

Nova Scotia Birds

A Quarterly Publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society



Autumn Season 2012

Volume 55, Issue 1



NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY

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

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c/o The Nova Scotia Museum

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Cover: A new and totally unexpected species for the province was this **BURROWING OWL**, video'd by Wade Cornell, Oct. 18 on McNabs I. in Halifax Hbr. for a CBC documentary on Nova Scotia's islands. See the detailed account of this record on p. 44.

Nova Scotia Birds**Vol. 55, Issue 1***Address below***Production Assistants***Vacant***Records Editor***Lance Laviolette***Events Editor***Chris Pepper***Seasonal Bird Reports***John Belbin**Ulli Hoeger**Ken McKenna**Ian McLaren**Eric Mills**Susann Myers**Chris Field***Banner Artist & Line Art***Trevor Herriot***Other Help***Ulli Hoeger**Eric Mills**Chris Pepper***Bird Reports to:***Lance Laviolette**RR # 1, Glen Robertson, ON**KOB 1H0**Lance.laviolette@Imco.com***Photo submissions to:***Ian McLaren, Photo Editor**Address below***All Other Items for publication to:***Ian McLaren, Acting Editor**Nova Scotia Birds**iamclar@dal.ca**Use of written material from**Nova Scotia Birds needs**permission from the Editor.**Cost of this publication is partly
borne by the Nova Scotia Museum.**ISSN 0383-0537***Message from the Acting Editor**

This first issue of 2013 will be in your hands a little later than it should be. This is largely due to my amateur status in editing and more particularly in assembling, formatting, and preparing the printer-ready copy. Fortunately, this part will be soon taken over by more qualified people, and I will then think about my capacities to continue as acting editor. This issue will also be the first to be available on-line, with colour images for display and analysis.

Timeliness of *Nova Scotia Birds* is of course important; we must strive to get the four issues in your hands at reasonable intervals. Our seasonal accounts are tied to seasonal bird schedules – two migration seasons, with spring (3 months) taken as shorter than autumn (4 months), and two less dynamic seasons, winter (3 months) taken as longer than summer (2 months). This inevitably introduces some asymmetry into completing our tasks. Readers will also appreciate that the seasonal accounts in *Nova Scotia Birds* are not meant to announce hot-off-the-press events or even for readers to relive their experiences shortly after the preceding season, especially in this age of almost instant communication, when rarities are reported and events pondered when they occur. *Nova Scotia Birds* should have a regular schedule, but not necessarily immediately following the seasons being reported. Rather, it is a long term resource for browsing and study of our bird records. It is meant to be a synthesis and analysis of the season's records so readers can understand their personal observations in wider and longer contexts, and think further about the trends and patterns in our bird populations that they may only have partially glimpsed on their own. It also has an important role in full documenting extreme rarities, so that future readers can judge for themselves the validity of such records. Other articles in recent issues, like a study of Goldfinch nesting success and an update on the status of the threatened Piping Plover, have taken deeper views of our bird life, while reports like a "Magnificent day on Seal Island" have reminded us of the joys of birding.

We strive to make *Nova Scotia Birds* reflect the interests and observations of our members. To that end, we hope to get more input from members. Send us your accounts of discovering real rarities, unexpected forms, or odd plumage patterns that include the circumstances and excitement of the event. Tell us about unusual bird behaviours that you've seen. Submit detailed accounts of rarely observed nesting cycles, or trends that you've noted in watching particular species over the years. Give us accounts of major migration events or other large movements of birds that you've encountered, with your 'take' on what they might mean. Describe for us a really exciting day or weekend of birding. So, dear readers, help us maintain *Nova Scotia Birds* as one of the longest-running bird-related periodicals in Canada



Message from the President, David A. Currie

The Nova Scotia Bird Society, so rich in its people, contributions to bird study, and support of so many volunteer programmes, will be going through some very exciting times this year. I am so honoured and thrilled to be a part of this stage of our history as we embrace the future.

Staying connected with our members ensures that it is worth belonging to our Society, and gives us an endless source of ideas and directions for the future. With Ian McLaren so ably stepping in as acting editor along with our section editors feverishly vetting bird records in time for deadlines, our magazine is back on schedule. With this issue, *Nova Scotia Birds*, for the very first time, is available digitally with stunning colour images from our many gifted photographers. Those of us who enjoy a printed paper copy of *Nova Scotia Birds* will continue to receive it, although it will also continue to be without colour.

As I write, a new website with an updated Nova Scotia Bird Society logo is being developed that will be unveiled within weeks. All of our back issues since the mid 1950's are now in the process of being digitized, thereby offering a simpler and more accessible resource for research and enjoyment that all may use. To be able to see these wonderful early publications when the NSBS was still young will be amazing.

With the growing use of social media, smart phones, tablets, internet resources like Facebook and Twitter, there is almost unlimited opportunity to reach people and include them in observing and discussing the fascinating birds in our province. As of today, April 4, The Nova Scotia Bird Society's Facebook page stands at 678 members with over 40 joining it over the last 5 days!

Birding can be, and usually is, a social activity and we've heard over and over from many people that field trips were the catalysts for their lifelong enjoyment of birds. Our Field Trip Co-ordinator, Kate Steele, has taken on the organization of field trips for us this year and has put together a wonderful array of venues with interesting and knowledgeable leaders throughout the province. We hope to see you out there!

Stay tuned; it's going to be an exciting year!

Important Agenda Item for Next Annual General Meeting

In order to comply with recent changes to the Canadian Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (CNCA) and the Societies Act of Nova Scotia, the existing "Constitution and By-Laws" had to be converted/amended to a "Memorandum of Association and By-Laws". This was done with the assistance of the legal counsel of our honorary solicitor. The "Memorandum of Association" and the "By-Laws" each require a "special resolution" to be passed by the membership at the next Special/Annual General Meeting. Another terminology/technical change is that the "Executive Committee" is now a "Board of Directors" and all are elected as "directors" at the AGM. Also a few adjustments have been made and updates added to reflect modern realities, such as electronic notification, websites, etc. A copy of the "Memorandum of Association and By-Laws" will be available on our website or you can request an electronic or paper copy from the President.



AUTUMN BIRD REPORTS

NOTE: The following are frequently used abbreviations and acronyms, especially in tables. In addition, months and most county names (except when stand-alone) are abbreviated, and the latter are always in *italics* to distinguish from towns with the same names. 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.

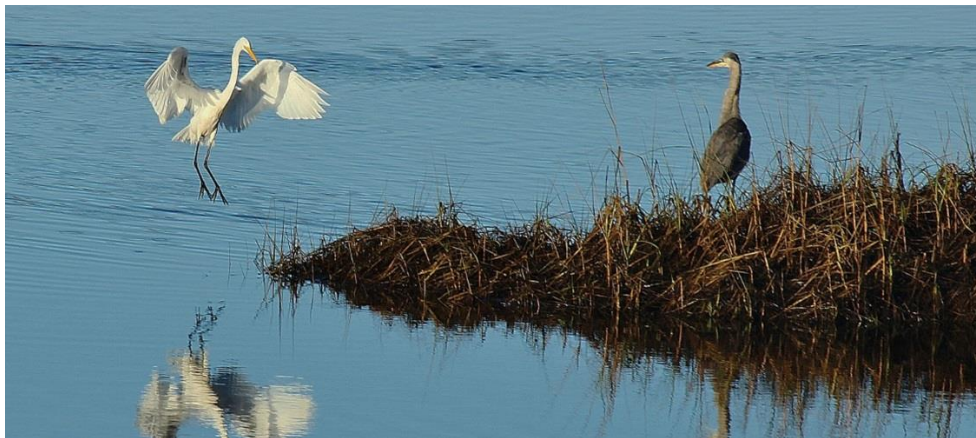
General terms

Ad. = adult
 BBS = Breeding Bird Survey
 Bch., bch. = Beach, beach
 Brk. = Brook
ca. = approximately
 CBC = Christmas Bird Count
 f. = female
fide = on the authority of
 Hbr. = Harbour
 imm. = immature
 I. = Island (pl. Is.)
 imm. = immature
 juv. = juvenile (first post-nestling plumage)
 Lr. = Lower
 m. obs. = many observers
 n.d. = no details (unsupported by documentation)
 no. = number or numbers
 nr. = geographically near
 obs., when alone as in '2 obs.' = observer (s)
 Pk = Park
 Pen. = Peninsula
 ph. = photographed
 PP = Provincial Park

Pt. = Point (not Port)
 pr. = pair
 rept(s). = report(s)
 Sanc. = Sanctuary, as in several Game Sanctuaries
 spec. = specimen
 thr. = through a season, as in 'thr, summer'
 var. obs. = various observers
 yng. = young
 + with numbers = more; with dates = later

Geographical locations

APBS = Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary, *Cum.*
 BPI = Bon Portage (Outer) I. Shel.
 Brier I. = Brier Island, *Digby*
 CBI = Cape Breton Island
 CBHNP = Cape Breton Highlands National Park
 CBRM = Cape Breton Regional Municipality
 Hbr, hbr = Harbour, harbour
 HRM = Halifax Regional Municipality
 Keji. NP = Kejimikujik National Park
 Keji. NP Adjunct = Kejimikujik NP Seaside Adjunct
 PPP. Halifax = Point Pleasant Park, Halifax
 Seal I. = Seal Island, Outer Tusket Is., *Yar.*
 Uniacke Pk. = Uniacke Estate Museum Park, *Hants*



Sometimes the eye, unlike the camera, cannot fully capture the beauty of a moment. [Photo Cal Brown]

Waterfowl

By John Belbin

One **GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE** was found Oct 29 in Onslow by ELM when he was studying some 4300 Canadas in the area. It did not appear to be fully mature and was identified from its grayish plumage and orange-pink bill as the *gambelli* subspecies. Another first-fall Greater White-fronted (this one the more usual “Greenland” subspecies *flavirostris*) was found by Alan Wilson around Nov 12 on the shores of Indian Bay, *CBRM*, and was seen and photographed by several thereafter (see photo). On Oct 12 KJM found an early **SNOW GOOSE** associating with 160 Canada Geese in Rollie MacDonald’s field near the Pictou rotary; all the geese had gone two hours later. There were several other sightings of numbers around the province and it seems we had a wider influx this fall. However last year’s concentration in the *Colchester* region is did not occur this year.



This young **GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE**, foraged for a couple of weeks in November on grassy seaside areas near Dominion, *CBRM*, and supplied this fine photo-documentation on Nov 21. Its blackish back and very orange bill marks it as a subspecies *flavirostris* straying from Greenland.[Photo Allan Murrant]

The flock of 2000+ **CANADA GEESE** reported from Port Joli, *Queens*, was most probably only a small part of the numbers present, as restricted viewing prevented better assessment of the true numbers. The composition of the large flocks of Canada Goose changes considerably over the fall period, with birds arriving from widely different locations. In a flock at Windsor on Oct 28, most appeared to be of the pale breasted “Atlantic” subspecies *canadensis* from Newfoundland and Labrador, and only about 5% the darker breasted *interior* from n.e. Canada or Greenland; but on Nov 23 the proportion had risen to about 25% in a flock seen at Masstown, *Col* (ELM). The single **CAKCLING GOOSE** found by KJM among the Canadas on Big I. appeared to be of the usual subspecies *hutchinsii* (see photo). Another was with a flock of 525 Canadas in a field near the Kings Edgehill School in Windsor (ELM). The geese were scared off by a large Coyote who investigated the flock. Another two Cackling Geese Nov 23 in the Onslow, *Hants*, area were found by ELM in a flock of 1500 Canadas. He noted that one

was a classic "Richardson's" Cackling Goose, with relatively light breast, but the other was noticeably darker and had a slightly smaller white cheek patch – probably still within the range of “Richardson's” but easily distinguishable from the earlier bird. The BRANT at CSI were probably under-reported.

For most waterfowl the breeding season is over by August and from then on birds increasingly gather together to prepare for the fall migration. It is then that we begin to see larger numbers month by month (see table) and to appreciate what has been largely hidden while young are being brought up. For example, SAH reported several hundred MALLARDS and AMERICAN BLACK DUCKS together on Aug 27 at the Port Clyde River Bridge in *Shelburne*. They were accompanied by a number of GREEN-WINGED TEAL. James Hirtle found a flock of 150 Green-winged Teal Sept 3 on CSI, the largest group he had seen at one location in some 20 years. Possibly they are beginning to rebound from extensive hunting pressures. A group of the same size was seen a month later at Rainbow Haven.

A number of MALLARD X AMERICAN BLACK DUCK hybrids were reported from *HRM* and *Pictou*. Terry Boswell concluded that 37 of about 50 individuals on Frog Pond in Jollimore, *HRM*, were hybridized.

There were widespread reports of WOOD DUCK as they began their migratory movements, but probably the most unusual came from Brier Island, where ELM found one sitting with a Herring Gull off Northern Point, having apparently arrived before dawn. A saltwater location is quite rare and the bird was presumably resting after an extensive flight.

A male **TUFTED DUCK** with a good long tuft, was seen with 110 LESSER SCAUP and 4 RUDDY DUCKS by RBS on Nov 2 at Bissett L., *HRM*. It was still there on Nov 11. The Ruddy Ducks had been found by BLM on Oct. 20. This is the second consecutive year that a Tufted Duck has graced Bissett L. for a period of time.

A single female **REDHEAD** was found at Kingsburg beach, *Lun*, by JAH and DAW. The first HARLEQUIN DUCK of the season was reported on Oct 27 by BLM off High Head on the Prospect Barrens. Bob McDonald found an unusually large group of 46 Harlequins off Keji Adjunct NP,

Ken McKenna noted of the gatherings of HOODED MERGANSER at Haliburton Gut, *Pict*, that “a similar number have been gathering in this location the last few years at this time . . . ‘til freeze-up”. The 100 **COMMON MERGANSERS** seen Sept 29 off Big Island, *Pict.*, were engaged in a feeding frenzy, explaining why such large numbers gather there each fall. Big Island is an excellent waterfowl watching location every fall. Significant populations of Surf Scoters, Canada Geese and Red Breasted Mergansers had all built up by Oct 12 according to KJM. A few **RUDDY DUCKS** again appeared at Bissett Lake as they did last year.

Note: selected counts of the more common species are represented in the tabulations,.

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE				Oct 20	Corkum’s I. <i>Lun</i>	1108	JAH
Oct 29	Onslow, <i>Col</i>	1	ELM	Oct 28	Onslow, <i>Col</i>	3000	ROH
ca. Nov. 12- 24	Indian Bay, <i>CBRM</i>	1 ph.	Alan Wilson <i>et al.</i>	Oct 28	Windsor	525	ELM
Snow Goose				Oct 29	Masstown, <i>Col</i>	4300	ELM
Oct 13	Pictou rotary area	1 ph.	KJM	Nov 18	Bissett L. <i>HRM</i>	600+	DHH
Nov 6	CSI			Nov 30	Osprey Golf Club, <i>Guys</i>	500	KJM
Nov 9	W. Head, <i>Queens</i>	2	Denise Ross	Wood Duck			
Nov 29	W. Pubnico, <i>Yar</i>	1	RDE	Aug 9, 17	Miners Marsh, Kentville	1 f., 6	JLC, RBS
Nov 29	Upper Stewiacke, <i>Col</i>	1	DAM	Aug 17, 29	Big I. <i>Pict</i>	1 m., 1	ALD, KJM
CAACKLING GOOSE				Aug. 22, 30	Middle R., <i>Pictt</i>	15, 25	KJM
Sept. 28	Big I., <i>Pictt</i>	1 ph.	KJM	Aug 23	French Basin Tr., <i>Anna</i>	8	RBS
Oct 28	Windsor	1	ELM	Sept. 2, 24	Lilydale area, <i>Lun</i>	8, 7	JAH
Nov 23	Onslow area, <i>Col</i>	2	ELM	Sept 21	Caledonia, <i>Queens</i>	3	JAH
Canada Goose				Sept 25	N. Point, Brier I.	1	ELM
Aug 5-	Bridgetown, <i>Anna</i>	20	MCR	Oct. 6	Churchvale, <i>Pict</i>	4	KJM
Aug 19	Back Centre, <i>Lun</i>	12	JAH	Oct 9	French Basin Trail, <i>Ann</i>	“lots”	GFO
Sept 2	Rose Bay, <i>Lun</i>	50	JAH	Oct. 14	Liverpool area	1	JAH
Sept 7	Tancook I., <i>Lun</i>	large flock	CJF, ELM	Oct. 20	Belcher St., <i>Kings</i>	1	Tim & Ann Hall
Sept 23	Long I., <i>Digby</i>	18	JAH	Oct 23	Gesner’s Pond, Kentville	2	Bob Stevens
Sept 24	Garden Lots, <i>Lun</i>	24	JAH	Oct 26	French Basin Tr., <i>Anna</i>	20	RDE
Sept 28	Victoria Vale, <i>Anna</i>	200+	PBG	Nov. 1	Churchvale, <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM
Sept 29, Oct 12	Big I. <i>Pict</i>	100, 590	KJM	Nov. 13, 16	Canso	2, 1	KJM, CKE
Oct 7	Port Joli, <i>Queens</i>	2100+	JAH				



This diminutive goose, compared to its Canada Goose companions, has short neck, steep forehead and stubby bill that characterize **CAACKLING GOOSE**, and it has the pale breast of subspecies *hutchinsii*, which nests mostly on Baffin I. [Photo Ken McKenna]

Gadwall

Aug. 16	Keji NP Adjunct	8	Graham Williams
Sept. 6	Horton Landing, <i>Kings</i>	1	RIW
Oct. 20	Kingsburg, <i>Lun</i>	3	JAH
Oct 23	Canard Pond, <i>Kings</i>	1 m.	Bob Stevens
Nov 9	Miners Marsh, Kentville	1 f.	David Waterfield

EURASIAN WIGEON

Sept 22	Windsor sewage ponds	1 m.	RBS
Oct. 22-Nov. 28	Red Bridge Pond, <i>HRM</i>	1 m.	sev. obs.
Oct. 24	Yarmouth Hbr.	1 m.	RDE
Nov 11	Williams Pt., <i>Ant</i>	1	RFL
Nov. 12	W. Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	1	Kate Steele
Nov 29	Birch Cove Pk., <i>HRM</i>	1	MZE

American Wigeon

Aug 12	Middle R. Dyke, <i>Pict</i>	10	KJM
Sept 15	W. Lawrencetown Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	130	BLM
Sept 27	Windsor sewage ponds, <i>Hants</i>	16	JOB
Oct 9	French Basin Trail, <i>Anna</i>	20+	GFO
Oct 18	Canard Pond, <i>Kings</i>	4	JCT
Nov 1	Red Bridge Pond, <i>HRM</i>	182	DMC
Nov 23	Onslow, <i>Col</i>	a few	ROH

American Black Duck

Aug 21	Daniels Head, CSI	50+	RAH
Sept 3	CSI	125	JAH
Sept 15	Canning, <i>Kings</i>	60	JAH
Sept 23	Long I., <i>Digby</i>	43	JAH
Sept 27	Windsor sewage ponds, <i>Hants</i>	45	JOB
Oct 7	Port Joli, <i>Queens</i>	212	JAH
Oct 9	French Basin Tr., <i>Anna</i>	lots	GFO
Oct 20. Nov 12	Big I. <i>Pict</i>	360, 158	KJM
Nov 9	Horton Landing, <i>Kings</i>	108	RIW
Nov 23	W. Apple R. <i>Cumb</i>	130	KFS
Nov 28	Grand Pré, <i>Kings</i>	200	RIW

Mallard

Aug 23	French Basin .Tr, <i>Ann</i>	50	RBS
Sept 8	Bridgewater, <i>Lun</i>	60	JAH

Sept 29	Windsor sewage ponds	18	JOB
Nov 11	Truro	250	KJM
Nov 27	Habitant R., Canning, <i>Kings</i>	35	JWW

Blue-winged teal

Aug 23	French Basin Tr., <i>Anna</i>	6	RBS
Sept 12	Rose Bay, <i>Lun</i>	1	JAH
Sept 15	W. Lawrencetown Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	3	BLM
Sept 23	Brier I. <i>Digby</i>	4	ELM, AHM
Sept 29	Lr. Barneys River, <i>Pict</i>	25	KJM
Oct 2	CSI, <i>Shel</i>	1	RDE
Oct 17	Annapolis Royal	55	Robert Scranton

Northern Shoveler

Sept 17	French Basin Tr., <i>Anna</i>	6	Robert Scranton
Oct 9, 26	French Basin Tr., <i>Anna</i>	7f, 5	GFO, RDE
Oct 27, Nov. 2, 3	Bissett L. <i>HRM</i>	1 m.	JED, RIW, PMC
Nov 5	Antigonish sewage ponds	10	KJM
Nov 9	Miners Marsh, Kentville	2f	David Waterfield

Northern Pintail

Oct 9, 26	French Basin Trail, <i>Anna</i>	2	GFO, RDE
Oct 23	Canard Pond, <i>Kings</i>	4 m.	Bob Stevens
Oct 26	Salt Marsh Trail, <i>HRM</i>	1 f.	TEB
Nov. 3-19	Bissett L. <i>HRM</i>	2	var. obs.
Nov 5	Antigonish sewage ponds	2	KJM
Nov 9	Saxon St. pond, <i>Kings</i>	6	David Waterfield
Nov 10	Salt Marsh Trail, <i>HRM</i>	6	PMU
Nov 22	Overton, <i>Yar</i>	1 m.	RDE
Nov 26	Salt Marsh Trail, <i>HRM</i>	6	PMU



This striking image of two drake wigeons, obtained Oct. 24 at Yarmouth Hbr., shows their overall similarity, apart from their distinctive heads. [Photo Ronnie D'Entremont]

Teal sp

Oct 18	Sheffield Mills, <i>Kings</i>	30+	JCT
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Green-winged Teal

Sept 2, 12, 26	Rose Bay, <i>Lun</i>	22, 25, 31	JAH
Sept 3	CSI, <i>Shel</i>	150	JAH
Sept 4	Big I. <i>Pict</i>	114	KJM
Sept 18	Kingsburg, <i>Lun</i>	18	JAH
Sept 24	Cornwallis R., Kentville	21	JLC
Oct 1	Horton Landing, <i>Kings</i>	60	DGA
Oct 13	Kingsburg Beach, <i>Lun</i>	35	JAH, DAW
Oct 26	French Basin Trail, <i>Anna</i>	80	RDE
Nov 2	Rainbow Haven, <i>HRM</i>	100	DAC

