

# **Nova Scotia Birds**

*A Quarterly Publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society*



**Summer 2012**

*Volume 54, Issue 4*



Formed in 1955, the Nova Scotia Bird Society is a member of Nature Nova Scotia and Nature Canada. The activities of the Society are centred on the observation, study and protection of the birds of the province and preservation of their habitats.

Nova Scotia Bird Society  
c/o The Nova Scotia Museum

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Halifax, NS B3H 3A6

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Piping Plovers in NS, 2012  
American Goldfinch Study  
High tide Havoc at Daniels Head, CSI

## NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY

### Executive 2011-2012

|                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| President                | Patrick Kelly     |
| Vice President           | Terry Boswell     |
| Past President           | Vacant            |
| Treasurer                | Gillian Elliot    |
| Secretary                | Patricia McKay    |
| Membership Secretary     | Ulli Höger        |
| Director                 | Chris Pepper      |
| Director                 | Helen Van Doninck |
| Chair, NSBS Sanct. Trust | Bob McDonald      |
| Honorary Sliciter        | Tony Robinson     |
| Honorary Auditor         | Ruth E. Smith     |

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**Cover:** A COMMON TERN is an uncommonly beautiful example of birds as art. Photo by Ronnie D'Entremont

## Nova Scotia Birds Summer 2012

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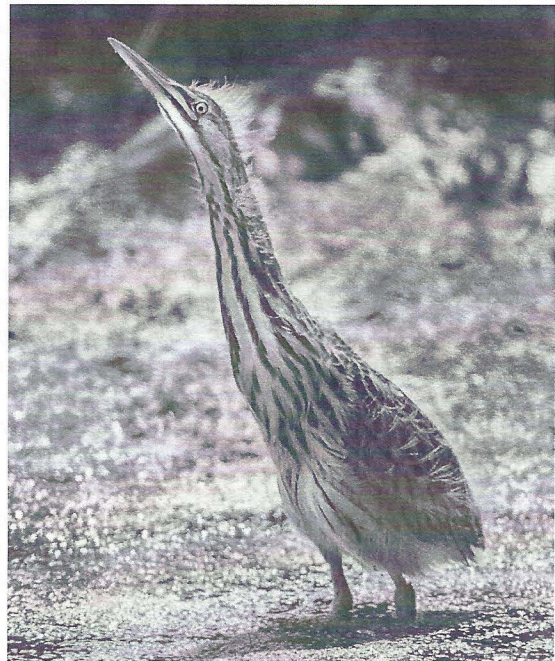
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## Message from the Acting Editor

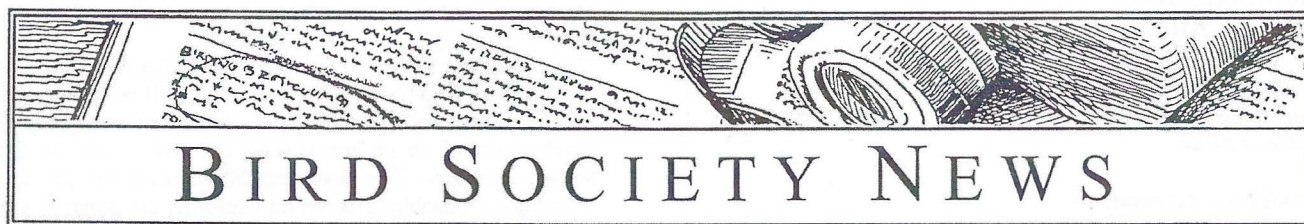
This is the last issue of the Society's quarterlies for 2012, almost on its usual schedule. In 2013, the Society will be making major changes in keeping with this age of e-communication, including development of an on-line version of *Nova Scotia Birds* for Society members. The more-than 50 years of our journal of record are a valuable resource for exploring the province's bird life, and there are also plans to make an on-line version of past volumes for members and others who wish to make use of them

Although most of us, if we chose to, are now informed every day of bird sighting around the province, I believe there is still a place for a traditional journal like ours. Too often, the 'big picture' becomes lost in the welter of on-line reports and images of the birds we find. Rare or unusual birds, even with photos, are not fully described and put in perspective, in the manner needed for wider acceptance. Important changes in abundance, distribution and behaviour of our bird populations may be overlooked unless they are analysed and documented.

As acting editor, I am glad to be part of this transition. Do continue to let us know your own views of what might be done improve our journal.



A young AMERICAN BITTERN (note the wispy down on head and neck) July 19 near Pugwash, Cum., hasn't quite learned that it's better to hide upright in a bed of cattails. [Photo Ian Murray]



## Minutes of the Nova Scotia Bird Society Annual General Meeting

Thursday, November 22, 2012

The meeting was called to order by the President Patrick Kelly, at 7:35pm. It was noted that there were 33 people in attendance, which is more than enough for a quorum for the society.

- 1 **Approval of the Agenda.** It was moved by Susann Myers, and seconded by Chris Pepper, that the agenda for tonight's meeting of the N.S.B.S. be approved as submitted. The motion was passed.
- 2 **Approval of the Minutes of the 2011 Annual Meeting.** It was moved by Eric Mills and seconded by Sylvia Fullerton, that the minutes of the 2011 Annual Meeting of the NSBS be approved. The motion carried.
- 3 **Business arising from the Minutes.** The business arising from the minutes centered on the reactivation of the membership committee. The President stated that this has been done, and that the committee has carried out an in-depth survey of the membership to try to determine why membership numbers continue to decline.

### 4. Reports.

#### 4.1 The Membership Report, presented by Membership Secretary, Ulli Hoeger. (See Appendix 1)

The downward trend in paid-up membership numbers continues. The total membership stands at 268, as compared with 295 last year. We had 33 new members sign up, but were still -27 members compared to last year due to past members not renewing their memberships. The NSBS Facebook group however has over 450 followers, and is very active. See Appendix 1 for the table of numbers for the past 5 years. Some questions and discussion followed the presentation of this report.

Eric Mills asked if Facebook has brought many new members to the society. Ulli replied that there had been some, but the numbers speak for themselves.

Blake Maybank asked how many members had given an email address to the society for contact purposes. Ulli replied that he had around 200 email addresses on file for the total membership of 268, but there were always several emails which 'bounce' every month as members do not remember to update their contact details.

Wayne Neily suggested that we need a phoning committee to phone up non-renewing members to find out why they have chosen not to renew.

It was moved by Suzanne Borkowski and seconded by Ian McLaren, that the Membership Report be approved. The motion carried.

#### 4.2 Treasurer's Report, presented by Treasurer Gillian Elliott. (See Appendix 2)

It was moved by Blake Maybank, and seconded by Bob McDonald, that the Treasurer's Report be approved. The motion carried.

### 4.3 Conservation Report, presented by the Conservation Committee Chair, Helene Van Doninck.

There have been two major projects this year, both directly relating to the welfare of birds and wildlife in general:- the lead shot campaign and the indoor cats campaign. Both have gone extremely well.

Susann Myers proposed a round of applause from the membership for Helene, to thank her for all her hard work over the year.

### 4.4 Editor's Report.

A brief report was given by Acting Editor, Ian McLaren, who has only been on the job for a month. Since the resignation of long time Editor Blake Maybank, there have been problems getting NS Birds published on time due to the resignation due to health issues of our volunteer layout editor, and a lack of volunteers to fill both her position and other vacancies on the editorial team. Ian is confident that the situation is improving, and hopes to have one issue mailed out very soon, with a second issue already in the works. However, the production of NS Birds is a lot of work, and more volunteers are always welcome.

President Patrick Kelly called for a round of applause from the membership in recognition of Ian's hard work.

### 4.5 NSBS Sanctuary Trust Report, presented by Chairman Bob McDonald. (See Appendix 3.)

Overall, it's been a rather quiet year for the NSBS Sanctuary Trust – all of our properties remain the same but I can give you some information about several of them. Of course, the primary function of the Sanctuary Trust is to maintain our properties in good standing with respect to taxes. As I've mentioned previously, three of our six properties are now tax-exempt, saving us about \$600 per year.

**Peters Island** in Digby Co, located in Grand Passage between Long and Brier Islands, is now tax-exempt. Last year, Eric Mills sent me a concise report which I suspect is still relevant. Breeding birds consist mainly of Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls, Double-crested Cormorants and Black Guillemots. Unfortunately, no terns have nested since 2001.

Also at the western end of the Province are our 4 **Bald Tusket Islands** having a total area of about 21 acres. Ted d'Eon is our property warden there and although he did not land on any of the islands this year, he did send us a brief listing of birds he noted on a cruise-by in June. These include Common Eider, Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls, Black Guillemot, Double-crested Cormorant and a few terns, species unknown. Presumably, Leach's Storm-petrels are still an important part of the avifauna on several of the islands.

We own 2 inland properties: one is a small island in a lake north of **North Kemptville** and the other, the **Kelsey Property**, is a 200-acre wet woodland on St. Catherine's River Road between Port Joli and Kejimikujik Seaside National Park. Neither of these was visited this year and so I have no updates.

Our last two properties are islands. One is 39-acre **Indian Island** in Green Bay about 6 km off shore from Broad Cove. Occasionally, Ken Gregoire, our current property warden, would fly over this island and provide a brief report but apparently not in 2012.

Perhaps our most significant holding is **Hertford Island**, one of the 2 Bird Islands located off Cape Dauphin in Victoria County, Cape Breton. The Bird Islands have the distinction of being both an IBA (Important Bird Area) site and a Wildlife Management Area, a Provincial designation. Ciboux Island, the other island of the pair, is jointly owned by the Province (NSDNR) and the Federal Government. The Bird Islands received the IBA designation on the basis of the globally important population of Great Cormorants nesting there (possibly 9% of the Western Atlantic population!).

From time to time, the Department of Natural Resources in cooperation with the Bird Society conduct surveys of colonial nesting seabirds on the islands. Surveys were carried out during the summers of 2009 and 2012. Each year, 2 surveys are done, one in early June to optimize detection of Kittiwake nests and the other in early July, for alcids. Each island is circumnavigated by boat about 50-100 m offshore, with each of 4-6 observers focussed on one species or group of species. A second circumnavigation is done if necessary.

Total numbers for cormorants are incomplete since many of the nests are located on top of the islands and thus not visible from the boat. Nevertheless, Great Cormorants are still common although now outnumbered by Double-crested. Black-legged Kittiwakes are the most numerous and obvious gull on the islands; the 2009 population was about 1500 nests, although in 2012 that number had dropped to about 400. Kittiwakes will often abandon their nests if fish are not available to feed their young. Also worth noting is the fact that the first nesting was observed in 1980. Although the number of Atlantic Puffins was lower in 2012 than 2009, both tallies were higher than any count since 1925. The most abundant alcid is the Razorbill with over 1500 nests counted in both 2012 and 2009!! Black Guillemot counts also were among the highest recorded since 1925. Of particular note were 3 Common Murres noted on both 2012 surveys, and first seen in 2011 during a Nature Nova Scotia outing, thanks to Richard Stern. Along with the seabirds, a few Great Blue Herons, Bank Swallows and Savannah Sparrows were nesting on the islands.

The Sanctuary Trust does from time to time make donations to support small bird-related research projects or bird rehabilitation centres. Although we received no formal applications this past year, we did learn that the Cobequid Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre has under construction a flight enclosure for large raptors, a project that is putting considerable strain on their resources. To support this worthy undertaking, the Sanctuary Trust board made a contribution in the amount of \$500. Helene von Doninck wrote a very nice message of thanks for our contribution.

As always, the Sanctuary Trust welcomes your contributions along with your NSBS membership renewal. Donors of \$10 or more will receive a charitable receipt that can be used at income tax time.

Finally, I am pleased to announce the composition of the Sanctuary Trust Board for 2012-2013. Terry Boswell will continue on as Treasurer and Suzanne Borkowski as Secretary. Dennis Hippert begins his third year on the Board and I will continue on as Chair. Incoming NSBS President Dave Currie will be an ex officio ST Board member and will replace outgoing President Patrick Kelly. I thank you all for your past service and look forward to working with you in the coming year.

The Board of the Sanctuary Trust for 2012 -13 shall consist of the following persons: Chair, Bob McDonald; Treasurer, Terry Boswell; Secretary, Suzanne Borkowski; Director, Dennis Hippert, President of NSBS (ex officio) .

Respectfully submitted,  
Bob McDonald, Chair

It was moved by Blake Maybank, and seconded by Suzanne Borkowski, that this report be accepted. The motion passed.

#### **4.6 Sanctuary Trust Financial Report, presented by the Trust Treasurer, Terry Boswell. (See Appendix 4)**

It was moved by Wayne Neily, and seconded by Bob McDonald, that the report be accepted as presented. The motion carried.

#### **4.7 President's Report, given by President Patrick Kelly.**

**Bylaws:** We had started an initiative to bring the by-laws up to date. These required a substantial overhaul, and they have been sent back to our honorary solicitor with comments and some requests for clarification. Hopefully, we will be able to present them for the next AGM.

**Outdoor Sports and RV Show:** Last year, due to a switch to all-email for communications, we were not notified of the show in enough time to be able to participate. We are confirmed for this coming year. March 8-10, 2013.

**Museum Grant:** After two years worth of tracking paper work, the \$2,000 grant that we had missed has finally been sorted out. The cheque came after the end of the current fiscal year, so it will show up on the books for next year.

**Nova Scotia Birds:** Things appear to be getting back on track, largely through the assistance of Ian McLaren who has taken on the role of acting editor. He has made some changes and one issue should be back from the printers, and another is almost ready to go. Hopefully, it will be caught up in the near future. The executive has also considered hiring a company to do the layout, and will investigate this more fully in the New Year. Cost will be a large factor.

**All the Birds of Nova Scotia:** This year saw the launch of Ian's new book and there was a large crowd for the official launch in September. At the book launch, Ian also received the Ludlow Griscom Award from the American Birding Association,

presented by the chair of the ABA's board of directors. We combined this event with the book launch and it was very enjoyable.

**No-Lead Initiative:** Our main focus of conservation has been Helene Van Doninck's work in getting hunters to use non-lead ammunition. She has spoken to many groups in the Maritimes as well as at a large conference in the United States, which she attended with some support from the society. As a result of her work, the Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters became the first hunting group in North America to pass a motion, recognizing the dangers of lead, and will be starting an information and education campaign for all of the member groups.

**Allied Cats Program:** Another initiative by Helene has added our name to the list of groups involved in the Ecology Action Centre's program to educate people on the benefits to both the cats, and nature, of keeping cats indoors.

**Out-of-Town Meeting:** This year's was held at Cape North. While the group was not as large as I had hoped, this was the first time I have been on a birding trip that was more than a walk in the woods, or a caravan of cars going from one spot to another. The get-together was over more than one day, and I can see why people enjoy these events so much, as a real bond develops among birders, and events like this produce lasting memories

**MBBA Atlas in 2013:** This is a project to which many society members have contributed. The publishing of the printed atlas next year is an event we all eagerly await.

**Thanks to...** all the executive members who have helped to deal with many issues that have come up over recent years: field trip leaders who are willing to share their time and knowledge with others, and introducing many new birders to the bird life of the province; the entire crew who worked and contributed to *NS Birds*, it is only when one has to deal with the details, that

**What I'll be doing:** Updating NSBS Web site, and hopefully looking after the digitising of back issues of *NS Birds*. Oh, and still doing field trips!

**4.9 Nominations Committee Report.** The following slate of 2012-2013 Executive nominations was submitted.

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| - President: David Currie           | - Director: Chris Pepper  |
| - Vice-President: Eric Mills        | - Director: Kate Steele (Field Trip Coordinator)                  |
| - Treasurer: Gillian Elliott        | - Director: Helene Van Doninck (Conservation Chair)               |
| - Membership Secretary: Ulli Hoeger | - Director: Tuma Young  |
| - Secretary:                        | - Chair, NSBS Sanctuary Trust: Bob McDonald ( <i>ex officio</i> ) |
| - Director: Terry Boswell           |   |

The President called for nominations from the floor. Blake Maybank proposed Joan Czapalay for the position of secretary, and Joan accepted the nomination. There were no further nominations.

It was moved by Susann Myers, and seconded by Sylvia Fullerton, that the Nominations Report be accepted with the addition of Joan Czapalay's name as Secretary. The motion carried, and the above persons were declared elected to serve on the Executive for the year 2012-2013.

The following have agreed to serve for 2012-2013 and have been duly appointed by the Executive:  
Editor: Ian McLaren; Honorary Solicitor: Tony Robinson; Honorary Auditor: Ruth E. Smith

## 5 Puffin of the Year Award.

This was awarded to Pat McKay by President Patrick Kelly, with the following statement:

The award this year goes to someone who is well known to most people in the society despite being somewhat on the quiet side. Like a lot of people who are active in birding in Nova Scotia, she brought her interest in nature and the outdoors, but especially birding, with her when she moved to Nova Scotia from overseas. That love of birds has continued over the years and whenever she travels, the quest for new birds is always near the top of her agenda.

While she has been reporting interesting birds to the society for close to 40 years, it has been her work behind the scenes that has made her worthy of this year's award. She has helped out numerous times at the Outdoor Sports and RV Show, but her biggest asset to the society has been talent for being extremely well-organized and being able to recall much of what has done in past years, often on short notice. I have been on the executive for quite some time, but she has served for nine years as both the person who keeps track of what the executive said we would do, and quickly reminds us shortly after each executive meeting when the minutes are circulated. The minutes have always been detailed and help to remind us all of the decisions that we have made and who was going to carry them out. If that was not enough, she has hosted most of the executive meetings at her home and even provided wireless access so we now have executive members that are able to join the meeting by Skype. We did not realise just how good we had it until her travels required us to find a meeting place that was similar. Not only did we have to pay for the use of the room, there wasn't even any complimentary tea and cookies! Sadly, at least for us, she is now travelling more extensively and didn't think that she would be able to attend many more meetings, and so she reluctantly decided it was time to step down.

The 2012 Puffin of the Year goes to Pat McKay.

And, thanks to Ralph MacLean who donates his time each year to produce the award.

#### 6 New Business.

Blake Maybank advised the members that he had a number of books on birds and birding which he wished to give away to anyone who would like them. He also had a set of posters in mint condition, of birds and mammals of the high Arctic. Blake wishes to sell these posters and donate the proceeds of the sale to the Sanctuary Trust Fund. Prospective buyers should contact Blake directly.

There being no further business, the retiring President, Patrick Kelly, turned the meeting over to the new President, David Currie. David thanked Patrick for all his hard work as President, and called for a motion to adjourn.

**7 Adjournment.** The motion to adjourn was made by Bob McDonald, seconded by Helene von Doninck..

**The minutes were recorded by Pat McKay, Secretary, Nova Scotia Bird Society**

#### Appendix 1: Membership Report , Year 2012 Nova Scotia Bird Society

|               | 2012            | 2011            | 2010             | 2009             | 2008       |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------|
| Complimentary | 5               | 7               | 5                | 5                | 5          |
| <b>Family</b> | <b>73</b>       | <b>81</b>       | <b>82</b>        | <b>90</b>        | <b>97</b>  |
| Individual    | 153             | 169             | 174              | 184              | 181        |
| Institutional | 10              | 10              | 10               | 12               | 14         |
| Life          | 19              | 20              | 20               | 20               | 20         |
| Student       | 8               | 8               | 6                | 6                | 12         |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>268(-27)</b> | <b>295 (-2)</b> | <b>297 (-20)</b> | <b>317 (-12)</b> | <b>329</b> |

In summary, we have new members joining (33), but we keep losing long-time members.



