED COWBIRD shows nicely its large size, hunch-backed posture and shiny (blue) wing. Note also the whitish and somewhat hair-like feather tips on its expanded “ruff” (right). The photo at right was valuable in showing that the rump and uppertail coverts are tinged with mauve, not brassy, which supports its identification as subspecies *loyei*. [Photos: left, Ronnie D’Entremont, right Dennis Garratt]

Comments on Bronzed Cowbird subspecies

by Ian McLaren

The Yarmouth Bronzed Cowbird (*Molothrus aeneus*) was the fifth recorded in Nova Scotia. The first were sight records: May 1991 on Seal I. and October 1997 on CSI; the next was specimen found July 2008 Dartmouth; and, again on Seal I., one was photographed July 2011. The species occurs largely in Mexico and Central America, but colonized s.e. U.S. in the last century. There are two subspecies: *loyei* of western Mexico includes migratory birds that breed in New Mexico, Arizona, and s.e. California; *aeneus* is found in eastern Mexico into southeast Texas, and has recently spread to the central Gulf Coast and Florida. It would be of interest to know from which population the Yarmouth male might have come.

The two subspecies of the Bronzed Cowbird have a confusing taxonomic history. Ridgway (1902) distinguished the current eastern subspecies *aeneus* as a species (“*Callothrus robustus*”) that had the “rump bronzy, like back” from the western *loyei* as a different species (“*Callothrus. aeneus*”) with the “rump violet.” Friedmann (1927) clarified things somewhat, but perpetuated the Ridgway names by using *Tangavius aenius involucatus* for bronze-rumped

and *T. a. aeneus* for violet-rumped ones. Parkes and Blake (1965) traced the correct names and geography, giving us *Molothrus a. aeneus* for the eastern Mexico and *M. a. loyei* for the western subspecies.

The above sources and some field guides note that the two subspecies differ in measurements and that their females are distinctive: those of *loyei* are dark gray or brownish gray, and of *aeneus* are brownish black to dull black. The description of the 1997 bird (Nickerson *et al.* 2000) suggests the dark plumage of a female *aeneus*, and the 2008 specimen measured as a young male of *loyei* (Hebda and McLaren 2001).¹

Pyle (1997 "Identification Guide to North American Birds," states that western Mexico *loyei* has a "relatively short" tail and "rump washed violet" and the eastern *aeneus* as having a "relatively long" tail "back and rump uniformly greenish bronze." Jarimillo and Burke (1999) note the plumage difference (p. 375, under Adult Male Definitive Basic) but then state (p. 375 under Geographic Variation): "Traditionally males of *loyei* . . . are stated to have a violet sheen to the rump . . . However, a study of many museum specimens has determined that *aeneus* has a violet sheen on the rump . . . (P. Warren, pers. Comm.)" Yet the published study of Bronzed Cowbird vocalizations by Warren (2002) makes no reference to museum specimens, and simply asserts: "male plumage does not differ visually between the subspecies (Parkes and Blake 1965)." The latter, however, clarified taxonomy and established current subspecies names, but make no reference to distinguishing plumages males of *aeneus* and *loyei*.

Some of the photos of the Yarmouth bird appear to show a violet sheen on rump. I've tried to get some insights from Google and VIREO images of geographically assignable adult males that clearly show the rump; four from Arizona one from California (presumably *loyei*) all show violet on the rump, but of four from southeast Texas (presumably *aeneus*), two have bronze on the rump, but two seem to have some violet at least on upper tail coverts. A re-examination of museum series would seem to be worthwhile. I have tried to estimate from suitable Web images relative lengths of tail projection (beyond the primaries) relative to lengths of wing from outer coverts to primary tips, but these seem quite variable. Meanwhile, possibly only measurements, like those obtained from the 2000 specimen from Dartmouth, might indicate the geographic origins of our birds.

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¹For some reason, the submitted table of measurements was omitted from that published account. For the record, the measurements are as follows, using methods of Pyle 1997): wing chord, 121 mm; tail length 89 mm; culmen 19.5 mm. The tail length is near the upper extreme for *loyei* and beyond the limits for *aeneus*.