Redhead

Oct 13	Kingsburg Beach, <i>Lun</i>	1 f.	DAW
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TUFTED DUCKNov 2-11 Bissett L., *HRM* 1 ad. m. RBS + var. obs.**Ring-necked Duck**

Aug. 22, 30 Middle R., *Pict* 7, 2 KJM
 Sept 17 French Basin Tr., *Anna* 45 Robert Scranton
 Oct. 9 French Basin Tr., *Anna* 60 GFO
 Oct. 11-20 Kingsburg, *Lun* 6 to 60 birds ELM, JAH, KEL
 Oct 13 Beaverbank, *HRM* 25 GMU
 Oct 23 L. Midway, *Digby* 12 KJM
 Oct 25, 26 Bissett L., *HRM* 4, 14 BLM, TEB
 Nov 11 Gammon L., *HRM* 35 KST

Greater Scaup

Aug 12, 22, 30 Middle R., *Pict* 150, 168, 127 KJM
 Sept. 29 Big I., *Pict* 1 KJM
 Oct 13, 20 Kingsburg Bch., *Lun* 20, 46 JAH, DAW
 Oct 25 Bissett L. *HRM* 300+ BLM
 Nov 1 Granton, *Pict* 150 KJM
 Nov 12 Big I., *Pict* 11 KJM
 Nov 18 Shelburne area 10 JAH
 Nov 23 Bissett L., *HRM* 3 TEB
 Nov 24 Sampson Tr., *Pict* 100 KJM

Lesser Scaup

Sept 17 French Basin Tr., *Anna* 4 Robert Scranton
 Sept 17, 30 Bissett Lake, *HRM* 170, 110 TEB, RIW
 Oct 20 Kingsburg, *Lun* 1 JAH
 Nov 2 Bissett Lake, *HRM* 30 RBS
 Nov 18 Shelburne area 1 JAH

Common Eider

Aug 18 Keji NP Adjunct 10 JAH
 Aug 26, Sept 2 W. Head, *Queens* 29, 77 JAH
 Sept 2 Duncans Cove, *HRM* 150 DAC
 Sept 15 Black Rock, *Kings* 27 JAH
 Sept 15 Cherry Hill Beach, *Lun* 6 JAH
 Sept 18 Kingsburg, *Lun* 35 JAH
 Sept 22 Brier I. 27 JAH
 Sept 25 Hemeon Head, *Shel* 65 RIW
 Sept 25, Oct 14 Liverpool98, 20 JAH
 Sept 28 Port George, *Ann* 40 PBG
 Oct 7 CSI 11 JAH
 Oct 30 Chebucto Head, *HRM* 120 DAC, DMC
 Nov 10 Strait of Canso field trip 70 NSBS
 Nov 29 Melmerby Beach PP 60 KJM
 Oct 27 Prospect Pen., *HRM* 1 BLM
 Oct 28 Shad Bay, *HRM* 4 SAB
 Nov 10 Hemeon Head, *Shel* 6 AVM
 Nov 12 Cow Bay, *HRM* 4 Chris Kennedy
 Nov 18 Keji NP Adjunct 46 RSM

Harlequin Duck

Oct 28 Shad Bay, *HRM* 4 SAB
 Nov 10 Hemeon Head, *Shel* 6 AVM
 Nov 12 Cow Bay, *HRM* 4 Chris Kennedy
 Nov 18 Keji Seaside NP 46 RSM

Surf Scoter

Aug 15 Big I., *Pict* 18 KJM
 Sept 13 W. La Have, *Lun* 6 m obs?
 Sept 28 Port George, *Ann* 17 PBG
 Oct 10 Beaver Harbour, *HRM* 22 KJM
 Oct 12 Big I. *Pict* 241 KJM
 Oct 12 Dingwall, *Vic* 10 Andrew Slater
 Oct 14 Crescent Bch, *Lun* 10 SJF
 Nov 11 Green Bay, *Lun* a few RBS
 Nov 12 Port Morien, *CBRM* 14 BEC
 Nov 30 Boylston, *Guys* 2 KJM

White-winged Scoter

Aug 29 Big I., *Pict* 3 KJM
 Sept. 16 Brier I. 1 KJM
 Sept 26, 29 Big I., *Pict* 2, 12 KJM
 Oct 6 Bacarro, *Shel* 1 JAH
 Oct 12 Dingwall, *Vic* 10 Andrew Slater
 Oct 12, 20 Big I., *Pict* 4, 6 KJM

Oct 14 Crescent Beach, *Lun* 4 SJF
 Oct 14 W. Head, *Queens* 5 JAH
 Oct 29 Chebucto Hd., *HRM* 4 DMC
 Nov 10 Strait of Canso field trip 4 NSBS
 Nov 18 Port L'Hebert, *Shel* 13 JAH

Black Scoter

Aug 4 Cape Forchu, *Yar* 4 Tim & Anne Hall
 Sept 29 Big I., *Pict* 1 KJM
 Oct 12, 20, 30 Big I., *Pict* 5, 20, 3 KJM
 Oct 14 W. Head, *Queens* 7 JAH
 Oct 17 Kingsburg, *Lun* 1 KEL
 Nov 11 Green Bay, *Lun* 50 RBS
 Nov 13 Margaretsville, *Anna* 12 WPN
 Nov 18 Port L'Hebert, *Shel* 7 JAH

Long-tailed Duck

Oct. 31 Sinclairs I., *Pict* 1 KJM
 Nov 1 Pictou Lodge 30 KJM
 Nov 11 Green Bay, *Lun* 15 RBS
 Nov 18 Keji NP Adjunct 33 RSM
 Nov 19 Sober Island, *HRM* 45 KJM
 Nov 19 Beaver Hbr., *HRM* 26 KJM

Bufflehead

Oct 15 Waterside PP 2 KJM
 Oct 19, 26 French Basin Tr., *Anna* sev., 30 RBS, RDE
 Oct 25, 26 Bissett L. *HRM* 35, 45 BLM, TEB
 Nov 4 Corkums Island, *Lun* 62 JAH
 Nov 5 Antigonish sewage ponds 23 KJM
 Nov 5 Head Prospect Bay, *HRM* 14 BLM
 Nov 11 Mahone Bay, *Lun* 24 RBS
 Nov 11 Oakland, *Lun* 62 JAH
 Nov 11 Lawrencetown, *HRM* 6 DMW
 Nov 13 Guysborough 39 KJM
 Nov 18 Keji Seaside NP 18 RSM
 Nov 18 Port L'Hebert, *Shel* 90 JAH

Common Goldeneye

Aug. 20 Middle R., *Pict* 2 KJM
 Sept 2 Rose Bay, *Lun* 7 KEL
 Oct 20, 30 Big I., *Pict* 2, 8 KJM
 Oct 27 Waterside PP, *Pict* 12 KJM
 Oct 20 New Glasgow 4 KJM
 Nov 12 Big I., *Pict* 156 KJM
 Nov 28 Melmerby Bch. PP, *Pict* 162 KJM
 Nov 30 Milford Haven R. *Guys* 80+ KJM

Hooded Merganser

Aug. 12, 22, 30 Middle R., *Pict* 23, 1, 5 KJM
 Sept. 4, 9, 29 Big I., *Pict* 9, 4, 2 KJM
 Oct 16 Gesner's Pond, *Kings* 3 JWW
 Oct 19 French Basin Tr., *Ann* large numbers RBS
 Oct 20 Riverport, *Lun* 25 JAH
 Oct 23 Saxon St Pond, *Kings* 8 Bob Stevens
 Nov 4 Haliburton Gut, *Pict* 250 KJM
 Nov 10 Port Hawkesbury 8 KJM
 Nov 11 Oakland, *Lun* 3 JAH
 Nov 27 Silver L., Lakeville, *Kings* 6 JWW
 Nov 27 Habitant R. Canning, *Kings* 4 JWW

Common Merganser

Sept 16 Maders Cove, *Lun* 52 JAH
 Sept 29 Big I. *Pict* 100 KJM
 Oct 13 Local patch circuit, *HRM* 80 PHE
 Nov 4 Lyons Brook, *Pict* 150 KJM
 Nov 5 W. Lakevale, *Ant* 11 KJM
 Nov 11, 28 Conrad Marsh, *HRM* 24, 14 DMW
 Nov 18 Bissett L. *HRM* 55 DHH
 Nov 19 Sober Island, *HRM* 20 KJM
 Nov 26 Shulie, *Cumb* 24 KFS
 Nov 29 Chance Harbour, *Pict* 60+ KJM

Red-breasted Merganser

Sept. 16 Brier I. 1 KJM
 Oct. 4, 12, 30 Big I., *Pict* 3, 80, 30 KJM
 Nov 4, 12 Big I., *Pict* 1830, 368 KJM

Nov 5	Jimtown, <i>Ant</i>	100	KJM	Nov 28	Conrad Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	36	DMW
Nov 11	Chapel Gully, Canso	20	JOK	Nov 28	Sinclairs I., <i>Pict</i>	1200	KJM
Nov 11	Green Bay, <i>Lun</i>	a few	RBS	Nov 29	Chance Hrb, <i>Pict</i>	1100+	KJM
Nov 11	First South, <i>Lun</i>	11	JAH	Ruddy Duck			
Nov 11	Canso	20	JOK	Sept 23, 24	Port Clyde Bridge, <i>Shel</i>	1m	SAH
Nov 18	Port L'Hebert, <i>Shel</i>	21	JAH	Oct 25	Bissett L. <i>HRM</i>	4	BLM
Nov 23	Terence Bay, <i>HRM</i>	flock	BLM	Nov 11	Chapel Gully, Canso	1	JOK

Galliformes

By Rick Whitman

The reports on eBird for RING-NECKED PHEASANT extended from *Digby*, to *Pictou*, and the individual reports only added a single observation from Middle Cape, *CBRM*. RUFFED GROUSE reports came from one end of the province to the other, with specific reports up to nine birds, at Kelley R., Chignecto Game Sanctuary, *Cumb*. There were nine SPRUCE GROUSE reports during the period with all eBird reports extracted in detail below. The last public report of **GRAY PARTRIDGE** in the province appears to be from November, 2011. Is it still here?

Ring-necked Pheasant

Aug-Nov	<i>Digby-Pic</i> , 81 repts.	1-8 indivs.	eBird
Aug-Nov	Tremont, <i>Kings</i>	1	SLH
Oct 5	Wolfville	2	JWW
Oct 22, 26	Nov 16 Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	7, 1, 6	DMW
Nov 26	Middle Cape, <i>CBRM</i>	1	Liz MacDonald

Ruffed Grouse

Aug-Nov	<i>Shel</i> to <i>Inv</i> . 41 reports	1-9	eBird
Aug 11-12	Isle Haute	1	CLD
Oct 17	Beaverbank <i>HRM</i>	1 "drumming"	GMU
Nov 12	Big I. <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM
Nov 16, 18, 29	Apple River, <i>Cumb</i> .	1	KFS

Spruce Grouse

Oct 2	Apple R. area, <i>Cumb</i> .	1	KFS
Oct 10	Liscomb Game Sanc.	1	KJM
Oct 13	East Dalhousie, <i>Kings</i>	1	Nancy Dowd
Oct 22	Cape Capstan, <i>Cumb</i>	1	KFS
Oct 23	Sheffield L., <i>Kings</i>	1	RIW
Oct 27	Evanston. <i>Rich</i> .	1	BID
Nov 14	Chignecto, <i>Cumb</i> .	1	Chris Lantz
Nov 15, 17	Kelley R., <i>Cumb</i> .	1, 2	KEL



This displaying male RUFFED GROUSE, Oct 6 on Brier I., is fortunate to have been shot by only a photographer during this hunting season. [Photo Ronnie D'Entremont]

Loons through Grebes

By John Belbin

RED-THROATED LOONS are usually reported from only a handful of locations, and the Noel Shore of *Hants* County is not normally one of them. This makes the report of eight of these Loons lingering for a month in Tennycape Bay, where only 2 are occasionally seen, of significant interest. This could be a previously unreported local summering population. Significant later groupings were also found in *Pictou* and at W. Apple River, *Col*.

COMMON LOONS begin gathering surprisingly early some years. They can be found in groups even on small lakes as well as in saltwater locations. A nice group of 25 was spotted in the Big I., *Pict*, area on Aug 15, and on the same day Larry Bogan saw six in breeding plumage on Shell Camp L., *Kings*. On Aug. 18, GFO found seven loons at Huntington Point (Halls Harbour). The value of pelagic trips also brought to our attention the means to see a little of the considerable offshore movements of birds. Two common Loons were located some 51 km south of Pubnico, showing their habit of ranging far beyond any possible view from the land. Large numbers were seen by RBS in mid-November, once again confirming Brier

Island as a highly significant migration choke point. Another significant gathering was found by AVM at Hemeons Head, Shel At 45 individuals this is the largest such gathering reported in quite some time.

The **RED-NECKED GREBES** seen at Big I., *Pict*, were still in the alternate plumage and sported red necks in mid-August. At the same location, good numbers of **HORNED GREBES** had built up by Oct. 12 and there was also a significant number of **RED THROATED LOONS**. This is a reliable location for both species every fall. However, last year's significant gatherings in both *Digby* and *Queens* Counties did not materialize this year.

Red-throated Loon

Aug 29	Tennycap Bay, <i>Hants</i>	8	
Sept. 26, 29	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1, 1	KJM
Oct 7	Daniels Head, CSI, <i>Shel</i>	2	JAH
Oct 30, Nov 12	Big I. <i>Pict</i>	18, 29	KJM
Nov 5	Arisaig, <i>Ant</i>	3	KJM
Nov 10	Canso causeway	1	KJM
Nov 11	Mahone Bay, <i>Lun</i>	1	RBS
Nov 18	Keji NP Adjunct	1	RSM
Nov 22	W. Apple R. <i>Cumb</i>	10+	KFS
Nov 23	Black Rock, <i>Kings</i>	some	RBS

Common Loon

Aug 3	MicMac L. <i>HRM</i>	1 juv	GAM
Aug 15, Sept 29	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	25, 9	KJM
Aug 15	Shell Camp L. <i>Kings</i>	6	Larry Bogan
Aug 18	Huntington Point, <i>Kings</i>	7	GFO
Aug 25	Pubnico pelagic, <i>Yar</i>	2	DAC
Sept 15	Black Rock, <i>Kings</i>	5	JAH
Sept 17	Margaretsville, <i>Anna</i>	6	Robert Scranton
Sept 22	Brier I.	1	JAH
Oct 19	Port George, <i>Anna</i>	a few	RBS
Oct 19	Sober Island, <i>HRM</i>	9	KJM
Oct 30	Chebucto Head, <i>HRM</i>	7	DAC, DMC
Nov 10	Hemeons Head, <i>Shel</i>	45	AVM
Nov 11	Mahone Bay, <i>Lun</i>	several	RBS
Nov 11	Oakland, <i>Lun</i>	8	JAH
Nov 17	Brier I.	large numbers	RBS
Nov 24	Louis Head, <i>Shel</i>	13	AVM

Pied-billed Grebe

Aug 18, 19	Back Centre, <i>Lun</i>	1, 2	JAH
Aug 23	French Basin Trail, <i>Anna</i>	3	RBS
Sept 3	Flemming Park, <i>HRM</i>	1	PLC
Sept 7	Tancook I., <i>Lun</i>	1	CJF, ELM
Sept 23	Tiverton, <i>Digby</i>	1	JAH
Sept 24	Cornwallis R. Kentville	1	JLC
Sept 26	French Basin Trail, <i>Anna</i>	4	RBS
Sept 28	Frog Pond, <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC
Oct 9	French Basin Tr., <i>Anna</i>	5	GFO
Nov 22	Dennis Point, <i>Yar</i>	1	RDE
Nov 23	Bissett Lake, <i>HRM</i>	2	TEB

Horned Grebe

Oct 12	Big I. <i>Pict</i>	good numbers	KJM
Nov 5	Mahoneys Beach, <i>Ant</i>	4	KJM
Nov 11	Cherry Hill Beach, <i>Lun</i>	6	RBS
Nov 11	Green Bay, <i>Lun</i>	a few	RBS
Nov 11	Mason's Beach, <i>Lun</i>	3	JAH
Nov 12	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	23	KJM
Nov 16	Cooks Cove, <i>Guys</i>	3	KJM



An adult **PIED-BILLED GREBE** cocks a warty eye Oct 16 on a pond at Argyle Head, *Yar*. [Photo Ronnie D'Entremont]

Nov 18	Port L'Hebert, <i>Shel</i>	7	JAH
Nov 19	Moosehead, <i>HRM</i>	4	KJM
Nov 23	Bass R. <i>Col</i>	2	ROH
Nov 23	Terence Bay, <i>HRM</i>	1	BLM

Red-necked Grebe

Aug 15	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	2	KJM
Sept 3	Lockeport, <i>Shel</i>	2	JQA
Oct 7	Brier I. <i>Digby</i>	1	ELM
Oct 21	Margaretsville, <i>Anna</i>	16	WPN
Oct 30	Big I. <i>Pict</i>	2	KJM
Nov 10	Strait of Canso field trip	3	NSBS
Nov 18	Keji NP Adjunct	2	RSM
Nov 18	Port L'Hebert, <i>Shel</i>	3	JAH
Nov 19	Sober Island, <i>HRM</i>	17	KJM
Nov 23	Black Rock, <i>Kings</i>	1	RBS

Tubenoses through Cormorants

By Eric Mills

The fall seabird season was full of exceptional reports, almost certainly the best in many years, if not ever, of birds seen in Nova Scotian waters in a comparable period. The most remarkable included beautifully documented accounts, with photographs, by the seabird observer Tom Johnson of an **AUDUBON'S SHEARWATER**, four **BAROLO**

SHEARWATERS, and two **WHITE-FACED STORM-PETRELS**, all sighted on Aug 17. All were in far offshore waters east of Georges Bank, in an area attributable to *Shelburne*, ranging from 100 km south of CSI to 150-160 km south of Baccaro, where the water temperature ranged from about 21 to 23°C, characteristic of offshore continental slope water.

Barolo Shearwater (*Puffinus baroli*) requires some comment, because it has recently been split from a complex of small black-and-white shearwaters called in all the usual field guides Little Shearwater (*Puffinus assimilis*). In McLaren's book *All the Birds of Nova Scotia*, it is treated as one subspecies of Macaronesian Shearwater, itself split from Little Shearwater and composed of two subspecies. (For a comprehensive discussion, see Steve Howell's *Petrels, Albatrosses and Storm-Petrels of North America*, 2012.) Barolo Shearwater breeds on the northern Canaries and Azores, and has been recorded off the eastern USA and as a specimen from Nova Scotia in 1896 along with a sight report in 2003. Although there have been a number of sight reports of Audubon's Shearwater in Canadian East Coast areas, Johnson's report and photographs put it firmly in the Nova Scotian confirmed category. The highly charismatic White-faced Storm-Petrel has been reported on our waters three times between 1967 and 1997; it too is now confirmed for the province and in addition for Canada. We hope to have a full account of these remarkable birds by their observer, Tom Johnson, in the next issue.

Finally, among the super-rarities, there was a totally unexpected brief sighting of a **FRIGATEBIRD**, unidentified to species, overhead at Bayport, *Lun*, after a southerly gale on Oct 17.

CORY'S SHEARWATER is highly sought after by offshore birders, although this species tends to be most abundant late in the season after the pelagic trips have stopped, and at the best of times stays well offshore, preferring warm slope water. Nonetheless, a few do come within range and the seven records from this season are probably about average or slightly above.

Brier Island has been designated an Important Bird Area by Bird Studies International, partly on the basis of the abundance of shearwaters and phalaropes in the outer Bay of Fundy. The observation from the island of at least 45,000 **GREAT SHEARWATERS** headed out of the bay in a gale on Oct 7 justifies this designation.



This nice comparison of our regular Storm-Petrels (left, WILSON'S, Aug 18 off Sambro, *HRM*; right LEACH'S, Aug 27 off Pubnico, *Yar*) captures their essential differences in behaviour and plumage. But note that the usual dark central streak on the white patch of Leach's may be hard to see. [Photos: left, Paul Murray; right, Ron D'Entremont]

Exceptional numbers of **NORTHERN GANNETS** were reported in June and July, partly in response to a food-related breeding failure in the Newfoundland colonies and in response to the exceptional abundance of fish and squid in unusually warm coastal waters. Peter Stow of Hubbards, *HRM*, reported to NatureNS on Aug 16: "fishing at the mouth of the bay [St. Margaret's Bay] today it was encouraging to see enormous schools of mackerel and pollock. So many in fact it was impossible to get the gear down to find cod without bait fishing. Still lots of squid inshore and interesting to see that the

mackerel, in addition to feeding on sand lance and other small fry, had been feeding on squid about 2 inches in length.” Although the coastal water off the Atlantic coast of the province eventually cooled due to coastal upwelling later in August, gannet numbers stayed high until at least the end of October and, as the next report will show, were still significant into the early winter.

In the summer 2012 report, I mentioned that a satellite colony of the well-established breeding colony of DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS on the east side of Peters I., at the south end of Westport, Brier I., had been established on the west side. This was a late development, for unknown reasons, and there were still fledglings on and near the new nest sites on Sept 23, when migration of this species was well underway.

A number of observers took to coastal observation points during the passage of Hurricane Sandy, the largest Atlantic hurricane on record, which moved inland along the New Jersey coast on Oct 29 (carrying an exotic crop of pelagic birds) and dissipated inland over the Great Lakes on October 31. Despite strong easterlies in our area, the outcome was relatively humdrum, except possibly for the large numbers of Leach’s Storm-Petrel and NORTHERN GANNETS seen off Chebucto Head, *HRM*, on Oct 29, plus Kittiwakes and Dovekies there too, as reported in my section on Gulls through Alcids (p. 19).