**Appendix 2: Treasurer's Report of Nova Scotia Bird Society**, signed by Patrick Kelly, President, Gillian Elliot, Treasurer, R. Smith, Auditor

**Balance Sheet**

as at Sept 30, 2012

|                                 | <u>2011/2012</u> | <u>2010/2011</u> |
|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>ASSETS</b>                   |                  |                  |
| Current Bank Account            | 6,132            | 11,393           |
| Power Savings Account           | 33,765           | 33,397           |
| Accounts Receivable             | 322              | 259              |
| Prepaid Expenses                | 0                | 0                |
| <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>             | <b>40,219</b>    | <b>45,049</b>    |
|                                 | =====            | =====            |
| <b>LIABILITIES</b>              |                  |                  |
| <b>PAYABLES</b>                 |                  |                  |
| Accounts Payable                | 305              | 200              |
| Deferred Revenue                | 0                | 0                |
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>        | <b>305</b>       | <b>200</b>       |
| <b>EQUITY</b>                   |                  |                  |
| Current Earnings                | -4,936           | 3,416            |
| Accumulated Revenue             | 44,849           | 41,433           |
| <b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>             | <b>39,914</b>    | <b>44,849</b>    |
| <b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b> | <b>40,219</b>    | <b>45,049</b>    |
|                                 | =====            | =====            |

**Income Statement**

for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2012  
(with comparative figures at September 30, 2011)

|                            | <u>2011/2012</u> | <u>2010/2011</u> |
|----------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>REVENUE</b>             |                  |                  |
| Memberships                | 4,770            | 5,685            |
| Advertising                | 80               | 80               |
| Donations                  | 677              | 0                |
| Grants                     | 2,000            | 2,000            |
| Interest                   | 368              | 578              |
| Product Sales              | 150              | 338              |
| Miscellaneous Income       | 101              | 129              |
| <b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>       | <b>8,146</b>     | <b>8,810</b>     |
| <b>EXPENSE</b>             |                  |                  |
| Nova Scotia Birds          | 3,999            | 3,261            |
| Advertising and Promotions | 95               | 53               |
| AGM                        | 493              | 256              |
| Awards and Gifts           | 36               | 125              |
| Bank Charges               | 81               | 70               |
| Bird Counts                | 120              | 65               |
| Committees                 | 634              | 0                |
| Donations                  | 6,600            | 650              |
| Insurance                  | 463              | 456              |
| Memberships                | 175              | 175              |
| Miscellaneous Expenses     | 99               | 254              |
| Monthly Meeting Expenses   | 288              | 30               |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>       | <b>13,082</b>    | <b>5,394</b>     |
| <b>NET INCOME</b>          | <b>-4,936</b>    | <b>3,416</b>     |

**Appendix 3: Sanctuary Trust Financial Report;** signed by Bob MacDonald, President, Terry Boswell, Treasurer, and Ruth Smith, Auditor

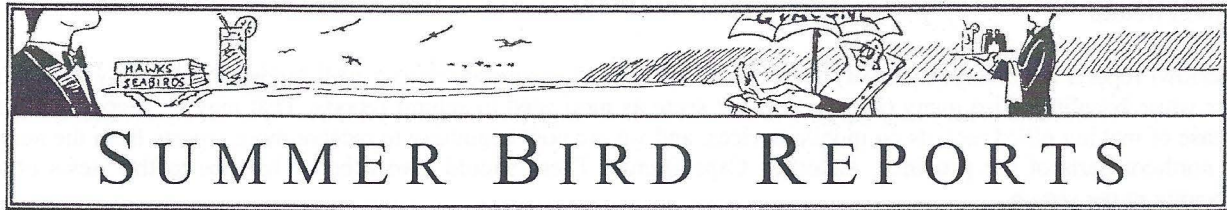
**NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY SANCTUARY TRUST**  
**BALANCE SHEET**  
**As at September 30, 2012**  
**(With comparative figures as at September 30, 2011)**

| <b>Assets</b>               |                  |                  | <b>Liabilities</b>            |                  |                  |
|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                             | <b>2011/2012</b> | <b>2010/2011</b> | <b>Current Liabilities</b>    | <b>2011-2012</b> | <b>2010-2011</b> |
| Bank account                | 2,658            | 2,790            | Accounts payable              | 0                | 0                |
| Term deposits               | 17,000           | 17,000           | Deferred revenue              | 0                | 0                |
| Interest Term Deposits      | -                | -                | <b>Total Liabilities</b>      | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b>         |
| Land (see appendix A)       | 47,660           | 47,660           |                               |                  |                  |
| Total cash                  | <u>67,318</u>    | <u>67,450</u>    |                               |                  |                  |
| Accounts receivable         | 0                | 0                | <b>Trust equity</b>           |                  |                  |
| Prepaid expense             | 0                | 0                | Opening balance               | 67,450           | 66,530           |
|                             | <u>0</u>         | <u>0</u>         | Surplus (deficit)             | -132             | 920              |
| <b>Total Current Assets</b> | <b>67,318</b>    | <b>67,450</b>    | <b>Total Trust equity</b>     | <b>67,318</b>    | <b>67,450</b>    |
|                             |                  |                  | <b>Liabilities and equity</b> | <b>67,318</b>    | <b>67,450</b>    |

| <b>Revenue</b>        |                  |                  | <b>Expense</b>                          |                 |               |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|---|-----------------|---------------|
|                       | <b>2011-2012</b> | <b>2010-2011</b> |   |                 |               |
| <b>Revenue</b>        |                  |                  | Bank charges                            | -               | -             |
| Donations to the Fund | 995.00           | 1,714.00         | Property taxes                          | 165.12          | 315.38        |
| GIC interest          | -                | -                | Insurance                               | 462.50          | 455.50        |
| Bank interest         | 0.20             | 0.21             | Cobequid wildlife rehabilitation center | 500.00          | -             |
| Other revenue         | -                | -                | Miscellaneous expense                   | -               | 22.94         |
|                       |                  |                  | <b>Total Expense</b>                    | <b>1,127.62</b> | <b>793.82</b> |
| <b>Total Revenue</b>  | <b>995.20</b>    | <b>1,714.21</b>  |   |                 |               |

| <u>Land (Properties)</u> | <u>Purchase Price</u> | <u>2011/2012 Assessment</u> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Bald Islands (4)         | 1,000                 | 6,700                       |
| Hertford Island          | 160                   | 30,600                      |
| Indian Island            | 12,000                | 38,400                      |
| North Kemptville         | 1,500                 | 5,600                       |
| Peter Island             | 20,000                | 15,600                      |
| Port Joli                | 13,000                | 55,700                      |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>47,660</b>         | <b>152,600</b>              |



# SUMMER BIRD REPORTS

NOTE: The following are frequently used abbreviations, especially in tabulations. 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 may be abbreviated (as w., n.e., etc.) and capitalized when part of a place name.

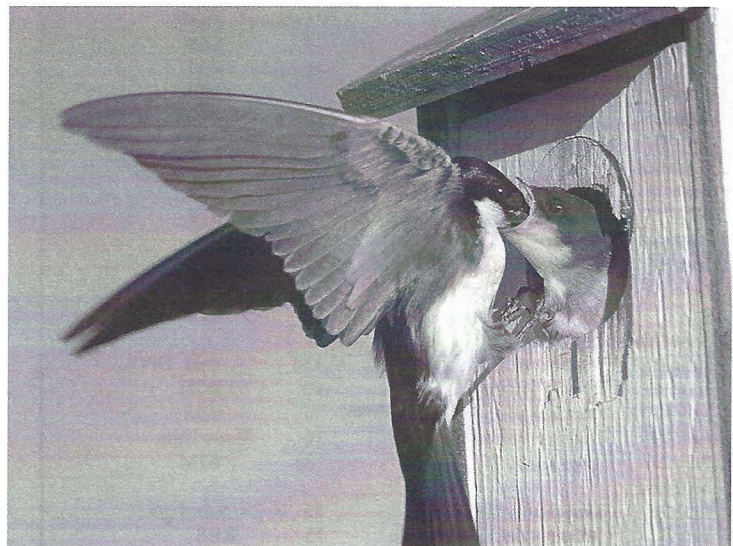
## General terms

Ad. = adult  
 BBS – Breeding Bird Survey  
*ca.* = approximately  
 CBC = Christmas Bird Count  
 f. = female  
*fide* = on the authority of  
 imm. = immature  
 juv. = juvenile (post-nestling plumage)  
 m. obs. – many observers  
 n.d. = no details (unsupported by documentation)  
 no. - number  
 nr. = geographically near  
 NSNT = Nova Scotia Nature Trust (bird surveys)  
 obs., as in 2 obs. = observer (s), not observation(s)  
 ph. = photographed  
 pr. = pair  
 spec. = specimen  
 var. obs. = various observers  
 + or ++ with numbers = more or many more;  
 with dates = later or much later

## 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*  
 Brk. = Brook  
 CBI = Cape Breton Island  
 CBHNP = Cape Breton Highlands National Park  
 CBRM = Cape Breton Regional Municipality  
 HRM = Halifax Regional Municipality  
 I. = Island (plural Is.)  
 Keji. NP = Kejimikujik National Park  
 Keji. NP Adjunct = Kejimikujik NP Coastal Adjunct  
 Lr. = Lower  
 Pk = Park  
 PP = Provincial Park  
 PPP. Halifax = Point Pleasant Park, Halifax  
 Pt. = Point or Port  
 Seal I. = Seal Island, Outer Tusket Is., *Yar.*  
 Uniacke Pk. = Uniacke Estate Muesum Park, *Hants*

Most of our summering birds, like this TREE SWALLOW, were much preoccupied with nesting. See portfolio, p. 36. [Photo Janet Quinn]



## Waterfowl

## By John Belbin

Waterfowl reports are always relatively scarce in summer as most species remain well hidden in relatively lush vegetation cover while breeding. Also many observers do not seem as motivated to submit reports. That may be changing a little with the ease of making eBird records on mobile devices, and we are now beginning to receive more reports from the near-border and northern parts of the province, including Cape Breton. These should give a better balance to the views of what is happening in our region.

CANADA GEESE now seem to breed on any available site and their numbers must be adversely affecting the other waterfowl. A truer picture of their increasing numbers is obtained every fall when flocks of thousands are regularly reported, until they are forced to migrate out of much of the province.

The two reports on breeding WOOD DUCK originated from the Annapolis Valley, although they were noted elsewhere. Joyce Allen began watching a pair of GADWALLS nesting in the St. Catherine's River Marsh of Port Joli on May 8. By June 10 they had fledged 6 young. This is a welcome and rare occurrence for that location, one that has probably not occurred for more than 30 years.

Patrick and Barbara Giffin report that COMMON EIDER breeds regularly on the islands in Dublin Bay and around West Ironbound, Spectacles and Moshers Islands in Mahone Bay, Lun. Sometime 18-20 offspring with several females form crèches that would make excellent photographic subjects for those with capable equipment that would minimize disturbances. Eiders were widely distributed elsewhere around the province, with significant numbers breeding on other islands.

A RUDDY DUCK graced the marshes of French Basin Trail at Annapolis Royal for a while, giving people an opportunity to view this still unusual species.

|                            |                                   |           |                |            |                          |                               |                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|----------------|------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Brant</b>               |                                   |           |                |            |                          |                               |                       |
| June 9                     | CSI, Shel                         | 1         |                | Avery Nagy | July 20                  | Birch Cove, HRM               | 40 MZE                |
| <b>Canada Goose</b>        |                                   |           |                |            | <b>Blue-winged teal</b>  |                               |                       |
| June 8                     | Gesners Pond, Pt. Williams, Kings | 2 prs     | JCT            |            | June 2                   | Belleisle, Ann.               | present BKW           |
| June 8                     | South Harbour, Vic.               | 32        | KJM            |            | June 10                  | Amherst Point, Cum.           | 1m JAH, DPO           |
| June 20                    | St Croix, Hants                   | 15        | Tim Hall       |            | July 26                  | Hemeon's Head, Shel.          | 5 Avery Nagy          |
| June 21                    | Melvorn Square, Ann.              | 2+3 juv   | PBG            |            | <b>Northern Shoveler</b> |                               |                       |
| June 30                    | Wentworth, Col.                   | 9         | JAH            |            | June 10                  | Chignecto, Cum.               | 2 JAH                 |
| June 30                    | Chignecto, Cum.                   | 8         | JAH            |            | June 30                  | Eddy St. Marsh, Cum.          | 1 KEL                 |
| July 1                     | Margaree, Inv.                    | 65        | Magill Weber   |            | <b>Northern Pintail</b>  |                               |                       |
| July 12                    | French Basin, Annapolis Royal     | 12        | RBS            |            | June 7                   | Salt Marsh Trail, HRM         | MZE                   |
| <b>Wood Duck</b>           |                                   |           |                |            | June 10                  | Masstown, Col.                | 1 JAH                 |
| June 17                    | French Basin, Annapolis Royal     | 22        | KEL            |            | <b>Green-winged Teal</b> |                               |                       |
| June 21                    | Phiney's Pond, Ann.               | 1+6 juv   | PBG            |            | June 2                   | Belleisle, Ann.               | BKW                   |
| June 30                    | Chignecto, Cum.                   | 1         | JAH            |            | June 3                   | Three Fathom Harbour, HRM     | PMC                   |
| July 7                     | Lilydale, Lun.                    | 1         | KEL            |            | June 30                  | Chignecto, Cum.               | 2 JAH                 |
| July 7                     | Miners Marsh, Kentville           | 1         | RBS            |            | July 11                  | Tatamagouche, Col.            | 2 ROH                 |
| July 11                    | Tatamagouche, Col.                | 1         | ROH            |            | <b>Ring-necked Duck</b>  |                               |                       |
| July 21                    | Miners Marsh, Kentville           | 1f+ 3 juv | AND            |            | June 8                   | Trout Brook, Inv.             | 5 KJM                 |
| <b>Gadwall</b>             |                                   |           |                |            | June 10                  | Chignecto, Cum.               | 10 JAH                |
| June 10                    | Port Joli, Queens                 | 2+6 juv   | JOA            |            | July 11                  | Tatamagouche, Col.            | 30 ROH                |
| July 7                     | French Basin, Annapolis Royal     | 3         | KEL            |            | July 12                  | French Basin, Annapolis Royal | 17 RBS                |
| <b>American Wigeon</b>     |                                   |           |                |            | July 15                  | Kingsburg, Lun.               | 3 KJM                 |
| June 30                    | Amherst Point, Cum.               | 4         | KEL            |            | <b>Lesser Scaup</b>      |                               |                       |
| June 30                    | Chignecto, Cum.                   | 14        | KEL            |            | June 13                  | Chester Basin, Lun.           | 2 Ryan Pigeon         |
| July 3                     | Big Island, Pic                   | 2         | KJM            |            | <b>Common Eider</b>      |                               |                       |
| <b>American Black Duck</b> |                                   |           |                |            | June 2                   | Eastern Passage, HRM          | 25 DAC                |
| June 10                    | Masstown, Col.                    | 134       | JAH, DPO       |            | June 9                   | The Cape, Shel.               | 80 Avery Nagy         |
| July 11                    | Tatamagouche, Col.                | 40        | ROH            |            | June 12                  | Crow Neck Beach, Shel.        | 55 Avery Nagy         |
| July 12                    | French Basin, Annapolis Royal     | 33        | RBS            |            | June 14                  | Brier Island, Digby           | 30 Jo Sanzalong       |
| July 19                    | Redman Basin, Inv.                | 16        | Shane Hunt     |            | June 16                  | Cape Chignecto, Cum.          | 127 Ray Cooke         |
| July 24                    | Big Island, Pic.                  | 23        | KJM            |            | June 20                  | Hemeon's Head, Shel.          | 60 Avery Nagy         |
| <b>Mallard</b>             |                                   |           |                |            | July 1                   | Point Pleasant Park, HRM      | 33 TEB                |
| June 21                    | Dartmouth, HRM                    | 55        | Bryan Sabourin |            | July 1                   | Inverness                     | 60 Magill Weber       |
| July 7                     | Miners Marsh, Kentville           | 75        | RBS            |            | July 4                   | Green I., CSI                 | 2 nesting Laura Jones |
| July 20                    | Masons Beach, Lun.                | 30        | JAH            |            | July 4                   | Cabot Landing PP, Vic.        | 12 Magill Weber       |
| July 20                    | Dayspring, Lun.                   | 10        | JAH            |            | July 8                   | Cherry Hill Beach, Lun.       | 31 JAH                |
|                            |                                   |           |                |            | July 8                   | Hartlen Point, HRM            | 60 TRB                |

|                            |                                  |         |                |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------|----------------|
| July 11                    | The Brothers Island, <i>Yar.</i> | 8       | Avery Nagy     |
| July 15                    | Kingsburg, <i>Lun.</i>           | 42      | KEL            |
| July 29                    | Western Head, <i>Queens</i>      | 50      | KEL            |
| <b>Surf Scoter</b>         |                                  |         |                |
| June 22                    | Ingonish, <i>Vic.</i>            | 4       | Mark Arvin     |
| July 30                    | Big Island, <i>Pic.</i>          | 1       | JOK            |
| <b>White-winged Scoter</b> |                                  |         |                |
| June 2-21                  | Pond Cove, Brier I. <i>Digby</i> | 1-3     | ELM            |
| June 8                     | South Harbour, <i>Vic.</i>       | 23      | KJM            |
| June 22                    | Ingonish, <i>Vic.</i>            | 27      | Mark Arvin     |
| July 15                    | Crow Neck Beach, <i>Shel.</i>    | 4       | Avery Nagy     |
| July 30                    | Grand Pre, <i>Kings</i>          | 3       | Byran Sabourin |
| July 31                    | Horton Landing, <i>Kings</i>     | 5       | RWH            |
| <b>Black Scoter</b>        |                                  |         |                |
| June 3                     | Three Fathom Harbour, <i>HRM</i> | present | PMC            |
| June 7                     | Sandy Bay, <i>Queens</i>         | 1       | Avery Nagy     |
| June 19                    | Round Bay, <i>Shel.</i>          | 4       | Avery Nagy     |
| <b>Common Goldeneye</b>    |                                  |         |                |
| June 2                     | Big Gaspereaux L. <i>Gays.</i>   | present | ROH            |

|                               |                                  |          |                 |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------|-----------------|
| <b>Hooded Merganser</b>       |                                  |          |                 |
| June 14                       | Wolfville, <i>Kings</i>          | 1        | BLF             |
| July 3                        | DU Margaretsville, <i>Ann.</i>   | family   | PLC             |
| July 11                       | Tatamagouche, <i>Col.</i>        | 5        | ROH             |
| <b>Common Merganser</b>       |                                  |          |                 |
| June 8                        | South Harbour, <i>Vic.</i>       | 2        | KJM             |
| June 9                        | Annapolis Royal                  | 1        | DAC             |
| July 6                        | Big Island, <i>Pic.</i>          | 10       | Kurt Arseneault |
| July 11                       | Tatamagouche, <i>Col.</i>        | 4        | ROH             |
| July 16                       | Beechhill Cove, <i>Ant.</i>      | 10       | JOK             |
| <b>Red-breasted Merganser</b> |                                  |          |                 |
| June 6                        | James Beach, <i>Pic.</i>         | 2        | KJM             |
| June 11                       | The Brothers Island, <i>Yar.</i> | 1        | Avery Nagy-     |
|                               | MacArthur                        |          |                 |
| June 22                       | Inverness                        | 1        | Mark Arvin      |
| June 24                       | Louis Head, <i>Shel.</i>         | 2        | Avery Nagy      |
| July 13                       | Grand Greve, <i>Rich.</i>        | 1f+8 juv | JSH             |
| July 28                       | Saltmarsh Trail, <i>HRM</i>      | family   | ULH             |
| <b>Ruddy Duck</b>             |                                  |          |                 |
| July 12                       | French Basin, Annapolis Royal    | 1        | RBS             |



This half-grown brood of COMMON MERGANSERS, July 20 at Hacketts Cove, HRM, has the privilege of a midday nap, while mother keeps a careful watch. [Photo Kevin Lantz]

## Galliformes

By Ian McLaren

We birders prefer the unusual, so many would probably report SPRUCE GROUSE but ignore RING-NECKED PHEASANT, but. One obvious reason is that pheasants have increased on the BBS more than 30 times since the mid-1960s, and SPRUCE GROUSE may have diminished, but are too scarce to be reliably monitored by the BBS. Not generally recognized is that

RUFFED GROUSE have decreased to about 1/6 of their 1960s numbers according to the BBS. If real, the cause seems to me to be elusive. Ruffed Grouse should not be suffering from climate change, and they tolerate second-growth and open areas in the woods. Hunters may have more ideas on this decline than do we birders. The only submitted comment (on eBird) among the paltry listings of this group was by Kathleen Spicer, who felt that other young RUFFED GROUSE in addition to the one she noted July 9 may have been hiding in roadside cover.

#### Ring-necked Pheasant

July 26 Tupperville Ann 1 ad with 6 chicks *fide* MCR

#### Ruffed Grouse

July 9 W. Apple River, Cum. 1 ad., 1 juv. KFS

#### Spruce Grouse

June 12, Higginsville, HRM 1 ad. m. VJH

June 30, , Old Guysborough Rd., HRM 1 ad. VJH



**Right:** Does he think he's hiding? This seems even less convincing in colour. [Photo Jeannie Shermerhorn]

## Loons and Grebes

### By John Belbin

AMO and CCA found a juvenile **COMMON LOON** trapped in fishing gear while they were guiding a whale watching trip out of Tiverton on Digby Neck. They were able to cut it free and release it.

A few reports came in of nesting and breeding loons, often without giving specific locations. There are other reports commenting on the scarcity of breeding loons this year. The breeding report from Sandy Bottom Lake mentions that by June 25 the nest was empty and by June 29 both chicks were almost the same size as their parents and diving well. They were still being fed by the parents on Aug 19<sup>th</sup>. Local people believe that the breeding loons have returned, after an absence of some 10 years due to acid rain problems in lakes in and around Keji NP. Hopefully this is a real trend. The other reports were well distributed about the Province but the numbers seem low even by recent standards.

Last year a significant number of **PIED BILLED GREBES** were noted in the Chignecto region of *Cumberland County*, which is of course our most significant marshland region. The numbers are much lower this year. It is surprising how few reports of other breeding waterbirds originate in this region. Perhaps it is simply too far from the home bases of our active birders. However, few grebes of these grebes are reported in summer, because of their small size and ability to hide while nesting. Summering **HORNED GREBE** are rare, and no details were supplied on the one July 13 on Cow Bay, *HRM*.

In the Spring 2011 issue there was a discussion of what appeared to be a very rare **YELLOW-BILLED LOON** that had been seen and photographed at Purdy's Wharf in Halifax. Another was reported seen this year July 10 at Lake Charlotte, *HRM*. It was well photographed, and showed a largely ivory-toned bill, not a result of reflection. Ian McLaren studied the images (one shown below) and his comments [in the caption] to photographer Laurie Laskiwiski should help us all with such identifications in the future.



“Your photos are very interesting as they illustrate a not-so-common variation in Common Loon. I think that it is probably a result of early development of the “winter” condition on the “hard parts” in this adult - maybe it’s a newly matured one. They generally have this pale bill in winter. Yellow-billed Loon at this season would have a much-upturned, definitely butterfly bill, and no duskieness on the upper mandible, which would be straight, not decurved. Also, the spots on the back would be larger in the middle, becoming smaller fore and aft.”

#### Common Loon

|         |   |                  |
|---------|---|------------------|
| June 25 | Sandy Bottom L. Ann., nest empty, then 2 juv. | MCR              |
| June 7  | Hubbards, Lun                                 | 2 Rena Waters    |
| June 16 | Tiverton, Digby Neck                          | 1 AMO, CCA       |
| June 16 | Cape Chignecto PP, Col                        | 9 Ray Cooke      |
| June 21 | Mt. Uniacke, HRM                              | 1 Mike MacDonald |
| June 23 | Bird Island, Vic                              | 1 JAH            |
| June 23 | Ingonish, Vic                                 | 10 Mark Arvin    |
| July 1  | Lilydale, Lun                                 | 3 KEL            |
| July 8  | Jerry Lawrence PP, HRM                        | 2+2 juv BLM      |
| July 8  | Lake Paul, Kings                              | 1 Angela Joudrey |
| July 15 | Medway Ledge, Queens                          | 3 Janis Grant    |

|                          |                               |             |                |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| July 20                  | Dayspring, Lun                | 2           | JAH            |
| July 20                  | Maitland, Lun                 | 2           | JAH            |
| July 28                  | Angevine L. Cum.              | 2 ad.+1 juv | Mary MacCauley |
| July 31                  | Tidnish, Cum.                 | 2           | Debbie Cusick  |
| <b>Pied-billed Grebe</b> |                               |             |                |
| June 30                  | Chignecto NWA, Cum            | 3           | JAH            |
| July 2                   | Twin Rock Valley, Cum         | 1           | Magill Weber   |
| July 11                  | Tatamagouche, Cum             | 2           | ROH            |
| July 12                  | French Basin, Annapolis Royal | 2           | RBS            |
| July 16                  | Miners Marsh, Kings           | 4           | Byran Sabourin |
| <b>Horned Grebe</b>      |                               |             |                |
| July 13                  | Cow Bay, HRM                  | 1 n.d.      | Byran Sabourin |

## Tubenoses through Cormorants

By Eric Mills

Seabirds were abundant in Nova Scotian waters this summer, whether one went to sea in the Bay of Fundy, off SW Nova Scotia, or farther north and east. N. FULMARS were relatively abundant in early summer in the Gulf of Maine – Brier Island areas, but by the middle of July had become scarce, presumably moving farther northeast where feeding conditions may have been better. Only one CORY’S SHEARWATER was reported, on June 11 by a professional seabird observer on the US research vessel *Henry B. Bigelow* in the Gulf of Maine, although Cory’s later became regular (see discussion in next issue of *Nova Scotia Birds*). Among the common shearwaters, SOOTIES were extremely abundant by the end of June, but diminished to modest numbers by the end of July, being replaced by hundreds, and probably actually thousands, of GREATS by the end of the month. MANX SHEARWATERS were exceptionally abundant in our waters by the end of June, persisting through the summer, and were noted in exceptional numbers on the other side of the Bay of Fundy, around Deer Island and Grand Manan, NB, according to reports from whale-watching tours there. WILSON’S STORM-PETRELS were seen by nearly everyone who went to sea off SW Nova Scotia during the summer, but LEACH’S were much less abundant, as expected of this species, which although it nests widely in our area, feeds far offshore, usually at night.