The Late-April 2012 Fallout of Indigo Buntings in Nova Scotia

By Ian McLaren

This spring, one of the largest fallouts ever of INDIGO BUNTINGS appeared in Nova Scotia. (The late-April 1991 fallout may have been even larger, but this was before the proliferation of birders and e-reporting.) Along with them were smaller numbers of SUMMER TANAGERS, BLUE GROSBEAKS and a few “southern” warblers beyond their normal range, and some very early SCARLET TANAGERS and ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAKS, which are at the fringe of their wider ranges here. Clearly something happened to bring these birds beyond their normal migratory and breeding ranges. Because the INDIGO BUNTING was much the most abundant species, I have chosen it in my attempt to explain this “fallout” phenomenon. To do so I consulted e-Bird map records, state and provincial e-mail birding groups, and NOAA and Canadian weather records and maps.

Now we can turn to the INDIGO BUNTING’s normal migratory pattern, which is nicely captured by eBird’s “occurrence-maps” (Figure 1).

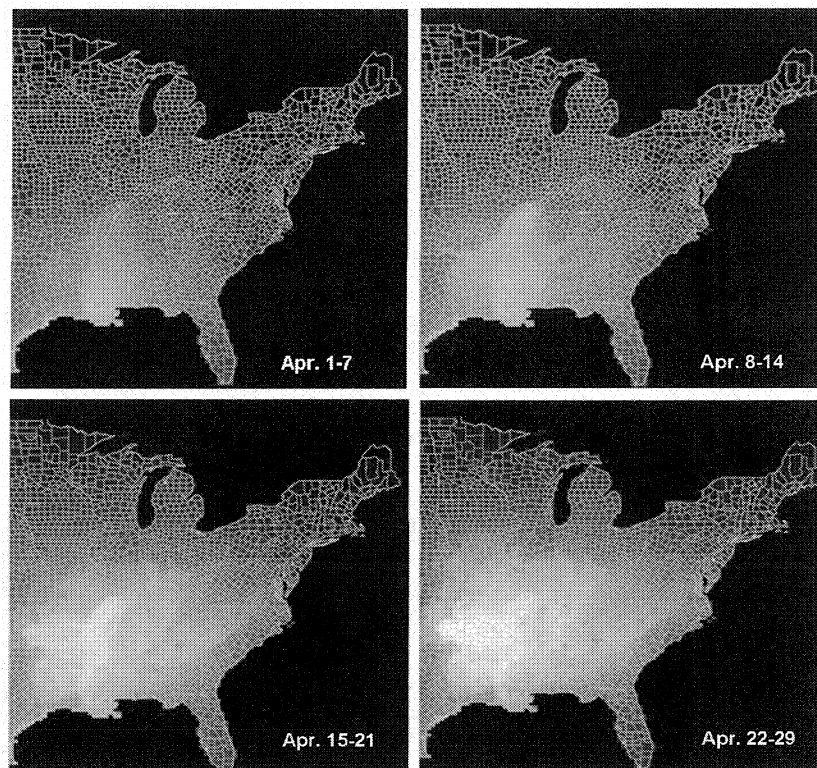


Figure 1. Weekly Migration patterns, for many years combined, of INDIGO BUNTING. Extracted from eBird’s colour-coded videos of weekly numbers (<<http://ebird.org/ebird/map/>>).

One remarkable feature of the fallout (see Table 1, below) is that, after a few earlier individuals, the first big influx of buntings in New England and Atlantic Canada, beginning Apr. 24, was overwhelmingly in Nova Scotia, as indicated in the following table: The Apr. 24 influx in New Brunswick was entirely on offshore Machias Seal I., where there were also about two dozen BLUE GROSBEAKS and six ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAKS, exceeding numbers of those species found that day in all of Nova Scotia.

Table 1. Numbers of INDIGO BUNTINGS on first days observed, Apr. 19-26, in New England and Atlantic Canada. None was recorded in New Hampshire or Newfoundland.