Northern Fulmar

July 28	Off Brier I.	1	Penny Graham
Aug 20	Gulf of Maine, <i>Yar</i>	1	Tom Johnson
Aug 25	SE Bank, <i>Shel</i>	3	NSBS
Sept 22	Off Brier I.		3 JAH

Oct 8 Off Yarmouth 1+ Linda Warschauer

Cory’s Shearwater

Aug 9	Scotian Shelf off Halifax	1	fide DAC
Aug 17	Gulf of Maine, <i>Shel</i>	2	Tom Johnson
Aug 18	Scotian Shelf off Halifax	2	NSBS
Aug 18	Gulf of Maine, <i>Shel</i>	2	Tom Johnson
Aug 20	Gulf of Maine, <i>Shel</i>	1	Tom Johnson
Aug 25	SE Bank, <i>Shel</i>	3	NSBS
Oct 8	Off Yarmouth	1+	Linda Warschauer

Great Shearwater

(including selected reports from eBird)

Aug 7	Off Brier I.	200	Graham Williams
Aug 9	Digby-St. John ferry	169	JOK
Aug 17	Gulf of Maine, <i>Shel</i>	53	Tom Johnson
Aug 18	Scotian Shelf off Halifax	60	NSBS
Aug 20	Gulf of Maine, <i>Yar</i>	2300+	Tom Johnson
Aug 25	SE Bank, <i>Shel</i>	1000+	NSBS
Sept 8	Scotian Shelf off Halifax	1	NSBS
Sept 15	Off Brier I.	1200	KJM, RBS
Sept 22	Off Brier I.	146	JAH
Oct 7	Off Northern Pt., Brier I.	45,000+	ELM, RDE, SMA
Oct 22	Off Northern Pt., Brier I	12,000	ELM
Oct 30	Chebucto Hd. area, <i>HRM</i>	3	DAC, DMC
Nov 28, 29	5 km w. of Seal I. “several”, “hundreds”		RDE

Sooty Shearwater

(including selected reports from eBird)

Aug 7	Off Brier I.	30	Graham Williams
Aug 9	Digby-St. John ferry	2	JOK
Aug 18	Scotian Shelf off Halifax	1	NSBS
Aug 20	Gulf of Maine, <i>Yar</i>	5	Tom Johnson
Aug 25	SE Bank, <i>Shel</i>	8	NSBS
Sept 22	Off Brier I.	4	JAH
Oct 7	Off Northern Pt., Brier I.	6	ELM
Oct 22	Off Northern Pt., Brier I.	ca. 200	ELM, RDE, SMA
Oct 30	Chebucto Hd. area, <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC, DMC

Manx Shearwater

(including selected reports from eBird)

Aug 7	Off Brier I.	4	Graham Williams
Aug 9	Digby-St. John ferry	1	JOK
Aug 18	Scotian Shelf off Halifax	1	NSBS
Aug 25	SE Bank, <i>Shel</i>	1	NSBS
Sept 16	Off Brier I.	1	KJM, RBS
Oct 7	Off Northern Pt., Brier I 3		ELM, RDE, SMA

AUDUBON’S SHEARWATER

Aug 17	Gulf of Maine, <i>Shel</i>	1 ph.	Tom Johnson
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BAROLO SHEARWATER

Aug 17	Gulf of Maine, <i>Shel</i>	4, 3 ph.	Tom Johnson
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WHITE-FACED STORM-PETREL

Aug 17	Gulf of Maine, <i>Shel</i>	2 ph.	Tom Johnson
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Wilson’s Storm-Petrel

(including selected reports from eBird)

Aug 4-8	Off Brier I.	5+	Penny Graham
Aug 7	Off Brier I 8		Graham Williams
Aug 17	Gulf of Maine, <i>Shel</i>	8	Tom Johnson
Aug 17	Gulf of Maine, <i>Yar</i>	5	Tom Johnson
Aug 18	Scotian Shelf off Halifax	10	NSBS
Aug 19	Gulf of Maine, <i>Yar</i>	2	Tom Johnson
Aug 20	Gulf of Maine, <i>Yar</i>	48	Tom Johnson
Aug 25	SE Bank, <i>Shel</i>	100	NSBS
Sept 22	Off Brier I.	4	JAH

Leach’s Storm-Petrel

(including selected reports from eBird)

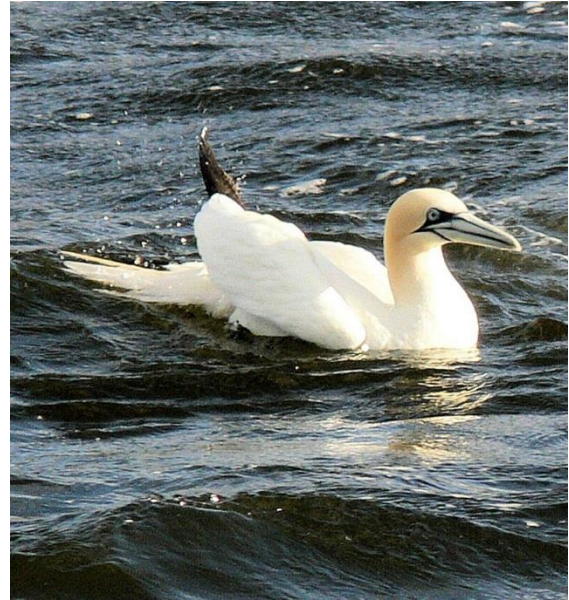
Aug 17	Gulf of Maine, <i>Shel</i>	82	Tom Johnson
Aug 17	Gulf of Maine, <i>Yar</i>	9	Tom Johnson
Aug 18	Scotian Shelf off Halifax	2	NSBS
Aug 16	Gulf of Maine, <i>Yar</i>	8	Tom Johnson
Aug 20	Gulf of Maine, <i>Yar</i>	145	Tom Johnson
Aug 25	SE Bank, <i>Shel</i>	250	NSBS
Sept 1-2	BPI	2-5	CLD
Sept 11	Canso Causeway	2+ ph.	DCO, LOC
Sept 15	Off Brier I.	1	KJM, RBS
Oct 22	Off Northern Pt., Brier I.	1	ELM
Oct 29	Chebucto Hd., <i>HRM</i>	30	DAC, DMC
Nov 3	Caribou light, <i>Pict</i>	17	KJM, STV
Nov 10	St. of Canso, <i>Guys/Inv</i>	4-12	NSBS
Nov 15	Big I., <i>Pict</i> 1		KJM

Northern Gannet

(including selected reports from eBird)

Aug 3	Off Caribou Pt., <i>Pict</i>	4+ ad, fishing	ELM
Aug 4	Doctors Brk., <i>Ant</i>	9	JOK
Aug 7	Off Brier I.	25	Graham Williams
Aug 8	Brier I.	70	JOK
Aug. 8	Middle Hd., CBHNP, <i>Vic</i>	12	Emily Williams
Aug 14	Doctors Brk., <i>Ant</i>	8	JOK
Aug 14	Chebucto Hd., <i>HRM</i>	25	Graham Williams
Aug 9	Digby-St. John ferry	23	JOK
Aug 15	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	17	KJM
Aug 16	Halifax hbr.	20	UHO
Aug 16	Mahone Bay village, <i>Lun</i>	1	Paul MacDonald
Aug 18	Scotian Shelf off Halifax	20	NSBS
Aug 20	Gulf of Maine, <i>Yar</i>	9	Tom Johnson
Aug 25	SE Bank, <i>Shel</i>	ca. 250	NSBS
Aug 29	BPI	55	ABO., Janice Chard
Aug 30	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	50	DAC et al.
Sept 1	Western Hd., <i>Queens</i>	ca. 200	ELM

Sept 4	Off Northern Pt., Brier I.	10	ELM
Sept 8	Scotian Shelf off Halifax	16	ELM
Sept 9	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	10	KJM
Sept 15	Western Hd., <i>Queens</i>	ca. 45	ELM
Sept 15-16	Off Brier I.	300	KJM, RBS
Sept 23	Brier I.	40	ELM
Sept 24	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	60	DAC
Sept 25	Waterside PP, <i>Pict</i>	62	KJM
Oct. 6	Off Northern Pt., Brier I.	ca. 50	ELM
Oct 6	Baccaro, <i>Shel</i>	226	JAH
Oct. 7	Brier I.	200	ELM
Oct. 12	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	32	KJM,
CHK			
Oct 14	Herring Cove, <i>HRM</i>	60	DAC
Oct 20	Western Hd., <i>Queens</i>	140	JAH
Oct 20	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	50	KMK
Oct 22-23	Off Northern Pt., Brier I.	50+	ELM
Oct 24	Off Northern Pt., Brier I.	100+	ELM
Oct 24	Hirtles Bch., <i>Lun</i>	11	RIW
Oct 26	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	35	DAC <i>et al.</i>
Oct 29-30	Chebucto Hd., <i>HRM</i>	up to 500/hr (2 hrs)	BLM <i>et al.</i>
Nov 5	Georges Bay, <i>Ant</i>	26	KJM
Nov 12	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM, CHK
Nov 12	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	16	TEB
Nov 13	Margaretsville, <i>Anna</i>	1	WAN
FRIGATEBIRD SP.			
Oct 17	Bayport, <i>Lun</i>	1	AHM
Double-crested Cormorant			
(including selected reports from eBird)			
Aug 1	Bird Is., <i>Vic</i>	300	T. & A. Honan
Aug 7	Brier I.	250	Graham Williams
Aug 8	Brier I.	28	JOK
Aug 9	Digby-St. John ferry	66	JOK
Aug 11-12	Isle Haute, <i>Cumb</i>	1+	CLD
Aug 18	Off Sambro, <i>HRM</i>	5	NSBS
Aug 18	Keji Seaside, <i>Queens</i>	113	JAH
Aug. 25	Pubnico Hbr., <i>Yar</i>	15	NSBS
Aug 25	Beach Meadows, <i>Queens</i>	93	JAH
Aug 25	Gulf of Maine, <i>Yar</i>	1	Tom Johnson
Sept 1	BPI50	CLD	
Sept 4	Peters I., Brier I	10+ nests, young	ELM
Sept 7	Miners Marsh, Kentville	2	RBS
Sept 8	Off Sambro, <i>HRM</i>	30	NSBSSept
15-late Oct	Migrant groups, <i>HRM to Digby</i>	ca. 40-200	var. obs.
Nov 2	Caribou PP, <i>Pict</i>	107	KJM, CHK
Nov 8	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	2	KJM
Nov. 10	Str. of Canso, <i>Guys/Inv</i>	6-7	NSBS
Nov 11	Oakland, <i>Lun</i>	3	JAH
Nov 11	Pictou Causeway, <i>Pict</i>	2	KJM, CHK
Nov 12	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1	Terry Boswell
Nov 12	3 Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1	KST
Nov 13	Canso	1	KJM, CHK
Nov 25	Hemeon Hd., <i>Shel</i>	1	AVM



The Canso Causeway is an excellent place for close-up views of NORTHERN GANNET (here Nov. 9) without going to sea [Photo Don Codling]

Great Cormorant

(includes selected reports from eBird)

Aug 1	Bird Islands, <i>Vic</i>	150	T. & A. Honan
Aug 18	Off Sambro, <i>HRM</i>	1	NSBS
Aug 25	Pubnico hbr., <i>Yar</i>	1	NSBS
Aug 26	Western Hd., <i>Queens</i>	1	JAH
Aug 29-Sept 12	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	2-4	DAC
Aug 29-Sept 9	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM, Rick Ferguson
Sept 1	Off Western Hd., <i>Yar</i>	9	ELM
Sept 2	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	2	DAC, AZV
Sept 4-Oct. 12	Brier I. locations	12-25 residents	var. obs.
Sept 8	Off Sambro, <i>HRM</i>	1	NSBS
Sept 15	Western Hd., <i>Queens</i>	6	ELM
Sept 26	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM, CHK
Oct 12	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM, CHK
Oct 22-24	Brier I.	ca.100	ELM
Oct 27	Beach Meadows, <i>Queens</i>	2	JAH
Nov 10	Str. of Canso, <i>Guys/Inv</i>	1	NSBS
Nov 13-16	Canso	4-5	KJM, CHK

Hérons

By Ulli Hoeger

GREAT EGRETS were reported from many parts of the province. The bird at Seaforth, *HRM*, was seen off and on and was most likely hidden in the channels of the tidal flats when not visible. Noteworthy are the numerous reports of CATTLE EGRETS this fall, both in number of locations and numbers of birds. Most past sightings have been of individuals, so the flock of 10 observed at Eastern Passage, *HRM*, was unprecedented.

Interesting were several appearances of an immature YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON for over a month around Wolfville this fall. Was it the same bird making several brief appearances, or different individuals? If it was the same

individual, where was it between sightings? The first question will have to remain unanswered, but the tidal channels of the Land of Evangeline could have offered plenty of territory for an individual to go unnoticed for long periods at a time. In comparison with other years, LITTLE BLUE HERON, SNOWY EGRET, and GREEN HERON seem to have been a bit scarcer this fall.

American Bittern

Oct. 1	Horton Landing, <i>Kings</i>	1	RIW
Oct.	Rose Bay, <i>Lun</i>	1	KEL
Nov. 18	CSI	1	JON, SAN

Great Blue Heron

Common through season, with local accumulations in migration			
Sept. 8	Salt Marsh Trail, <i>HRM</i>	50	PMU
Oct. 4	Morien Bar, <i>CBRM</i>	22	Tony Timmons
Oct. 6	Brier I., <i>Digby</i>	10 (mostly imm.)	ELM
Oct. 13-15	Waterside PP, <i>Pict</i>	13-22	KJM
Nov. 5	Miners Marsh, <i>Kings</i>	5	JCT
Nov. 22	CSI	9	JON, SAN

GREAT EGRET

Aug. 19, Sept 7	APBS, <i>Cumb</i>	1	Ally Manthorne
Oct. 15	W. Pubnico, <i>Yar</i>	1	AAD
Oct. 20	Pleasantville, <i>Lun</i>	1	Sharon Gunn
Oct. 28	Overton, <i>Yar</i>	1	Debbie Roberts
All season	Seaforth, <i>HRM</i>	1	var. obs.
Nov. 8	Yarmouth	1	Ervin Olsen
Nov. 11 - 16	Chapel Gully, <i>Canso</i>	1	var. obs.
Nov. 12	CSI	1	JON, SAN
Nov. 18-23	CSI	1	diff? (ph.) JON, et al.

SNOWY EGRET

May – Oct	Canso, <i>Guys</i>	1	TOK
Oct. 3	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1	DOU
Oct. 6	Rainbow Haven PP	1	DHH

LITTLE BLUE HERON

Aug. 9	Hortonville, <i>Kings</i>	1	RIW
Oct. 2	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1	imm. ph. CHK
Nov. 12	Rossway, <i>Digby</i>	1	imm. Kathy Bernard

CATTLE EGRET

Oct. 24 – Nov. 6	Apple R., <i>Cumb</i>	KJM	1 ph.	KFS
Nov. 1	E. Passage, <i>HRM</i>		10	DAC, DMC
Early Nov	<i>HRM</i>		4 unconfirmed	AGH
Nov. 4	Aylesford, <i>Kings</i>		1	Mark Langford
Nov. 6	Canso		3	TOK
Nov. 11-15	Merigomish, <i>Pict</i>		1	DOU

Black-crowned Night-Heron

Sept. 2	BPI	1	CLD, et al.
Sept. 16	CSI	4 ads.	JON, SAN

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON

Aug. 23	Wolfville hbr	1	imm. ph. RBS
Sept. 14	Wolfville	1	imm. ph. Erin.Hennessy, et al.
ca. Oct 3-5	Wolfville	1	imm. "probable" var. obs., fide JWW
Nov 24	Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	1	ad. ph. Juliet Whalen



This young **YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON** found perched in an urban tree Sept 14 in Wolfville, was possibly the same one photographed late August in Wolfville harbour and seen again in the town in early October. [Photo Erin Hennessy]

Diurnal Raptors

By Rick Whitman

Numerous reports were received on most of our diurnal raptors, in particular through eBird. The latter reports are tabulated for each species in the first line. For the more common eBird species I have included the most widely separated counties, to indicate roughly the geographical span of all reports. For **NORTHERN GOSHAWK** and **BROAD-WINGED HAWK**, I have listed all counties with eBird reports, aside from specific reports given below. There were three reports of **COOPER'S HAWK** and one of **GOLDEN EAGLE** for the period. It is good to have comments by ELM on one of the former, Oct. 24 on Brier I., which was an immature "chased by a Sharp-shinned, giving good comparison of structure, size". Also, BLF commented on the apparent adult Golden Eagle seen Oct. 17 at E. Ferry, *Digby*, that there was no white on the underside of the wings, and he noted the smaller head and, when the light was right he could see the golden colour on the back of the neck and the upper part of the wings.

On the eastern Grand Pré dykelands some surprising numbers of **BALD EAGLES** can be observed, even in the fall months, depending on conditions. On Sept. 11 and Nov. 23 RIW counted 55 and 77 birds, respectively, from a single point on the dyke north of Hortonville. The September count involved a fresh pile of dead chickens.

We have two reports on impressive raptor flights on Brier Island, from Eric Mills, and these are presented below. The numbers of several species are most impressive. The data in these reports are best as a package and have not been repeated in the species tabulations below.

Sep 24, Brier I. – included 8 Turkey Vultures, 5 Bald Eagles, 4 Northern Harriers, 50 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 1 Northern Goshawk, 200 Broad-winged Hawks, 1 Red-tailed Hawk, 12 American Kestrels, 1 Merlin, 1 imm. Peregrine Falcon.

Oct 7, Brier I. – 30 Turkey Vultures, 5 Bald Eagles, 12 Northern Harriers, 50 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 800 Broad-winged Hawks (flocks of 300 and 100 flew straight out to sea to the W across the Gulf of Maine – rare direct evidence of this), 6 Red-tailed Hawks, 4 American Kestrels, 1 Merlin, 6 Peregrine Falcons (incl. 2 *tundrius*; the rest small and dark).



Signs of success were obvious for this fully-fledged **OSPREY** family, awaiting an adult bringing home a meal Aug 8 on a power pylon in Burnside, *HRM*. Who gets first portion? [Photo Frank Gummet]

Turkey Vulture

Aug.-Nov.	<i>Shel., Guys., Cumb</i> , 18 repts	1-5	eBird
Sept.-Nov.	Bridgetown <i>Anna</i>	up to 12	MCR
Sept. 7	E. Jordan, <i>Shel</i>	1	JQA
("in a dead spruce by the side of the road eating road kill")			
Sept. 11, Oct. 10, Dec. 2	Advocate <i>Cum.</i>	3,5,5	KFS
October	Canso	2	TOK
Oct 11	Apple River <i>Cumb.</i>	2	KFS
Oct 24	Brier I.	44	NSBS
Nov 8	Wyman Rd <i>Yar</i>	35	RDE

Osprey

Aug-Oct 13	<i>Shel, Ant, Vic</i> , 70 repts.	1-5 indivs.	eBird
August	Bull I., nr. Lockeport	2 ad, 2 yng "successful"	DJC
Aug 10	Annapolis Royal	1	SLH
Aug 31	Bridgewater, <i>Lun</i>	2	JAH
Sep 11	Bedford, <i>HRM</i>	1	Paul Lindgreen
Oct 18	Samsonville <i>Rich</i>	1	BID

Bald Eagle

Aug-Nov	<i>Yar. to Vic.</i> , 207 repts.	1-77 indivs.	eBird
Aug 3	Margaretville <i>Anna</i>	1	SLH
Aug. 11-12	Isle Haute, <i>Cumb</i>	1	CLD
Sep-Nov	Apple R., Advocate, <i>Cumb</i>	1-2 ("fairly often")	KFS

Northern Harrier

Aug-Nov	<i>Shel to CBRM</i> , 114 repts.	1-15 indivs.	eBird
Aug 11-12	Isle Haute, <i>Cumb</i>	2	CLD
Aug 18	Keji Adjunct	1	JAH
Sep 1-3	BPI	1-2	CLD <i>et al.</i>
Sep 1	Apple R., <i>Cumb</i>	1	KFS
Sep 1	Cape Sable, CSI	1	BLF <i>et al.</i>
Sep 2	Conrad I., <i>Lun</i>	1	JAH, DAW
Sep 3	Bacarro, <i>Shel</i>	2	JAH
Sep 3	CSI	2	JAH
Sep 6	Hortonville <i>Kings</i>	1	RBS
Sep 7	Little Tancook I., <i>Lun</i>	2	CJF, ELM
Oct 13	Kingsburg, <i>Lun</i>	1	JAH, DAW
Oct 17	Conrad Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	1	DMW

Sharp-shinned Hawk

Aug-Nov	<i>Shel. to Inv.</i> , 85 repts.	1-11 indivs.	eBird
Sep 1-2	BPI	1-2	CLD <i>et al.</i>
Sep 3	CSI	1	JAH
Sep 7	Tancook I., <i>Lun</i>	1	CJF, ELM
Sep 26-Nov	Apple R., <i>Cumb</i>	1 in yard	KFS
Oct 5	Wolfville	1	JWW
Oct 24	Brier I.	30	DMW

COOPER'S HAWK

Sep 21	BPI	1	ABO, Janice Chard
Oct 8	Brier I.	1 imm.	ELM
October	Canso	1 (ph.)	TOK

Northern Goshawk

Aug-Oct 28	<i>Lun, HRM, Pict, Inv.</i> , 5 repts	singles	eBird
Sep 3	Keji NP	1	PKE
Sep 8	Kingston <i>Kings</i>	1	PBG
Sep 20	Wilmot <i>Ann.</i>	1 juv	IRO
Oct 27	Beaverbank <i>HRM</i>	1	GMU
Oct 30	Tancook I., <i>Lun</i>	1 (ph.)	Hillary Dionne
Nov 5	Whites L., <i>HRM</i>	1	BLM

Broad-winged Hawk

Aug 6-22	<i>Shel., Cumb, Pict, Ant.</i> , 5 repts	1-2 indivs	eBird
Aug 12	Apple R., <i>Cumb</i> , area	1	KFS
Aug 18	Keji Adjunct	3	JAH
Sep 1	Louisburg	1	BJS
Nov 18	E. Pt. L'Hebert, <i>Queens</i>	1	JAH, <i>et al.</i>

Red-tailed Hawk

Aug-Nov	<i>Digby. to Vic.</i> , 63 repts.	1-3 indivs.	eBird
Aug 18	Keji Adjunct	1	JAH
Aug 23	Tremont, <i>Kings</i>	1	SLH
Oct. 27, Nov. 19, Apple R., <i>Cumb</i>		1, 1	KFS
Nov. 3	central <i>Kings</i>	7	GMY.