Without doubt, the bird of the summer was a **RED-BILLED TROPICBIRD** captured in a video about June 18 by Jody D’Entremont, fishing out of Pubnico, on George’s Bank, just inside the Hague Line, which demarcates Canadian jurisdiction on the NE corner of the bank. Its position was likely in *Yarmouth Co.* waters, if the boundaries of that county are extended seaward. This species, which breeds in the Antilles (not on Bermuda, like White-tailed Tropicbird) has been recorded regularly along the US northeast coast for the past few summers, notably in Maine waters, and also around Machias Seal Island, NB. During the summer of 2006, two damaged corpse were found on Sable Island, and in mid-July 2007 an injured immature bird, which did not survive, was found in a driveway in Three Fathom Harbour, HRM. This species, like any Tropicbird, remains among the rarest of the rare in Nova Scotia waters.



**Left:** These images are from a video obtained in the Canadian waters of Georges Bank. Although far from picture perfect, they do confirm the bird as a **RED-BILLED TROPICBIRD** showing the diagnostic wedge of black on the outer primaries.

**NORTHERN GANNETS** require some comment this season. By the end of June, and into July, exceptional numbers were being reported from inshore waters, including most of the major bays and even Halifax harbour. Most were adults, frequently fishing actively, and accompanied by Harbour Porpoises and at least two species of large whales. Two factors were at work, the first being the exceptionally high surface water temperatures that developed along the coast of the province in early summer, resulting in the presence of warm-water fish species and unusual numbers of squid. Gannets responded to this food supply big-time. The other factor was the failure of Gannet breeding in Newfoundland colonies due to the absence of food. May birds abandoned their nests and moved into richer feeding areas, which included Nova Scotian coastal waters. Later in the summer (outside the seasonal scope of this report), SW winds brought about a dramatic drop in water temperatures due to coastal upwelling and bird abundance decreased equally dramatically.

Cormorants seldom require much comment, but this year **DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS**, which have had a colony on the east side of Peters Island, off Southern Point, Brier Island, established themselves in late July on the west side, laid eggs, and raised young that were still being fed into September. What caused this change, and so late in the season, is not known.

Any season in which both species of Pelicans show up has to be a good one. An adult **WHITE PELICAN** appeared in Pembroke Shore, *Yar.*, on June 3, was photographed, and put in another couple of days before disappearing. Fishermen on Tancook Island, *Lun.*, first reported a **BROWN PELICAN** during the last few days in May. It was seen off and on in the area, even in Tancook harbour, until about June 2, although not by birders.

#### Northern Fulmar

(including selected reports from eBird)

|         |  |        |                 |
|---------|--|--------|-----------------|
| June 12 | Gulf of Maine, <i>Shel. &amp; Yar.</i> | 8 & 15 | Tom Johnson     |
| June 21 | Off Brier I.                           | 10     | ELM             |
| June 25 | Off Brier I.                           | 4      | Bryan Sabourin  |
| June 28 | Off Brier I.                           | 15     | Penny Graham    |
| June 29 | Off Brier I.                           | 4\     | Penny Graham    |
| July 15 | Digby-St John ferry                    | 4      | Gordon Saunders |

#### Cory's Shearwater

|         |                            |   |             |
|---------|----------------------------|---|-------------|
| June 11 | Gulf of Maine, <i>Yar.</i> | 1 | Tom Johnson |
|---------|----------------------------|---|-------------|

#### Great Shearwater

(including selected reports from eBird)

|         |                                |          |                |
|---------|--------------------------------|----------|----------------|
| June 12 | Gulf of Maine, <i>Shel.</i>    | 210      | Tom Johnson    |
| June 21 | Off Brier I.                   | 200      | ELM            |
| June 25 | Off Brier I.                   | 200      | Bryan Sabourin |
| June 28 | Off Brier I.                   | 40       | Penny Graham   |
| June 29 | Off Brier I.                   | 25       | Penny Graham   |
| July 4  | Off Brier I.                   | 10       | Penny Graham   |
| July 13 | Off Ingonish Hbr., <i>Vic.</i> | 2        | Michael Press  |
| July 15 | Medway Ledge, <i>Queen's</i>   | 8        | Janis Grant    |
| July 21 | Off Brier I.                   | 23       | Penny Graham   |
| July 21 | Western Hd., <i>Queens</i>     | 1        | ELM            |
| July 23 | nr Chebucto Hd., <i>HRM</i>    | 300+     | HAT, LAE       |
| July 26 | Shelf S of Halifax             | 124      | DAC            |
| July 27 | Off Peggy's Cove, <i>HRM</i>   | 50       | Ron Romano     |
| July 28 | Western Hd., <i>Queens</i>     | 32       | ELM            |
| July 30 | Off Brier I.                   | est. 300 | ELM            |

#### Sooty Shearwater

(including selected reports from eBird)

|         |  |           |                 |
|---------|--|-----------|-----------------|
| June 12 | Gulf of Maine, <i>Shel. &amp; Yar.</i> | 55& 210   | Tom Johnson     |
| June 21 | Off Brier I.                           | est. 5000 | ELM             |
| June 25 | Off Brier I.                           | 200       | Bryan Sabourin  |
| June 28 | Off Brier I.                           | 30        | Penny Graham    |
| June 29 | Off Brier I.                           | 4         | Penny Graham    |
| July 4  | Off Brier I.                           | 12        | Penny Graham    |
| July 13 | Off Ingonish Hbr., <i>Vic.</i>         | 1         | Michael Press   |
| July 21 | Off Brier I.                           | 1         | Penny Graham    |
| July 26 | Shelf S of Halifax                     | 14        | DAC             |
| July 27 | Off Peggy's Cove, <i>HRM</i>           | 10        | Ron Romano      |
| July 30 | Off Brier I.                           | 15        | ELM, Tom Fuller |

#### Manx Shearwater

(including selected reports from eBird)

|         |                                    |    |                 |
|---------|------------------------------------|----|-----------------|
| June 21 | Off Brier I.                       | 10 | ELM             |
| June 25 | Off Brier I.                       | 2  | Bryan Sabourin  |
| July 11 | Off N. Sydney, <i>CBRM/Vic.</i>    | 2  | H. Heerklotz    |
| July 15 | Digby-St. John ferry, <i>Anna.</i> | 2  | Gordon Saunders |
| July 26 | Shelf S of Halifax                 | 1  | DAC             |
| July 28 | Western Hd., <i>Queens</i>         | 1  | ELM             |
| July 30 | Off Brier I.                       | 3  | ELM             |

#### Wilson's Storm-Petrel

(including selected reports from eBird)

|         |                                   |    |             |
|---------|-----------------------------------|----|-------------|
| June 12 | Gulf of Maine, <i>Shel., Yar.</i> | 2  | Tom Johnson |
| June 21 | Off Brier I.                      | 25 | ELM         |



|         |                                    |          |                 |
|---------|------------------------------------|----------|-----------------|
| June 25 | Off Brier I.                       | 40       | Bryan Sabourin  |
| June 28 | Off Brier I.                       | 18       | Penny Graham    |
| June 29 | Off Brier I.                       | 10       | Penny Graham    |
| July 4  | Off Brier I.                       | 8        | Penny Graham    |
| July 11 | Off N. Sydney, <i>CBRM/Vic.</i>    | 2        | H. Heerklotz    |
| July 13 | Off Ingonish Hbr., <i>Vic.</i>     | 1        | Michael Press   |
| July 15 | Digby-St. John ferry, <i>Anna.</i> | 2        | Gordon Saunders |
| July 21 | Off Brier I.                       | 2        | Penny Graham    |
| July 26 | Shelf s. of Halifax                | 60       | DAC             |
| July 30 | Off Brier I.                       | est. 300 | ELM             |

**Leach's Storm-Petrel**

(including selected reports from eBird)

|         |                                   |         |                |
|---------|-----------------------------------|---------|----------------|
| June 12 | Gulf of Maine, <i>Shel., Yar.</i> | 45, 185 | Tom Johnson    |
| June 25 | Off Brier I.                      | 3       | Bryan Sabourin |
| July 11 | Off N. Sydney, <i>CBRM/Vic.</i>   | 3       | H. Heerklotz   |
| July 26 | Shelf S of Halifax                | 5       | DAC            |
| July 30 | Off Brier I.                      | 1       | ELM            |

**RED-BILLED TROPICBIRD**

|             |               |            |                  |
|-------------|---------------|------------|------------------|
| Ca. June 18 | Gulf of Maine | 1 ad., ph. | Jody D'Entremont |
|-------------|---------------|------------|------------------|

**Northern Gannet**

(including selected reports from eBird)

|             |                                   |          |                  |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|----------|------------------|
| June 3      | Northern Pt., Brier I.            | 50       | ELM, IAM         |
| June 21     | Off Brier I.                      | 10 imm.  | ELM              |
| June 22, 23 | Ingonish, <i>Vic.</i>             | 37, 90   | Mark Arvin       |
| June 25     | Daniels Hd., <i>CSI</i>           | 15       | Avery Nagy       |
| June 28     | Off Brier I.                      | abundant | Penny Graham     |
| July 1      | Cheticamp, <i>Inv.</i>            | 40       | Magill Weber     |
| July 4      | Off Brier I.                      | 4        | Penny Graham     |
| July 6      | Inverness, <i>Inv.</i>            | 60       | Magill Weber     |
| July 11     | BeechillCove, <i>Ant.</i>         | 207      | JOK              |
| July 13     | Off Ingonish Hbr., <i>Vic.</i>    | 30       | Michael Press    |
| July 14     | Conrads I., Rose Bay, <i>Lun.</i> | 44       | JAH, DAW         |
| July 15     | Medway Ledge, <i>Queens</i>       | 30       | Janis Grant      |
| July 19-20  | Spanish Ship Bay, <i>HRM</i>      | 2 ad.    | A. & J. Williams |
| July 19     | Big I., <i>Pict.</i>              | 4        | JOK              |
| July 20     | Inverness, <i>Inv.</i>            | 41       | Shane Hunt       |

|         |                             |                 |           |
|---------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| July 21 | Western Hd., <i>Queens</i>  | ca. 150 feeding | ELM       |
| July 21 | Lunenburg                   | 40 M.L.         | Whitehorn |
| July 23 | nr Chebucto Hd., <i>HRM</i> | abundant        | HAT, LAE  |
| July 24 | Big I., <i>Pict.</i>        | 15              | KJM       |
| July 26 | Shelf S of Halifax          | 100             | DAC       |
| July 28 | Western Hd., <i>Queens</i>  | 124             | ELM       |
| July 29 | Western Hd., <i>Queens</i>  | 30              | KEL       |
| July 30 | Off Brier I.                | 20              | ELM       |

**Great Cormorant**

(including selected reports from about 28 on eBird)

|         |                            |         |               |
|---------|----------------------------|---------|---------------|
| June 1  | Brier I.                   | 9       | ELM           |
| June 2  | Peters I., Brier I.        | 2 ad.   | ELM, IAM      |
| June 9  | White Point, <i>Vic.</i>   | 1 imm.  | NSBS          |
| June 14 | Bird Is., <i>Vic.</i>      | 50      | Steve Metchis |
| June 21 | Peters I., Brier I.        | 1 ad.   | ELM           |
| June 30 | Port Hood, <i>Inv.</i>     | 11      | Magill Weber  |
| July 3  | Bird Is., <i>Inv.</i>      | 50      | Magill Weber  |
| July 28 | Western Hd., <i>Queens</i> | 4+ imm. | ELM           |
| July 30 | Peters I., Brier I.        | 4 imm.  | ELM           |

**Double-crested Cormorant**

(including selected reports from more than 250 on eBird)

|         |                            |                |                  |
|---------|----------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| June 9  | White Point, <i>Vic.</i>   | Ca. 200        | NSBS             |
| June 21 | Brier I.                   | 25             | ELM              |
| June 25 | Grassy I., <i>Lun.</i>     | 37             | Tracy Pagenhardt |
| July 1  | Cheticamp I., <i>Inv.</i>  | 23             | Magill Weber     |
| July 6  | Port Hood, <i>Inv.</i>     | 41             | Magill Weber     |
| July 21 | <i>Queens</i> shores       | 200            | ELM              |
| July 21 | Schooner Pd., <i>CBRM</i>  | 74             | Shane Hunt       |
| July 28 | Western Hd., <i>Queens</i> | 20             | ELM              |
| July 30 | W side Peters I., Brier I  | ca. 75 nesting | ELM              |
| July 31 | Tidnish, <i>Cumb.</i>      | 32             | Debbie Cusick    |

**AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN**

|            |                             |            |                           |
|------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|
| June 13-15 | Pembroke Shore, <i>Yar.</i> | 1 ad., ph. | Deborah Atwood-Power, RDE |
|------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|

**BROWN PELICAN**

|                     |                          |        |               |
|---------------------|--------------------------|--------|---------------|
| Late May-ca. June 2 | Big Tancook, <i>Lun.</i> | 1 JAH, | Hilary Dionne |
|---------------------|--------------------------|--------|---------------|



Although an AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN, like this adult in breeding condition, June 14 at Pembroke, *Yar.*, seems ungainly when ashore or on the water, it is a thing of beauty in flight. [Photo Ron D'Entremont]

## Hérons

By Ulli Hoeger

The only frequently reported heron was as usual our widely breeding GREAT BLUE HERON. Breeding of another species, BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON is apparently limited to CSI, although one “young” noted there June 15 by Clyde Stoddard was at that early date presumably a yearling, which retain juvenile-like plumage. It rarely shows up in other parts of the province, where most sightings are during the spring and fall, and are likely overshooting migrants or wandering post-breeders and juveniles. This pattern also applies to other heron and egret species that are mostly reported during the shoulder seasons or after dramatic weather events that alter movement patterns. As evident below, summer sightings of these species are rare.

### American Bittern

|   |         |              |
|---|---------|--------------|
| June 2, 17 Belleisle Marsh, <i>Ann.</i> | 1, 2    | BKW, JAH     |
| June 10, 30 Chignecto NWA, <i>Cum.</i>  | 1, 5    | KEL, N. Dowd |
| June 14 APBS, <i>Cum.</i>               | 1       | JAH          |
| June 17 Watermans L. <i>Queens</i>      | 1       | JAH          |
| June 25 Invernesa                       | present | KEL          |
| June 30 Eddy St. Marsh, <i>Cum.</i>     | 2       | KEL          |

### Great Blue Heron

Common in usual numbers throughout season in suitable habitat

### Great Egret

|                                    |   |               |
|------------------------------------|---|---------------|
| June 3 Churchville, <i>Pic.</i>    | 1 | KJM           |
| July 20-31 Miners Marsh, Kentville | 1 | RBS, var obs. |

### Snowy Egret

|   |   |            |
|---|---|------------|
| July 16-20 Back Oler Marsh, <i>Lun.</i> | 1 | KEL et al. |
|---|---|------------|

### Little Blue Heron

|                                     |       |             |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------------|
| July 22 Lawrencetown L., <i>HRM</i> | 1 ad. | Kate Steele |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------------|

### Black-crowned Night-Heron

|                   |              |               |
|-------------------|--------------|---------------|
| June 1-July 5 CSI | 1-5 indivs.. | eBird + 4 obs |
|-------------------|--------------|---------------|



Many have seen GREAT BLUE HERONS, like this one June 8 at Musquodoboit Hbr., *HRM*, swallow a large eel bit by bit. The amazing thing is that they don't always kill them beforehand [Photo Paul Murray]



**Left:** The well-known limerick about a “Young Lady from Natchez” has the line: “Because, when Ah itches, Ah scratches.” This photo and another in the previous issue seem to suggest it's a widespread habit among Southerners.

## Diurnal Raptors

By Ian McLaren

There is now very convincing new genetic research that adds to older morphological evidence that the falcons are only remotely related to the hawks. The AOU has moved them close to the parrots on its 'official' list to between the "pre-passerines" like pigeons and woodpeckers and the flycatchers. Amazingly, falcons are now taken as more closely related to sparrow than they are to eagles! But, since this section is "Diurnal Raptors" with no implication of relationships, we'll keep them here for convenience.

No one seems to have risen to the challenge fully confirming our first nesting of TURKEY VULTURE. It seems that hilly *Cumberland* is a hotspot for sightings of these wandering scavengers. The **BLACK VULTURE** observed by NSBS field trippers near Cape North, *Vic.*, was reported (ELM) to have been long-staying, although it had not been reported to us earlier. Among eBird reports of OSPREY, 22 were entered as "2", but only one was noted explicitly as a nesting pair. Four successful nests were otherwise reported. It would be good if more of us could note the timing and success events like brooding, hatching, fledging, etc. at the nests we observe. Finally, there were several comments and concerns about the toll of seabirds, mostly young kittiwakes, being taken by BALD EAGLES at the famed colonies on the Bird Islands, *Vic.* But, it is difficult to propose a solution for such a conservation dilemma.

Reporting of the other raptors was dilatory at best, or maybe reflects real changes. Long-term BBS trends are mixed and short of significant. We may need more focused and systematic surveys of our summering raptors. One pleasing note was the scolding pair of NORTHERN GOSHAWKS found near Yarmouth by Paul Gould. There was only one confirmed nesting in that county (and none in *Shelburne*) in the recent Atlas. On June 18, one RED-TAILED HAWK "branchling" and another wing-flapping nestling were near fledging at Pt. Williams, *Kings* (RBS).

Billy Digout noted that none of the 10 nest boxes set for AMERICAN KESTREL in *Richmond* by RFL was occupied this year. More pleasing, Fulton Lavender alerted us to the news that after some years of summer sightings and even hints of breeding in Halifax, a pair of PEREGRINE FALCONS nested under the MacDonald Bridge. According to Kyle Williams, who has worked on the bridge, they were quite unperturbed by bridge repair activity, sometimes close to the nest. They successfully nurtured (mostly with pigeons) and fledged two young. Furthermore, apparently they have nested under the bridge for a few years. Bridges have long been used as nest site elsewhere in North America, including Saint John, NB.

### Turkey Vulture

|                |                                   |           |             |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Through season | 12 locs. <i>Shel. to Cum.</i>     | 9 indivs. | eBird       |
| Through season | <i>Bridgetown, Ann.</i>           | "up to 9" | MCR         |
| June 2         | <i>St. Margarets Bay Tr., HRM</i> | 2         | B. McCarron |
| June 19        | <i>Advocate, Cum.</i>             | 2         | KFS         |
| June 25        | <i>New Salem, Cum.</i>            | 1         | KFS         |
| July 1         | <i>Apple R., Cum.</i>             | 1         | KFS         |
| July 1         | <i>Advocate, Cum.</i>             | 1         | KFS         |
| July 19        | <i>Advocate, Cum.</i>             | 1         | KFS         |

### BLACK VULTURE

|        |                                  |   |              |
|--------|----------------------------------|---|--------------|
| June 9 | <i>Dump nr. Cape North, Vic.</i> | 1 | ELM for NSBS |
|--------|----------------------------------|---|--------------|

### Osprey

|                |                                |                    |           |
|----------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Through season | <i>Shel. to Inv., 43 locs.</i> | 67 indivs.         | eBird     |
| July           | <i>Centrelea Ann.</i>          | 2 yng., nest empty | Aug 4 MCR |

### Northern Harrier

|           |                              |            |              |
|-----------|------------------------------|------------|--------------|
| June-July | 20 locs., <i>CSI to Inv.</i> | 22 indivs. | eBird+1 obs. |
|-----------|------------------------------|------------|--------------|

### Bald Eagle

|                |                               |             |                |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Through season | 30 locs., <i>Yar. to Vic.</i> | 117 indivs. | eBird + 7 obs. |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------|

The following data on nests in *Kings* were reported by JWW

|         |                         |                   |
|---------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| June 18 | <i>New Minas</i>        | 2 "near fledged"  |
| June 19 | <i>Kentville Ravine</i> | 2 "big" young     |
| June 28 | <i>n. of Waterville</i> | 1. nearly fledged |
| June 28 | <i>Lr. Canard St</i>    | 2 "large young    |
| July 28 | <i>nr., Scots Bay</i>   | 1 nest "not used" |
| July 28 | <i>Bomidon</i>          | 2 young           |

### Sharp-shinned Hawk

|         |                                      |   |               |
|---------|--------------------------------------|---|---------------|
| June 2  | <i>Cole Hbr.-Shearwater Tr., HRM</i> | 1 | D. Waterfield |
| July 2  | <i>Inverness area</i>                | 1 | Magill Weber  |
| July 22 | <i>Lunenburg</i>                     | 1 | Jo Sanzalone  |

### Northern Goshawk

|         |  |              |     |
|---------|--|--------------|-----|
| June 16 | <i>Shelburne area</i>                          | 1            | JAH |
| July 2  | <i>J &amp; D Stone Cons. Lands, NSNT, Yar.</i> | scolding pr. | PRG |

### Broad-winged Hawk

|   |            |            |
|---|------------|------------|
| <i>Shel. to Hants &amp; HRM, 7 repts.</i> | 11 indivs. | eBird only |
|---|------------|------------|



This male NORTHERN HARRIER on the hunt June 10 at Kayak Brk., Yar., is a study in fierce concentration. Photo Ronnie D'Entremont]

**Red-tailed Hawk**

Through season, *Lun.* to *Inv.* 17 repts, 24 indivs. eBird + 3 obs.

**American Kestrel**

June 17 Hardwood Lands, R. *Hants* DOU  
 June 29 Kingsport & Scots, Bay, *Kings* 1 & 1 JAH

**Merlin**

July Bridgetown *Ann.* cemetery 2 ad. vocalizing MCR  
 July 8 Fauxburg Tr., *Lun.* 1 JAH, DOU  
 July 19 Bridgewater 1 JAH  
**Peregrine Falcon**  
 July 28 PPP, Halifax (also see text) 1 m. C. Colville

**Rallids, Cranes**

By Ulli Hoeger

As in previous summer seasons, reports during the two month are sparse. This is in part because many birders are on vacation, but also that many bird species are more secretive than usual when tending their nests and young. Rallids that are, with the exception of American Coots, very secretive by nature, are largely reported as “heard” and were mostly a few SORA at expected locations.