Date (April)	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Connecticut						3		
Rhode I.				1	1			
Massachusetts			1	1		4	2	1
Maine						3	1	2
New Brunswick	1					12	12	1
Nova Scotia				3		32+	62+	24+

Many more buntings in Nova Scotia were first observed on days after April 26, and well into May (see information on these and other fallout species in the seasonal report on **Tanagers through House Sparrow**), but most of these probably arrived with the big influx on Apr. 24-25, and were only discovered as they came to feeders. Most of these were found in Lunenburg County, which may be partly because of extensive reporting of birds there to James Hirtle. Note also that, of birds of specified sex, 25 were female and 44 were male.

It is well-known, and clear from Figure 1, that most buntings arrive in Louisiana and Mississippi from their winter range in Central America and Mexico, whence they spread into south and central U.S. They begin arriving in early April, and abundantly after mid-April, so that the Nova Scotia fallout coincided with their major trans-Gulf migration, NEXRAD radar, which monitors bird migration as well as precipitation (see archive with discussion of migration <http://people.mbi.ohio-state.edu/hurtado.10/US_Composite_Radar/>), is somewhat uninformative as its reach clearly does not capture much offshore Gulf or Atlantic migration. However, following heavy precipitation in the Gulf and Florida during the night of April 21, there was strong migration during the next two nights in coastal and near-shore southern Texas, and some indication of birds moving off southern Florida and the Carolinas. More informative are the airflow patterns in days before and during the major fallout. Surface winds are too variable and unrepresentative of conditions experienced by migrants, but charts at the next documented altitude (850 mb, or about 1,500 m) probably give a good indication of wind conditions above a couple of hundred metres of the surface (Figure 2).

During evenings of Apr. 20 and 21 (Figure 2) there was moderate southwesterly airflow from the Gulf of Mexico and southeastern U.S. to Atlantic Canada, which may have abetted overshooting by the few buntings that turned up Apr. 21-23 in New England and Nova Scotia. Then in evening Apr. 21, a low developed in the northeastern Gulf and moved rapidly northeast to the Delmarva Peninsula by next evening, setting up strong westerly flow in the Gulf and southeastern U.S. This pattern continued for some days as the deepening low moved slowly to Hudson Bay and beyond. The charts (Figure 2) suggest that birds crossing the Gulf during evening Apr. 22 would have been deflected far out over the Atlantic, and would only then have been propelled northeastward to reach land in Nova Scotia, but not further south or west. Indeed, most of them seemed to have come ashore in about the middle of the province which, following the isobars and wind directions, might be expected for flocks of birds originating in the middle of the Gulf. On the other hand, any birds forced out to sea from further north in coastal southeastern U.S., where Indigo Buntings are not normally found then in numbers (Figure 1), would also have been driven out to sea before being impelled northeast. This this may explain the limited fallout in New England and even New Brunswick, where almost all were on Machias Seal I. or Grand Manan I., which were not much in the "shadow" of Nova Scotia to the east.