Broad-winged Hawk

Aug 6-22	<i>Shel., Cumb, Pict, Ant.</i> ,	5 repts	1-2 indivs. eBird
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Aug 12	Apple R., <i>Cumb</i> , area	1	KFS
Aug 18	Keji NP Adjunct	3	JAH
Sep 1	Louisburg	1	BUS
Nov 18	E. Pt. L'Hebert, <i>Queens</i>	1	JAH, <i>et al.</i>



Hillary Dionne on Tanccok I., *Lun*, has shared her "sad yet very exciting photo" of a young GOSHAWK, and concluded that "I guess when you let your chickens roam free . . . there is always the risk that hawks will attack." and that "I think I'll keep them enclosed for the next little while. Not sure if there are more Hawks around because of migration, but I don't want to lose any more of my hens." In another time, and perhaps still today, the perpetrator would have paid dearly for following its natural ways.

Red-tailed Hawk

Aug-Nov	<i>Dig. to Vic.</i> , 63 repts.	1-3 indivs.	eBird
Aug 18	Keji Adjunct	1	JAH
Aug 23	Tremont <i>Kings</i>	1	SLH
Oct. 27, Nov. 19, Apple R., <i>Cum.</i>		1, 1	KFS
Nov. 3	central <i>Kings</i>	7	GMY

Rough-legged Hawk

Nov 15	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM
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GOLDEN EAGLE

Oct 17	E. Ferry <i>Digby</i>	1	BLF
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American Kestrel

Aug.-Oct. 12	<i>Shel. to Vic.</i> , 24 repts	1-5 indivs.	eBird
Aug 3	Middleton <i>Anna</i>	1	SLH
Aug 10	nr. Bridgetown <i>Anna</i>	2	SLH
Aug 17	Apple R. area, <i>Cumb</i>	1	KFS
Sep 1	Cape Sable, <i>Shel.</i>	3	BLF, RBS, RDE, RIW
Oct 12	BPI	1	ABO, Janice Chard

Merlin

Aug-Nov	<i>Shel to Inv.</i> , 53 repts.	1-2 to 5 indivs	eBird
Sep 1	Cape Sable, <i>Shel</i>	1	BLF, RBS, RDE, RIW
Sep 1-2	BPI	1-3	CLD <i>et al</i>
Sep 17	Apple R., <i>Cumb</i>	1	KFS
Oct 2	CSI	4	RDE
Oct 20	Kingsburg Bch, <i>Lun</i>	1	JAH
Oct 24	Chebucto Hd, <i>HRM</i>	2	HAT

Peregrine Falcon

Aug-Nov	<i>Shel.</i> to <i>CMRM</i> , 45 repts.	1-3 indivs.	eBird
Aug 11-12	Isle Haute, <i>Cumb</i>	1	CLD
Sept 1	BPI	3	CLD <i>et al.</i>
Sept 6	Hortonville <i>Kings</i>	1	RBS
Sept 7	Tancook I., <i>Lun</i>	1 ad	ELM, CJF, Hillary Dionne
Sept 22	Brier I.	1	ELM
Oct 2	CSI	4 "all juv"	RDE

Oct 5	Brier I.	1 imm <i>tundrius</i> , 1 ad. <i>anatum</i> -like	ELM, AHM
Oct 6	Hartlen Pt.	<i>HRM</i>	1 DGA
Oct 7	Brier I.		1 ad ELM
Oct 10	Watt Section Sheet Hbr.,	<i>HRM</i>	1 KJM
Oct 12	Big Is. <i>Pict</i>		1 KJM
Oct 22	Brier I.		2 NSBS
Oct 23	Chebucto Hd.,	<i>HRM</i>	1 HAT

Rallids, Cranes

By Ulli Hoeger

A male **PURPLE GALLINULE** that spent three days in a backyard pond on Long Island takes the rare bird trophy (if there would be such a thing) in this category. This quite strikingly coloured species is common in southern parts of North America, here in Nova Scotia sightings occur only every few years. This fall Bissett Lake set again record numbers for **AMERICAN COOTS**, peaking with counts of 20 individuals late in the season this species stayed on the lake well into the winter season.

Three reports of **SANDHILL CRANE** were about as usual; the two at Mabou might have been the same ones (a pair?) that stayed there last May.

Common Gallinule

November	Russell Lake, <i>HRM</i>	1	var. obs.
Nov 15	Canso,	1	TOK

American Coot

Sept 15	W. Lawrencetown Marsh, <i>HRM</i>	1	BLM
Sept 23	Brier I	1	CAH, ELM, AHM
Oct 9	PPP, Halifax	1	Linda Warschauer
Oct 11 to mid-Nov	Kingsburg, <i>Lun.</i>	2-4	KEL <i>et al.</i>
Oct 26	Brier I., <i>Digby</i>	1	KJM
Oct 29	Saxon St. Pond, <i>Kings</i>	1	AND
November	Russell Lake, <i>HRM</i>	4	GAM

November	Public Gardens, <i>HRM</i>	1	var. obs.
Nov 11, 17	Mason's Bch., <i>Lun</i>	2	JAH, DAW
Nov 19	Red Bridge Pond, <i>HRM</i>	3	RSM
Mid Nov	Bissett L., <i>HRM</i>	>20	var. obs

PURPLE GALLINULE

Aug 9-11	Smiths Cove, <i>Digby</i>	1 m	Gail Smith
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SANDHILL CRANE

Aug 16	Berwick, <i>Kings</i>	1	Larry Bogan
Sept 12	Mabou, <i>Inv</i>	2 ph	.Shauna Barrington
Oct 5	Brier I., <i>Digby</i>	1	ELM, AHM

Due to an unavoidable delay, the account of the fall-season SHOREBIRDS was not available on time for the present issue of *Nova Scotia Birds*. The section will be included in the next (Winter-Season) printed issue.

Gulls through Alcids

By Eric Mills

A few early-season **BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKES** were found in s.w. Nova Scotia, but the presence of hundreds off Brier Island on Oct 22 indicated the transition to a fall and winter scene in the Bay of Fundy. Two hundred off Chebucto Head, *HRM*, on Oct 29 were certainly unusual and probably linked to the easterly gale on the far north edge of Hurricane Sandy as it headed inland in New Jersey that day.

Reports of **BONAPARTE'S GULLS** were unusually frequent this season, enabling documentation of the arrival of failed breeders in mid-August, the first immatures at the end of the month, and the remarkable build-up that occurs in *Pictou* in October and November.

Early-season abundances of **RING-BILLED GULLS** clustered from *Pictou* northward along the shore of Northumberland Strait. By early September this increasingly common small gull was being reported almost everywhere in the province in significant numbers, the most impressive of which were at Eastern Passage, *HRM*, on Nov 15 and 16 following a storm. My observations of big groups in *Colchester* during the fall indicate that the flocks were made up mostly of adults. Where were the immatures?

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULLS are no longer rare, but they remain a bit of a mystery because we don't know for sure where they come from. Many European Lesser Black-backs are banded, but I don't ever remember seeing a banded individual in Nova Scotia, nor have other observers mentioned bands. Likely the birds we see come from the new and expanding colonies in Greenland. It would help to enlarge our knowledge if observers would always report the age of the birds they see and look for bands.

ICELAND GULLS were exceptionally abundant during the fall and winter of 2012-2012, but they were relatively scarce until November in 2012 and seemed at more normal levels than a year ago, when they were exceptionally abundant all around the temperate North Atlantic.

Banded gulls tell interesting stories. In *CBRM* at Beacon Street dam, Glace Bay, the Murrants found a banded HERRING GULL from Sable Island in 2011. This year it returned to the same location between Sept 10 and Dec 5. A GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL with a green wing-tag and a leg-tag marked "ACY", found by Ken McKenna and Charlie Kendell on Nov 13 in Canso, was also from the Sable Island gull project; it had been banded there in January 2012.

An interesting BLACK TERN report and photograph from the last reporting period, summer, came to light recently – an adult in a wetland near Debert, *Col*, on July 11. This was probably a post-breeding or non-breeding wanderer, but this area should be searched in early summer next year for evidence of breeding. Our only fall report of the species came from Morien Bar, *CBRM*, where the Murrants found a migrant on Sept 3.

CASPIAN TERN records clustered from about mid-September until mid-October; likely these were birds moving away from colonies in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

SOUTH POLAR SKUA reports were below average – only five individuals, all between Sept 8 and 15.

Eight early DOVEKIES were reported, all but one on Oct 29-30, apparently associated with the easterly gale on the extreme northern fringe of Hurricane Sandy. Other alcids were in expectable low numbers, with the exception of ATLANTIC PUFFINS, which, as usual, were moderately abundant off Brier I. following the breeding season a bit farther west, notably on Machias Seal I., NB.



Two interesting gulls hanging around this fall at the Beacon Street Dam, Glace Bay, were the HERRING GULL at left that was banded in summer 2011 on Sable I., and which returned for a second fall, and a 3d-cycle hybrid HERRING X GREAT-BLACK-BACKED GULL. [Photos Allan Murrant]

In the following, some exceptional numbers are in bold text.

Black-legged Kittiwake

(including selected reports from eBird)

Aug 15	The Hawk, CSI	3	Graham Williams
Aug 25	SE Bank, <i>Shel</i>	4	NSBS
Sept 4	Westport hbr., Brier I	1 ad.	ELM
Sept 8	Scotian Shelf off Halifax	3	NSBS
Sept 15	Off Brier I	1	KJM, RBS
Sept 20-23	Westport hbr., Brier I.	2, 2 nd -yr.	ELM
Sept 22	Off Brier I.	2	JAH
Oct 6	Grand Passage, Brier I.	3	ELM
Oct 7	Off Northern Pt., Brier I.	10	ELM, RDE, SMA
Oct 22	Off Northern Pt., Brier I.	300+	ELM
Oct 23	Off Northern Pt., Brier I.	ca. 50	ELM
Oct 24	N & W of Brier I.	75	ELM
Oct 29	Chebucto Hd., <i>HRM</i>	200	DAC, DMC
Nov 13	Margaretsville, <i>Anna</i>	1 ad.	WAN
Nov 23	Black Rock, <i>Kings</i>	“constant stream”	RBS
Nov 28,29	15 km W Seal I., <i>Yar</i>	“several”, “many”	RDE

Black-headed Gull

(including selected reports from eBird)

Aug 6-11	Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1	Graham Williams
Aug 7	Windsor sewage lagoons	1 ad.	WPN
Aug 8	Brier I.	1	Graham Williams
Oct 6	Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	2	DEH
Oct 26	Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	4	TEB
Oct 29	Glace Bay hbr., <i>CBRM</i>	1	CAM, ALM
Nov 1	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	2	DAC, DMC
Nov 2	Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	2	DAC, AZV
Nov 5-6	Antigonish area	2-6	KJM, CHK
Nov 10	St. of Canso, <i>Guys/Inv</i>	1	NSBS
Nov 10	Rose Rose Bay, <i>Lun</i>	13	SJF, JSC
Nov 16	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	2	DAC
Nov 22	Daniels Hd., CSI	1	JON
Nov 23	W. Pubnico, <i>Yar</i>	3	RDE
Nov 28	Conrads Bch., <i>HRM</i>	20	DMW
Nov 30	New Hbr., <i>Guys</i>	3	KJM et al.

Bonaparte's Gull

(including selected reports from eBird)

Aug 7-Sept 11	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	50-240	KJM, et al.
Aug 9	Digby-St. John ferry	2	JOK
Aug. 11	Conrad's Bch., <i>HRM</i>	15	BLM, Graham Williams
Aug 12-30	Middle R., <i>Pict</i>	22-81	KJM
Sept 5	Gull I., <i>Pict</i>	300	KJM
Sept 22-25	Waterside PP, <i>Pict</i>	100-320	KJM
Sept 29-Oct. 20	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	66-271	KJM, CHK
Oct 12	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	66	KJM, CHK
Oct 13-15	Waterside PP, <i>Pict</i>	250-220	KJM
Oct 18	Kingsburg, <i>Lun</i>	1	KEL
Oct 29	Glace Bay hbr., <i>CBRM</i>	1	CAM, ALM
Nov 2	Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	25	DAC, AZV
Nov 3	Waterside PP, <i>Pict</i>	120	KJM, Steve Vines
Nov 4	Abercrombie, <i>Ant</i>	20	KJM
Nov 5	Antigonish area	56	KJM, CHK
Nov 5	Jimtown, <i>Ant</i>	170	KJM, CHK
Nov 10	Strait of Canso	50+	NSBS
Nov. 10-11	Rose Bay, <i>Lun</i>	3-7	SJF, JSC, JAH
Nov 10-11	Waterside PP, <i>Pict</i>	56	KJM
Nov 12	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	20	KJM, CHK
Nov 19	Doctors Brk., <i>Ant</i>	16	JOK
Nov 28	Sinclair's I., <i>Pict</i>	1200	KJM et al.
Nov 28-29	New Glasgow	40-45	KJM et al.

Ring-billed Gull

(including selected reports from eBird)

Aug 2-11	<i>HRM, Hants, Kings, Digby</i>	1-62	v. obs.
Aug 4	Doctors Brk., <i>Ant</i>	4	JOK
Aug 4	Amherst Shore PP	62	Debbie Cusick

Aug 4	Pugwash, <i>Cumb</i>	30	Debbie Cusick
Aug 4	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	53	KJM
Aug 11	Long I., <i>Kings</i>	20	Sydney Penner
Aug 12	Middle R., <i>Pict</i>	85	KJM
Aug 13	Tidnish, <i>Cumb</i>	12	Debbie Cusick
Aug 14	Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	11	Tammy MacDonald
Aug 15	Martinique Bch., <i>HRM</i>	40	RIW
Aug 15	The Hawk, CSI	2	Graham Williams
Aug 25	Pubnico hbr., <i>Yar</i>	10	NSBS
Aug 26	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	130	ROH
Sept 8	Scotian Shelf off Halifax	5	NSBS
Sept 11	Wolfville area	12	WPN
Sept 14-30	Crescent Bch., <i>Lun</i>	26-42	JAH
Sept 16-23	Brier I.	1-2	KJM, ELM
Sept 16-23	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	35	DAC, MIK



This young BONAPARTE'S GULL, Oct. 20 at Cole Hbr., *HRM*, is readily distinguished from young Black-headed by its blacker and more slender bill, paler inner primaries, and gray of mantle extending up the nape.

Sept 26	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	56	KJM, CHK
Sept 27-30	Crescent Bch., <i>Lun</i>	30-42	JAH
Oct 3	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	10	DAC, AZV
Oct 4	Schooner Pd., <i>CBRM</i>	10	Tony Timmons
Oct 4-20	Birch Cove, Dartmouth	24-40	MZE
Oct 5-6	Pond Cove, Brier I.	1 ad., 6 imm	ELM
Oct 12	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	53	KJM, CHK
Oct 14	Kingsburg bch., <i>Lun</i>	1, 1 st -w.	ELM
Oct 15	Bayview, <i>Pict</i>	40	KJM
Oct 22-24	Brier I.	3-6	ELM
Oct 26	Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	16	TEB
Nov 1	Haliburton Gut, <i>Pict</i>	110	KJM
Nov 5	Antigonish	30	KJM, CHK
Nov 5	Knoydart, <i>Pict</i>	120	KJM
Nov 15, 16	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	750, 300	DAC
Nov 16	Cooks Cove, <i>Guys</i>	1	KJM
Nov 22	W. Apple R., <i>Cumb</i>	5	KFS
Nov 23	W. Pubnico, <i>Yar</i>	1	RDE
Nov 28	Bridgewater	1	JAH
Nov 28-29	New Glasgow, <i>Pict</i>	90-160	KJM et al.

Nov 30	Milford Haven, <i>Guys</i>	1	KJM	Sept 15	Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	2	BLM
Herring Gull				Sept 15	Off Brier I.	2	KJM, RBS
Sept 10-Dec 5	Glace Bay, banded Sable I.	1	CAM, ALM	Sept 16	Second Pen., <i>Lun</i>	6 (2 juv.)	JAH
Herring x Lesser Black-backed Gull				Sept 22	Gull I., <i>Pict</i>	12	KJM
Nov 3	Beacon St. dam, Glace Bay	1	CAM, ALM	Sept 26, 29	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	20, 3	KJM, CHK
Lesser Black-backed Gull				Oct 12, 20	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM, CHK
(including selected reports from eBird)				Nov 24	Florence Big Pond, <i>CBRM</i>	1	DBM
Aug 8	Brier I.	1	Graham Williams	Arctic Tern			
Aug 10-11	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	1	Graham Williams	(including selected reports from eBird)			
Aug 14	Crystal Crescent, <i>HRM</i>	1	Graham Williams	Aug 5,6	Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1, 2	Graham Williams
Aug 20	Gulf of Maine, <i>Yar</i>	3	Tom Johnson	Aug 6	Chezzetcook Inlet, <i>HRM</i>	2	Graham Williams
Aug 25	SE Bank, <i>Shel</i>	1 ad.	NSBS	Aug 9	Crow's Neck bch., <i>Shel</i>	1	RAH
Sept 5	Caribou light, <i>Pict</i>	1 ad.	KJM	Aug 11	Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1	BLM
Sept 5	Nr Pt. Williams, <i>Kings</i>	1 ad.	RBS	Aug 10	Sand Hills PP, <i>Shel</i>	5	RAH
Sept 7	Lr Canard, <i>Kings</i>	1 ad.	RBS	Aug 18	Scotian Shelf off Halifax	2	NSBS
Sept 8	Brier I.	3	KEL <i>et al.</i>	Caspian Tern			
Sept 10	Beacon St. dam, Glace Bay	1	CAM, ALM	Sept 11	Horton Landing, <i>Kings</i>	2 ph.	RIW
Sept 11	Schooner Pd. bch., <i>CBRM</i>	1	CAM, ALM	Sept 16	Brier I.	1	KJM
Sept 14	Brier I.	1	KJM	Sept 16	BPI	1	Janice Chard
Sept 15	Eagle Head Bch., <i>Queens</i>	1 ad. <i>graellsii</i>	ELM	Oct 1	Big I., <i>Pict.</i>	1 ad., 1 imm.	KJM, CHK
Sept 21	Lilydale, <i>Lun</i>	1	KEL	Oct 3	BPI	1	ABO, Ryan Dudragne
Oct 5	Pond Cove, Brier I.	1 ad. <i>graellsii</i>	ELM	Oct 5	Pond Cove, Brier I.	1 ad., 1 imm.	ELM
Oct 7-14	Beacon St. dam, Glace Bay	1, 1 st -w.	CAM, ALM	Skua sp.			
Oct 10	Lr. Canard, <i>Kings</i>	1 ad. <i>graellsii</i> , ph.	RIW	Aug 6-10	Scotian Shelf off Halifax	1+	<i>fide</i> DAC
Oct 12	Schooner Cove, <i>CBRM</i>	1	Tony Timmons	Aug 25	SE Bank, <i>Shel</i>	1	NSBS
Oct 21	Lwr Canard, <i>Kings</i>	2 ad., 1 2 nd -yr	ELM	SOUTH POLAR SKUA			
Oct 30+	Beacon St. dam, Glace Bay	2	CAM, ALM	Sept 8-11	Off Brier I.	4	Penny Graham
Nov 1	Nr. Port Williams, <i>Kings</i>	1 ad.	RBS	Sept 15	Off Brier I.	1 ph.	KJM, RBS
Nov 4	Gaspereau, <i>Kings</i>	1	RIW	SKUA Sp. (prob. S. Polar)			
Nov 10	Lr. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	1 ad.	DGA	Aug 18	Gulf of Maine, <i>Yar</i>	1	Tom Johnson
Nov 10	Canard, <i>Kings</i>	1	David Waterfield	Jaeger sp.			
Nov 13	Grand Pre, <i>Kings</i>	2 ad.	WAN	Nov 10	Strait of Canso	1	NSBS
Nov 23	West Pubnico, <i>Yar</i>	1	RDE	Pomarine Jaeger			
Iceland Gull				Aug 9	Scotian Shelf off Halifax	"several"	<i>fide</i> DAC
Aug 11-12	Isle Haute, <i>Cumb</i>	1	CLD	Aug 18	Scotian Shelf off Halifax	2	NSBS
Oct 3	N. Sydney, <i>CBRM</i>	1	DBM	Aug 18	Gulf of Maine, <i>Yar</i>	1	Tom Johnson
Oct 9	BPI	1	Ryan Dudragne	Aug 20	Gulf of Maine, <i>Yar</i>	1	Tom Johnson
Oct 29	Glace Bay hbr	1, 1 st -w.	CAM, ALM	Aug 25	SE Bank, <i>Shel</i>	9 (one dark)	NSBS
Oct 31	Beacon St. dam, Glace Bay	1, 3 rd -w.	CAM, ALM	Sept 8	Scotian Shelf off Halifax	1	NSBS
Nov 10	Canso Causeway	3	NSBS	Sept 15	Off Brier I.	1	RBS, KJM, ACO
Nov 10	Antigonish, <i>Ant</i>	3	KJM, CHK	Oct 30	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	3 ad. light	KJM, CHK
Nov 13	Canso, <i>Guys</i>	8	KJM, CHK	Nov 28,29	15 km W Seal I., <i>Yar</i>	1,1	RDE
Nov 13	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	10	DAC, DMC	Parasitic Jaeger			
Nov 14	Lockeport, <i>Shel</i>	1 imm.	DJC	Sept 11	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM
Nov 15,16	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	50,150	DAC	Dovekie			
Nov 17	Broad Cove, <i>Lun</i>	2	SJF	Oct 29	Chebucto Head, <i>HRM</i>	4	DAC, DMC
Nov 17	New Glasgow, <i>Pict</i>	10	KJM	Oct 30	Chebucto Head area, <i>HRM</i>	3	DAC, DMC
Nov 22	Purdys Wharf, Halifax	1 ad.	DGA	Nov 23	Black Rock, <i>Kings</i>	1	RBS
Nov 23	West Pubnico, <i>Yar</i>	"several"	RDE	Murre sp.			
Nov 28	Sinclair's I., <i>Pict</i>	2	KJM	Nov 28,29	15 km W Seal I., <i>Yar</i>	100+, 50+	RDE
Nov 28/29	New Glasgow, <i>Pict</i>	9, 25	KJM <i>et al.</i>	Common Murre			
Nov 30	Canso, <i>Guys</i>	4	JOK	Aug 9	Digby-St. John ferry	7	JOK
Glaucous Gull				Oct 21	Margaretsville, <i>Anna</i>	6	WAN
Nov 13	Canso, <i>Guys</i>	1	TOK	Razorbill			
Nov 23	West Pubnico, <i>Yar</i>	2	RDE	Nov 13	Margaretsville, <i>Anna</i>	2	WAN
Great Black-backed Gull				Black Guillemot			
Nov 13	Canso	1 banded Sable I. Jan 2012	KJM, CHK	(including selected reports from eBird)			
Black Tern				Aug 1	Bird Is., <i>Vic</i>	30	T.&A. Honan
July 11	Debert, <i>Col</i>	1 ad., ph.	Kate Messer	Aug 5	Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1	Graham Williams
Sept 3	Morien Bar, <i>CBRM</i>	1	CAM, ALM	Aug 7	Hemeon Head, <i>Shel</i>	12	AVM
Common Tern				Aug 8-Sept. 22	Brier I.	1 to few	var. obs.
(including selected reports from eBird)				Aug 25	Pubnico hbr., <i>Yar</i>	25	NSBS
Aug 4-31	Throughout province	1-28	var. obs.	Sept 15, 16	Off Brier I.	15, 8	KJM
Sept 1-2	BPI	5-11	CLD	Sept 8	Digby Neck, <i>Digby</i>	6	KEL
Sept 2	Rose Bay, <i>Lun</i>	1	JAH	Oct 7	Off Northern Pt., Brier I.	10	ELM, RDE, SMA
Sept 4	Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	14	PMU	Oct 14	Herring Cove, <i>HRM</i>	5	DAC
Sept 4	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	28	KJM	Oct 22	Grand Passage, Brier I.	20	ELM
Sept 8	Scotian Shelf off Halifax	1	NSBS	Oct 23/26	Brier I.	5, 20	ELM, KJM
Sept 11	Morien Bar, <i>CBRM</i>	1	CAM, ALM	Nov 13	Canso, <i>Guys</i>	12	KJM, CHK
Sept 11	Glace Bay sanctuary, <i>CBRM</i>	5	CAM, AAM	Nov 28	15 km W Seal I., <i>Yar</i>	2	RDE