SANDHILL CRANES are now seen in our province more regularly. Although they are still considered rare, in recent years we have had year-round reports of individuals, pairs, or smaller groups. The summer sighting of two birds in Antigonish county, along with the history of sightings in this region, makes me wonder if we will get a nesting report for this species in the not too distant future. Like Turkey Vulture, this species seems to be expanding its range in recent years.\*

**Virginia Rail**

June 30 Port Hood, *Inv.* 1 Magil Weber

**Sora**

All season Miners Marsh, Kentville several, ph. var. obs.  
 June Tancook I., *Lun.* pr. (ph.) Hillary Dionne, et al.  
 June 2 Belleisle Marsh, *Ann.* present BKW  
 June 10, 30 Chignecto NWA, *Cum.* 2 JAH  
 June 14 APBS, *Cum.* 2 JAH

**Sandhill Crane**

June 2 Belleisle Marsh, *Ann.* 1 BKW  
 June 11 St. Andrews, *Ant.* 2 (ph) Andy & Karen Sears



Right. A marsh near Southwest Cove on Tancook I., *Lun.*, is a reliable place to hear and sometimes glimpse a SORA. But you’ll be lucky if one walks out in plain view. [Photo Hillary Dionne]

\* **Addendum, by the acting editor.** Although not of this season, it is worth recording two Sandhill Cranes, not previously reported. They were present “for a few weeks in May” 2012 near Mabou, *Inv.*, and videoed (Shauna Barrington; video seen by IAM).

## Shorebirds

By Susann Myers

Early June saw the last of the northbound migrants, in their usual small numbers, along with some first-year non-breeders. Returning migrants began arriving in early July, most either on schedule or up to ten days early. Most species were reported in high numbers for this early in the migration season, possibly due to the summer's fine weather and good viewing conditions.

Both **BLACK-BELLIED** and **SEMPALMATED PLOVERS** were found in large numbers, and JSC noted that Semipalmateds peaked early at Crescent Beach. **PIPING PLOVERS** had a successful breeding season at some South shore beaches, while for a second year none were found nesting in HRM. (See the article on BSC's Piping Plover program, p. 38.) **EASTERN WILLETS** also had good breeding success in many locations. Numbers remained stable at Three Fathom Harbour through July, as juveniles gathered, but at the southwest end of the province flocks were already dwindling by the end of the month as migrants moved through.

The season was also a good one for shorebird rarities. One exciting report was Patricia Chalmers' record of an **UPLAND SANDPIPER** singing from an agricultural field near Welsford, *Ann.* at 5:20 on the morning of July 4, during her annual Breeding Bird Survey. The song she heard, a complex combination of rising bubbly notes, two-noted whistle and associated rapid chatter, is well illustrated on Disc 3 of "More Birding by Ear" in the Peterson Field Guide series for Eastern/Central North America. Although no NS breeding evidence was found for Upland Sandpiper in the second Maritime Breeding Bird Atlas, previous records have indicated the possibility of their breeding here, and both the first and second Atlas brought confirmed breeding records at several locations in NB, some of which, as noted by Patricia, "were not far, as a bird flies, from the Annapolis Valley." This record gives Valley birders yet another reason for early morning forays, in the coming summers!

The greatest rarity of the season was a hybrid shorebird, probably **PECTORAL X BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER**, that surprised Pat McKay and me at Shorebird Cove, Three Fathom Harbour, when we arrived for a picnic supper July 26. The first field mark to catch our attention was the bird's orange legs, which were a true darkish orange rather than yellow-orange. When none of the orange-legged options (Ruff, one of the redshanks, etc.) was right for this bird, we began detailed study in earnest. The picnic supper got little attention; Pat dedicated herself to capturing photographs of the bird, which remained about 50 m. away, while I studied it through my spotting scope and made notes. In size and structure, this shorebird matched a male Pectoral Sandpiper. Its size was similar to Lesser Yellowlegs, but with shorter legs. Its medium length, tapered and decurved bill was black on the outer half, dull orange at the base. The darker cap on its head, tapered to a point at the base of the bill. The heavy breast streaking, which was paler than on a Pectoral, ended abruptly at the plain white belly and undertail. Its back was not heavily marked. The tip of the long primary projection reached the end of its fairly long tail, on which a dark central stripe was seen in flight. Field marks that suggested a hybrid were: its overall warm light buffy brown colour, as if a wash of dull yellow were applied over reddish brown; its plain unstreaked buff-brown face showing no white (a split supercilium was buff-brown); and its mostly-white underwings. These characteristics, as well as the orange legs, fit best with Buff-breasted Sandpiper, but its streaked breast ending at the white belly resembled a Pectoral's, although the streaking was not so pronounced. Buff-breasted has a fairly limited breeding territory in the high arctic, from northern Alaska to western Nunavut, which is fully overlapped by that of Pectoral Sandpipers. Groups of male Buff-breasteds perform elaborate courtship displays in leks, while male Pectorals also have a lek-like display ritual. Hybrid shorebirds are rare, but have been found and documented more often in recent years, with the availability of better shorebird field guides and optical equipment. Studying this one was exciting, to say the least. Paul Murray provided help with photographs of the bird taken earlier that day, but unfortunately with the sun behind the bird, limiting visibility.

Another lucky find for Pat McKay and me at Three Fathom Harbour was a **RUFF** July 8, showing the tattered remains of heavily moulted breeding plumage. Its plumage pattern was the same as on the one seen July 3, 2011 in the same location, possibly the same bird.

**SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER** migration was unusually diffuse, with the only large numbers reported from the Cole Harbour Saltmarsh Trail and CSI. At Three Fathom Harbour, flocks remained small and were made up mainly of the *hendersoni* subspecies throughout July.

Note: on the table, Alternate = "breeding" plumage and Basic = "non-breeding" or immature plumage

#### small shorebird species

July 26, 31 E. Evangeline Bch., *Kings* 15-20,000 JWW, RIW

#### Black-bellied Plover

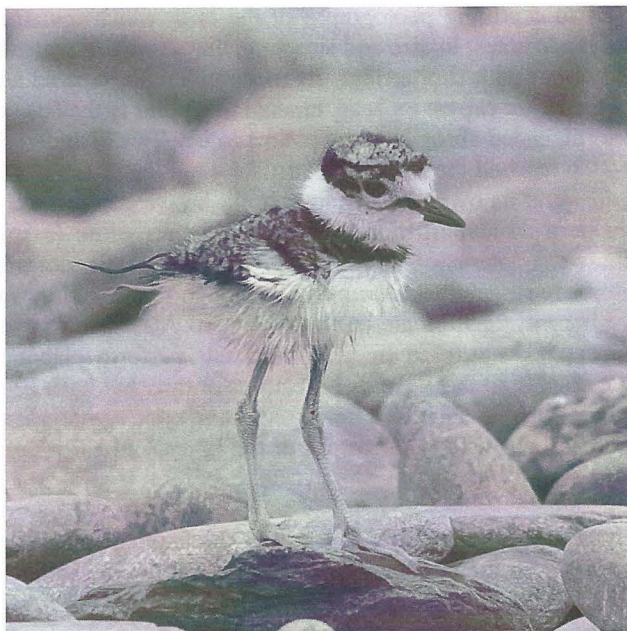
June 1-4 3 locations, *Shel.* 18 total Avery Nagy  
 June 1, 6 N. Grand Pre, *Kings* 1, 25 RIW  
 June 2 Beach Meadows Bch., *Queens* 8 Avery Nagy  
 June 10, 25 Cherry Hill Bch., *Lun.* 3, 6 Basic SJF  
 July 1 Big I., *Pic.* 3 KJM  
 July 9 Cook's Bch., *Shel.* 20 RDE  
 July 13 The Hawk, *CSI* 7 Avery Nagy  
 July 21, 29 Cole Hbr. Trail, *HRM* 9, 45 SEM  
 July 25, 28 Cherry Hill Bch., *Lun.* 5, 15 SJF  
 July 26 Wolfville sewage pond, *Kings* 26 RBS

#### Semipalmated Plover

June 1 N. Grand Pre, *Kings* 2 RIW  
 July 9 Cook's Bch., *Shel.* 10 RDE  
 July 9, 22, 31 3 Fathom Hbr., *HRM* 20, 220, 250 SEM  
 July 11 The Hawk, *CSI* 90 JON  
 July 25, 28 Cherry Hill Bch., *Lun.* 16, 233 SJF  
 July 25, 31 Crescent Bch., *Lun.* 65, 1360 JSC  
 July 29 Cole Hbr. Trail, *HRM* 475 SEM

#### Piping Plover

June 1-28 Daniels Head Bch., *CSI* 1-4 Avery Nagy  
 June 7-27 2 locations, *Queens* 7 total Avery Nagy  
 June 8 South Harbour, *Vic.* 2 ad., 3 juv. KJM  
 June 30 Port Hood Bch., *Inv.* 1 eBird  
 June 10, 25 Cherry Hill Bch., *Lun.* 5, 2 SJF  
 July 1, 11 Big I., *Pict.* 2-3 ad., 2 juv. KJM  
 July 10-26 7 locations, *Shel.* 58 total Avery Nagy  
 July 16 James Bch., *Pic.* nest, eggs KJM  
 July 16 near Camp Geddie, *Pic.* pr., 2 juv. KJM  
 July 21 Ragged Hbr. Bch., *Queens* 1 ad., 1 juv. ELM



A recently hatched KILLDEER chick, July 9 at Cook's Bch., Yar., is an irresistible mix of ungainliness and cuddliness.

#### Killdeer

June 6 Berwick, *Kings* 2 ad., eggs JCT  
 June 10, 30 Folly Mtn., *Col.* 2, 1 JAH  
 June 17 Hardwood Lands, *Hants* 2 DOU  
 July 3 mainland locations 4 total var. obs.  
 July 8 Hartlen Pt., *HRM* 6 TEB  
 July 9 Cook's Bch., *Shel.* 2 ad., 3 juv. RDE  
 July 10-30 4 locations, widespread 8 total eBird

#### AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER

July 3 Daniels Head, *CSI* 2 JON

#### Willet

June 20 locations, widespread 59 total eBird  
 June 10, 25 Cherry Hill Bch., *Lun.* 11, 22 SJF  
 June 18 3 Fathom Hbr., *HRM* 9 ad., 9 juv. SEM  
 June 30 Crescent Bch., *Lun.* 16 JSC  
 July 1-15 19 locations, widespread 128 total eBird  
 July 8 Cherry Hill, *Lun.* 13 JAH, DPO  
 July 8, 25, 31 Crescent Bch., *Lun.* 23, 63, 110 JSC  
 July 9-21 4 mainland locations 26 total var. obs.  
 July 9-31 3 Fathom Hbr., *HRM* 44-46E SEM  
 July 11, 28 Big I., *Pic.* 15, 12 KJM  
 July 13 The Hawk, *CSI* 100 Avery Nagy  
 July 14 Lwr. Rose Bay, *Lun.* 16 JAH, DAW  
 July 16-31 22 locations, widespread 94 total eBird  
 July 21 Cole Hbr. Trail, *HRM* 14 juv. E SEM  
 July 25, 28 Cherry Hill, *Lun.* 32, 22 SJF



A slightly more advanced SPOTTED SANDPIPER chick – not so much.

#### Spotted Sandpiper

June 17 locations, widespread 28 total var. obs.  
 July 19 locations, widespread 39 total var. obs.  
 July 8-20 Doctor's Brook, *Ant.* 6 JOK

#### Solitary Sandpiper

July 8-20 Doctor's Brook, *Ant.* 5, night JOK  
 July 10 Glengarry, *Pic.* 1, early KJM  
 July 18-30 4 mainland locations singles var. obs.

**Greater Yellowlegs**

|            |                             |          |           |
|------------|-----------------------------|----------|-----------|
| July 1-15  | 8 mainland locations        | 34 total | var. obs. |
| July 1, 22 | 3 Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>   | 10, 28   | SEM       |
| July 15-31 | 15 mainland locations       | 55 total | var. obs. |
| July 21    | Cole Hbr. Trail, <i>HRM</i> | 82       | SEM       |

**Willet**

|                |                               |               |            |
|----------------|-------------------------------|---------------|------------|
| June           | 20 locations, widespread      | 59 total      | eBird      |
| June 10, 25    | Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i> | 11, 22        | SJF        |
| June 18        | 3 Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>     | 9 ad., 9 juv. | SEM        |
| June 30        | Crescent Bch., <i>Lun.</i>    | 16            | JSC        |
| July 1-15      | 19 locations, widespread      | 128 total     | eBird      |
| July 8         | Cherry Hill, <i>Lun.</i>      | 13            | JAH, DPO   |
| July 8, 25, 31 | Crescent Bch., <i>Lun.</i>    | 23, 63, 110   | JSC        |
| July 9-21      | 4 mainland locations          | 26 total      | var. obs.  |
| July 9-31      | 3 Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>     | 44-46E        | SEM        |
| July 11, 28    | Big I., <i>Pic.</i>           | 15, 12        | KJM        |
| July 13        | The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>          | 100           | Avery Nagy |
| July 14        | Lwr. Rose Bay, <i>Lun.</i>    | 16            | JAH, DAW   |
| July 16-31     | 22 locations, widespread      | 94 total      | eBird      |
| July 21        | Cole Hbr. Trail, <i>HRM</i>   | 14 juv. E     | SEM        |
| July 25, 28    | Cherry Hill, <i>Lun.</i>      | 32, 22        | SJF        |

**Lesser Yellowlegs**

|                |                            |            |           |
|----------------|----------------------------|------------|-----------|
| June 24        | 3 Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>  | 5          | SEM       |
| July 1-15      | 5 locations, widespread    | 35 total   | eBird     |
| July 1, 11     | Big I., <i>Pic.</i>        | 6, 19      | KJM       |
| July 1, 20, 31 | 3 Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>  | 14, 65, 39 | SEM       |
| July 14; 21    | Lwr. Rose Bay, <i>Lun.</i> | 31, 70     | JAH; KEL  |
| July 16-31     | 12 locations, widespread   | 39 total   | var. obs. |
| July 20        | Garden Lots, <i>Lun.</i>   | 150        | JAH       |
| July 24, 28    | Big I., <i>Pic.</i>        | 41, 12     | KJM       |

**UPLAND SANDPIPER**

|        |                            |            |     |
|--------|----------------------------|------------|-----|
| July 4 | near Welsford, <i>Ann.</i> | 1, singing | PLC |
|--------|----------------------------|------------|-----|

**Whimbrel**

|            |                               |     |            |
|------------|-------------------------------|-----|------------|
| July 1     | Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i> | 1   | SJF        |
| July 11    | The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>          | 4   | JON        |
| July 13-27 | Crow Neck Bch., <i>Shel.</i>  | 5-1 | Avery Nagy |
| July 21    | Western Head, <i>Queens</i>   | 1   | ELM        |
| July 22    | 3 Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>     | 1   | SEM        |
| July 23    | Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>       | 5   | RBS        |

**Hudsonian Godwit**

|             |                             |              |          |
|-------------|-----------------------------|--------------|----------|
| July 11, 19 | The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>        | 5, 4         | JON; RAH |
| July 21     | Cole Hbr. Trail, <i>HRM</i> | 1, Alternate | SEM      |
| July 31     | The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>        | 29           | RAH      |

**Ruddy Turnstone**

|            |                               |   |               |
|------------|-------------------------------|---|---------------|
| June 9     | The Cape, <i>Shel.</i>        | 5 | Avery Nagy    |
| July 8, 25 | Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i> | 1 | JAH, DOP; SJF |

|            |                      |          |       |
|------------|----------------------|----------|-------|
| July 13-30 | 6 mainland locations | 23 total | eBird |
|------------|----------------------|----------|-------|

|         |                            |        |          |
|---------|----------------------------|--------|----------|
| July 21 | Western Hd., <i>Queens</i> | 3 ad.  | ELM      |
| July 29 | Grand Pre, <i>Kings</i>    | 2 alt. | RBS, RIW |

**Red Knot**

|             |                            |                 |          |
|-------------|----------------------------|-----------------|----------|
| June 7      | N. Grand Pre, <i>Kings</i> | 3 alt.          | RIW      |
| July 22; 26 | 3 Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>  | 2-3, Alternate. | SEM; DOU |

**Sanderling**

|             |                               |              |            |
|-------------|-------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| June 19, 22 | Red Head Bch., <i>Shel.</i>   | 1            | Avery Nagy |
| July 11-27  | Crow Neck Bch., <i>Shel.</i>  | 7-32         | Avery Nagy |
| July 13-26  | 3 locs., <i>Shel.</i>         | 24 total     | Avery Nagy |
| July 15-29  | Grand Pre, <i>Kings</i>       | 2, Alternate | RBS; RIW   |
| July 20     | Martinique Bch., <i>HRM</i>   | 55           | TEB        |
| July 25     | Big I., <i>Pict.</i>          | 4            | JOK        |
| July 25, 28 | Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i> | 3, 15        | SJF        |

**Semipalmated Sandpiper**

|           |                            |      |     |
|-----------|----------------------------|------|-----|
| June 1, 7 | N. Grand Pre, <i>Kings</i> | 8, 2 | RIW |
|-----------|----------------------------|------|-----|

|             |                               |             |            |
|-------------|-------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| June 22     | Crow Neck Bch., <i>Shel.</i>  | 2           | Avery Nagy |
| July 9      | Cook's Bch., <i>Shel.</i>     | 1           | RDE        |
| July 9      | 3 Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>     | 6           | PMC, SEM   |
| July 11     | The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>          | 340         | JON        |
| July 15     | Grand Pre, <i>Kings</i>       | 120         | RBS        |
| July 20, 23 | 3 Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>     | 103, 420    | SEM        |
| July 20, 31 | Grand Pre, <i>Kings</i>       | 3, 6 banded | RIW        |
| July 21, 29 | Cole Hbr. Trail, <i>HRM</i>   | 100, 665    | SEM        |
| July 24, 31 | N. Grand Pre, <i>Kings</i>    | 10-15,000   | RIW        |
| July 25, 28 | Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i> | 28, 106     | SJF        |

**Least Sandpiper**

|             |                                 |          |               |
|-------------|---------------------------------|----------|---------------|
| June 9      | The Cape, <i>Shel.</i>          | 1        | Avery Nagy    |
| July 1, 8   | Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i>   | 6, 61    | SJF; JAH, DPO |
| July 7-29   | 8 mainland locations            | 33 total | var. obs.     |
| July 10-16  | locations, <i>Shel.</i>         | 73 total | Avery Nagy    |
| July 11, 28 | Big I., <i>Pict.</i>            | 25, 20   | KJM           |
| July 20     | Little Port Joli, <i>Queens</i> | 25       | Avery Nagy    |
| July 25, 28 | Cherry Hill, <i>Lun.</i>        | 20, 25   | SJF           |
| July 31     | N. Grand Pre area, <i>Kings</i> | 19       | RIW           |

**White-rumped Sandpiper**

|             |                                   |           |            |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| June 2      | Beach Meadows Bch., <i>Queens</i> | 4         | Avery Nagy |
| July 20, 31 | 3 Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>         | 1         | PLC, SEM   |
| July 24, 29 | Grand Pre, <i>Kings</i>           | 2+, a few | RIW, RBS   |
| July 25, 28 | Cherry Hill, <i>Lun.</i>          | 2, 15     | SJF        |
| July 25, 31 | Crescent Bch., <i>Lun.</i>        | 1, 4      | JSC        |

**Pectoral Sandpiper**

|         |                               |   |            |
|---------|-------------------------------|---|------------|
| June 11 | Johnston's Pond, <i>Shel.</i> | 1 | Avery Nagy |
| July 28 | E. Long I., <i>Kings</i>      | 1 | eBird      |

**PROBABLE PECTORAL X BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER**

|         |                           |        |               |
|---------|---------------------------|--------|---------------|
| July 26 | 3 Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i> | 1, ph. | PMC, SEM, PMU |
|---------|---------------------------|--------|---------------|

**RUFF**

|        |                           |           |          |
|--------|---------------------------|-----------|----------|
| July 8 | 3 Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i> | 1 m., ph. | PMC, SEM |
|--------|---------------------------|-----------|----------|

**Stilt Sandpiper**

|             |                           |           |          |
|-------------|---------------------------|-----------|----------|
| July 15, 22 | 3 Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i> | 5, 4 alt. | PLC, SEM |
|-------------|---------------------------|-----------|----------|

**Short-billed Dowitcher**

|                 |                                 |             |               |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| June 30         | Crescent Bch., <i>Lun.</i>      | 10          | JSC           |
| July 1, 9       | 3 Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>       | 34, 205     | SEM           |
| July 3, 5       | The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>            | 350, 700    | var. obs.     |
| July 8; 28      | Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i>   | 34, 16      | JAH, DPO; SJF |
| July 9          | Cook's Bch., <i>Shel.</i>       | 75          | RDE           |
| July 11         | The Hawk, <i>CSI</i>            | 3,500       | JON           |
| July 11         | Cole Hbr. Trail, <i>HRM</i>     | 200         | eBird         |
| July 14, 25, 31 | Crescent Bch., <i>Lun.</i>      | 24, 62, 103 | JSC           |
| July 14         | Lwr. Rose Bay, <i>Lun.</i>      | 87          | JAH           |
| July 20, 31     | 3 Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>       | 145, 29     | SEM           |
| July 21, 29     | Cole Hbr. Saltmarsh, <i>HRM</i> | 670, 769    | SEM           |

**Wilson's Snipe**

|             |                         |         |           |
|-------------|-------------------------|---------|-----------|
| June - July | 4 locations, widespread | singles | var. obs. |
|-------------|-------------------------|---------|-----------|

**American Woodcock**

|        |                         |   |     |
|--------|-------------------------|---|-----|
| June 2 | Trafalgar, <i>Guys.</i> | 1 | KJM |
|--------|-------------------------|---|-----|

**phalarope species**

|             |              |       |           |
|-------------|--------------|-------|-----------|
| July 12, 13 | off Brier I. | 100s  | P. Graham |
| July 31     | off Brier I. | 1000s | P. Graham |

**Red-necked Phalarope**

|         |                           |        |           |
|---------|---------------------------|--------|-----------|
| July 19 | off Brier I.              | 100s   | P. Graham |
| July 26 | Minas Basin, <i>Kings</i> | 1 juv. | RIW       |
| July 26 | off Halifax Hbr.          | 45     | DAC       |
| July 30 | off Brier I.              | 100    | ELM       |

**Red Phalarope**

|         |              |                 |           |
|---------|--------------|-----------------|-----------|
| July 13 | off Brier I. | some, Alternate | P. Graham |
| July 19 | off Brier I. | 100s            | P. Graham |
| July 30 | off Brier I. | 300             | ELM       |



These three images, obtained under difficult lighting, help document an apparent PECTORAL X BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER hybrid July 26 at Shorebird Cove, Three Fathom Hbr., HRM. All three images show the Pectoral-like breast, but with slightly less prominent streaking, and the featureless face, without eyeline or supercilium, more like Buff-breasted. The left image shows its size in comparison with a nearby Short-billed Dowitcher, its thin, drooping bill, and a hint of the “split” supercilium (narrow, pale streak on lateral crown). The Middle image shows its largely white underwing, more like Buff-breasted. Photos: left, Paul Murray, middle and right, Pat McKay]

## Gulls through Alcids

By Eric Mills

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKES are off-again on-again birds in southwestern waters of Nova Scotia, breeding mainly in Cape Breton, and on one island off Mahone Bay, Lun. Some summers non-breeders can be found here and there, but only one was reported this summer, from not far outside Digby Gut, attributed to *Annapolis Co.*

The numbers of mid-summer LAUGHING GULLS vary greatly from year to year; this summer there were only two, both in July. A few summering, non-breeding BONAPARTE'S GULLS were reported throughout July until the first returning birds, possibly failed breeders, showed up along the shore of Northumberland Strait late in the month. RING-BILLED GULLS showed a similar pattern, although the presence of adults in some numbers in *Inverness Co.*, Cape Breton, in early summer - see the South Bay and Cabot Landing reports - is a bit puzzling if breeding is not occurring somewhere nearby. A handful of LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL reports is about normal, indicating a small and mobile population of immatures and non-breeding adults, probably originating at some time in the relatively new West Greenland population of this species.