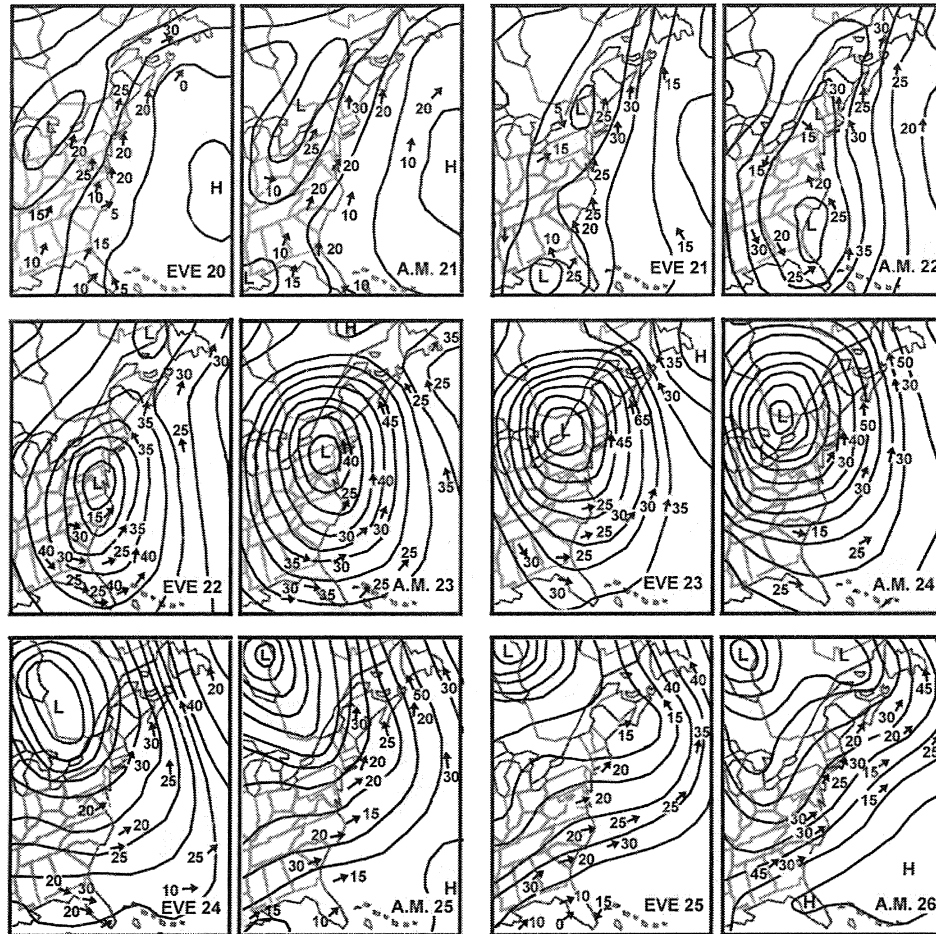


Figure 2. Pressure at about 1500 m (in 3 mb intervals) and selected wind directions and speeds to nearest 5 knots in eastern North America during evening (20:00 EDT) and morning (08:00 EDT) Apr. 24-26. Redrawn from NOAA analysis charts at 850 mb (<<http://nomads.ncdc.noaa.gov/ncep/charts>>).

The weather setup that sent buntings to us ended by Apr. 26 (Fig. 2), so it is uncertain if all Indigo Buntings and individuals of other fallout species that were discovered into early May, often at feeders and (see especially table in Tanagers to Sparrows section of this issue), were part of the April 24-25 fallout, or arrived later.

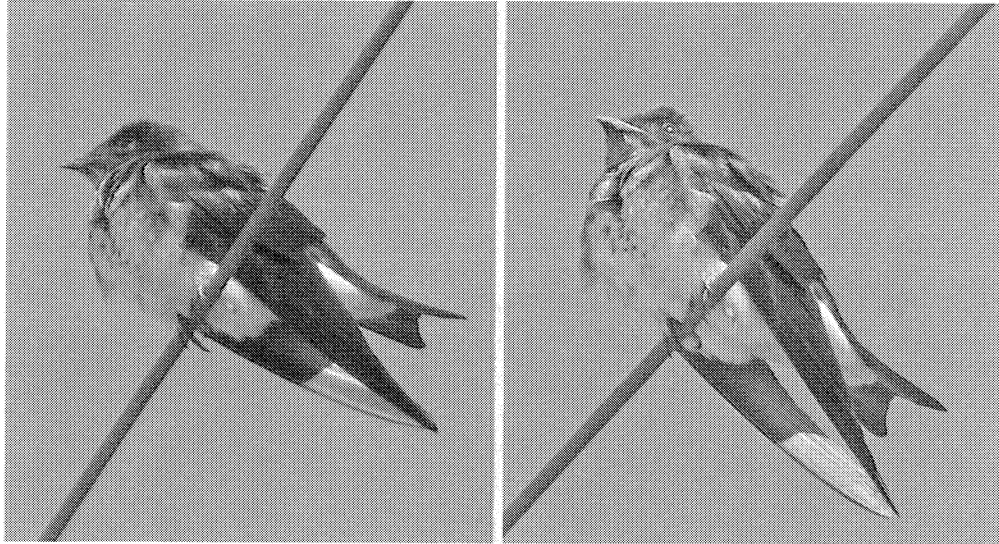
The weather at Halifax and Saint John was foggy and rainy during morning Apr. 24, and somewhat better next morning. On Apr. 24, one bunting was found dead in Halifax, another picked up exhausted at Hartlen Pt., *HRM*, later died under care, and others were rated as listless or very tame. One Blue Grosbeak was found dead Apr. 25 on Conrad Bch., *HRM*. The fallout birds clearly had an arduous journey. Males usually prevail among vagrants because they migrate earlier and faster, but the present fallout presumably delivered seasonally timely trans-Gulf migrants (see Fig. 1). The preponderance of males reported might also imply that females suffered relatively greater mortality. Preliminary individual-based models by James McLaren, using known estimates of variable fuel (fat) capacities, navigational speeds and orientations, and effects of winds, suggest that even with 50% capacity (a level at which birds often migrate) of full fat load, 80-90% of Indigo Buntings might not have made it to Nova Scotia. The disturbing thought occurs that the spring (and autumn) low-pressure systems that traditionally form in southeastern U.S. and move northeast might become more extreme and frequent as a result of humanity's increasing impact on the global climate system.