Nov.30	Canso, <i>Guys</i>	2	JOK	Sept 2	BPI	11	CLD
Atlantic Puffin				Sept 8	Scotian Shelf off Halifax	2	NSBS
Aug. 1	Bird Is., <i>Vic</i>	300	T.&A. Honan	Sept 15	Western Head, <i>Queens</i>	1	ELM
Aug 4-7	Off Brier I.	1-5	Penny Graham et al.	Sept. 15-22	Off Brier I.	18-20	KJM, RBS, JAH
Aug 11-12	Isle Haute, <i>Cumb</i>	1+	CLD	Oct 13	BPI	1	ABO, Ryan Dudragne
Aug 25	SE Bank, <i>Shel</i>	8	NSBS	Oct 22	Off Northern Pt., Brier I.	1	ELM

Pigeons through Woodpeckers

By Chris Field

There were four reports of YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO in October but none of BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO. The most extraordinary vagrant of the season, the **BURROWING OWL** on McNabs I. in Halifax Hbr., is given full treatment elsewhere (see p. 44). Randy Lauff reported that in his fall owl banding he had 15 NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWLS and one **BOREAL OWL**. He comments "I had a below average year, despite most other stations reporting phenomenal, best-ever years. I attribute this to the very rainy weather we had – on those nights, I did not open the nets. What a shame to have missed the huge flow of birds!"



Randy Lauff has added a great deal to our knowledge of small owls in our province, both through banding and breeding-box programs. Much of his work takes place in night, and it is seems from this image that **BOREAL OWLS** are more wide awake than humans at such times.

COMMON NIGHTHAWK and **CHIMNEY SWIFT** numbers declined quickly in August with last reports of the latter at roosts Aug. 21 in New Glasgow (3 birds) and Aug. 10 in Wolfville (1 bird). The early November swift found by Ronnie D'Entremont and the nighthawk seen by Donna Crosby were very late.. Both might have been fallouts from hurricane Sandy. Following last summer's **RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD**, another was reported by Rita Viau and Anita. Pouliot. It showed up Sept. 22-24 at a feeder in Lower Sackville. (But, see comments below in figure caption.) **RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER** was once again widely reported with many sightings occurring in early November.. We have two reports of successful breeding of Red-bellied Woodpecker this year indicating their continued inroads into the province. The first is from E. Desplanque-Deventer in Amherst who observed an adult feeding young while the second again with adults feeding juveniles is from L. Codling in Lower Sackville. By contrast, only one **RED-HEADED WOODPECKER** was reported.

Rock Pigeon			
Aug-Nov	province-wide	64 repts	eBird
Mourning Dove			
Aug-Nov	province-wide	503 birds	eBird
Great Horned Owl			
Aug-Nov	<i>Anna to Vic</i>	8 birds	
Sep 2-3	Apple R., <i>Cumb</i>	2	KFS
Sep 3	Brier I.	1	ELM, AHM
Nov 28	Broad Cove, <i>Lun</i>	1	SJF
Snowy Owl			
Nov 27	Middle Lahave, <i>Lun</i>	1	C. Nickerson
BURROWING OWL		see text	



GREAT HORNED OWL turns up widely in fall, suggesting that summer territories have become more crowded and competitive. This one, Nov. 17 in s. end Halifax, was a treat for a number of birders. [Photo Alan Springer]

Barred Owl			
Aug-Nov	7 counties	12 birds	eBird
Aug 4	Long Hill, <i>Lun</i>	1	JAH, DAW
Sep 16	Clearland, <i>Lun</i>	1	JAH
Aug 24	Clayton Park, <i>HRM</i>	1	R.Lindthaler
BOREAL OWL			
Nov 1	<i>Antigonish</i>	1 banded	RFL
Northern Saw-whet Owl			
Sep 28-Nov 2	<i>Antigonish</i>	15 banded	RFL
Oct 4	BPI	1	ABO, J. Chard
Common Nighthawk			
August	<i>Shel to Pict</i>	55 birds	eBird
Aug 4-15	Apple R., <i>Cumb</i>	up to 10	KFS
Aug 7,9	Middle Musquodoboit, <i>HRM</i>	1-3	VJH
Nov 1	Lockeport, <i>Shel</i>	1	DJC
Chimney Swift			
Aug 1-8	<i>Kings,Vict</i>	60 birds	eBird
Aug 1-30	New Glasgow	up to 86	KJM
Aug 30	Wolfville	1	K. & J.Rosma
Nov 4	CSI	1	RDE

Ruby-throated Hummingbird			
Aug-Sep16	province wide	114 bird	eBird
RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD			
Sept 22-24	Lr. Sackville, HRM	1 imm. m.	RIV

eBird



This lovely portrait of, young male **RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD** Sept 22 in Lr. Sackville, HRM, does not entirely eliminate Allen's Hummingbird of California, which has occurred in n.e. U.S.A. Discrimination by photos needs good images of the spread tail. [Photo Rita Viau]

Belted Kingfisher			
Aug-Nov	province wide	84 birds	eBird
RED-HEADED WOODPECKER			
Oct 3	Black Pt., <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM
Red-bellied Woodpecker			
Sep-Nov	Brier I. to <i>HRM</i>	6 birds	eBird
Aug 25	Lr. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	1m, 1f, 1j	LOC
October	<i>Anna to Pict</i>	10 birds	var.obs.
November	<i>Anna to Pict</i>	27 birds	var.obs.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker			
Aug- Oct 7	<i>Cumb, HRM, Kings, Pict</i>	9 birds	eBird
Oct 7	Apple R., <i>Cumb</i>	1	KFS
Downy Woodpecker			
Aug-Nov	province wide	62 birds	eBird
Hairy Woodpecker			
Aug-Nov	province wide	53 birds	eBird
Black-backed Woodpecker			
Sep 6	Indian Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1	BLM
Sep 25	Ketch Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1	M. Dowd
Oct 12	Sheffield L., <i>Kings</i>	1	RIW
Northern Flicker			
Aug-Nov	province wide 1	79 birds	eBird
Oct 7	Brier I.	35+	ELM
Pileated Woodpecker			
Aug-Nov	<i>Shel to Pict</i>	19 birds	eBird

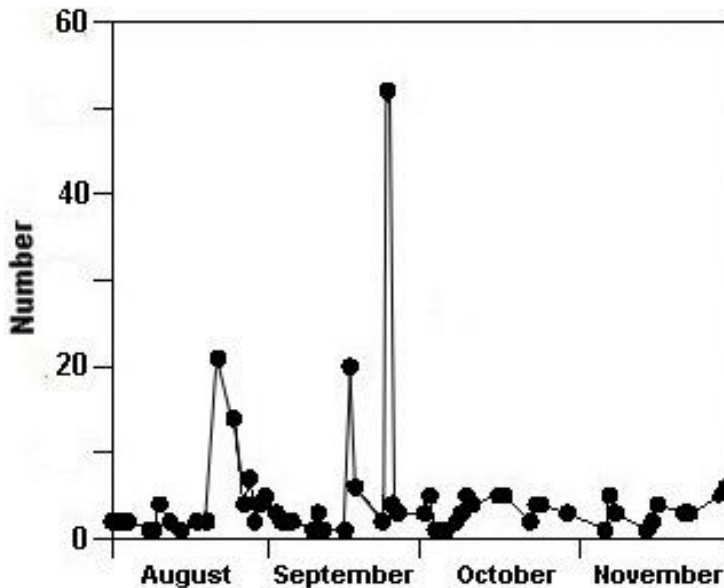
Flycatchers through Thrushes, Fall 2011

By Ian McLaren

The one sighting and night calls monitored by JOK indicated that OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHERS were on the move in early August. *Empidonax* flycatchers seemed scarce, but seasonable. Given our second confirmed **DUSKY FLYCATCHER** Oct. 18 on BPI (see documentation p. 48), it would have been helpful if the ‘empid’ briefly “hawking at moths” (HA T) Nov. 4 at Portuguese Cove, *HRM* had settled down for more study and photos. No further details were reported on the **WILLOW FLYCATCHER** (eBird) “heard clearly” Aug. 4 in Greenwood, *Kings*. **EASTERN PHOEBES** did not linger into November. **WESTERN KINGBIRD** again demonstrated its astonishingly regularity here, and Marilyn O’Brien’s property in Lanark, *Ant*, proved to be a large-flycatcher magnet, although her late **EASTERN KINGBIRD** was hardly a match for her Gray Kingbird and Ash-throated Flycatcher in Nov. 2010.

NORTHERN SHRIKES appeared in good numbers; we’ll see if this presages a ‘shrike winter’. The shrike Oct. 26 at Gaff Pt., *Lun* (ELM) had the temerity to be chasing a Blue Jay. In addition to our regular vireos, only a handful of vagrants appeared; it is unusual for more **WHITE-EYED VIREOS** reported than **WARBLING** or **PHILADELPHIA** vireos; Warbling is known to be decreasing sharply in the East, but the other two are holding their own (BBS).

The regular corvids have been tabulated by month, and the eBird summaries don’t seem to suggest any great changes through the season. Yet we know that **BLUE JAY** is a partial migrant, as suggested by large numbers at times on our islands (e.g. 75 on Oct. 24 on Brier I; ELM). Near daily monitoring as graphed below may show spikes of transient migratory flocks. Several observers commented on their apparent departures from feeders in late November. It was suggested (DAM) that they may simply have stored enough feeder goodies (as they do) to allow them to avoid the bustle.



Left: Counts of Blue Jays at Ted and Anne Hall’s property in Habitant, *Kings*.

A moulting adult **HORNED LARK** early August in coastal *Queens* was evidently of the white-throated regional subspecies *praticola* (only one “probably” and three “possibly” breeding during the recent Atlas), and suggests we might look for them in Atlantic coastal area as well as the former traditional sites in *Cumberland* and the Annapolis Valley. Two other apparent *praticola* were photographed in flocks of the prevailing migrant *alpestris* (See table and photos below of all three of these *praticola*).



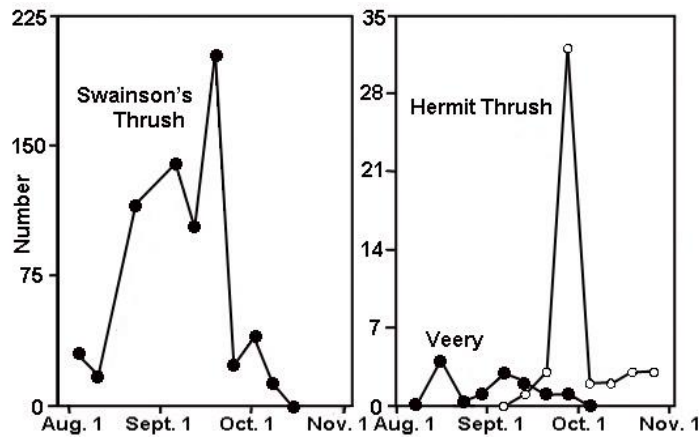
These images illustrate all three of this season's reported HORNED LARKS of the regionally nesting subspecies "Prairie" subspecies *praticola*. At top left is a messily moulting adult found in early August at Black Pt. Bch., *Queens*. Top right is one photographed 16 Nov in the Grand Pré, *Kings*, area. Bottom left is another photo'd Oct 27 at Englishtown, *CBRM*, along with a typical migrant *alpestris* at bottom right. The white, rather than yellow face of *praticola* and, in direct comparisons, its smaller size than *alpestris* are usually evident. The arctic-nesting *hoyti* (not confirmed here) also has a white throat. Although their bills all average about the same length, that of *praticola* is more slender than those of the other two subspecies, which can be seen this photo comparison. [Photos Top two, Rick Whitman; bottom two, Tuma Young]

All the swallows except BARN SWALLOW seemed (perhaps distressingly) scarce. TREE SWALLOW had a possible peak movement in mid-August, and was not unusually late. In addition to those tabulated, three Barn Swallow were observed Aug. 17 more 100 km off s.e. NS during NOAA seabird surveys (Tom Johnson). The probable CLIFF SWALLOW on Oct. 16 was seen only briefly, back-on, before it flew out of sight,, and the reporter (RIW) wisely felt that Cave Swallow (quite possible at this season) couldn't be eliminated.

The monthly eBird totals of BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE (about 8 per location) changed little through the season, but this obscures some major events, like the tabulated sequence Oct. 23-25 on Brier I, clearly indicating a major migratory departure. A white-headed individual in Shubie Park during November (JCZ) entertained visitors feeding it on their hands. Numbers of BOREAL CHICKADEES and BROWN CREEPERS seem to swell later in the season, whereas those of RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH seemed to diminish. Was this a result of in-migration and out-migration respectively? (And, note the large count of Red-breasted Nuthatch on BPI in early September.). Blake Maybank noted that "at Whites L., *HRM*, thanks to the after-effects of Hurricane Juan, the habitat has become less interesting for Red-breasted Nuthatches, and for the first time since we moved here in 1987, we had none breeding in our yard. But [in early August] we have been entertained by a family group of five, with the three youngsters doing an entertaining song and dance number to entice the adults to feed them bits of suet or peanuts. I am guessing this represents a late (or second) nesting. Does anyone know if nuthatches have more than one nesting a season?" Birds of North America on-line states that "Documentation of second broods is rare" and, in two accounts, "both [were] initiated in early July." Looks like a nice challenge for keen observers. WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH numbers per location seemed steady Two reported seen Aug. 8 at Middle Hd., CBH NP (eBird, Emily Williams), were unusual, and might have benefited from supporting details. A Brown Creeper at suet, Nov. 18 at Beaverbank, *HRM* (Gary Murray), was rated unusual. As the table indicates, WINTER WREN is often elusive after the breeding season, but a late songster in Keji NP gave itself away. The two **HOUSE WRENS** were at well-known "vagrant traps", and the **MARSH WREN** lingered for many to see amongst the cattails of Miners Marsh; photos (see p. 29) suggested that the latter was of the regionally nesting subspecies.

We had the usual flurry of **BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHERS**, which are always fun to watch. **GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET** numbers seemed to increase markedly in October-November; was the count of 28 Sept. on Big I., Pic. (KJM) an incoming migratory wave from the boreal forest beyond ? Is the mere handful of reports of **RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET** alarming? It has decreased to less than half its 1960s levels in the BBS in both Nova Scotia and the wider "Atlantic Forest Region". Two **NORTHERN WHEATEARS** were nice finds.

The **EASTERN BLUEBIRDS** in *Richmond* were unusual, they were clearly migrating through Brier I. in late October, and the latest reported might have been settling in, as they winter in the Yarmouth region. A single **BICKNELL'S THRUSH**, "seen well at close range" Sept. 7 near Mt. Uniacke, *Hants*, and well described (Josh Vandermeulen) was presumably passing through. Among our regular thrushes, a single report of **VEERY** is worrisome, and the others were seldom reported. John Kearney's recordings of overhead night-migrants at Doctors Brk., *Ant.*, are somewhat reassuring, although only **SWAINSON'S THRUSH** was abundantly represented (graph below). The **WOOD THRUSH** reported at Greenwood, *Kings*, was "heard well" but not otherwise described. They were not known to have nested in that region during the recent Atlas years. The overhead night call of one at Doctors Brook, *Ant.*, was a surprise.



Thrush migration over Doctor's Cove, *Ant.*, as evident in recordings of night calls by individuals flying overhead. Data courtesy of John Kearney.

The "first wave" (HAT) of **AMERICAN ROBINS** at Portuguese Cove, *HRM*, was on Sept. 23. It is clear from the eBird totals that October is the month of major migratory surges, most of them probably from farther north and west.

Olive-sided Flycatcher			
Aug. 1	E. Apple R., <i>Cumb</i>	1	KFS
Aug. 3-10	Doctors Brk., <i>Ant</i>	3 night calls	JOK
Eastern Wood Pewee			
Aug. 5-18	Brier I., <i>Kings, Lun</i> , 6 locs.	9 birds.	eBird
Sept. 2	Fauxburg/Northwest, <i>Lun</i>	5	JAH
Sept. 28	Miners Marsh, <i>Kings</i>	2 (?)	JWW
Oct. 10	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1 ph.	KJM
Alder Flycatcher			
Aug. 2-15	Brier I. to <i>Ant.</i> , 12 locs.	28 birds	eBird
Sept. 2	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1	AZV, MIK
WILLOW FLYCATCHER			
Aug. 4	Greenwood, <i>Kings</i>	1	Alain Carriere
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher			
Aug. 4	Big Lake, <i>HRM</i>	1	Rena Walters
Aug. 7	Taylors Hd. PP, <i>HRM</i>	1	Sydney Penner
Aug. 21	Windsor Sewage Lagoons	1	WP
Oct. 10	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1 ph.	KJM
Least Flycatcher			
Aug. 1-19	<i>Shel.</i> to <i>Pict</i> , 7 locs.	7 birds	eBird
Sept. 1-22	Brier I. to <i>Pict</i> , 11 locs.	9 birds.	eBird
Oct. 3	Habitant, <i>Kings</i>	2	Anne & Tim Hall
Empidonax species			
Nov. 5	Portuguese Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT
DUSKY FLYCATCHER			
Oct. 18	BPI 1 banded (see text)	1	ABO



One **WESTERN KINGBIRD** paused for its portrait, 21 Sept at Lr. W. Pubnico, *Yar.* [Photo Margie Rogers]

Eastern Phoebe

Sept. 12	Lockeport	1	DJC
Oct. 1	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM
Oct. 2	Tremont, <i>Kings</i>	1	WPN
Oct. 6	Blanche Pen., <i>Shel</i>	1	JAH
Oct. 22	Brier I.	1	ELM et al.

WESTERN KINGBIRD

Aug. 21	Beach Meadows, <i>Queens</i>	2	Geo. Lowe, <i>fide</i> JAH
Sept. 12	Scchooner Pond, <i>CBRM</i>	1 ph.	ALM, CAM
Sept. 21	W. Pubnico, <i>Yar</i>	1 ph.	Marie Rogers
Oct. 21	Bedford, <i>HRM</i>	1 ph.	LOC
Nov. 13	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1 ph.	DAC, et al.

Eastern Kingbird

August	<i>Kings, Queens, CBHNP.</i>	15 birds	6 obs.
Sept 1-15	Brier I. to <i>CBRM</i>	9 birds	4 obs.
Sep. 24	Brier I.	1	ELM
Oct 27	Melbourne, <i>Yar</i>	1 ph.	RDE
Nov. 22	Lanarck, <i>Ant</i>	1 ph.	Marilyn O'Brien

Northern Shrike

Oct. 23	Brier I.	1ELM et al.
Oct. 25	Gaff Pt., <i>Lun</i>	1 imm. ELM
Nov. 4-23	<i>Yar-CSI to Cumb-HRM</i>	8 birds 6 obs.

WHITE-EYED VIREO

Sept. 6	Brier I.	1	LAL
Oct. 3	BPI	1	ABO, Ryan Dugrange
Oct. 4	Argyle Hd., <i>Yar</i>	1 ph	RDE
Oct. 24	Brier I.	1 ph	ELM et al.