Two CASPIAN TERNS, and adult and an immature, seen on Merigomish Big Island, *Pict.*, July 23-25 were likely the first post-breeding arrivals from colonies to the north around the Gulf of St. Lawrence. BLACK TERNS were as expected, from the NS-NB border area, except for two, rather unclearly described as adults, reported from Cole Harbour, *HRM*, on July 20. Despite the monitoring of tern colonies in Mahone Bay, where a ROSEATE TERN recovery programme is underway, the only report of that species was of birds in the well-established and protected colony on The Brothers Islands, *Yar.*

An early SOUTH POLAR SKUA was reported from a whale cruise off Brier Island on June 25, the first of several to follow in mid and late summer to be detailed in next issue. Of the three other skuas reported, only the bird on Banquereau off Cape Breton I. was identifiable from photos as South Polar.

As more and more pelagic birding occurs in the Gulf of Maine, on the Scotian Shelf, and in the entrance to the Bay of Fundy, it is becoming clear that a few non-breeding DOVEKIES spend the summer in our waters. Tom Johnson, doing bird surveys



from the NOAA research vessel *Henry B. Bigelow* in the Gulf of Maine, found several small groups, totalling 18, in the Canadian sector of Georges Bank on June 12, and almost a month later, on July 4, Penny Graham of Mariner Cruises of Westport, Brier Island, found one just north of the island, as she has occasionally during other summers for the past few years. Other alcids were much as expected, with the exception of ATLANTIC PUFFINS, which were somewhat more common than expected off Brier Island during July. This was not due to breeding failure, at least not on Machias Seal Island, NB, where a local lightkeeper/birder reported reasonable breeding success in the Puffin colony into late summer. There is no information on the status of the smaller colonies in *Yarmouth Co.*, NS.

#### Black-legged Kittiwake

(Reports from eBird)

|         |                                    |     |               |
|---------|------------------------------------|-----|---------------|
| June 14 | Bird Is., <i>Vic.</i>              | 50  | Steve Metchis |
| June 23 | Neils Hbr., <i>Vic.</i>            | 1   | Mark Arvin    |
| June 24 | Middle Hd. Trail, <i>Vic.</i>      | 4   | Mark Arvin    |
| July 3  | Bird Is., <i>Vic.</i>              | 200 | Magill Weber  |
| July 10 | Bird Is., <i>Vic.</i>              | 150 | Michael Press |
| July 23 | Digby-St. John ferry, <i>Anna.</i> | 1   | Shane Hunt    |

#### Laughing Gull

|         |                  |                            |     |
|---------|------------------|----------------------------|-----|
| July 1  | Taylor Hd., PP   | 1, 1 <sup>st</sup> -summer | DGA |
| July 20 | Daniels Hd., CSI | 1                          | RAH |

#### Bonaparte's Gull

(including reports from eBird)

|            |                               |       |                  |
|------------|-------------------------------|-------|------------------|
| July 11    | Tatamagouche, <i>Col.</i>     | 2     | ROH              |
| July 11    | Saddle I., <i>Lun.</i>        | 1     | Tracy Pagenhardt |
| July 18-30 | Big I., <i>Pic.</i>           | 3-41  | JOK              |
| July 22    | Pugwash, <i>Cum.</i>          | 1     | SAB              |
| July 24    | Big I., <i>Pic.</i>           | 18    | KJM              |
| July 25    | Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun.</i> | 1     | SJF              |
| July 27    | Pictou area                   | 5     | Ron Romano       |
| July 27    | Round Bay, <i>Shel.</i>       | 1     | Avery Nagy       |
| July 28    | Big I., <i>Pic.</i>           | 5 ad. | KJM              |
| July 31    | Tidnish, <i>Cum.</i>          | 5     | Debbie Cusick    |

#### Ring-billed Gull

(including selected reports from 79 on eBird)

|                 |                                |                |                 |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| June 2          | E. Passage, <i>HRM</i>         | 25             | DAC             |
| June 7,12       | Bayswater Bch., <i>Lun.</i>    | 2              | Rena Waters     |
| June 8          | South Bay, <i>Vic.</i>         | 15             | KJM             |
| June 9          | South Bay, <i>Vic.</i>         | 20, mostly ad. | ELM, AHM        |
| June 15-July 26 | Birch Cove, Dartmouth          | 1-2            | MZE             |
| June 25         | Brier I.                       | 1              | Bryan Sabourin  |
| June 30-July 6  | Port Hood, <i>Inv.</i>         | 1-6            | Magill Weber    |
| July 4          | Cabot Ldg. PP, <i>Vic.</i>     | 40             | Magill Weber    |
| July 6-25       | Big I., <i>Pic.</i>            | 3-35           | JOK             |
| July 9          | Off Caribou, <i>Pic.</i>       | 20             | Bryan Sabourin  |
| July 9-31       | BIO, Bedford Basin, <i>HRM</i> | 1-2            | Tim & Anne Hall |
| July 11         | Tatamagouche, <i>Col.</i>      | 20             | ROH             |
| July 16-30      | Grand Pre, <i>Kings</i>        | 2-15           | Bryan Sabourin  |
| July 17         | W. Mabou Bch. PP, <i>Inv.</i>  | 43             | Shane Hunt      |
| July 20,23      | Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>          | 25,18          | Bryan Sabourin  |
| July 24         | Big I., <i>Pic.</i>            | 23             | KJM             |
| July 31         | Tidnish, <i>Cumb.</i>          | 13             | Debbie Cusick   |

#### Lesser Black-backed Gull

(including reports from eBird)

|            |                              |                             |                |
|------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| June 6     | Nr Horton Ldg., <i>Kings</i> | 1, 3 <sup>rd</sup> -cy, ph. | RIW            |
| June 9     | South Bay, <i>Vic.</i>       | 1, 3 <sup>rd</sup> -yr.     | ELM, AHM       |
| July 8     | E. Passage, <i>HRM</i>       | 1                           | TEB            |
| July 20    | Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>        | 1                           | Bryan Sabourin |
| July 28/30 | Grand Pre, <i>Kings</i>      | 1                           | Bryan Sabourin |

#### Caspian Tern

|             |                     |       |          |
|-------------|---------------------|-------|----------|
| July 23, 25 | Big I., <i>Pic.</i> | 1 ad. | DOU, JOK |
| July 24     | Big I., <i>Pic.</i> | 2 ad. | KJM      |

#### Black Tern

(reports from eBird)

|         |                         |       |                |
|---------|-------------------------|-------|----------------|
| June 30 | APBS                    | 16    | JAH            |
| June 30 | Eddy Marsh, <i>Cum.</i> | 12    | KEL            |
| July 20 | Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>   | 2 ad. | Bryan Sabourin |

#### Roseate Tern

|         |                           |    |            |
|---------|---------------------------|----|------------|
| July 11 | Brothers Is., <i>Yar.</i> | 15 | Avery Nagy |
|---------|---------------------------|----|------------|

#### Common Tern

(selected reports from 93 on eBird)

|                 |                              |        |                  |
|-----------------|------------------------------|--------|------------------|
| June 6          | James Bch., <i>Pic.</i>      | 16     | KJM              |
| June 13, 24     | Big I., <i>Pic.</i>          | 4/4    | KJM              |
| June 21         | Off Brier I.                 | 5 ad.  | ELM              |
| June 25-July 6  | Grassy I., <i>Lun.</i>       | 1-18   | Tracy Pagenhardt |
| June 25-July 19 | Westhaver I., <i>Lun.</i>    | 42-27  | Tracy Pagenhardt |
| June 25-July 26 | Saddle I., <i>Lun.</i>       | 2-130  | Tracy Pagenhardt |
| July 4          | Cabot Ldg. PP, <i>Vic.</i>   | 19     | Magill Weber     |
| July 6-30       | Big I., <i>Pic.</i>          | 3-10   | JOK              |
| July 8, 15      | Sandy Bottom L., <i>Ann.</i> | 3      | MCR              |
| July 11         | Brothers Is., <i>Yar.</i>    | 30     | Avery Nagy       |
| July 20         | Maders Cove, <i>Lun.</i>     | 17     | JAH              |
| July 21         | Western Hd., <i>Queens</i>   | 10 ad. | ELM              |
| July 24         | Big I., <i>Pic.</i>          | 4      | KJM              |
| July 26         | Louis Hd., <i>Shel.</i>      | 18     | Avery Nagy       |
| July 28         | Western Hd., <i>Queens</i>   | 10     | ELM              |
| July 29         | Caribou I., <i>Pic.</i>      | 26     | Leonel Richard   |
| July 30         | Off Brier I.                 | 1 ad.  | ELM              |

#### Arctic Tern

(selected from 20 reports on eBird)

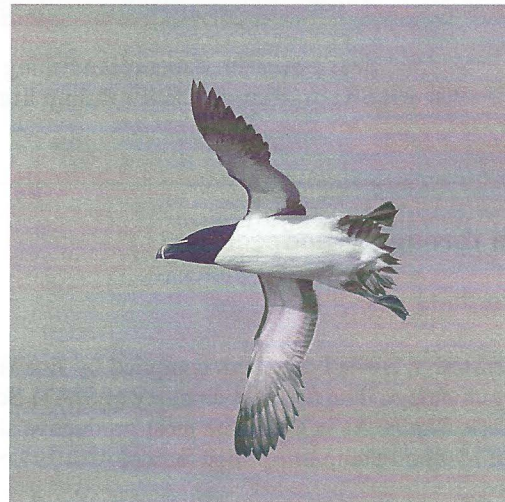
|                 |                              |       |                  |
|-----------------|------------------------------|-------|------------------|
| June 12         | Gulf of Maine, <i>Yar.</i>   | 1     | Tom Johnson      |
| June 15-July 17 | Crow Neck Bch., <i>Shel.</i> | 12-45 | Avery Nagy       |
| June 25         | Grassy I., <i>Lun.</i>       | 2     | Tracy Pagenhardt |
| July 3-11       | Westhaver I., <i>Lun.</i>    | 1-4   | Tracy Pagenhardt |
| July 4          | Cabot Ldg. PP, <i>Vic.</i>   | 2     | Magill Weber     |
| July 11         | Brothers Is., <i>Yar.</i>    | 60    | Avery Nagy       |

#### SOUTH POLAR SKUA

|          |              |         |                |
|----------|--------------|---------|----------------|
| June 25  | Off Brier I. | 1       | Bryan Sabourin |
| June 3-4 | Banquereau   | 1 (ph.) | Aldric D'Eon   |

#### SKUA sp.

|         |                                   |   |                 |
|---------|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------|
| July 15 | Digby-St. John ferry, <i>Ann.</i> | 2 | Gordon Saunders |
|---------|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------|



A RAZORBILL from a small colony on Green Rock, *Yar.*, seems hardly capable of keeping its stout body aloft on such relatively small wings. [Photo Ronnie D'Entremont]

**Razorbill**

(including selected reports from eBird)

|                 |                         |        |         |
|-----------------|-------------------------|--------|---------|
| June 2          | Green Rock, <i>Yar.</i> | 19     | RDE     |
| June 14-July 10 | Bird Is., <i>Vic.</i>   | 50-400 | v. obs. |
| July 30         | Off Brier I.            | 1 ad.  | ELM     |

**DOVEKIE**

|         |                            |                  |              |
|---------|----------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| June 12 | Gulf of Maine, <i>Yar.</i> | 18 (sev. groups) | Tom Johnson  |
| July 4  | Off Brier I.               | 1                | Penny Graham |

**Common Murre**

|         |                               |   |            |
|---------|-------------------------------|---|------------|
| June 24 | Middle Hd. Trail, <i>Vic.</i> | 1 | Mark Arvin |
| July 30 | Off Brier I.                  | 2 | ELM        |

**Black Guillemot**

(including selected reports from 30 on eBird)

|                 |                              |          |                  |
|-----------------|------------------------------|----------|------------------|
| June 2          | Grand Passage, Brier I.      | 2 ad.    | ELM, IAM         |
| June 9          | White Point, <i>Vic.</i>     | 1        | NSBS             |
| June 14-July 10 | Bird Is., <i>Vic.</i>        | 20-50    | v. obs.          |
| June 17         | C. Chignecto PP, <i>Cum.</i> | 4        | Ray Cooke        |
| June 23         | N of Cheticamp, <i>Inv.</i>  | 6        | Mark Arvin       |
| July 3          | Green I., CSI                | abundant | Laura Jones, CST |

|         |                                |             |               |
|---------|--------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| July 14 | Off Ingonish Hbr., <i>Vic.</i> | 15          | Michael Press |
| July 16 | Lockeport, <i>Shel.</i>        | 6           | Janis Grant   |
| July 21 | Western Hd., <i>Queens</i>     | 2 ad.       | ELM           |
| July 26 | Hemeon Hd., <i>Shel.</i>       | 60          | Avery Nagy    |
| July 28 | Cribbons Wharf, <i>Ant.</i>    | 6 on cliffs | KJM           |

**Atlantic Puffin**

(including selected reports from eBird)

|                 |                            |        |                  |
|-----------------|----------------------------|--------|------------------|
| June 2          | Green Rock, <i>Yar.</i>    | 1      | RDE              |
| June 12         | Gulf of Maine, <i>Yar.</i> | 5      | Tom Johnson      |
| June 14-July 10 | Bird Is., <i>Vic.</i>      | 50-300 | v. obs.          |
| June 21         | Off Brier I.               | 25+    | ELM              |
| June 28         | Off Brier I.               | 12     | Penny Graham     |
| June 29         | Off Brier I.               | 4      | Penny Graham     |
| July 3          | Green I., CSI              | 30     | Laura Jones, CST |
| July 4          | Off Brier I.               | 14     | Penny Graham     |
| July 21         | Off Brier I.               | 3      | Penny Graham     |
| July 28         | Western Hd., <i>Queens</i> | 2 ad.  | ELM              |
| July 30         | Off Brier I.               | 1 ad.  | ELM              |



A skua, June 4 over the Banquereau fishing grounds, obligingly revealed itself as a dark phase SOUTH POLAR SKUA, then snatched a shrimp from a GREAT SHEARWATER. [Photos Aldric D'Eon]

**Pigeon through Woodpeckers**

By Chris Field

The CHIMNEY SWIFT numbers compiled by Jim Wolford were encouraging in that new sites were identified with swifts entering chimneys. The first is a chimney at SJAM School on Russell St. in north-end Halifax and the second is a residence in Martock, *Hants*. As is usual, the most productive sites were Temperance St. School in New Glasgow, with 605 on June 7 followed by Middleton, *Ann.*, High School with 194 on June 6.

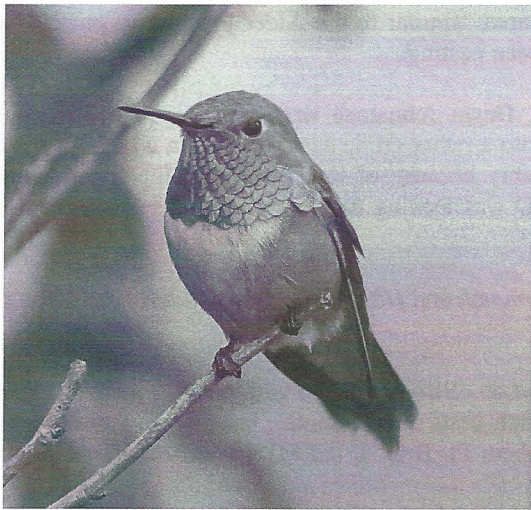
As is usual for the summer season, there are few rarities to report. However an adult male **RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD** was seen for several days at a residence near Sable River, *Shel.*, as first reported by Ron d'Entremont. An experienced Connecticut birder reported a hummingbird at Digby Pines that was clearly smaller than the **RUBY-THROATEDS** it was with. Without more details hard to guess what it could have been. Randy Lauff sent in a report of a **RED-HEADED WOODPECKER** in Sonora, *Guysborough*, in early June. At least two **RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER** nestings were

indicated this summer. One was a couple of blocks south of the Dalhousie campus in Halifax, where a pair fought with starlings over a nest hole obscured by a large, leafy tree, then after mid-June came frequently to a feeder and carrying seeds and suet into the tree (Sara Iverson, Alan Springer). The other was in Lr. Sackville, *HRM*, where a pair had occurred in May, one of which was seen in early June (see table). There will be a follow-up on these nestings in the next issue.

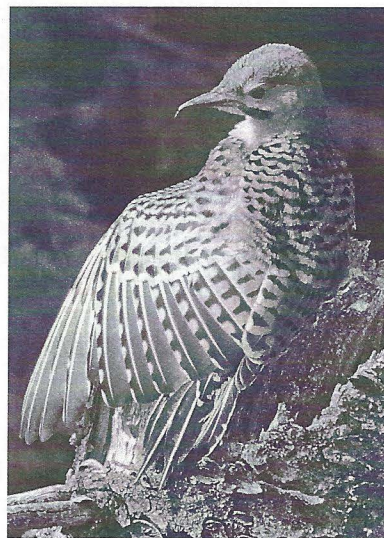
Among our more regular woodpeckers, YELLOW-BELLIED seemed particularly scarce, and indeed its numbers have decreased since the 1960s (BBS). The others were more extensively reported. In Jo Sanzalone's yard in Lunenburg, a female HAIRY WOODPECKER was feeding young from June 18 to 11 July. In Debbie Stoddart-Pageau's backyard in Timberlea, *HRM*, males of both a Hairy and DOWNY were feeding fledglings in early July.

*The eBird totals on the table include only maximum numbers found during the period at each repeatedly surveyed eBird site.*

|                                  |                               |             |                              |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Mourning Dove</b>             |                               |             |                              |
| June-July                        | province-wide                 | 279         | ebird                        |
| <b>Great Horned Owl</b>          |                               |             |                              |
| June 19                          | Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>         | 1           | KFS                          |
| <b>Barred Owl</b>                |                               |             |                              |
| June-July                        | 6 counties                    | 18          | ebird                        |
| <b>Long-eared Owl</b>            |                               |             |                              |
| July 29                          | Meaghers Grant, <i>HRM</i>    | 1           | M. Lushington                |
| <b>Northern Saw-whet Owl</b>     |                               |             |                              |
| June                             | Esso-Coldbrook, <i>Kings</i>  | 2           | TEB                          |
| <b>Common Nighthawk</b>          |                               |             |                              |
| June-July                        | 7 counties, 15 locs.          | 35          | ebird                        |
| July 20, 25, Aug. 2              | Plympton, <i>Digby</i>        | 20, 25, 20  | MCR                          |
| <b>Chimney Swift</b>             |                               |             |                              |
| June 2                           | Black R., <i>Hants</i>        | 5-6         | WPN                          |
| June 2                           | Middleton, <i>Ann.</i>        | 194         | WPN                          |
| June 7                           | Upper Falmouth, <i>Hants</i>  | 57          | C. Rutledge                  |
| June 7                           | RTNC, <i>Hants</i>            | 97          | JWW                          |
| June 7                           | New Glasgow, <i>Pic.</i>      | 605         | KJM                          |
| June 20                          | North end Halifax, <i>HRM</i> | 5           | M. Butler                    |
| June 24                          | Abrahams L., <i>Pict.</i>     | 2           | KJM, R. Ferguson             |
| June 25                          | McGowan L., <i>Queens</i>     | 68          | B. Toms                      |
| June 30                          | Island L., <i>Pict.</i>       | 2           | KJM                          |
| July 25                          | Truro, <i>Col.</i>            | 25+         | JBO                          |
| July 25                          | Oxford, <i>Cum.</i>           | 7           | A. Manthorne                 |
| July 29                          | St. Bernards, <i>Digby</i>    | 48          | CLD, P. Potter               |
| Late July                        | Martock, <i>Hants</i>         | 2+juv       | A. Manthorne                 |
| <b>Ruby-throated Hummingbird</b> |                               |             |                              |
| June-July                        | province-wide, 62 locs.       | 111         | ebird                        |
| <b>RUFOUS HUMMINBIRD</b>         |                               |             |                              |
| July 26-31                       | Sable R., <i>Queens</i>       | 1 ad. m.    | RDE, DHY                     |
| <b>Belted Kingfisher</b>         |                               |             |                              |
| June-July                        | province-wide, 39 locs.       | 46 indivs.  | ebird                        |
| <b>RED-HEADED WOODPECKER</b>     |                               |             |                              |
| June 4                           | Sonora, <i>Guys.</i>          | 1           | <i>fide</i> RFL              |
| <b>RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER</b>    |                               |             |                              |
| June, July                       | Halifax                       |             | Nesting. See text            |
| June 2                           | Lr. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>     | 1           | as prev. rep. Byran Sabourin |
| <b>Yellow-bellied Sapsucker</b>  |                               |             |                              |
| June-July                        | 5 counties                    | 7 indivs.   | ebird                        |
| <b>Downy Woodpecker</b>          |                               |             |                              |
| June-July                        | province-wide 34 locs.        | 57 indivs.  | ebird                        |
| <b>Hairy Woodpecker</b>          |                               |             |                              |
| June-July                        | province-wide 31 locs.        | 48 indivs.  | ebird                        |
| <b>Black-backed Woodpecker</b>   |                               |             |                              |
| June                             | CBHNP                         | 1           | Shane Hunt                   |
| <b>Northern Flicker</b>          |                               |             |                              |
| June-July                        | province-wide, 63 locs.       | 105 indivs. | ebird                        |
| <b>Pileated Woodpecker</b>       |                               |             |                              |
| June-July                        | province-wide, 14 locs.       | 18 indivs.  | ebird                        |
| June 30                          | N. Berwick, <i>Kings</i>      | 1           | SLH                          |
| July 29                          | APBS, <i>Cumb.</i>            | 1           | KFS                          |

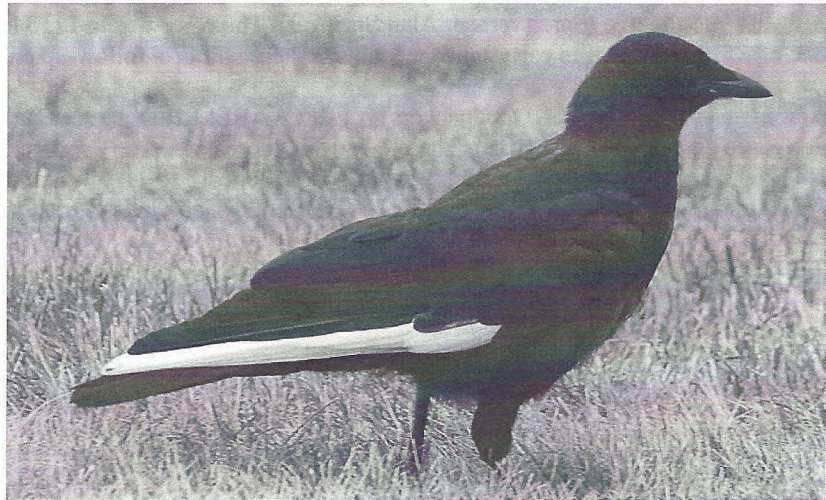


Only a few lucky observers got to see this summer's RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD (here July 29) at Sable River, Queens. [Photo Ronnie D'Entremont]



NORTHERN FLICKERS, like this juvenile in late June, seems to enjoy sunbathing and incidentally displaying their elegantly patterned plumage. [Photo Paul Murray]

**Right.** Crows, like this one July 16 in Stellerton, have a tendency to sport white primaries. White feathers also tend to fray badly, so this one, in relatively freshly molted primaries, is more pleasingly marked than some. [Photo Graham Cassidy]



## Flycatchers through Thrushes

By Ian McLaren

It seems clear from the tabulations below that the late migrating OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER, EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE, and the regular *Empidonax* flycatchers, were still arriving in early June; there's also a hint that arrivals were later in Cape Breton. Diminished singing may also partly account for the fall-off of reports in July. Interestingly, only Judy Tufts explicitly reported one of these species as nesting – a pair of Wood-pewees behind her house on Wolfville Ridge. There seemed to be no follow-up on the apparently breeding EASTERN PHOEBES mentioned in the last issue, although a brood was a photograph at Millstream, *Pic.* (see p. 37) and an adult July 20 and 27 at a bridge in Berwick, *Kings* (Sydney Penner), was presumably nesting there.