I thank James Hirtle for amassing the numerous reports in Lunenburg County, Andrew McLaren for advice on extracting individual frames from normally unstoppable video files, Eric Mills and Jamie McLaren for helpful suggestions on a draft version, and Jamie McLaren for his preliminary modeling of the event.

An Odd Martin on Cape Sable Island

By Ian McLaren

On May 19, 2012, Bernice McLaren and I found an apparent martin perched on wires high above the road to Daniel's Head, CSI. Although it was fluffed out and somewhat droopy, it didn't look as large as a PURPLE MARTIN should be. Its unsullied white undertail coverts, unlike any field-guide illustrations, made me wonder about a tropical martin. So I concentrated on getting a few representative images, all of them necessarily from below. After a few minutes, it flew off out of sight to the southwest. I was only able to contact John Nickerson among the CSI birders, and upon my simply mentioning "an odd martin" he immediately responded that he, had been puzzled by a smallish martin (and had compared it to a nearby Tree Swallow) at the same place an hour earlier.




I solicited comments on the above photos (in colour) from an on-line "Advanced Birding" group and, among others, Alvaro Jaramillo (author of the authoritative "Birds of Chile") responded that: "the question . . . is how commonly, or in what plumage, does Purple Martin have clean white undertail coverts? . . . This is a key feature, as [the South American] Gray-breasted (which this bird resembles!) and Caribbean Martin have [these]." Paul Buckley reported seeing a subadult male Purple Martin in Connecticut that, among other non-field-guide features, was white below the chest, but did have dark marks on the undertail coverts. David Christie sent photos of a similarly unstreaked martin found April 21, 2011 by him and Stuart Tingley in New Brunswick, and he also sent the following link to a Purple Martin website:

<[http://purplemartin.org/update/Tattletails11\(4\).pdf](http://purplemartin.org/update/Tattletails11(4).pdf)>

That source notes that 2nd cycle ("subadult") females sometimes have all-white crissum, but doesn't show how far up the breast this white might extend, in comparison with the CSI martin. The extensively blue wings including the coverts of the CSI martin may be more suggestive of a subadult male.

I've also looked at images of Purple and Gray-breasted Martin on the web, including some immatures of the latter that have a similarly grayish nape, without resolution. Al. Jaramillo has also noted that Gray-breasted Martin is probably two species, one largely resident in Brazil, and the other an austral migrant breeding in Bolivia, Uruguay, and Argentina, and more likely to overshoot during its northward migration (our spring) to northern South America, like Fork-tailed Flycatcher, Brown-chested Martin, and some other swallows and swifts that have turned up in North America.

So, that's where it remains. The bird was most likely a Purple Martin, but how, then, would one identify a vagrant Gray-breasted Martin? A puzzle is always more fun than a mere tick.



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