Blue-headed Vireo

August	Brier I to <i>Pict</i> , 11 locs.	2 birds	eBird + 3 obs.
Sept. 4-15	<i>Queens to Pict</i> , 14 locs.	15 birds	eBird + 2 obs.
Sept. 16-29	Brier I. to <i>Pict</i> , 13 locs.	13 + birds	eBird + 1 obs.
Oct. 6-10	<i>Shel. to Sober I., HRM</i>	7 birds	eBird+ 1 obs.
Oct. 24	Brier I.	numbers	ELM
Nov. 11	CSI	1	AAD



Not merely a 'record shot', this portrait of a **WHITE-EYED VIREO**, Oct 4 at Argyle Head, Yar., celebrates its bright, warbler-like plumage. [Photo Ronnie D'Entremont]

Blue-headed Vireo

August	Brier I to <i>Pict</i> , 11 locs.	2 birds	eBird + 3 obs.
Sept. 4-15	<i>Queens to Pict</i> , 14 locs.	15 birds	eBird + 2 obs.
Sept. 16-29	Brier I. to <i>Pict</i> , 13 locs.	13 + birds	eBird + 1 obs.
Oct. 6-10	<i>Shel. to Sober I., HRM</i>	7 birds	eBird + 1 obs.

Oct. 24	Brier I.	numbers	ELM
Nov. 11	CSI	1	AAD

WARBLING VIREO

Sept. 6	Pentz L., <i>Hants</i>	1 "well seen"	J. Vandermuelen
Oct. 24	Chebucto Hd., <i>HRM</i>	1 "probable"	singing HAT

PHILADELPHIA VIREO

Aug. 29	BPI	1	ABO
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Red-eyed Vireo

August	BPI to <i>Pict</i> , 24 locs.	50++ birds	eBird + 3 obs.
Sept. 1-24	Brier I. to <i>Pict</i> , 16 locs.	44+ birds	eBird + 4 obs.
Oct. 3-10	<i>Shel. to HRM</i> , 5 locs.	6 birds	eBird + 2 obs.

Gray Jay

Through season	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1-3	var. obs.
Through season	Sandy Cove Rd., <i>HRM</i>	2	var. obs.
Through season	<i>Digby to Pict</i> , 14 locs.	29 birds	eBird + 3 obs.

Blue Jay

August	Brier I. to <i>Ant</i> , 55 locs.	231 birds	eBird
September	Brier I. to <i>Vic</i> , 66 locs.	326 birds	eBird
October	Brier I. to <i>Pict</i> , 65 locs.	304 birds	eBird
November	<i>Anna to Ant</i> , 67 locs.	222 birds	eBird

American Crow

August	Brier I. to <i>Ant</i> , 78 locs.	548 birds	eBird
September	Brier I. to <i>Vic.</i> , 66 locs.	571 birds	eBird
October	Brier I. to <i>Pic.</i> , 60 locs.	304 birds	eBird
November	<i>Ann. to Ant.</i> , 81 locs.	587 birds	eBird

Northern Raven

August	Brier I. to <i>Inv.</i> , 28 locs.	63 birds	eBird
September	Brier I. to <i>Vic.</i> , 23 locs.	43 birds	eBird
October	Brier I. to <i>CBRM</i> , 26 locs.	59 birds	eBird
November	<i>Ann. to Ant</i> , 33 locs.	66 birds	eBird

Horned Lark

7, 10 Aug.	Hemeons Head, <i>Shel</i>	1 ph.	Avery Nagy, RIW
Sept. 29	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	12	KJM
Oct. -Nov.	Brier I. to <i>CBRM</i> , 13 locs.	450 + birdse	Bird+6obs.

Tree Swallow

Aug. 3-30	Habitant, <i>Kings</i>	1-8	Anne & Tim Hall
Aug. 17	Habitant, <i>Kings</i>	peak of 24	Anne & Tim Hall
Aug. 4-Sept. 3	<i>Digby to Pict</i> , 5 locs.	17 birds	eBird
Oct. 14	Herring Cove, <i>HRM</i>	5	DAC
Oct. 24	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT
Nov. 5	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	4	DGA
Nov. 11	Salt Marsh Tr., <i>HRM</i>	1	MZE

Bank Swallow

11 Aug.	E. Long I. Rd., <i>Kings</i>	30 (nr. colony?)	Sydney Penner
Aug. 12	Inverness	no?	Nancy Dowd
Aug. 15	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	12	KJM
Aug. 29	<i>Digby</i>	5	Nicole Richardson

Barn Swallow

Aug. 1-Sept. 3	Brier I. to <i>Vic</i> , 33 locs.	278 birds	eBird only
Sept. 16	Brier I.	1	KJM
Oct. 14	Herring Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC

Cliff Swallow

Aug. 4	Middleton, <i>Anna</i>	8 still at colony	WPN
Aug. 7	CSI	8	CST
Aug. 22	Middle R., <i>Pict</i>	2	KJM
Oct. 18	First South, <i>Lun</i>	1 probable	RIW, BLF

Black-capped Chickadee

August	Brier I. to <i>Inv</i> , 66 locs.	332 birds	eBird
September	Brier I. to <i>CBRM</i> , 64 locs.	520 birds	eBird
October	<i>Shel to Inv</i> , 67 locs.	535 birds	eBird
November	<i>Shel to CBRM</i> , 109 locs.	865 birds	eBird
Oct. 23, 24, 25	Brier I.	few, 300, 150	ELM et al.

Boreal Chickadee

August	Brier I. to <i>Inv</i> , 7 locs.	23 birds	eBird + 3 obs.
September	Brier I. to <i>Pict</i> , 8 locs.	33 birds	eBird + 2 obs.
October	Brier I. to <i>CBRM.</i> , 9 locs.	26 birds	eBird
November	<i>Shel to Guys</i> , 13 locs.	47 birds	eBird

Red-breasted Nuthatch

August	Brier I. to <i>Pict</i> , 23 locs.	70 birds	eBird
September	Brier I. to <i>Pict</i> , 18 locs.	75 birds	eBird + 3 obs.

Sept. 1-2	BPI	55	CLD et al.
October	Brier I. to <i>CBRM</i> , 9 locs.	21 birds.eBird + 3 obs.	
November	<i>Shel.</i> to <i>Guys</i> , 13locs.	30 birds.eBird + 2 obs.	
White-breasted Nuthatch			
August	<i>Shel</i> to CBHNP 10 locs.	16 birds	eBird
September	Digby To <i>HRM</i> , 9 locs.	15 birds	eBird + SLH
October	Brier I. to <i>HRM</i> , 14 locs.	22 birds	eBird +2 obs.
November	<i>Shel</i> to <i>Guys</i> , 17 locs.	29birds	eBird +3 obs.
Brown Creeper			
Aug. 5, 11, 26	<i>HRM, Kings, Anna</i>	1, 1, 1	eBird
Sept. 17, 26, 30	<i>HRM, Pict, Kings</i>	1, 2, 1	eBird
October	<i>Lun.</i> to <i>Pict</i> , 10 locs.	13 birds	eBird
November	<i>Yar.</i> to <i>Pict</i> 11 locs.	17 birds	eBird + 2 obs.
HOUSE WREN			
Oct. 2	BPI	1	ABO, Janice Chard
Nov. 16	Canso	1	KJM et al.
Winter Wren			
Aug. 4	Greenwood, <i>Kings</i>	1	Alain Carriere
Aug. 8	Brier I.	1	Graham Williams
Sept. 6	Pentz L., <i>Hants</i>	1	JVA
Sept. 15	Keji NP	1 singing!	Brad Toms
Nov. 4	Halifax	1	ABM



WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH is often upside-down, but rarely with a full-frontal display like this one Oct 2 at Mahone Bay, *Lun* [Photo Maxine Quinton]

MARSH WREN

Oct. 28-Dec	Miners Marsh, Kentville	1 ph	RSM + m. obs
Nov 19	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1 ph.	DGA

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER

Aug. 7	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM
Oct. 3	Duncans Cove, <i>HRMROHJR1</i>		KJM, AZV, JED
Oct. 4	Schooner Pond, <i>CBRM</i>	1	Tony Timmons
Oct. 8	French Basin Tr., <i>Anna</i>	1 probable	GFO

Golden-crowned Kinglet

August	Brier I. to <i>Ant</i> , 13 locs.	46 birds	eBird + 2 obs.
September	Brier I. to <i>Pict</i> , 15locs.	67 birds	eBird
October	Brier I. to <i>HRM</i> , 29 locs.	113 birds	eBird +2 obs.
November	<i>Shel</i> to <i>Guys</i> , 39 locs.	127 birds	eBird +2 obs.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet

Aug. 12	Middle R., <i>Pic.</i>	1	JAH
Aug. 18	Keji NP Adjunct	1	Tony Timmons
September	Brier I. to <i>Pict</i> , 4 locs.	5 birds	eBird
October	<i>HRM</i> to <i>CBRM</i> , 4 locs.	7 birds	eBird
November	<i>HRM</i> to <i>Pict</i> , 5 locs.	6 birds	eBird

NORTHERN WHEATER

Sep. 3, 4	Summerville Bch. PP, <i>Queens</i>	1	John Davies, DPO
Sept. 22-24 +?	Brule, <i>Col</i>	1	John Rubin

Eastern Bluebird

Sept. 20	R. Borgeois, <i>Rich</i>	1 m.	Marie Fougere
Sept. 22	Oban, <i>Rich</i>	3 m.	<i>fide</i> BID
Oct. 9	New Salem, <i>Cumb</i>	3	KFS
Oct. 23, 25	Brier I.	7, 9	ELM
Nov. 5	Glenwood, <i>Yar</i>	1	RDE

Veery

Aug. 4	Taylors Hd. PP	1	NSBS, Sydney Penner
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Bicknell's Thrush

Sept. 7	Mt. Uniacke area, <i>Hants</i>	1	JVA
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Swainson's Thrush

Aug. 4, 14	Doctors Brk, <i>Ant</i>	2, 2	JOK
Sept. 15	Goat L. Conserv. Lands, <i>Lun</i>	4	CJF
Oct. 26	Brier I.	1	KJM et al.

Hermit Thrush

August	<i>Shel</i> to <i>HRM</i> , 9 locs.	12 birds	eBird+3obs.
September	<i>Lun</i> to <i>Pict</i> , 17 locs..	17 birds	eBird
October	Brier I. to <i>CBRM</i> , 9 locs.	25 birds	eBird+3 obs.
Nov. 6	White Pt., <i>Queens</i>	1	MMI
Nov. 11	PPP, Halifax	1	HAT

WOOD THRUSH

Aug. 4.	Greenwood, <i>Kings</i>	1	Alain Carriere
Aug. 17-24	Doctors Brk, <i>Ann</i>	1 night call	JOK

American Robin

August	throughout, 47 locs.	291 birds	eBird
September	throughout, 49 locs.	263 birds	eBird
October	throughout, 58 locs.	1501 birds	eBird
November	throughout, 61 locs.	220 birds	eBird



The origins of wrens that wander here can sometimes be guessed at. The **HOUSE WREN** at left (Oct. 23 at Cape Sable, CSI), appears to be a little too grayish around face and upper back to be of the more rufous eastern subspecies *aedon* from New England. It may be *parkmanii* from further west. The rufous back, warm buff flanks and dark cap of the **MARSH WREN** at the middle (Back Cove, Hartlen Pt., HRM), seem typical of the regional subspecies *dissaepus*, which nests in marshes near the NB border. The one at right, Nov 1 in Miners Marsh, Kentville, is paler and less rufous, on back and flanks, and is distinctly paler-crowned. This might suggest that it, too, has wandered from further west, but subspecies would be tricky. [Photos: left, Ronnie D'Entremont; middle, Dennis Garratt; right, Richard Stern]

Mimids through Warblers

By **Ken McKenna**

All three mimic-thrushes were noted in fair numbers for this fall report. Surprisingly, **GRAY CATBIRD** sightings appeared to increase near season's end. Starting Nov 2, HAT ticked four at Duncan's Cove, HRM, and ten others were seen to the end of November along the Atlantic coast from Cole Harbour to Liverpool. There was a somewhat similar pattern of observations of **NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD**, with a stepping up of sightings in November. The seven **BROWN THRASHERS**, all from *Halifax* and south, were more than in most autumns.

AMERICAN PIPIT usually rests on the ground, so it was unusual for ELM to observe a flock on a power line Oct 21 at Lower Canard, Kings. **BOHEMIAN WAXWING** arrived in the province almost on cue on Oct 27 at a couple of locations, but no very large flocks were reported. **CEDAR WAXWING**, as usual, seemed to mostly disappear just as the Bohemian arrived. **SNOW BUNTINGS** touched down in multiple locations in the province on Oct 26-27. The largest flock for the period was 90 Nov 12 on Big I., Pict.

A total of 29 species of warbler was detected this fall. There were a few general observations on fall-migration patterns, and my report makes much use of the valuable nocturnal flight-call study at Doctors Brook, Ant, by John Kearney (see p. 49). In the first week of September, there were large numbers of **BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER** and **NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH** on Sept. 2 at Brier I. (LAL); a large night-time movement of **COMMON YELLOWTHROAT** over Doctors Brook, Ant; two huge flocks of warbler-sized birds around dusk Sept 5 flying south from Louisbourg (BUS); and a mid-day movement of migrants with increasing numbers of **BLACKPOLL WARBLER** and **COMMON YELLOWTHROAT** on Sept. 6 at Brier I. (LAL). Later in the season, there was a large dawn arrival of warblers (mostly **YELLOW-RUMPED**, **PALM**, and **Blackpoll**) at Brier I (ELM) on Sept. 24, and big numbers of calling warblers (mainly **Yellow-rumped** and **Palm**) at Doctors Brook, Ant, on the night of Sept 28-29, and even more on Oct 4-5.

The **OVENBIRD** appeared to be generally under-reported this fall, considering that JOK recorded over 500 at night, with two separate peaks: Aug. 17-24 (95), and a larger spike Sept 7-14 (167). By the end of September, all Ovenbirds appeared to have moved south, with only a single probable reverse migrant Nov 18 (DAC). Northern Waterthrush reports were few except from migration-monitoring locations. During banding operations on Brier I., LAL noted big migrations of this species Aug 25 and to a slightly lesser extent Sept 2, but in declining mode Sept 6. Just over 150 night audio records were noted at

Doctors Brook, *Ant*, with the majority spread out over the last two weeks of August and the first two of September. There were no reports after Sept 15. BLACK AND WHITE WARBLERS also had peak migration numbers the last two weeks of August and the first two of September. Night recordings of migrants at Doctors Brook, *Ant*, totalled 210, with a peak of 44 during the week of Sept 7-14 (JOK).

TENNESSEE WARBLER could warrant a rare-bird alert, given the numbers reported this fall, although JOK had a few probable night calls. However, there is difficulty distinguishing calls of Tennessee from NASHVILLE WARBLER so he combined a number of recordings of these two species. As usual, ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER seemed to migrate later than most other warblers, with a first sighting in late September and small numbers reported province-wide in the dying days of November. Nashville was another under-reported warbler, with the bulk reported in the last half of August and first half of September. A total of 48 were recorded during night at Doctors Brook, *Ant*, with the season's peak somewhat in line with the eBird submissions. Again, a number of Nashville-like flight calls were not identified because of similarity with those of Tennessee Warbler.

Normally MOURNING WARBLER migration is poorly reported, but JOK at Doctors Brook recorded 146 night calls of this warbler beginning mid-August, but not reaching a peak (81 calls) until the second week of September. COMMON YELLOWTHROAT lived up to its name and was quite common, with a majority reported late August to mid-September. However, nocturnal monitoring at Doctors Brook indicated two peaks within the season's total of 1300 night-calls: 366 between Sept 7-14 and another 238 in the first week of October, with fewer in between.

A lone male HOODED WARBLER was a nice find at Pubnico Pt., *Yar* (RDE). Observations indicated that the bulk of AMERICAN REDSTART migration was in the first two weeks of August. At Doctors Brook, *Ant*, about 650 night calls were noted by JOK, with 182 in the first week and 125 in the second week of August, and significant numbers to mid-September. Only two CAPE MAY WARBLERS were noted, one during a seabird survey near Georges Bank and the other in a backyard. Nevertheless, at Doctors Brook, 171 audio recordings of this species were detected, including a peak of 47 during Sept 7-14, a surprisingly large number. From all data received, NORTHERN PARULA migration had a peak second week of September. A total of 462 was recorded over Doctors Brook, with a peak of 178 during Sept 7-14. At Brier I., LAL pondered the lack of sightings of this species during the banding operation, but it seems they may have moved through just after banding ceased for the season. The common MAGNOLIA WARBLER out-migration also peaked in the second week of September, with 158 out of a fall-season total of 526 recorded at night over Doctors Brook (JOK).

If not for JOK's nocturnal monitoring, BAY-BREASTED WARBLER would have been undetected this fall. Interestingly, he identified 130 of this species through August and September with peak numbers in late August and early September. BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER reports were few, although 118 were recorded at night by JOK with a peak of 30 Sept 7-14. There were no reports after September. Most YELLOW WARBLER records were confined to August, including one observed on a seabird survey Aug 20 off Georges Bank (Tom Johnson). The two very late (Nov 17, 22) Yellow Warblers, both photographed (see one below), showed the drab back and crown and dull underparts that suggest a western or boreal subspecies, probably *amnicola*, first photographed in the province last summer (see p. 33 of last issue). About 75% of 112 night-time-calling CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER were recorded before the end of August, but other observers noted them until the mid-September. The total for this period was buoyed up by the 15 on Sept 2 at Front Centre, *Lun* (KEL). Five BLACKPOLL WARBLERS on a NSBS field trip Aug 4 to Taylor Head PP were probably local breeders, as most reports of them were in mid-September. Because night-time flight calls of Yellow and Blackpoll Warblers are hard to distinguish, the data from Doctors Brook night-call monitoring have not been included. It does appear that Blackpoll Warbler numbers detected by daytime birders was lower than normal this year. The season total of 82 night-calling BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER at Doctors Brook peaked at 36 during Sept 7-14. There were very few reports otherwise, with the latest observed Oct 6 at an elevated area near Forbes Lake, *Pict*, where five pairs had been found during the breeding season. A singing male was detected as late as Sept 9 at this location (KJM).

Night calling by PALM WARBLER at Doctors Brook peaked Sept 28 to Oct 5, when 132 of the season's 213 were reported by JOK. All "western" Palm Warblers were noted after Oct 14 although there were still 12 "eastern" Oct 24 on Brier I. Despite merely four PINE WARBLER reported on eBird, this warbler was otherwise widely reported this fall, with a few quite early reports from August and September. There was probably a record number (see table) in November from the Sunrise Valley, *Vic*, to Pubnico Pt., *Yar*.



Three “AUDUBON’S” YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLERS were recorded this fall, including an apparent first-fall male Nov. 6 in Point Pleasant Park, Halifax, and an adult male Nov. 20 along Sampsons Trail, New Glasgow. [Photos: left, Alix D’Entremont; right, Ken McKenna]

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER migration peaked in late September and early October based on data from observers as well as the flight-call study by JOK, who detected a total of 622 calls for the season, with a peak of 368 during Sept 28 to Oct 5. Three records this fall of the western “AUDUBON’S” Yellow-rumped subspecies greatly added to the six previous fall-winter records in “*All the Birds of Nova Scotia*” (McLaren, 2012). All were well-described and two were photographed (see above). The first was found Nov 6 by DMC in Point Pleasant Park, Halifax. He felt it was a hatch-year male based on the amount of yellow on the throat, distinct streaking on sides and yellow crown. It was viewed from as close as 5m and photographed later that day (AAD). The “Audubon’s” at Canso was seen briefly Nov. 14 by KJM and CHK, but long enough to note its well defined bright yellow throat and blank face. It was travelling with a group of “Myrtle” Yellow-rumped in shrubbery along the Canso waterfront. The New Glasgow bird, discovered along Sampsons Trail, was as also closely observed for at least ten minutes. It was in leafless hardwood, thus easier to study and photograph features such as the lack of supercilium, blank face, bright yellow throat patch, and wing-bars coalesced into a white patch. The sole **YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER** was quickly photographed (CHK), but enough to reveal it as white-lored. PRAIRIE WARBLER, another reverse-migrant species, appeared in average numbers. BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER migration peaked during the first two weeks of September, mirrored by the largest count of 100 night-calling birds Sept 7-14 at Doctors Brook, of out of a seasonal total of 430.

Only two reports of CANADA WARBLER were received. Yet night monitoring at Doctor’s Brook indicate more may pass through than observed by birders: a total of 33 were detected August 10-17 and 76 for the fall season. Night monitoring also seems to reveal more WILSON’S WARBLERS than daytime birding would indicate, with 33 flight calls during Aug 24 to 31 and a total of 88 for the season. The regular reverse migration of YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT to the province followed the usual fall pattern of a few appearing in August, with a substantial number reported in November. None was reported from the northern mainland or Cape Breton.

Gray Catbird

August	widely mainland	12 reports of 16 birds	eBird
September	HRM, Lun, Brier I,	8 reports of 11 birds	eBird, var. obs.
Oct 3	Duncans Cove, HRM	2	AZV, JED
Oct 4	Schooner Pond, CBRM	1	Tony Timmons
Oct 14	Liverpool	1	DPO, JAH
Nov 2	Duncans Cove, HRM	4	HAT
Nov 4-5	Lr. Sackville, HRM	1	LOC
Nov 5	Conrads Bch., HRM	1	DOU
Nov 5	Whites L., HRM	1	BLM
Nov 5	White Pt., Queens	1	MMI
Nov 5	Lawrencetown, HRM	1	DMW
Nov 6	Broad Cove, Lun	1	SJF
Nov 13	Cole Harbour, HRM	1 also Nov 24	DOU, DGA
Nov 24	Portuguese Cove, HRM	1	HAT

Northern Mockingbird

August	Port La Tour, Shel	1 seen in first week	Peter Yaukey
Aug 17	Kentville	1 ad.	JLC
Sep 23	Brier I.	1, also Oct 23	AHM, ELM, JAH
Oct 7	Melbourne, Yar	1	RAS
Oct 8, 11	Dartmouth	1, yard first	DAC
Oct 9	PPP, Halifax	1	Linda Warschauer
Oct 24-Nov 3	Wolfville waterfront	1	RBS, var. obs.
Oct 28-Nov 23	Miners Marsh, Kentville	1	RSM, var. obs.
Nov 1	Dartmouth	1 yard	Jane Schlosberg
Nov 2	Duncans Cove, HRM	1	DAC, AZV
Nov 10	Sand Lake, CBRM	1	CAM, ALM
Nov 13	Eastern Passage, HRM	1	DOU
Nov 17	Westville, Pict	1	STV
Nov 18	McLellans Brook, Pict	1	CHK
Nov 19	Barrington	1	Michael Drenth

Brown Thrasher

Sep 28	Duncan Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC
Oct 3	Portuguese Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1	<i>vide</i> HAT
Oct 9	Three Fathom Harbour, <i>HRM</i>	1	Kate Steele
Oct 15	Halifax waterfront	1	DHH
Oct 18	Mid-W. Pubnico, <i>Yar</i>	1 ph	AAD
Oct 25	Melbourne, <i>Yar</i>	1	RAS
Nov 29	Canning area, <i>Kings</i>	1 chasing R.T. Hawk	RBS

European Starling

Aug-Nov	widely	450+ reports	eBird
Oct 8	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	est. 12,000	TEB

American Pipit

Sep 4	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	2	KJM
Sep 8	Sydney airport	2	SEM, NSBS
Sep 9	Point Michaud Bch., <i>Rich</i>	present	BID, WMA
Sep 13	Hortons Landing area, <i>Kings</i>	8	RIW
Sep 14	Cherry Hill Bch., <i>Lun</i>	13	JAH
Sep 14, 16	Brier I.	12, 60	KJM
Sep 17	Grand Pré, <i>Kings</i>	1	RIW
Sep 17-30	widely mainland	14 reports 2-50 birds	eBird, var. obs.
October	widely	27 reports 2-33 birds	eBird, var. obs.
November	widely	11 reports 2-5 birds	eBird, var. obs.