Three summer reports of WILLOW FLYCATCHER were about as usual. The one persistently vocalizing at Northern Pt., Brier I. (ELM) was never seen with a mate. Most of our summer reports have been of hopeful males, but two flycatchers July 8 on the St. Margarets Bay Tr., *HRM*, identified as Willow appeared “similar to the Alder Flycatcher, but obviously couldn't be from the sound of them” (Bryan Sabourin), and may have been nesting.

In the one report of nesting by GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER, Devin Johnstone wrote that on June 1 the pair in Kingston mentioned in the last issue were “carrying nesting materials into a rather crude nest box . . . in a large pine tree at the rear of lot.” Unfortunately, they failed to nest successfully, possibly because of Raccoons, but did linger into later summer (D. Johnstone; see next issue). An adult EASTERN KINGBIRD was feeding four young July 20 at Miners Marsh, Kingston (RBS).

Our only unusual vireos were the two PHILADELPHIA VIREOS in *Yarmouth* and *HRM* respectively. It has been some years since we've had a confirmed nesting,

All three common corvids were present in reduced numbers per location on eBird compared with those of spring. This may simply reflect more sedentary and secretive behaviour. GRAY JAY often nests in late winter, but offspring generally stay with parent for some time, so an immature appearing June 21 at Northern Pt. Brier I. (ELM) was on the move unusually early.

Several successful TREE SWALLOW nestings were mentioned, but the well-known nest boxes around the French Basin Trail in Annapolis Royal were said to have been predated a weasel and then, more disgustingly, the boxes, some with near-fledglings, were vandalized in mid-July (Sharron Hawbolt). The ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW pair discovered in late May on the Westport, Brier I. (see last issue), indeed nested under the enclosed eaves of a storefront balcony on the Grand

Passage waterfront, for the first fully confirmed nesting of the species here. Eric Mills and others watched them in early June carrying nesting material into the cavity in early June, and later carrying food to the nestlings into early July (the Gidneys; see photo). Some effort was made to report colonies of BANK and BARN and CLIFF SWALLOWS, all of them in trouble (current BBS estimates < 5%, < 15%, and about 20% of 1960s estimates respectively). Some large counts on eBird presumably represented such colonies, but only one Bank Swallow count was actually designated as such. Furthermore, all but one of the larger counts of Bank (4 counts of 26-80), and all those of Barn (7 counts of 11-151) and Cliff Swallow (3 counts of 20-25) were in July, and may have included fledglings. Reported colonies of Cliff Swallow, the least common of the three, had: 1-2 nests at Blue Mt., *Kings* (WPN), four near River John, *Pic.* (JOK); and in *Annapolis* there were four nests at W. Advocate Hbr. (Mark Elderkin), seven near Middleton (WPN), 30 in Upper Clement (SHH), 11 at the Annapolis Royal power plant (SHH), and an unstated number under an overpass near Bridgetown (SHH). Sadly, BLM noted that in W. Advocate, *Cum.*, the once “thiving colony of 200 encouraged by its ‘owners’ is gone”, and AND wrote that last year’s colony in Middleton, *Ann.*, was no more. We need a concerted province-wide survey of our swallow colonies and analysis of situations that lead to fledging success.

Reports of chickadees and relatives were almost entirely on eBird, with some reports of juveniles but no explicit reports of nesting. Most were distributed as expected, with counts of boreal species highest in the northern mainland and Cape Breton. An eBird report of WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH (no number given) at Broad Cove, *Vic.*, in CBHNP was somewhat surprising. WINTER WREN was thought to be “unusually abundant in song on territories” through the season on Brier I. (ELM). Separate eBird reports (not tabulated) of a MARSH WREN July 16 at oft-birded Miners Marsh, Kentville (where one stayed in fall- see next issue), and two more July 22 on an island in Mahone Bay, *Lun.*, had no supporting details. GOLDEN-CROWNED outnumbered RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET on eBird; the opposite is true in recent BBS results, suggesting that the powerful song of the latter is more often heard during that early summer survey.

The VEERY is rated our least common routine thrush, and so it was this summer. We less often get reports of BICKNELL’S THRUSH (COSEWIC status: “threatened”). One recorded overheard at night during the period May 27-June 3 at Doctors Brook, *Ant.*, and two more recorded June 3-10 (JOK) may have been relocating rather than migrating. Reporting on the NSBS field trip on June 9 led by Pat Kelly, Fritz McEvoy, and Becky Stewart, Eric Mills wrote that “. . .pre-dawn and post-sunset forays atop Cape North, where singing Bicknell’s Thrushes, a host of warblers and other boreal passerines, and an after-dark chorus of coyotes were memorable.” The 21 night-calling SWAINSON’S THRUSH recorded by JOK between May 27 and June 3 may well have been late boreal migrants. Three heard July 8-20 seemed early for migrants, but 16 between July 27 and Aug. 3 were surely under way. AMERICAN ROBIN was in its usual abundance. And no wonder; one was building a nest (its 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3d ?) on July 18 at the Kentville Research Station.

#### Olive-sided Flycatcher

|         |  |           |                |
|---------|--|-----------|----------------|
| June 2  | Abraham L. Tr., <i>HRM</i>             | 2         | KJM            |
| June 3  | Hammionds Plains, <i>HRM</i>           | 1         | Jeff MacLeod   |
| June 3  | Long L., <i>Rich.</i>                  | 1         | BID            |
| June 6  | Surrise Valley, <i>Vic.</i>            | 1         | FMC            |
| June 9  | Cabot Crescent, <i>HRM</i>             | 1         | Bryan Sabourin |
| June 15 | Tree Lot, <i>Queens</i>                | 1         | Brad Toms      |
| June 16 | J. & D. Stone Cons. Lands, <i>Yar.</i> | 1         | PRG            |
| June 17 | Hardwood Lands, E. <i>Hants</i>        | 1         | DOU            |
| July 28 | Methals L. Bog, , <i>Kings</i>         | 1 singing | RBS, BLF       |

#### Eastern Wood-Pewee

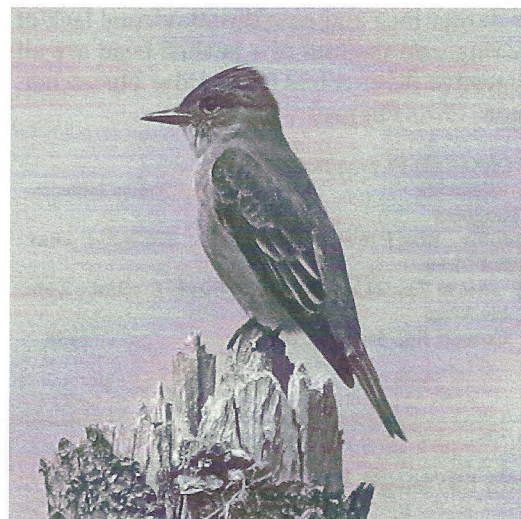
|      |  |            |                |
|------|--|------------|----------------|
| June | 21 locs., <i>Shel. to Pic.</i>         | 35 indivs. | eBird + 4 obs. |
| July | 6 locs, <i>Col., Kings, Lun., Yar.</i> | 5 indivs.  | eBird          |

#### Yellow-bellied Flycatcher

|             |   |            |          |
|-------------|---|------------|----------|
| June 2      | 4 locs. in <i>HRM</i> , 1 loc. in <i>Lun.</i> | 11 indivs. | eBird    |
| June 9      | Money Pt., <i>Vic.</i>                        | 1          | RIW      |
| June 15, 16 | Cape Chignecto PP, <i>Cum.</i>                | 1, 4       | KJM, JAH |
| July 4      | Liverpool area                                | 1          | KJM      |

#### Alder Flycatcher

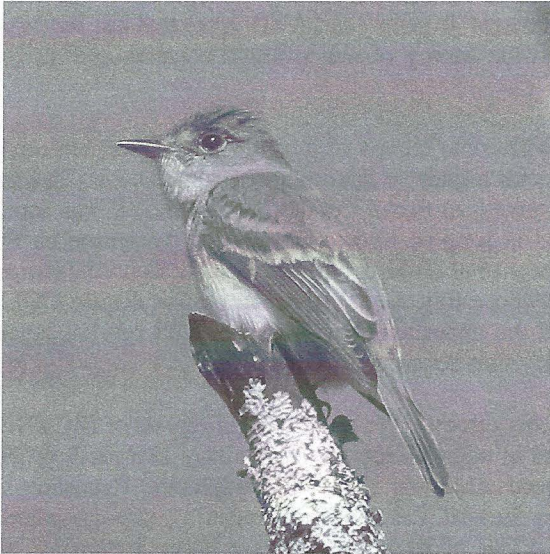
|           |                                 |               |       |
|-----------|---------------------------------|---------------|-------|
| June 2    | Brier I.                        | 15+, arrival. | ELM   |
| June 2-4  | CSI to Guys, 12 locs.           | 32 indivs.    | eBird |
| June 7-30 | <i>Shel. to Vic.</i> , 16 locs. | 25 indivs.    | eBird |
| July      | <i>Shel. to Inv.</i> , 16 locs. | 24 indivs.    | eBird |



OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER is at home in our boggy woods. The fallen tree gives it a snag to perch and a clearing in which to launch its forays.

#### WILLOW FLYCATCHER

|                                    |              |                |        |
|------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|--------|
| June 2-25+ Northern Pt., Brier I.  | 1 vocalising | ELM            | June 8 |
| Borgles I., HRM                    | 1 ph.        | CHP            |        |
| July 4 St. Margarets Bay Tr., HRM  | 2            | Bryan Sabourin |        |
| <b>Least Flycatcher</b>            |              |                |        |
| June 2, 3 Lun. to Pic., 6 locs.    | 10 indivs.   | eBird + 1 obs. |        |
| June 19-20 Shel. to Inv., 12 locs. | 24 indivs.   | eBird          |        |
| July Ann. to Inv., 6 locs.         | 9 indivs.    | eBird          |        |
| <b>Eastern Phoebe</b>              |              |                |        |
| June 3-24 Yar, to Guys, 5 locs.    | 6 indivs.    | eBird          |        |
| July 7-27 Lun to Pic., 5 locs.     | 5 indivs.    | eBird          |        |



**WILLOW FLYCATCHER** is difficult to identify by sight alone but this "overshoot", June 8 on Borgles I., HRM, was vocalizing distinctively. In grayscale the lack of clear boundary between the darker face and pale throat, virtual lack of eye ring, and the hint of a peaked head are all suggestive distinctions from Alder Flycatcher. [Photo Chris Pepper]

#### **GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER**

June 1, 3 Kentville pr at nest box Devin Johnston

#### **Eastern Kingbird**

June-July Brier I. to HRM, 13 locs. 276 indivs. eBird

#### **Blue-headed Vireo**

June-July Shel. to Vic., 24 locs 56 indivs. eBird + 2 obs.

#### **Philadelphia Vireo**

June 18 Connoly Rd., Sackville, HRM 1 DGA

#### **Red-eyed Vireo**

June-July Shel. to Vic., 74 locs. 103 indivs. eBird

#### **Gray Jay**

|         |                                 |        |     |
|---------|---------------------------------|--------|-----|
| June 2  | Big Gaspereaux L., Guys.        | 1      | ROH |
| June 21 | Brier I.                        | 1 imm. | ELM |
| July 4  | Old Campbell Rd, Pic.           | 2      | KJM |
| July 8  | J. & D. Cons. Lands, NSNT, Yar. | 9      | PRG |

#### **Blue Jay**

June-July Shel, to Vic., 69 locs. 186 indivs. eBird+ 4 obs

#### **American Crow**

June-July Shel. to Vic., 148 locs. 618 indivs. eBird+2 obs.

#### **Northern Raven**

-July Shel. to Vic., 67 locs. 125 indivs. eBird

#### **Tree Swallow**

June-July Yar, to Vic., 65 locs. 276 indivs. eBird + 3 obs.

#### **NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW**

June 2-21 Brier I. making nest, then carrying food. ELM

Early July Brier I. still feeding nestlings EGI

#### **Bank Swallow**

June-July Shel. to Inv., 16 locs. 253 indivs. eBird

#### **Barn Swallow**

June-July Shel. to Inv., 47 locs. 337 indivs. eBird + 2 obs.

#### **Cliff Swallow**

June-July Ann. to CBRM, 7 locs. 84 indivs. eBird

#### **Black-capped Chickadee**

June-July Shel.-Inv., 98 locs. 373 indivs. eBird+3 obs

#### **Boreal Chickadee**

June-July Shel. to Vic., 10 locs. 22 indivs. eBird

#### **Red-breasted Nuthatch**

June-July Shel.-Vic. 36 locs. 55 indivs. eBird+2 obs,

#### **White-breasted Nuthatch**

June-July Ann. to Vic., 21 locs. 27 indivs. eBird+3 obs.

#### **Brown Creeper**

June-July Shel. to HRM, 6 locs. 11 indivs eBird

#### **Winter Wren**

June-July Shel. to Pic., 14 locs. 22+ indivs., eBird+ 1 obs.

#### **MARSH WREN** See text

#### **Golden-crowned Kinglet**

June-July Shel. to Vic., 25 locs. 62 indivs. eBird

#### **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**

Kings to Vic., 24 locs. 26 indivs. eBird + 1 obs.

#### **Veery**

June-July Lun. to Pic., 6 locs. 16 indivs. eBird

#### **Bicknell's Thrush**

June 9, Money Pt., Vic. 3 NSBS (est. no. by KJM)

July 4 Money Pt., Vic 2 Magil Weber

#### **Swainson's Thrush**

Shel. to Vic., 30 locs. 79 indivs. eBird

#### **Hermit Thrush**

June-July Shel. to Vic. 49 locs. 280+ indivs. eBird + 3 obs.

#### **American Robin**

Jun-July Brier I. to Vic., 147 locs. 627 indivs. eBird

## Mimids through Warblers

By Ken McKenna

Although reports were received from all three of our local mimic-thrushes this summer, only GRAY CATBIRDS were reported in double-digit numbers. All reports, but one from Inverness, were from the mainland. NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD reports were sparse, but from widely-spread communities across the province. One observed in Kentville

was carrying nest material June 22. The only BROWN THRASHER noted was in a submission from Wilmot, *Annapolis*. EUROPEAN STARLINGS were reported widely with 225 eBird reports, the largest number being 500 on July 11 in Tatamagouche (ROH). CEDAR WAXWINGS are somewhat abundant breeding birds and over 130 reports were received from all parts of the province.

All 22 species of our more regular breeding warblers were noted but there were **no** reports of PINE WARBLERS during the breeding season and no unusual warblers were noted in this period. Nocturnal flight call recordings by John Kearney at a coastal location in *Antigonish* would lead one to believe that spring migration of warblers is still active into the second week of June and that fall migrants are on the move in the second week of July.

The OVENBIRD was noted from most areas of the province and probably most of the 49 eBird reports involved heard birds. On July 30 in Georgefield, *Hants*, Rob Woods found an adult and a young Ovenbird, both dead in his yard. Tom Johnson on June 12 reported a COMMON YELLOWTHROAT while doing a seabird survey on the NOAA ship Henry B. Bigelow off Yarmouth.

In the Wolfville area, Judy Tufts noted an adult YELLOW WARBLER feeding two young July 30. While doing a transect count in a pre-assessment for a windmill site near Forbes L. *Pic.*, KJM found a BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER nest with one tan coloured egg with brown splotches. The nest was in a small fir tree about 1m. up. On a return trip June 22 with CHK, the nest was re-found and contained what looked to be four partially feathered young. For the third year in a row, a CANADA WARBLER was in the same Molega L. location (table).

**Gray Catbird**

|           |                             |                   |       |
|-----------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------|
| June 2    | L. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>    | 1 singing all day | LOC   |
| June 8    | Spencers L., <i>Cum.</i>    | 1                 | KFS   |
| June 19   | Bridgetown, <i>Anna.</i>    | 1                 | MCR   |
| July 6    | W. Advocate, <i>Cum.</i>    | 3                 | KFS   |
| July 7    | Miners Marsh, <i>Kings.</i> | 1                 | RBS   |
| June-July | province-wide               | 16 reports of 1-3 | eBird |

**Northern Mockingbird**

|         |                            |                 |              |
|---------|----------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| June 1  | L. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>   | 1 singing       | DGA          |
| June 1  | Brier I.                   | 1               | ELM          |
| June 7  | West Arichat, <i>Rich.</i> | 1               | Karen Roy    |
| June 20 | Kentville                  | 1-2             | JLC, RBS     |
| June 22 | Kentville                  | 1 nest building | AND, LED     |
| July 17 | Brier I.                   | 1               | Pat Mulligan |

**Brown Thrasher**

|          |                       |         |              |
|----------|-----------------------|---------|--------------|
| June 23  | Wilmot, <i>Ann.</i>   | 1       | Sandi Wharry |
| Mid-June | Brickton, <i>Ann.</i> | 1 (ph.) | Vicki Gaul   |

**European Starling**

|           |               |                    |       |
|-----------|---------------|--------------------|-------|
| June-July | province-wide | 1-500, 225 reports | eBird |
|-----------|---------------|--------------------|-------|

**Cedar Waxwing**

|           |               |             |       |
|-----------|---------------|-------------|-------|
| June-July | province-wide | 131 reports | eBird |
|-----------|---------------|-------------|-------|

**Ovenbird**

|           |                            |                   |          |
|-----------|----------------------------|-------------------|----------|
| June-July | province-wide              | 47 reports of 1-7 | eBird    |
| June 2    | Gold River L., <i>Lun.</i> | 11                | RIW, BLF |
| June 16   | Shelburne-Welshtown        | 12                | JAH      |

**Northern Waterthrush**

|            |                               |                |                  |
|------------|-------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| June 2     | Gold River L., <i>Lun.</i>    | 2              | RIW, BLF         |
| June 2     | MacDonald L., <i>HRM</i>      | 1              | KJM              |
| June 2     | Cole Hbr. area, <i>HRM</i>    | 1              | David Waterfield |
| June 6     | Chance Hbr., <i>Pic.</i>      | 1              | KJM              |
| June 10    | Wentworth area, <i>Col.</i>   | 1              | JAH              |
| July 2     | Twin Rock Valley, <i>Inv.</i> | 1              | Magill Weber     |
| July 4     | St. Margarets Bay             | 2              | Byran Sabourin   |
| July 20-27 | Doctors Bk., <i>Ant.</i>      | 1 night report | JOK              |
| July 28    | Fauxburg, <i>Lun.</i>         | 2              | JAH              |

**Black and White Warbler**

|           |               |                   |       |
|-----------|---------------|-------------------|-------|
| June-July | province-wide | 59 reports of 1-3 | eBird |
|-----------|---------------|-------------------|-------|

**Tennessee Warbler**

|           |                             |                |              |
|-----------|-----------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| June 2    | Trafalgar, <i>Pic.-Guy.</i> | 13             | KJM          |
| June 2    | Abraham's L., <i>HRM</i>    | 1              | KJM          |
| June 8    | Trafalgar BBS, <i>Guy.</i>  | 5              | KJM          |
| July 8-20 | Doctors Bk., <i>Ant.</i>    | 1 night report | JOK          |
| July 4    | Money Pt., <i>Vic.</i>      | 1              | Magill Weber |

**Nashville Warbler**

|           |               |                   |       |
|-----------|---------------|-------------------|-------|
| June-July | province-wide | 10 reports of 1-2 | eBird |
|-----------|---------------|-------------------|-------|

|            |                          |                   |     |
|------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-----|
| June 21    | Brier I.                 | 1 singing         | ELM |
| July 8-20  | Doctors Bk., <i>Ant.</i> | 7 night reports   | JOK |
| July 20-27 | Doctors Bk., <i>Ant.</i> | 5 night reports * | JOK |