Bohemian Waxwing

Oct 27	Cole Harbour, <i>HRM</i>	5	DAC
Oct 27	Front Centre, <i>Lun</i>	2	KEL
Oct 28	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	30+	DGA
Nov 5	Ballantynes Cove, <i>Ant</i>	2	CHK, KJM
Nov 7	Sand Lake, <i>CBRM</i>	3 yard	ALM, CAM
Nov 10	Port Hastings, <i>Inv</i>	25	NSBS
Nov 11	Lockeport	6	DJC
Nov 13	Canso	24	CHK, KJM
Nov 18	New Glasgow	small flock	KJM, CHK
Nov 19	Bridgetown, <i>Anna</i>	4, at crab apples	MCR
Nov 2, 29	Apple River, <i>Cumb</i>	1	KFS
Nov 24	New Glasgow	20	KJM <i>et al.</i>

Cedar Waxwing

August	widely	75 reports 1-25 birds	eBird
September	widely	28 reports 1-100 birds	eBird
October	widely	11 reports 1-12 birds	eBird
Nov 1	Pictou	23, + 5 Bohemians	KJM, CHK
Nov 4	Cole Harbour, <i>HRM</i>	1	DMC
Nov 10	Lr. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	4	DGA

Lapland Longspur

Sep 29	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	4, ph	KJM
Oct 13, 15	Waterside PP, <i>Pict</i>	2,1	KJM
Oct 19	Schooner Pond, <i>CBRM</i>	1	ALM, CAM
Oct 20	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant</i>	1	JOK
Oct 22	Brier I.	1	KJM
Oct 27	Prospect Pen., <i>HRM</i>	3	BLM
Nov 1	E. Passage, <i>HRM</i>	4	DMC
Nov 3	Rainbow Haven PP	4	DGA
Nov 4	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	5	KJM
Nov 5	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	DGA
Nov 7	Hortons Landing area, <i>Kings</i>	6	RIW
Nov 25	Port Morien sandbar, <i>CBRM</i>	30	CAM, ALM

Snow Bunting

Oct 26	Marsh Rd., <i>Digby</i>	25	DAM, AAD, RDE
Oct 26	Grand Pré, <i>Kings</i>	1	RIW
Oct 27	Cole Harbour, <i>HRM</i>	4	Chris Kennedy
Oct 27	Duncans Reef, <i>HRM</i>	3	HAT
Oct 27	Apple River, <i>Cumb</i>	3	KFS
Oct 27	Prospect Pen., <i>HRM</i>	3	BLM
Oct 30	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM, CHK
November	widely	27 reports of ~450 birds	eBird

Ovenbird

August	<i>HRM, Kings, Pict</i>	4 reports of 5	eBird
Aug 7, 15	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1,7	KJM

Sep 4	E. Passage, <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC
Sep 4	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM
Sep 27	Bush I., <i>Lun</i>	1	JAH
Nov 18	Micmac Blvd., Dartmouth	1	DAC

Northern Waterthrush

Aug 20	off Georges Bank	1 seabird survey	Tom Johnson
Aug 25	Brier I.	large movement	LAL
Sep 2	Brier I.	large movement	LAL
Sep 3	L. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	1	LOC
Sep 3	BPI	1	CLD
Sep 15	Black Rock, <i>Kings</i>	1	JAH

Black and White Warbler

Aug 1-14	widely, mainland	8 reports of 19	eBird
Aug 15-31	widely mainland	13 reports of 30	eBird
Sep 1-14	widely mainland	12 reports of 22	eBird
Sep 15-30	widely mainland	6 reports of 13	eBird
Oct 4	Schooner Pond, <i>CBRM</i>	1	Tony Timmons
Nov 11	S-end Halifax	1	DMC
Nov 19	near L. Banook, <i>HRM</i>	1	GAM

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER

Sept 28-Oct 5	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant</i>	1 possible night-call	JOK
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Tennessee Warbler

Aug 29	BPI	1	ABO, Janice Chard
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Orange-crowned Warbler

Sep 23	Brier I.	1	JAH
Oct 19-20	Donkin Pen, <i>CBRM</i>	1	CAM, ALM
Oct 24	PPP, Halifax	1	JOK
Nov 3	Portuguese Cove, <i>HRM</i>	2	HAT
Nov 4	E. Passage, <i>HRM</i>	1	AGH
Nov 5	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	DGA
Nov 11	Lr. Rose Bay, <i>Lun</i>	1	JAH
Nov 18	Dartmouth	1 ph	DAC
Nov 22	W. Pubnico, <i>Yar</i>	1	RSD, RDE
Nov 24	Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	2	DGA

Nashville Warbler

Aug 1-14	mainland only	2 reports of 2	eBird
Aug 15-31	mainland only	5 reports of 7	eBird
Sep 1-14	mainland only	4 reports of 7	eBird
Sept 15-30	mainland only	2 reports of 2	eBird
Oct 7	Brier I.	1	RDE, SMA
Oct 23, 25	Brier I.	1	<i>vide</i> ELM

Mourning Warbler

Aug 19	Salt Marsh Tr., <i>HRM</i>	1	MZE
Aug 20	off Georges Bank	1, seabird survey	Tom Johnson
Aug 25	Bible Hill, <i>Col</i>	1	ROH
Oct 14	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	DGA

Common Yellowthroat

Aug 1-Sept 30	mainland only	105 reports of ~450	e-Bird
Oct 3	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	4	AZV, JED
Oct 4	Eastern Passage area	2	IAM
Oct 6	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	DGA
Oct 10	Digby	3	Ria Hovik
Oct 14	N. Halifax Dump	1	DAC
Oct 19	French Basin tr., <i>Anna</i>	1	RBS

HOODED WARBLER

Oct 4	Pubnico Pt., <i>Yar</i>	1 ad m.	RDE
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American Redstart

Aug 1-15	widely	17 reports of 35	eBird
Aug 16-31	widely	10 reports of 18	eBird
Sep 1-15	widely	8 reports of 19	eBird
Sep 29	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM
Oct 19	N. Halifax dump	1	DAC

Cap May Warbler

Jul 27-Oct 5	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant</i>	171 night calls	JOK
Aug 20	Off Georges Bank	1 on seabird survey	Tom Johnson
Sep 23	Plymouth, <i>Pict</i>	1, yard	KJM

Northern Parula

Aug 1-15	widely	6 reports of 7	eBird
Aug 16-31	widely	11 reports of 18	eBird
Sep 1-15	widely	10 reports of 46	eBird
Sep 16-30	widely	7 reports of 7	eBird
Oct 25	Brier I.	1	KJM <i>et al.</i>

Magnolia Warbler

Aug 1-15	widely	10 reports of 32	eBird
Aug 16-31	widely	11 reports of 20	eBird
Sep 1-15	widely	14 reports of 34	eBird
Sep 16-30	widely	5 reports of 10	eBird

Bay-breasted Warbler

Jul 27-Oct 5 Doctors Brook, *Ant* 130 night flight calls JOK

Blackburnian Warbler

Aug 1-15	mainland	5 reports of 9	eBird, var. obs.
Aug 29	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC
Sep 4	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	3	KJM
Sep 13	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC, JED
Sep 14	W. Lawrencetown, <i>HRM</i>	1	BLM
Sep 15	Brier I.	1	KJM <i>et al.</i>

Yellow Warbler

Aug 1-15	widely, mainland only	39 reports of 85	eBird
Aug 16-31	widely, mainland only	19 reports of 50	eBird
Sep 1-15	widely, mainland only	12 reports of 30	eBird
Sep 16-30	mainland only	2 reports of 4	eBird
Nov 10	Lr. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	1 bright male	DGA
Nov 17	New Glasgow	1 ph., prob. <i>ammicola</i>	KJM, CHK
Nov 22	Yarmouth	1 ph., prob. <i>ammicola</i>	RDE



The dull olive and, gray-washed upperparts of this late YELLOW-WARBLER, Nov. 22 in Yarmouth, are said to characterize the boreal subspecies *ammicola*. [Photo Ronnie D'Entremont]

Chestnut-sided Warbler

Aug 1-15	mainland only	7 reports of 11	eBird
Aug 16-31	mainland only	8 reports of 11	eBird
Sep 1-15	mainland only	8 reports of 23	eBird

Blackpoll Warbler

Aug 1-15	2 <i>HRM</i> locations	6	NSBS, LOC
Aug 29	Eastern Passage, <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC
Sep 1-15	widely mainland	8 reports of 29	eBird, var. obs.
Sep 16-30	widely mainland	6 reports of 27	eBird, var. obs.
Oct 1-15	widely mainland	6 reports of 12	eBird, var. obs.
Nov 6	PPP, <i>HRM</i>	1	DMC

Black-throated Blue Warbler

Aug 6-7	Lr. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	1	LOC
Aug 20	off Georges Bank	1 seabird survey	Tom Johnson
Aug 30E.	Passage, <i>HRM</i>	1	IAM, ACO
Sep 4	Little Annapolis L., <i>Anna</i>	3 m.	MCR
Oct 6	Forbes L., <i>Pict</i>	1 m.	KJM

Palm Warbler

Aug 1-15	widely	7 reports of 11	eBird, var. obs.
Aug 16-31	widely	5 reports of 6	eBird, var. obs.
Sep 1-15	widely	14 reports of 94	eBird, var. obs.
Sep 16-30	widely	2 reports of 3	eBird
Oct 1-15	widely	5 reports of 11	eBird, var. obs.
Oct 15-31	widely	2 reports of 14	eBird, var. obs.
Oct 14	Chebucto Hd., <i>HRM</i>	1 western	DAC, AZV
Oct 24	Brier I.	1 western, 24 eastern	KJM <i>et al.</i>
Oct 25-26	Brier I.	1-2	KJM <i>et al.</i>
Nov 6	PPP, Halifax	1 western	DMC
Nov 10	e. of Matthews L., <i>Shel</i>	1 western	AAD
Nov 11	Saunders Pk., <i>HRM</i>	1 western	DMC
Nov 12	3-Fathom Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1	KST
Nov 18	Pubnico Pt., <i>Yar</i>	1 western	AAD
Nov 22	Halifax waterfront	1 western	DGA
Nov 23	Mahone Bay	1	JOA

Pine Warbler

Aug 11-12	Isle Haute	1	CLD
Sep 11	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1 imm. f.	BLM <i>et al.</i>
Sep 25	BPI	1	ABO, Ryan Dudrague
Oct 15	PPP, <i>HRM</i>	1	AGH
Oct 23	BPI	1	ABO, Ryan Dudrague
Nov 3-30	province-wide	22 reports of 26 birds	var. obs.

Yellow-rumped Warbler

Aug 1-15	widely	20 reports of 94	eBird
Aug 16-31	widely	19 reports of 81	eBird
Sep 1-15	widely	reports of 208	eBird
Sep 16-30	widely	28 reports of 496	eBird
Oct 1-15	widely	30 reports of 408	eBird
Oct 16-31	widely	12 reports of 57	eBird
Oct 24	Brier I.	150	ELM <i>et al.</i>
Nov 1-15	widely	12 reports of 42	eBird
Nov 16-30	widely	6 reports of 59	eBird

"AUDUBON'S" YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER

Three reports (see text)

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER

Nov 5	Jimtown, <i>Ant</i>	1 ph, white-lored	CHK, KJM
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PRAIRIE WARBLER, like this one Nov 19 in Dartmouth, turned up in some numbers this fall to brighten our birding days. [Photo David Currie]

PRAIRIE WARBLER

Aug 30	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	2, 1st winter	DAC, IAM, ACO
Sep 1-3	BPI	1	Ryan Dedragne
Sep 2	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC, MIK, AZV
Sep 7-14	Doctors Brook	5 night recordings	JOK
Sep 28-Oct 5	Doctors Brook	2 night recordings	JOK
Oct 8	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1 imm. m.	IAM
Oct 10	BPI	1 hy, f., banded	Ryan Dedragne
Oct 14	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	DGA
Oct 15	Blanche, <i>Shel</i>	1	RDE
Oct 18	BPI	1	Ryan Dedragne
Nov 17, 19	Dartmouth	1 ph	DAC, DMC
Nov 28	Green Bay, <i>Lun</i>	1 fed on ground 4 hr	JSC

Black-throated Green Warbler

Aug 1-15	widely	14 reports of 35	eBird, var. obs.
Aug 16-31	widely	10 reports of 19	eBird
Sep 1-15	widely	21 reports of 57	eBird, var. obs.
Sep 16-31	widely	6 reports of 8	eBird,
Oct 25	Brier I.	1	KJM <i>et al.</i>

Canada Warbler

Aug 7	Lr. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	1	LOC
Aug 15	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	2	KJM

Wilson's Warbler

Aug 4	Taylor Head PP	1	NSBS
Aug 20	off Georges Bank	1 from survey ship	Tom Johnson
Sep 2	L. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	1	LOC
Sep 4	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM
Sep 18	Brier I.	1	KJM
Oct 26	Annapolis Marsh	1	RDE, AAD
Nov 17	Kentville	1, ad. m.	JLC
Nov 22	Overton, <i>Yar</i>	1 f.	RDE

Yellow-breasted Chat

Aug 22	Brier I.	1	LAL
Aug 29	Hartlen Pt.	1	DAC
Sep 1-3	BPI	1	ABO, Ryan Dudragne
Sep 24	Sable R. <i>Shel</i>	1 ph	David Osborn
Sep 24-25	BPI	1	ABO, Ryan Dudragne
Oct 6	Lockeport, <i>Shel</i>	1	DJC

Oct 14-27	5 <i>HRM</i> locations	5 reports of 5	var. obs.
Nov 3-30	<i>HRM, Kings, Shel</i>	16 reports of 19	var. obs.



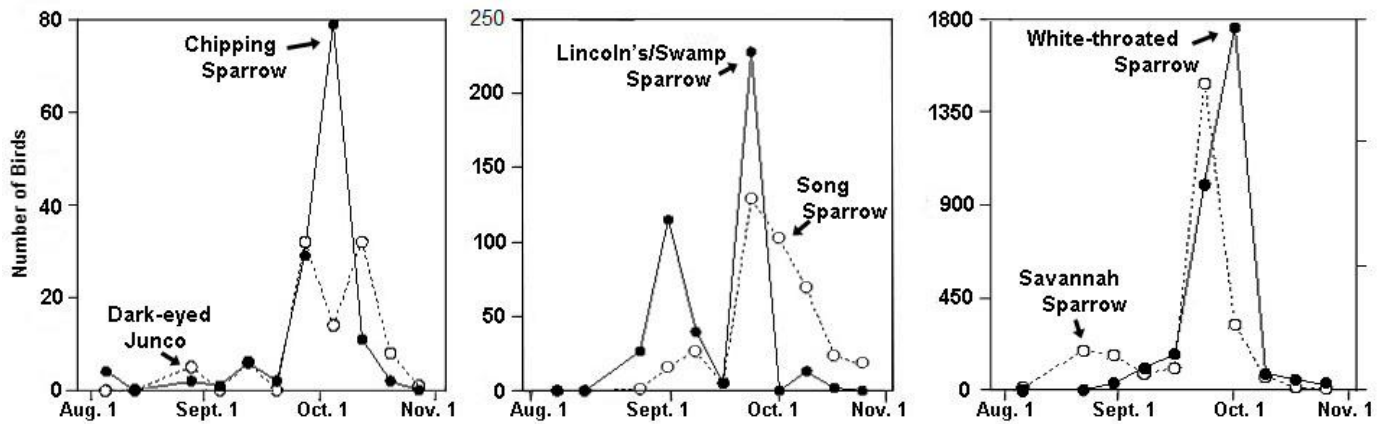
This (first-fall female?) WILSON'S WARBLER, Oct 27 at W. Pubnico, *Yar*, seems almost bright enough to be one of the western subspecies. [Photo Alix D'Entremont].

Sparrows to House Sparrow

By Ian McLaren

The wonderful time series of night calls collected by John Kearney at Doctors Brook (see graph below) probably gives the most reliable summary of migration of some of our more regular sparrows in that part of the province, mostly probably hailing from farther north and west. Although sparrows are often rated as day migrants, much movement clearly occurs at night. The presence of one CHIPPING SPARROW well offshore indicates that they were on the move in late August. The peak of 79 night-calling in early October is somewhat surprising – far more than were recorded through the season on eBird. Where were they coming from, and where bound? Their northern relative, AMERICAN TREE SPARROW, arrived on schedule. The late September peak of SAVANNAH SPARROW at Doctors Brook was matched by the tabulated eBird records for September, when more birds were counted at fewer locations. Big I., *Pict.*, is poised to catch migrants crossing the Gulf, and was surveyed on eight dates Aug. 7 to Oct. 30. It had a Savannah “migration movement” of 59 on Sept. 4 and another of 54 on Sept. 29 (KJM), matching two peak weeks over Doctors Brook. The IPSWICH subspecies peaked as usual in October on Atlantic beaches, but two or more occurred in coastal *Kings*, and one was even more off-track in *Antigonish*. Numbers of night migrant SONG SPARROWS peaked in late September, but remained high into October when largest numbers were more widely reported on eBird and elsewhere. The overhead calls of LINCOLN'S and SWAMP SPARROW are difficult to distinguish, but from their known migration timings, the early-September peak was presumably mostly Lincoln's, and the late-September peak mostly Swamp. The eBird records are somewhat uninformative on peaks of either species, but HAT reported a “migratory flock” of Swamp Sept. 25 at Duncans Cove, *HRM*, and RDE noted a big arrival Oct. 7 on Brier I. The peak of night-migrant WHITE-THROATED SPARROW was echoed by large eBird counts in several locations through October. Interesting was an apparent juvenile still being fed by an adult Nov. 9 in Bridgewater observed by Nancy Dowd, who noted that both were dull, so it could not have been seasonally misplaced courtship feeding. The early

August **WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW** on Ile Haute was highly anomalous, and only a few were reported subsequently, somewhat late and in small numbers.



Weekly counts of night calls of individual sparrows of six species recorded by John Kearney overhead during night at Doctors Brook, *Ant*.

There was the usual dose of vagrant sparrows (see photos) including unusually high numbers of **EASTERN TOWHEE**, **CLAY-COLORED** and **LARK SPARROW**, and some that deserve more details. The “possible” **BAIRD’S SPARROW** was independently found by BLM and HAT at hilltop on the trail from Duncans Cove, *HRM* to the barrens. Although both observers had fair looks at the bird, neither was willing to be certain of its i.d., and the bird was too shifty for confirming photographs. We have only one other report of a similarly elusive bird in Canso in October 2010. **LARK BUNTING** is a more regular stray, but seldom or never has one been independently found and photographed here (see below) by two observers. James Churchill Nov. 16 at Miners Marsh, Kentville, spotted an *Ammodramus* sparrow, “Seaside or Saltmarsh”, and was “leaning towards Seaside”. Either would be unusual, although not unprecedented, in a freshwater marsh not too far from the sea. The errant **HARRIS’S SPARROW** found and photographed by Michael Haynes was only our eighth on record.



This **LARK BUNTING** was independently found and photographed Oct. 26 by two alert birders driving along the Marsh Rd at the base of Digby Neck. It is a first-fall male (from its new black-centered lesser coverts and tertials), which are the usual ones to wander in fall. {Photos: left, Don MacNeill; right Alix D’Entremont}

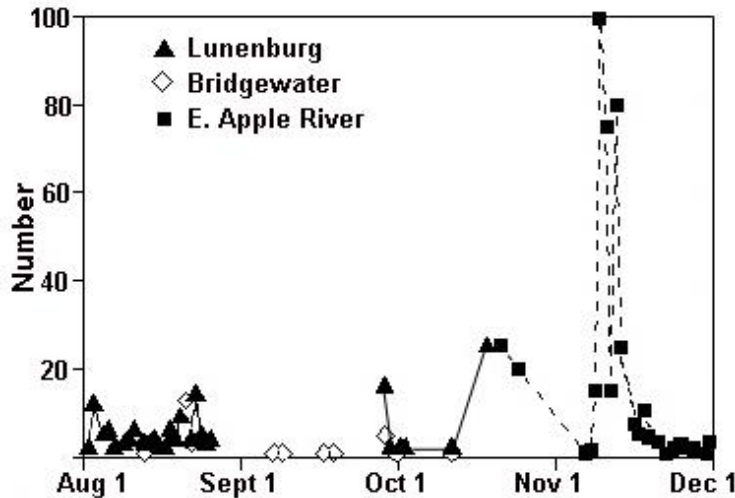
Perhaps the most interesting rarity this fall was a well-marked hybrid of WHITE-THROATED SPARROW and DARK-EYED JUNCO found and photographed by Chris Pepper (see images below). The combination of features is clear on the images. The hybrid is well known, and a number of quite varied examples can be found on-line, some resembling our bird.