This spanking BROWN THRASHER was an unexpected one-day visitor in mid-June June at Brickton, Kings. [Photo Vicki Gaul]

**Mourning Warbler**

|            |                               |                     |               |
|------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| June 2     | South L., <i>HRM</i>          | 1                   | KJM           |
| June 3-10  | Doctors Bk., <i>Ant.</i>      | 11 night reports    | JOK           |
| June 9     | Money Pt., <i>Vic.</i>        | 1                   | KJM           |
| June 10,30 | Wentworth-Folly Mtn.          | 2,1                 | JAH, DPO, KEL |
| June 30    | Folly L., <i>Cum.</i>         | 1                   | JAH, KEL      |
| June 21    | Lower Caledonia, <i>Guy.</i>  | 2                   | KJM           |
| July 1-6   | Inverness                     | 2 reported each day | Magill Weber  |
| July 1     | Cheticamp I., <i>Inv.</i>     | 1                   | Magill Weber  |
| July 2     | Broad Cove, <i>Inv.</i>       | 2                   | Magill Weber  |
| July 2     | Twin Rock Valley, <i>Inv.</i> | 1                   | Magill Weber  |
| July 2     | Black Cove Rd., <i>Vic.</i>   | 1                   | Magill Weber  |
| July 4     | Money Pt., <i>Vic.</i>        | 1                   | Magill Weber  |

**Common Yellowthroat**

|           |                          |                       |       |
|-----------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| June-July | province-wide            | 124 reports 1-8 birds | eBird |
| June 2    | Eastern Passage          | 12                    | DAC   |
| June 3-10 | Doctors Bk., <i>Ant.</i> | 8 night reports       | JOK   |
| June 13   | James R. BBS             | 32                    | KJM   |
| June 16   | Shelburne-Welshstown     | 20                    | JAH   |

**American Redstart**

|            |                           |                   |       |
|------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-------|
| June-July  | province-wide             | 96 reports of 1-8 | eBird |
| June 3-10  | Doctor's Bk., <i>Ant.</i> | 4 night reports   | JOK   |
| June 8     | Trafalgar BBS             | 54                | KJM   |
| June 13    | James R. BBS              | 34                | KJM   |
| July 8-20  | Doctors Bk., <i>Ant.</i>  | 2 night reports   | JOK   |
| July 20-27 | Doctors Bk., <i>Ant.</i>  | 15 night reports  | JOK   |

**Cape May Warbler**

|           |                             |                |     |
|-----------|-----------------------------|----------------|-----|
| June 3-10 | Doctors Bk., <i>Ant.</i>    | 1 night report | JOK |
| June 8    | Trafalgar BBS, <i>Gufs.</i> | 2              | KJM |



Seeing an OVENBIRD eyeball to eyeball is an experience that few will have. But, with a little help from the camera, the effect is almost the same [Photo Jeannie Shermerhorn]

|         |                           |   |            |
|---------|---------------------------|---|------------|
| June 13 | James R. BBS, <i>Ant.</i> | 1 | KJM        |
| June 23 | Dingwell, <i>Vic.</i>     | 1 | Mark Arvin |
| June 25 | Ingonish, <i>Vic.</i>     | 1 | Mark Arvin |

**Northern Parula**

|            |                               |                   |              |
|------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| June-July  | province-wide                 | 92 reports of 1-6 | eBird        |
| June 2     | White Pt. Bch., <i>Queens</i> | 10                | JAH          |
| June 8     | Trafalgar BBS                 | 37                | KJM          |
| June 13    | James R. BBS                  | 33                | KJM          |
| July 5     | E. Big Intervale, <i>Inv.</i> | 11                | Magill Weber |
| July 8-20  | Doctors Bk. <i>Ant.</i>       | 1 night report    | JOK          |
| July 20-27 | Doctors Bk., <i>Ant.</i>      | 1 night reports   | JOK          |

**Magnolia Warbler**

|           |                          |                   |       |
|-----------|--------------------------|-------------------|-------|
| June-July | province-wide            | 69 reports of 1-7 | eBird |
| June 3-10 | Doctors Bk., <i>Ant.</i> | 2 night reports   | JOK   |
| June 8    | Trafalgar BBS            | 40                | KJM   |

**Bay-breasted Warbler**

|        |                        |   |     |
|--------|------------------------|---|-----|
| June 2 | Abrahams L. <i>HRM</i> | 6 | KJM |
| June 2 | Trafalgar, <i>Guy.</i> | 1 | KJM |

|            |                          |                 |              |
|------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| June 2     | West Loon L., <i>HRM</i> | 1               | KJM          |
| June 3-10  | Doctors Bk., <i>Ant.</i> | 2 night reports | JOK          |
| June 8     | Trafalgar BBS            | 6               | KJM          |
| June 9     | Money Point, <i>Vic.</i> | 1               | NSBS         |
| July 4     | Money Point, <i>Vic.</i> | 4               | Magill Weber |
| July 24    | Big I., <i>Pic.</i>      | 2 migrants?     | KJM          |
| July 20-27 | Doctors Bk., <i>Ant.</i> | 2 night reports | JOK          |

**Blackburnian Warbler**

|           |                            |                   |       |
|-----------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------|
| June-July | province-wide              | 26 reports of 1-6 | eBird |
| June 3-10 | Doctors Bk., <i>Ant.</i>   | 1 night report    | JOK   |
| July 6    | West Advocate, <i>Cum.</i> | 1 male            | KFS   |
| July 8-20 | Doctors Bk. <i>Ant.</i>    | 5 night reports   | JOK   |

**Yellow Warbler**

|            |                          |                    |       |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------|-------|
| June-July  | province-wide            | 170 reports of 1-9 | eBird |
| June 2     | Eastern Passage area     | 16                 | DAC   |
| Jun 13     | Big I., <i>Pic.</i>      | 14                 | KJM   |
| June 13    | James R. BBS             | 29                 | KJM   |
| July 20-27 | Doctors Bk., <i>Ant.</i> | 13 night reports   | J OK  |

**Chestnut-sided Warbler**

|           |                      |                   |              |
|-----------|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| June-July | mainland sites       | 38 reports of 1-3 | eBird        |
| June 16   | Shelburne-Welshstown | 5                 | JAH          |
| July 1    | Inverness            | 1                 | Magill Weber |

**Blackpoll Warbler**

|           |                           |                 |                |
|-----------|---------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| June 3-10 | Doctor's Bk., <i>Ant.</i> | 5 night reports | JOK            |
| June 9    | Money Point, <i>Vic.</i>  | 1               | NSBS           |
| July 1    | Blomidon, <i>Kings</i>    | 1               | Tim & Ann Hall |
| July 4    | Money Point, <i>Vic.</i>  | 2               | Magill Weber   |

**Black-throated Blue Warbler**

|         |                            |              |                    |
|---------|----------------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| June 2  | Gold River L. <i>Lun.</i>  | 5            | RIW, BLF           |
| June 3  | Lewis L. <i>HRM</i>        | 1            | D, Stoddart-Pageau |
| June 15 | Cape Chignecto PP          | 1            | Ray Cooke          |
| June 16 | Shelburne-Welshstown       | 9            | JAH                |
| June 22 | Irish Mtn., <i>Pic.</i>    | 5 ad. & juv. | CHK, KJM           |
| July 17 | Valleyview PP, <i>Ann.</i> | 1            | Ian Manning        |

**Palm Warbler**

|           |                            |                   |              |
|-----------|----------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| June-July | mainland                   | 15 reports of 1-7 | eBird        |
| July 2    | Elizabethtown, <i>Vic.</i> | 1                 | Magill Weber |
| July 8-20 | Doctors Bk. <i>Ant.</i>    | 2 night reports   | JOK          |

**Yellow-rumped Warbler**

|            |                          |                   |       |
|------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-------|
| June-July  | province-wide            | 85 reports of 1-8 | eBird |
| July 8-20  | Doctors Bk. <i>Ant.</i>  | 3 night reports   | JOK   |
| July 20-27 | Doctors Bk., <i>Ant.</i> | 8 night reports   | JOK   |

**Black-throated Green Warbler**

|            |                         |                   |           |
|------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------|
| June-July  | mainland only           | 70 reports of 1-5 | eBird     |
| June 2     | Abrahams L., <i>HRM</i> | 7                 | KJM       |
| June 8     | Trafalgar BBS           | 40                | KJM       |
| June 15,16 | Cape Chignecto PP       | 8,14              | Ray Cooke |
| July 8-20  | Doctors Bk. <i>Ant.</i> | 4 night reports   | JOK       |

**Canada Warbler**

|         |                            |   |          |
|---------|----------------------------|---|----------|
| June 2  | Gold River L., <i>Lun.</i> | 1 | BLF, RIW |
| June 14 | Wolfville Watershed        | 1 | BLF, RIW |
| June 15 | Molega L., <i>Lun.</i>     | 1 | SJF, JSC |
| June 27 | Middlewood, <i>Lun.</i>    | 1 | SJF      |
| July 8  | Fauxburg, <i>Lun.</i>      | 2 | JAH      |

**Wilson's Warbler**

|           |                           |                |              |
|-----------|---------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| June 3-10 | Doctors Bk., <i>Ant.</i>  | 1 night report | JOK          |
| June 5    | L. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>  | 1              | LOC          |
| June 30   | Pleasant Bay, <i>Inv.</i> | 1              | Magill Weber |

\* actually Tennessee/Nashville as nights sounds could not be certainly ID'd 100% to species





The plumages of these two female YELLOW WARBLERS photographed early July at Cape George, *Rich.*, clearly differ, even in grayscale. The one at left appears to be the usual bright subspecies *aestiva* nesting in U.S. and s. Canada. The one at right has features of the boreal *annicola* – dingy olive above, and with some gray back feathering. It was once known as “Newfoundland Yellow Warbler”, but now known to summer across the boreal forest to Alaska. There are old summer specimens of *annicola* from Sydney and n. Cape Breton, and Godfrey, in his still-valuable “Birds of Canada”, has *aestiva*, , as “on Cape Breton Island intergrading with *annicola*.” [Photos Jeannie Shermerhorn]

### Sparrows to House Sparrow

By Ian McLaren

The regular summer sparrows were noted in expected numbers in expected places, except for FOX SPARROW, which was only reported from Cape Breton. They are certainly decreasing in the province, but were probably overlooked in some traditional mainland breeding areas. Three VESPER SPARROWS reported as found 16 July at frequently birded Evangeline Bch., *Kings*, were not noted by others and would need confirming details, as they are extirpated as breeding birds from most of the province.

The season’s only SCARLET TANAGER in *Richmond* (see table) was beyond its occasional mainland nesting areas, but a male NORTHERN CARDINAL merely affirmed their Cape Breton beachhead. Attendance of fledglings by a male cardinal alone late June in Wolfville suggested to JWW that a second nesting was underway. Rick Whitman wrote of discovering fledging ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAKS on June 19 by their “rather curious food-begging call . . . the third [fledgling] I’ve been alerted to by its one-note, quasi-pleasant, derivative of the [adult] song.” The male INDIGO BUNTING and male BLUE GROSBEAK in June may have lingered from the spring fallout.

BOBOLINKS were in their usual places, with no hints given on their (ongoing?) decline. “Good numbers” July 26 at Grand Pré, *Kings*, were probably on the move, as none was a breeding-plumage male (RBS). The blackbirds were generally reported in the usual places in the usual relative numbers, but two reports of the increasingly rare RUSTY BLACKBIRD in unexpected locations and habitats, may have misidentified them (eBIRD, not tabulated). There was only one explicit indication of breeding (see table and photo below) among a few reports of summering BALTIMORE ORIOLES.

Nothing much can be said about our summering finches, except to note the good numbers of PINE SISKIN.

**Chipping Sparrow**  
June-July *Ann. to Vic.* 16 locs.

37 indivs. eBird

June-July *Shel. to Inv.*, 56 locs.

189 indivs.

**Nelson’s Sparrow**

June-July *Shel. to Inv.*, 21 locs.

54 indivs. eBird

|                                |                           |                          |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Fox Sparrow</b>             |                           |                          |
| July 1                         | Cheticamp I., Inv.        | 1 Magil Weber            |
| July 4                         | Money Pt., Vic.           | 1 Magil Weber            |
| <b>Song Sparrow</b>            |                           |                          |
| June-July                      | Shel. to Vic., 153 locs.  | 670 indivs. eBird        |
| <b>Lincoln's Sparrow</b>       |                           |                          |
| June-July                      | Shel. to Vic., 7 locs.    | 14 indivs. eBird         |
| <b>Swamp Sparrow</b>           |                           |                          |
| June-July                      | Shel. to Vic., 18 locs.   | 32 indivs. eBird         |
| June 17                        | Hardwood Lands, Hants     | 1 ad., 1 fledgling DOU   |
| <b>White-throated Sparrow</b>  |                           |                          |
| June-July                      | Shel. to Vic., 42 locs.   | 190 indivs. eBird        |
| <b>Dark-eyed Junco</b>         |                           |                          |
| June-July                      | Shel. to Vic., 56 locs.   | 208 indivs. eBird        |
| <b>Scarlet Tanager</b>         |                           |                          |
| June 9                         | Martinique, Rich.         | 1 m. (ph.) Gloria Burke  |
| <b>Northern Cardinal</b>       |                           |                          |
| June-July                      | Shel. to Kings, 19 locs.  | 29 indivs. eBird         |
| Mid-July                       | Little Hbr., Rich.        | 1 m. BID                 |
| <b>Rose-breasted Grosbeak.</b> |                           |                          |
| June-July                      | Kings. to Inv., 6 locs.   | 13 indivs eBird + 3 obs. |
| <b>BLUE GROSBEAK</b>           |                           |                          |
| June 14                        | Shubie Pk., HRM           | 1 m. (ph.) Lisa Hines    |
| <b>Indigo Bunting</b>          |                           |                          |
| Early June                     | Martinique, Rich.         | 1 m. fide JSH            |
| <b>Bobolink</b>                |                           |                          |
| June-July                      | Shel. to Pic., 10 locs.   | 33 indivs. eBird         |
| <b>Red-winged Blackbird</b>    |                           |                          |
| June-July                      | Ann. to Vic., 45 locs.    | 240 indivs. eBird        |
| <b>Rusty Blackbird</b>         |                           |                          |
| June-July                      | Kings to Pic., 6 locs.    | 10 indivs. eBird         |
| <b>Common Grackle</b>          |                           |                          |
| June-July                      | Shel. to Vic., 58 locs.   | 242 indivs. eBird        |
| <b>Brown-headed Cowbird</b>    |                           |                          |
| June-July                      | Shel. to HRM, 6 locs.     | 16 indivs. eBird         |
| <b>Baltimore Oriole</b>        |                           |                          |
| June 1                         | Miners Marsh, Kingston    | 1 m. "chasing crows" JLC |
| June 9                         | Viditos Campground, Ann.  | 2 DAC                    |
| June 17                        | nr. Pt. Williams, Kings   | fledglings RBS           |
| <b>Pine Grosbeak</b>           |                           |                          |
| June 25                        | Inverness                 | 1 Nancy Dowd             |
| July 2                         | n. of Elizabethtown, Vic. | 8                        |
| July 5, 6                      | Inv., 2 locs.             | 1, 1 Magil Weber         |
| <b>Purple Finch</b>            |                           |                          |
| June-July                      | Shel. to Inv., 35 locs.   | 101 indivs. eBird        |
| <b>House Finch</b>             |                           |                          |
| Apr. 1                         | Yarmouth                  | 5 JAH                    |
| <b>Red Crossbill</b>           |                           |                          |

|                               |                     |         |            |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|---------|------------|
| July 26                       | Louins Head, Shel.  | 10      | Avery Nagy |
| <b>White-winged Crossbill</b> |                     |         |            |
| June 2                        | Abraham L. Tr., HRM | 6       |            |
| June 9                        | Money Pt., Vic.     | present | KJM, NSBS  |



BALTIMORE ORIOLE is an uncommon breeding bird in the province. This male photographed June 16 with a morsel for its nestlings has chosen to nest near Port Williams for the second summer. [Photo Richard Stern]

|                           |                          |  |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Pine Siskin</b>        |                          |  |
| June-July                 | Shel. to Vic., 112 locs. | 497 indivs. eBird                            |
| <b>American Goldfinch</b> |                          |  |
| Mar.-May                  | Al counties.             | 526 repts, ca 3330 indivs. eBird + sev. obs. |
| <b>House Finch</b>        |                          |  |
| No reports                |                          |  |
| <b>Evening Grosbeak</b>   |                          |  |
| June-July                 | Shel. to Vic., 10 locs.  | 17 indivs+2 flocks" eBird + 2 Obs.           |
| <b>House Sparrow</b>      |                          |  |
| June-July                 | Shel. to CBRM, 21 locs.  | 80 indivs. eBird                             |

**List of Those Contributors Represented by Initials.**

Names of other contributors are spelled out in full in the reports. Others unnamed have contributed records that are included in totals given of common species from eBird and other sources. Thanks to all.

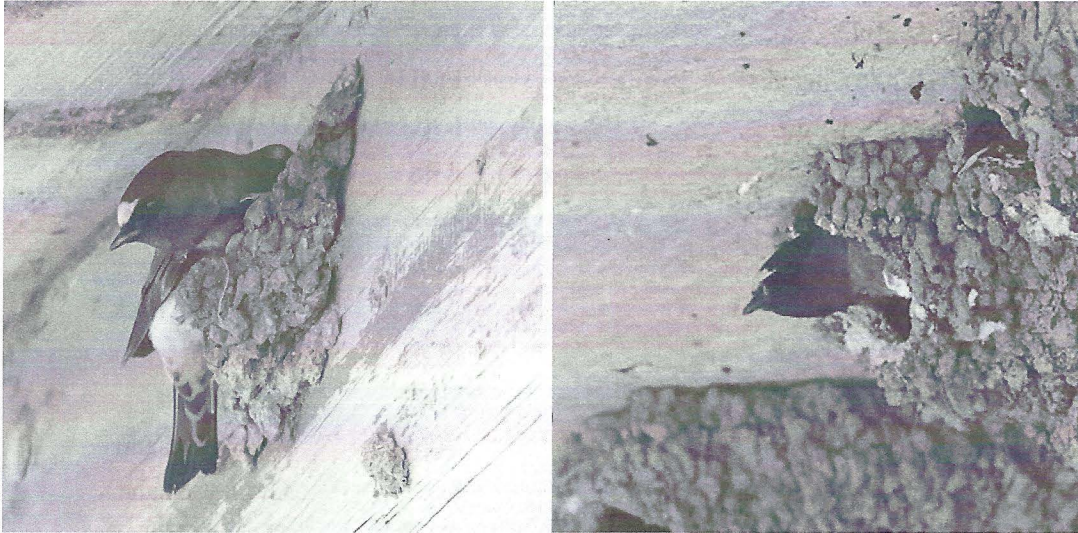
|     |                   |     |                     |
|-----|-------------------|-----|---------------------|
| AHM | Anne H. Mills     | BLF | Forsythe, Bernard   |
| AMO | Andy Moir         | BLM | Maybank, Blake      |
| AND | Dean, Andy        | CCA | Christine Callaghan |
| BID | Digout, Billy     | CLD | Diggins, Claire     |
| BKW | Brad K. Woodworth | CHP | Pepper, Chris       |

|       |                        |      |                           |
|-------|------------------------|------|---------------------------|
| DAC   | Currie, David          | MCR  | Rice, Maggie              |
| DAW   | Walmark, David         | MZE  | Zelenietz, Marty          |
| DGA   | Garratt, Dennis        | NSBS | NSBS field frip           |
| DHY   | Young, David H.        | PBG  | Giffin, Patrick & Barbara |
| DOU   | Doull, Elizabeth       | PLC  | Chalmers, Patricia L.     |
| DPO   | Poole, Dorothy         | PMC  | McKay, Pat                |
| eBird | eBird Online Checklist | PMU  | Murray, Paul              |
| EGI   | Gidney, Elizabeth      | RAH  | Hoogenbos, Rachel         |
| ELM   | Mills, Eric L.         | RBS  | Stern, Richard            |
| FMC   | McEvoy, Fritz          | RDE  | d'Entremont, Ron          |
| HAT   | Toom, Hans             | RFL  | Lauff, Randy F.           |
| IAM   | McLaren, Ian           | RIW  | Whitman, Rick             |
| JAH   | Hirtle, James          | ROH  | Hall, Ross                |
| JCT   | Tufts, Judith C.       | SAB  | Sue Abbott                |
| JLC   | Churchill, James       | SEM  | Myers, Susann             |
| JOA   | Allen, Joyce           | SGI  | Gidney, Shane             |
| JOK   | Kearney, John          | SHH  | Sharon Hawboldt           |
| JON   | Nickerson, John        | SJF  | Fullerton, Sylvia         |
| JSC   | Cohrs, J. Shirley      | SLH  | Hulford, Sheila           |
| JWW   | Wolford, Jim           | STV  | Vines, Steve              |
| KEL   | Lantz, Kevin           | TEB  | Terry Boswell             |
| KFS   | Spicer, Kathleen       | VJH  | Verna Higgins             |
| KJM   | McKenna, Ken J.        | WPN  | Neily, Wayne              |
| LAE   | Elliot, Laura          |      |                           |
| LOC   | Codling, Lois          |      |                           |

## The Breeding Season – a Portfolio of Images from Summer 2012

Among birds, as with all living things, “breeding”, is a complicated matter. Here are some images from summer 2012 depicting the various activities involved.

**For some, building nests is an elaborate process**



The CLIFF SWALLOW at left, June 22 at Clyde River, *Shel.*, has just begun its nest, whereas those at right, July 10 at the power plant in Annapolis Royal, have finished theirs or nearly so. [Photos: left, Ronnie D’Entremont; right, Kevin Lantz]

**Then comes tedious sitting on the eggs, day after day**



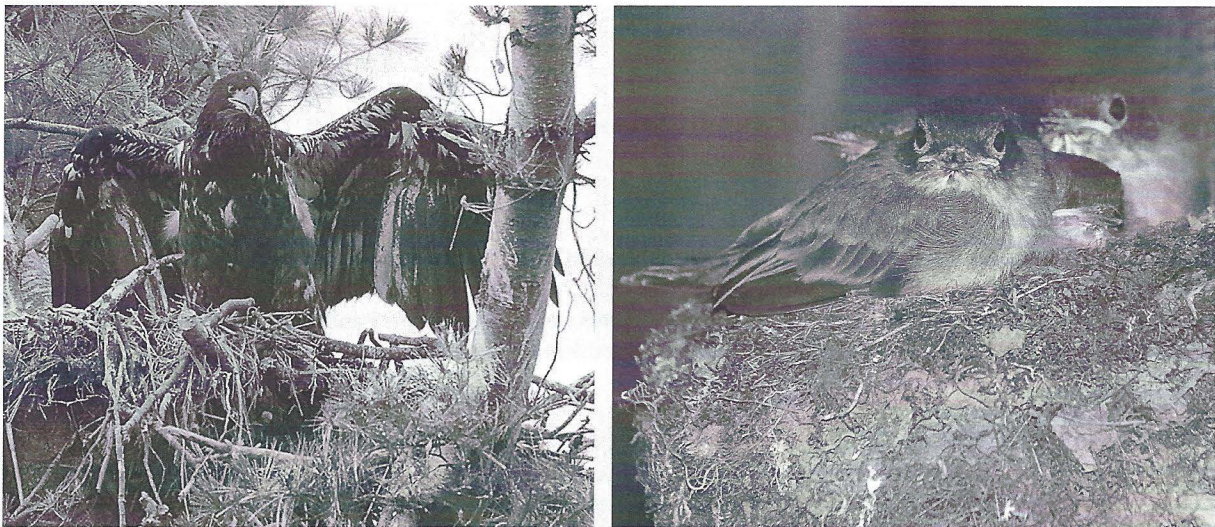
At least for these BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKES, June 11 on their breeding cliffs at the Bird Islands, *CBRM*, there’s opportunity for social chit-chat. [Photo Rick Whitman]

### Followed by foraging for hungry youngsters



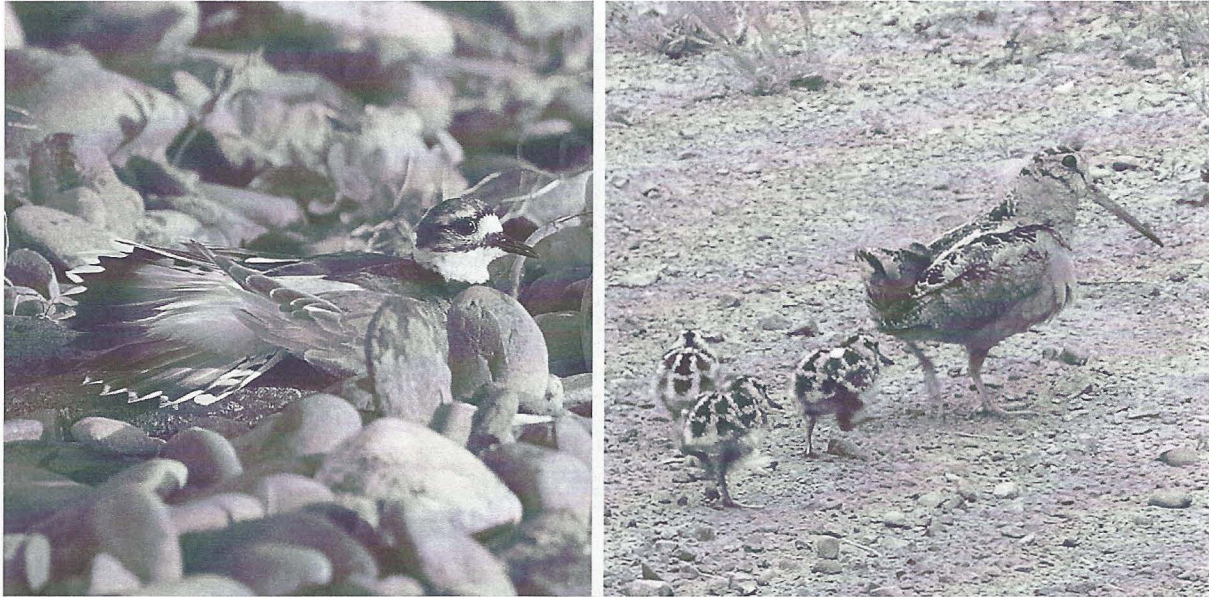
Feeding nestlings WARBLER (left, June 20 at Goose Creek Marsh, *Yar.*) and BOBOLINK (right, July 15 at Grand Pré, *Kings*) Richard Stern) is somewhat opportunistic. [Photos: left, Alix D'Entremont; right, Richard Stern]

### Soon the nestlings are ready to fledge



The adult BALD EAGLES have invested proportionately less energy in their large near-fledging at left (June 25 at New Minas, *Kings*) than the EASTERN PHOEBES have in their quartet at right (July 21 at Millstream, *Pic.*). But eagles can look forward to a less dangerous, longer life, so the phoebe's efforts are needed to keep up. [Photos: left, Richard Stern; right, Graham Cassidy]

### There's no easy way out of responsibility



Some birds, including shorebirds, don't have to feed their precocial young, but still have to guide and guard them. Some even risk themselves by luring potential predators away from their offspring, like the adult KILLDEER at left (July 3 at Cooks Bch., *Yar.*) displaying its broken-wing act. One might ask why the AMERICAN WOODCOCK at right (June 2 at Parrsboro, *Cum.*) isn't using a similar tactic. Perhaps it because they normally nest and forage in dense alder thickets, where predators may rely more on scent, and brief excursions across roads and paths are unusual. [Photos: left, Brenda Tate; right, Janet Quinn]

## Piping Plovers in Nova Scotia 2012: Report from Bird Studies Canada

By Sue Abbott, Bird Studies Canada

Bird Studies Canada (BSC) is a national, non-profit organisation dedicated to advancing the appreciation, understanding and conservation of birds and their habitats. Initiated in 2006, BSC's NS Piping Plover Conservation Program aims to recover Piping Plovers and conserve beach habitat in NS through a network of volunteers and partners. We are pleased to share a synopsis of the 2012 plover breeding season, including stewardship results.

### *Piping Plover Stewardship Results*

From Cape Sable Island to Cape North, 58 volunteers spent 1335 hours surveying beaches, monitoring plovers, protecting nesting habitat, and sharing plover-friendly tips with beachgoers (**Table 1**). This marks another annual increase in volunteer hours, particularly on Northern NS beaches, which is fantastic. We piloted a new beach survey protocol to better track human activities on beaches. We hope this information will improve our ability to understand threats to habitat and plovers and assess effectiveness of protection and stewardship efforts. The vast majority of beachgoers (85%) complied with signs marking sensitive nesting areas by walking on the wet sand. Compliance with dog leash regulations was less encouraging. Of the 226 dogs observed just over half were on-leash. Motorized vehicles and/or tracks were detected on 4% of beach surveys in southern NS. We are pleased to report that since 2004 motorized vehicle use on southern NS beaches has declined by 80%. We tracked motorized vehicle use on northern NS beaches for the first time in 2012 and detected vehicles and/or tracks on 9% of surveys.

**Table 1. Summary of 2012 Nova Scotia Beach Survey Results.**

| Region of NS    | No. of Piping Plover Volunteers | No. of Volunteer Hours | % Walkers on wet sand within signed nesting areas (n = total no. of walkers) | % Dogs on-leash on beaches (n = total no. of dogs) | % Beach surveys with motorized vehicle(s) or vehicle tracks detected (n= total no. of surveys) |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|--|--|--|
| Southern        | 32                              | 635                    | 83% (n=545)  | 53% (n = 192)                                      | 4% (n=312)   |
| Northern        | 26                              | 700                    | 91% (n=139)  | 65% (n = 34)                                       | 9% (n=97)  |
| <b>Total NS</b> | <b>58</b>                       | <b>1335</b>            | <b>85% (n=684)</b>   | <b>55% (n=226)</b>                                 | <b>6% (n=409)</b>  |

***Piping Plover Population & Breeding Success***

The number of year-end breeding pairs in NS (46) increased by one pair from 2011 (45), but remained below our recovery target of 60 pairs (**Figure 1**). Unfortunately, plover numbers in QC, NB and PE continued to decline. An estimated 179 pairs bred across Eastern Canada and St. Pierre & Miquelon. Since a peak in 2007, the regional plover population declined by over 30% and remains far short of the long-term recovery target of 310 pairs. Recent preliminary analyses conducted by Environment Canada suggest adult and/or juvenile survival rates may be driving the decline. There is still much to learn about the location of key plover migration and wintering areas and the many factors that may influence plover survival rates.

The 2012 Piping Plover breeding success in NS was fair. Annual productivity (1.53 fledglings/monitored pair) was below the 1.65 recovery target. Nest success (% nests hatched) and productivity were higher in northern NS than southern NS. Flooding during early June's astronomical high tides destroyed most nests in southern NS and many subsequent nest attempts were not successful, particularly in western Shelburne Co. One colour-banded Piping Plover (upper left leg - dark green flag; lower left leg - white over yellow; lower right leg - yellow over green) was observed in NS. Originally banded in Georgia, US, he (presumed male based on behaviour) nested at Sand Hills Provincial Park, Shelburne Co., but, for a second year in a row, did not successfully produce young. The Bahamas-banded male (upper left leg-black flag, lower left leg- white, lower right leg-red over black) was not observed at West Mabou, Inverness Co. nor at his Bahamian wintering site (Dr. Cheri Gratto-Trevor, pers. comm.).

A total of 24 beaches in NS supported one or more breeding pairs. Plovers successfully bred at two beaches with no previous breeding records (Middle Harbour, Inverness Co. and White Point, Queens Co.). For the first time since 1998, a pair nested at Beach Meadows, Queens Co.; however, despite the presence of rope and signs protecting the nesting area and regular volunteer presence, one or more person with a dog caused the loss of their nest on Canada Day. BSC staff informed authorities immediately. The identity of the individual(s) remains unknown. This represents the first incident of human-caused nest failure since 2008.

**Table 2. Summary of 2012 NS Piping Plover Population and Breeding Success.**

| Region of NS    | No. of Year-end pairs | No. of Year-end singles | No. of Year-end monitored pairs | % Nests hatched (n = known nest attempts) | No. of Fledglings ( $\geq 20$ days old) | Productivity (no. fledglings per monitored pair) | No. of Beaches with $\geq 1$ breeding pairs |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| Southern        | 32                    | 5                       | 32                              | 33% (n=52)                                | 46                                      | 1.44   | 15  |
| Northern        | 14                    | 2                       | 13                              | 71% (n=14)                                | 23                                      | 1.77   | 9   |
| <b>Total NS</b> | <b>46</b>             | <b>7</b>                | <b>45</b>                       | <b>41% (n=66)</b>                         | <b>69</b>                               | <b>1.53</b>                                      | <b>24</b>                                   |

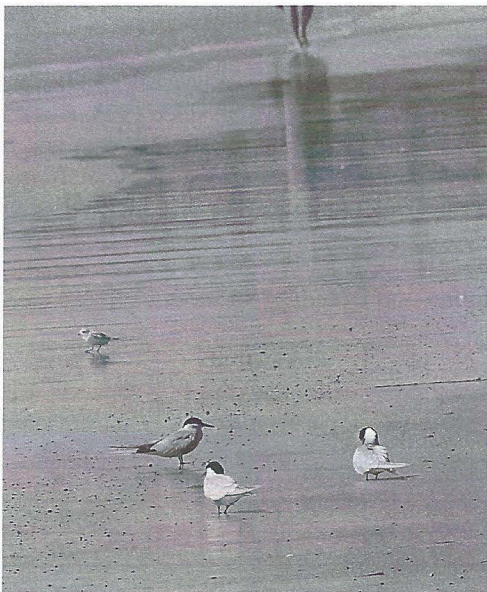
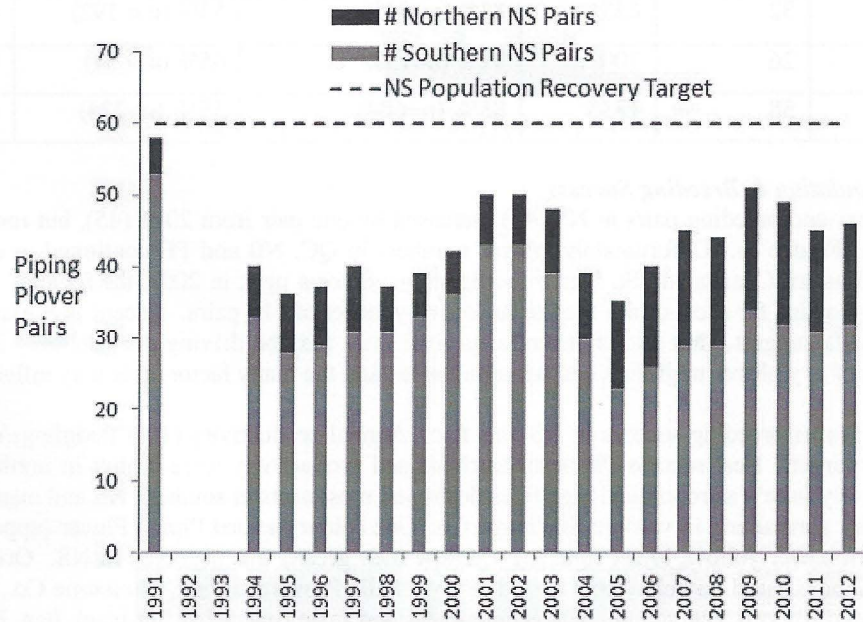
***Calling all NSBS Members!***

It takes a team to recover plovers and conserve beach habitat in NS. If you enjoy birding on beaches, contact us. We welcome new or past plover volunteers, so please contact us (nsplovers@gmail.com) or 902-426-4055).

***Acknowledgements***

Thank you to all our terrific 2012 volunteers and partners who supported and assisted in monitoring, protection and stewardship efforts across NS. Funding support in 2012 was provided by: Canadian Wildlife Federation, Environment Canada’s Canadian Wildlife Service, NS Habitat Conservation Fund, Parks Canada Agency and The Government of Canada Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk.

**Figure 1. Number of pairs of endangered Piping Plover in Nova Scotia, 1991-2012.**  
 (Note: data omitted in 1992 and 1993 due to incomplete monitoring.)



A lone walker on a relatively remote breach approaches a PIPING PLOVER two ARCTIC TERNS and a COMMON TERN and, properly, staying on the wet sand. [Photo, Elizabeth Doull]



Four Beach-Survey volunteers, ready to work, June 8, 2012 on Cape Sable, off CSI. From left: Leslie Smith, David Wamback, Avery Nagy-MacArthur and Jane Alexander.



## American Goldfinch Nesting Study 2007–2011\*

By Bernard Forsythe

Several old fields on Wolfville Ridge and the wide ditches along the 101 highway are within walking distance from our home. The area is overgrown with knapweed and other wildflowers, which provide food, and young trees and bushes, which provide nesting sites for a population of American Goldfinches to successfully breed. The results of many nesting attempts are required to assess the recruitment into the population. With a special interest in these delightful finches, I undertook a five-year study of their nests in this area. Nests found and recorded include 25 in 2007, 29 in 2008, 42 in 2009, 65 in 2010, and 54 in 2011, for a total of 215 nests.

### Nest sites

Most nests were in upright crotches next to the trunk in young trees or bushes either at the edge of a clump of trees or in a tree standing alone. Many were spotted at eye level, with the lowest 0.7 m from the ground, the highest at about 2.7 m. Many nests were within sight of other occupied nests, and several were no more than 12 m apart. Nests were located in the following species: 98 in willow, 33 in Wire Birch, 20 in poplar, 20 in buckthorn, 14 in hawthorn, 9 in Chokecherry, 6 in alder, 5 in Bayberry, 4 in Red Maple, 2 in Multiflora Rose, and one each in Canada Holly, White Birch, Wild Apple, and Meadowsweet.

### Eggs and Young

Earliest date for eggs in a nest was June 27, 2008. Latest date for young in a nest was September 18 in both 2008 and 2009. Over the five-year study period, there were 152 nests with observable clutch sizes:

- 1 nest with 7 eggs = 7
- 47 nests with 6 eggs = 282
- 67 nests with 5 eggs = 335
- 21 nests with 4 eggs = 84
- 11 nests with 3 eggs = 33
- 2 nests with 2 eggs = 4
- 3 nest with 1 egg = 3

Total eggs 748

In the other 63 nests the clutch size is unknown either because of predation during the egg-laying stage or because the nest was found after the eggs had hatched.

Number of young fledged from 127 nests:

- 13 nests fledged 6 young = 78 young
- 44 nests fledged 5 young = 220 young
- 45 nests fledged 4 young = 180 young
- 18 nests fledged 3 young = 54 young
- 4 nests fledged 2 young = 8 young
- 3 nests fledged 1 young = 3 young

Total young 543

In 2 nests the number of young fledged is unknown, 1 nest outcome was not conclusive, and 2 nests failed at either the egg or young stage. The remaining 83 nests had no young fledged.

Causes of 83 nest failures:

- 55 nests failed during the egg stage: 44 were subject to predation; in 9 nests the eggs failed to hatch; in 2 nests the eggs were abandoned.
- 28 nests with young failed: 22 were subject to predation; in 6 nests the young were dead in the nest.

Average number of young produced per nest, based on 543 young having fledged:

- Young fledged from 127 successful nests: 4.28 per nest

- Young fledged from 215 attempted nestings: 2.53 young per nest

“Despite the parental care, a large percentage of bird eggs never produce flying young. The many studies that have been made give diverse results, but a general statement can be made that only about half the eggs of songbirds are successful.” (From *Ornithology: An Introduction*, by Austin L. Rand, 1967.)

Success of 215 American Goldfinch nests in this study:

- 152 nests known to have produced 748 eggs = average 4.92 eggs per nest
- 63 nests with unknown number of eggs, using the calculated average 4.92 = 309 eggs

Therefore, the total of 215 nests had a possible production of 1057 eggs. The total of 543 young fledged goldfinches found in this study is slightly above the 50 percent average expected from the possible number of eggs produced.

In late September of 2011, most of the trees and bushes along the ditches of Hwy 101 in this study area were mowed down by the Department of Highways. Only one active goldfinch nest from this study was destroyed. However, it will be several years before new growth will again be suitable for nest sites. All 215 nest cards filled out during this study were submitted to the Maritimes Nest Record Scheme of the Canadian Wildlife Service.

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\*Editor's note. This fine study was previously published in the Blomidon Naturalist, and is reproduced here with the kind permission of the author.

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## **High-Tide Havoc at Daniels Head Beach, Cape Sable Island**

**By Rachel Hoogenbos**

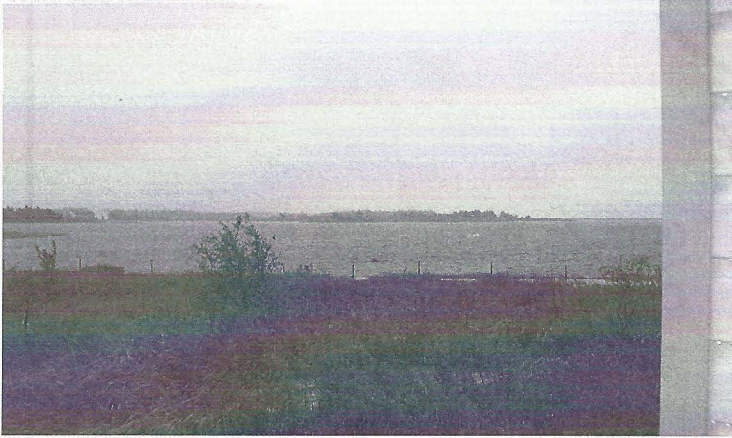
Early this summer, very high full-moon tides combined with strong easterlies on the nights of June 3 and 4 had a devastating impact on the beaches of CSI, and accordingly on some of the nesting birds. Two of my photographs below give an impression of the scale of these flooding tides.

As far as I know there were no Piping Plover nests on Daniels Head beach. All of those had been flooded out in June of past years during full-moon high tides. Due to major disturbances on the beach with easier access, there have been more people and off-leash dogs. Someone drove a truck right through the potential breeding area on Victoria Day weekend, and there has been no sign of nesting plovers since.

About two days after the high tide on June 4 (predicted 3.27 m above datum evenings of June 3-6) I noticed that several species of birds affected by the flooding were frantically mating. These included Herring Gull, Willet, ducks (especially Mallards), as well as a pair of Ring-necked Pheasants that I had observed earlier herding a troop of chicks through the salt marsh. Nature clearly needed to fill the void from all the drowned nests and young! Although I know this must always happen, it is the first time I saw such clear evidence of it.

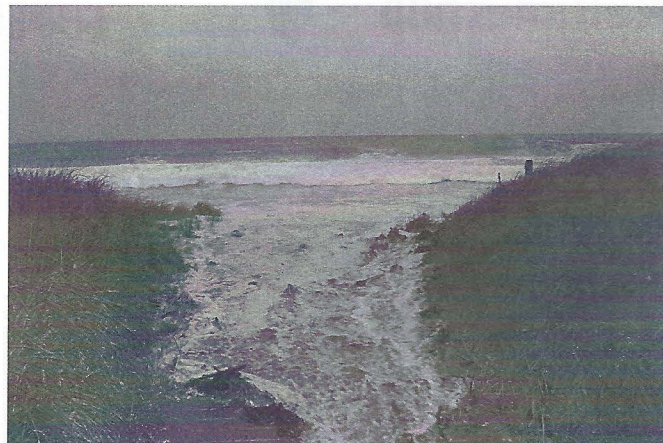
The island in the South Side Inlet with the large Herring Gull colony was completely under water. It was just heartbreaking to hear the parents calling for the drowning chicks.

This kind of coastal devastation is of course predicted to increase in coming decades.



**Left:** South Side Inlet shortly after 8 p.m June 3 was filled up to the fence line behind my house on its westernmost corner. None of its islets remained uncovered.

**Right:** Shortly before 9 p.m. June 4, the sea had swept over the beach and began to flood the parking lot on the bend of the road to the Daniels Head fish plant.



## Errors and Corrections

*In the past, incorrect information presented in Nova Scotia Birds has sometimes gone uncorrected, or even unnoticed. In future we will attempt to find and correct such errors, and hope that members and other readers will point out those that come to their attention.*

On p. 29 of the Winter-season 2010-1012 issue (Vol. 53, Issue 4), there is a photo of a sparrow with whitish outer tail feathers (6<sup>th</sup> retrices, R6), like those of a Vesper Sparrow. It was identified in the caption a Song Sparrow, because one of that species was identifiably photographed nearby. However, as pointed out to the Acting Editor by Michel Gosselin of the National Museum of Canada, it's shortish, squared off tail precludes that identification. It most resembles a Savannah Sparrow, which indeed more often flashes whitish outer trail feathers when flushed. In any case, the lesson remains: whitish outer tail feathers on sparrows may be a misleading field mark.



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