A hybrid WHITE-THROATED SPARROW X DARK-EYED JUNCO photographed Nov. 21 near Lawrencetown, *HRM*. Note that the back and wings resemble those of a sparrow, not a Junco, and the distinct white throat hints at one parent. But the white outer tail feathers, plain gray face, and wash of gray across the upper breast indicate the other parent.

Among the cardinalids, there were fewer tanagers than usual, but NORTHERN CARDINAL was more often reported this fall than last on eBird, and again one occurred across the strait in *Richmond*.

Among the icterids, BOBOLINK was (distressingly) scarce, and found only in August; RUSTY BLACKBIRD was only slightly more evident; and BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD hard to come by. The Rusty poses id problems unless well seen; David Sibley's blog recently noted .that Rusty can be picked out in flocks of Red-wingeds by its long, club-shaped (not squared off) tail; it's easier to spot with grackles, but less likely to associate with those. Both RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD and COMMON GRACKLE were well reported, especially on eBird. The former seemed to peak in August, whereas the latter not until November. An indication that large flocks were still wandering in November is seen in the time series from Apple River (see graph below).



COMMON GRACKLE counts in backyards in Lunenburg (Jo Sanzalone), Bridgewater (James Hirtle) and E. Apple River, *Cumb* (Kathleen Spicer) as entered in eBird.

The **YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD** that touched down in mid-October on CSI (JON) was our only truly off-course blackbird. **BALTIMORE ORIOLE**, which is mostly a reverse-migrant, was not especially common.

It was a banner fall for our “winter finches”, with **PINE GROSBEAK**, **PURPLE FINCH**, **WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL**, **PINE SISKIN**, and an early influx of **COMMON REDPOLL** fulfilling predictions of large numbers in Atlantic Canada following a dearth of food resources in the boreal forests to the northwest. A widespread shortage of cones here brought more crossbills to feeders, and Tom Kavanaugh noted some feeding on knapweed seeds in early November at Canso, where “White Spruce cones were almost absent”. Especially welcome was the return of the **EVENING GROSBEAK** which, as noted by Eric Mills of six sighted near Kempt, *Queens*, they “used to be a common sight, but [have been] so scarce . . . that the observation almost merits this RBA posting”. The species seems to be benefiting from an outbreak of Spruce Budworm to our northwest. **HOUSE FINCH** may be declining, but was clearly under-recorded in its Halifax and Yarmouth strongholds. Yet the sighting on BPI suggests a possibility for further immigration to the province.

Around Canso, Tom Kavanaugh thought the local **HOUSE SPARROWS** may have had up to four broods, and juveniles were still begging from adults in early October. And, as we’ll see in the next issue, Bev Crowell thought there were 90+ wintering in her area of Glace Bay. Is our dwindling population showing signs of recovery in northern Nova Scotia?

Note: in the following table, monthly or seasonal totals include only the largest counts from frequently birded localities.

Species	Date	Location	Count	Observer	
EASTERN TOWHEE	5, 6 Aug.	Lydgate, <i>Shel</i>	1 ad. m.	JQA	
	Oct. 7	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1 ad. m.	RIW, BLF, HAT	
	Oct. 14	Halifax	1 f. at feeder	SUM	
	Oct. 17-19	Schooner Pond, <i>CBRM</i>	1 ad m. (ph.)	ALM, CAM	
	Oct. 27	Pubnico Pt., <i>Yar</i>	1	AAD	
	Nov. 2-24+?	Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	1 m.	Peter Leblanc	
	Nov. 19-25	Barrington	1	Mike Drenth	
	American Tree Sparrow	Nov 4	N Halifax dump site	2	DMC
		Nov 4	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	3	KJM
		Nov 5	E. Apple River, <i>Cumb</i>	1	KFS
Nov 6-30`		<i>Anna to Guys</i> , 17 locs.	44 birds	eBird + 3 obs.	
Chipping Sparrow		Aug 19, 20	ca 100 km off <i>Yar</i> ,	1 on ship	Tom Johnson
	August	<i>Shel-Ant</i> , 8 locs.	19 birds	eBird +1 obs.	
	September	<i>Ann to Pict</i> , 4 locs.	16 birds	eBird +1 obs.	
	Sept 26-Oct 5	Doctors Brk., <i>Ant</i>	29 night calls	JOK	
	Oct 4-19	<i>Cumb</i> , <i>HRM</i> , 3 locs.	6 birds	eBird	
	Oct 6-13	Lr. Clarks Hbr, CSI	3	JON	
	Oct. 28	Miners Marsh, Kentville	1	RSM	
	Nov 4	PPP, Halifax	1	DMC	
	CLAY-COLORED SPARROW	Nov. 21	Miners Marsh, Kentville	1	GFO
		Oct 3	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1	AZV, DAC, JED
Oct. 6		Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	DGA	
Oct 14		Herring Cove PP Reserve	1	AZV, DAC, JED	
Oct. 14		Lr. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	1	DGA	
Oct 13		Moose Hbr., <i>Queens</i>	1	JAH, DPO	
Oct 15		BPI	1	ABO, Janice Chard	
Oct. 23		Brier I.	1	ELM <i>et al.</i>	
Oct. 13		BPI	1	ABO, Ryan Dudragne	
Mid-late Oct.		Canso	1	TOK	
Vesper Sparrow	Oct. 27	Chebucto Hd., <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT	
	Oct. 27	Daniels Hd., CSI	1	RDE	
	Mid-Nov.	Canso	1 at feeder	TOK	
	Aug. 10-17	Doctors Brk., <i>Ant.</i>	2 night calls	JOK	
	Sept 7-14	Doctors Brk., <i>Ant</i>	6 night calls	JOK	
	Sept 14-21	Doctors Brk., <i>Ant.</i>	4 night calls	JOK	
	Sept 21-28	Doctors Brk., <i>Ant.</i>	1 night call	JOK	
	Oct. 11	BPI	1	ABO, Ryan Dudragne	
	Oct 26	Saltmarsh Tr., <i>HRM</i>	2	TEB	
	Early Nov.	Lunenburg	1	<i>fide</i> JAH	

LARK SPARROW

Aug 29	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1 ad, 1 imm (ph.)	DAC <i>et al.</i>
Aug. 30	Brier I.	1	RSM
Sept 16	Mira, <i>CBRM</i>	1 (ph.)	Mary Vallis
Sept. 29	Ingonish, <i>Vic.</i>	1	Pat Begin
Oct. 6-13	Lr. Clarks Hbr., <i>CSI</i>	1 at feeder (ph.)	JON, RDE
Oct. 13	Portuguese Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT
Oct. 23	Duncan Cove "reef"	1	HAT
Oct. 27	Daniels Hd., <i>CSI</i>	1	RDE
Nov. 12	Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1	DGA

LARK BUNTING

Oct. 26	Marsh Rd., Digby Neck	1 imm. m.(ph.)	AAD, DAM
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Savannah Sparrow

August	Brier I. to <i>Inv.</i>	29 locs.	120+ indivs.	eBird + 1 obs.
September	Brier I. to <i>Pic.</i>	16 locs.	200+ indivs.	eBird + 2 obs.
October	CSI to <i>CBRM.</i>	19 locs.	123 indivs.	eBird
November	<i>Kings, HRM, Guys,</i>	7 locs.	17 indivs.	eBird

Savannah (Ipswich) Sparrow

Oct. 6	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	4	DGA
Oct. 13	Kingsburg Bch, <i>Lun</i>	7	JAH
Oct 14	nr. W. Head, <i>Queens</i>	1	RIW
Oct 20	Kingsburg Bch, <i>Lun</i>	5	JAH
Oct 28	Saltmarsh Tr., <i>HRM</i>	1	TEB
Nov 1	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC, DMC
Nov. 10	Havre Boucher, <i>Ant</i>	1	KJM, CHK
Nov. 11	CSI	1	AAD
Nov. 12	Rainbow Haven PP	1 (ph.)	David Waterfield
Nov. 15, 22	Horton Landing to E. Point, <i>Kings</i>	1, 1 (ph)	RIW
Nov 16, 30	Grand Pré, <i>Kings</i> 1,	1 (ph)	RIW

GRASSHOPPER SPARROW

Oct. 15	BPI	1	ABO, Janice Chard
Mid-late Oct.	Canso	2	TOK
Oct. 27	Pubnico Pt., <i>Yar.</i>	1 (ph.)	AAD

BAIRD'S SPARROW ("possible"; see text)

Oct 4	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1	HAT, BLM
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Nelson's Sparrow

August	CSI to <i>Pict.</i> , 14 locs.	25 indivs.	e-Bird
Sept 2	Rose Bay, <i>Lun.</i>	2	JAH
Sept 15	Wolfville region	1	JAH
Sept. 26	Big I., <i>Pic</i>	14	KJM, CKE
Oct 2	Morien Bar, <i>CBRM</i>	1	Tony Timmons
Oct 6	CSI	1	JAH
Oct 12	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	3	KJM, CHK
Oct. 16	Horton Landing to E. Point, <i>Kings</i>	1	RIW

SEASIDE SPARROW ("possible", see text)

Nov. 16	Miners Marsh, Kentville	1	JLC
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Fox Sparrow

Oct 19	E, Passage, Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC
Oct. 24	Wolfville	1	JWW
Oct. 25	Melbourne, <i>Yar</i>	1	RAS
Oct 26	Brier I.	1	KJM
Nov. 9	Brookside, <i>HRM</i>	1	Jeff MacLeod
Nov.11	Cole Hbr., <i>HRM</i>	1	DGA
Nov 17	Corkums I., <i>Lun</i>	1	JAH
Nov 30	Halifax	1	DMC

Song Sparrow

August	Brier I. to <i>Ant.</i> , 77 locs.	334 birds	eBird + sev. obs.
September	Brier I. to <i>Vic.</i> , 49 locs.	303 birds	eBird + sev. obs.
October	Brier I. to <i>CBRM.</i> , 53 locs.	520+ birds	eBird + 4 obs.
November	<i>Shel.</i> to <i>Guys-Pict.</i> , 56 locs.	230 birds	eBird

Lincoln's Sparrow

Aug 8	Brier I.	2	Graham Williams
Aug 10	Chezsetcook Inlet, <i>HRM</i>	1	Graham Williams
Aug 12	Windsor Junction, <i>HRM</i>	3	Jayne Green
Sept 6	Tremont, <i>Kings</i>	1	WPN
Sept 17	Annapolis Royal	3	Robert Scranton
Oct. 6	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	DGA
Oct. 14	Lr. Sackville, <i>HRM</i>	1	DGA
Nov 4	N Halifax Dump	1	DMC
Nov.18	Pubnico Pt., <i>Yar</i>	1	RDE

Swamp Sparrow

August	Brier I. to <i>Pict.</i> , 10 locs.	20 birds	eBird
September	Brier I. to <i>Pict.</i> , 11 locs.	34 birds	eBird
October	Brier I. to <i>CBRM.</i> , 13 locs.	33 birds	eBird+3 obs.
November	<i>HRM, Kings, Pict.</i> , 6 locs.	8+ birds	eBird+3 obs.

HARRIS'S SPARROW

Oct. 22-24	<i>W. Hants</i>	1 ad m., ph.	Michael Haynes
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White-throated Sparrow

August	Brier I. to <i>Ant.</i> , 9 locs.	40 birds	eBird + 2 obs.
September	Brier I. to <i>Ant.</i> , 12 locs.	64 birds	eBird + 2 obs.
October	Brier I. to <i>CBRM.</i> , 30 locs.	170++ birds	eBird + 5 obs.
November	<i>Shel.</i> to <i>Pict.</i> , 24 locs.	86 birds.	eBird

White-crowned Sparrow

Aug. 11-12	Isle Haute, <i>Cumb</i>	1	CLD
Oct 3	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC
Oct 3	Bacarro, <i>Shel.</i>	1	JAH
Oct 6-13	Lr. Clarks Hbr., <i>CSI</i>	4 at feeder	JON
Oct. 8	Whites L., <i>HRM</i>	1	BLM
Oct 14	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC <i>et al.</i>
Oct. 14	Canso	1	TOK
Oct. 23	Chebucto Hd. rd.	1	HAT
Oct 26	Brier I.	sev.	ELM
November	<i>Anna.</i> to <i>CBRM.</i> , 6 locs.	7 birds	var. obs.

Dark-eyed Junco

August	Brier I. to <i>Inv.</i> , 20 locs.	93 birds	eBird
September	<i>Anna</i> to <i>Pic.</i> , 16 locs.	54 birds	eBird
October	Brier I. to <i>Pic.</i> , 31 locs.	1312 birds	eBird
November	<i>Shel.</i> to <i>Ant.</i> , <i>Guys</i> 48 locs.	208 birds	eBird

SUMMER TANAGER

Oct. 22	BPI	1f.	ABO, R. Dudrangne
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Scarlet Tanager

Aug 17-24	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant</i>	1 night call	JOK
Oct. 23	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1 f.	HAT
Oct. 27	Wolfville Ridge	1 f.	JCT

Northern Cardinal

Through season	Brier I. to <i>Kings</i> , 34 locs	70+birds	eBird + 9 obs.
Oct. 12, 13	BPI	2 m.	ABO, R. Dudrangne
November	Dundee, <i>Rich</i>	1f.	Rosemary Burns

Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

Aug 4	Doctors Brk, <i>Ant</i>	1	JOK
Aug 16	Halifax	1	MZE
Aug 18	Miners Marsh, Kentville	3 imm.	WPN
Aug. 10-17	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant</i>	4 night calls	JOK
Aug 17-24	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant</i>	2 night calls	JOK
Aug 29	Habitant, <i>Kings</i>	1	Tim & Ann Hall
Aug 31-Sept 6	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant</i>	2 night calls	JOK
Sept 4	Big I., <i>Pic</i>	1	
Sept. 7-14	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant</i>	1 night call	JOK
Oct. 4	Dartmouth, feeder	1 imm.	BBU
Oct 13	Liverpool	1	JAH
Mid-Oct.	Canso	1 f, 1 m.	TOK
Nov. 3	Dartmouth	1 f.	DAC
Nov. 5	Milton, <i>Queens</i>	1 imm. m.	DPO
Nov 7-19	E. Apple River, <i>Cumb</i>	1 imm. ph.	KFS

BLUE GROSBEEK

Sept 22, 23	BPI	1	ABO
Oct. 12-15	Port Royal, <i>Rich</i>	1 f.	<i>fide</i> BID
Oct. 19	N. Halifax dump	2	DAC
Oct 30	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	3	BLM

Indigo Bunting

Aug. 4	Greenwood, <i>Kings</i>	1	
Aug 17-24	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant</i>	3 night calls	JOK
Sept 3	Blanche, <i>Shel</i>	1 f. plum.	JAH
Sept 4	CSI	1	JAH
Sept. 7-14	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant</i>	4 night calls	JOK
Sept 25	Western Hd., <i>Queens</i>	2	JAH, DPO
Oct 2	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1 f. plum.	DAC
Oct 3	Sandy Cove, <i>HRM</i>	1 f.	DAC
Oct 12	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM
Oct 13	Liverpool	1	JAH

Oct 13+	Halifax	2	SUM
Oct 14	Cork St., Halifax	1 f. plum.	TEB
Oct 14, 19	Seaview Pk. & N. Halifax dump	ca. 12	DAC
Oct 15, 17	Sunrise Valley, Vic1, 3FMC		
Mid-Oct.	Canso	“many”	TOK
Oct 23	Chebucto Hd., <i>HRM1HAT</i>		
Oct 30	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM2BLM</i>		
Nov 3-4	N Halifax dump	3 (same?)	DAC
Nov 6	Sunrise Valley, <i>Vic</i>	1 f.(back?)	FMC
Nov 9	N Halifax dump	1(same?)	DMC
Mid-Nov	Canso	2TOK et al.	
Dickcissel			
Aug 23	Salt Marsh Tr., <i>HRM</i>	2MZE	
Aug 25	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1DGA	
Aug 31	Brier I. 1LAL		
Sept 14	BPI	1imm. m	ABO, R. Dudragne
Sept 15	Prim Pt., <i>Digby</i>	1	M.Brownstein
Sept 15	W, Head, <i>Queens</i>	1 bright f.	ELM
Sept 22	Caribou I., <i>Pict1</i>	imm. f.	KJM
Sept 24	Brier I.	1 very vocal f.	ELM
Oct 6-13 +?	CSI, feeder	2	JON
Oct 13	BPI	1	ABO, R. Dudragne
Oct 13	Halifax	1 feeder	SUM
Oct 14	Liverpool	1	JAH
Oct 14, 19	N. Halifax dump	2, 3	DAC et al.
Mid-Oct.	Canso	3-4	TOK
Oct 17-19	Schooner Pond, CBRM	1	ALM, CAM
Mid Nov	Canso	up to 3	TOK et al.
Nov 18	N. Halifax dump	1	IAM
Nov 29	Canso	4	TOK
Bobolink			
Aug 5	Second Pen., <i>Lun</i>	4	JAH
Aug. 7	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	5	KJM
Aug 12	Middle R. Dyke, <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM
Aug 14	Doctors Brook, <i>Ant.</i>	11	JOK
Aug 15	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM



A fall-plumaged BOBOLINK Aug 23 at Hartlen Pt., *HRM*, demonstrates a skill that would be difficult for human gymnasts [Photo Ronnie D’Entremont]

Red-winged Blackbird
 August *Ann*, to *Ant*, 13 locs. 150+ birds eBird +2 obs.

September	<i>Ann, Kings, Lun, Pict</i> , 5 locs.	122 birds	eBird
October	Brier I. to <i>Pict</i> , 9 locs.	57 birds	eBird
November	<i>Shel</i> . to <i>Cumb-Guys</i> , 10 locs.	33+ birds	eBird +5 obs.
Rusty Blackbird			
Sept. 15	Brier I.	1	KJM
Oct 4	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	DAC
Oct 10	Barrington	1	JCZ
Oct. 10, 13	Birch Cove Pk., Dartmouth	1	MZE
Oct 13	BPI	1	ABO, Janice Chard
Oct 27	Woods Hbr., <i>Shel</i>	1 at feeder	DOC, RDE
YELLOW HEADED BLACKBIRD			
Oct. 18	Daniels Head, CSI	1 m	JON
Common Grackle			
August	Brier I. to <i>Ant</i> , 23 locs.	173 birds	eBird + 1 obs.
September	Brier I. to <i>Pict</i> , 22 locs.	139 birds	eBird + 1 obs.
October	Brier I. to <i>Rich</i> 18 locs.	347 birds	eBird + 5 obs.
November	<i>Shel</i> to <i>Vic</i> , 10. locs.	185+ birds	eBird + 5 obs.
Brown-headed Cowbird			
Aug 10	Rainbow Haven PP, <i>HRM</i>	2	Graham Williams
Sept 9	Gull I. & Light, <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM
Oct 4	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	2	DAC
Oct 20	Halifax	1	Paul Matthews
Oct 20	Corkums I., <i>Lun</i>	11 at feeder	JAH
Nov 15, 16	Apple R., <i>Cumb</i>	1 m.	KFS
Nov 26	Middleton, <i>Anna</i>	15+	AND
Nov 26 +	Halifax	1	SUM
Baltimore Oriole			
Aug 18	Miners Marsh, Kentville	1 imm.	WPN
Sept 2	Duncans Cove, <i>HRM</i>	2	DAC <i>et al.</i>
Sept 3	Long I., <i>Digby</i>	1	RSM
Sept 12	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	2	DAC
Sept 14-28	<i>HRM, Queens, Ant</i> , 7 locs.	10 birds.	6 obs.
Oct 4	Sampsonville, <i>Rich</i>	2 imm.	BID
Oct 8-28	<i>HRM</i> , 5 locs.	6 birds	5 obs.
Nov 1-16	<i>Lun</i> to <i>CBRM</i> , 7 locs	9 birds	6 obs.
Nov 21-29	<i>Lun, HRM Pict, Shel</i>	7 birds	6 obs.
Pine Grosbeak			
Aug 5, 18	Habitant, <i>Kings</i>	2, 3 in yard	Ann & Tim Hall
Aug 23	Graves I. PP, <i>Lun</i>	2	JAH
Nov 3-15	<i>Lun</i> to <i>Guys-Pict</i> , 12 locs.	49 birds	eBird + 4 obs.
Nov 16-21	<i>Yar</i> to <i>Guys-Pict</i> , 12 locs.	58 birds	eBird + 2 obs.
Purple Finch			
August	Brier I. to <i>Pict</i> , 23 locs.	146 birds	eBird
September	Brier I. to <i>Inv</i> , 20 locs.	103 birds	eBird + 2 obs.
October	Brier I. to <i>Cumb-HRM</i> , 14 locs.	74 birds	eBird + 2 obs.
November	<i>Cumb, HRM, Pict</i> , 6 locs	8 birds	eBird
House Finch			
Aug 5	Overton, <i>Yar</i>	1	Tim & Ann Hall
Oct. 7	BPI	1	ABO, Janice Chard
Oct 20	Gilbert Bay, <i>Yar</i>	1 m (usual)	RED
Oct 25	Robie St., Halifax	2	BLM
Oct 26	Gilberts Bay, <i>Yar</i>	1	RDE
Red Crossbill			
Aug 6	Johnstons Pond, <i>Shel</i>	2	Avery Nagy
Aug 8	Louis Head, <i>Shel</i>	45 overhead	Avery Nagy
Aug. 8, 9	Brier I.	1,1	Graham Williams, JOK
Oct 23	Chebucto Head, <i>HRM</i>	6	HAT
Nov 4	Halifax	1	PLC
Nov 11	Breakwater, <i>Shel</i>	2	AVM
Nov 17	Sampsonville, <i>Rich</i>	1	BID
White-winged Crossbill			
Aug. 7	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	1	KJM
Aug. 8	Brier I.	30	Graham Williams
Aug. 11-12	Isle Haute, <i>Cumb</i>	1+	CLD
Aug. 23	Brier I.	1	RIW
Aug. 28	Digby	1	Nicole Richardson
Sept. 15	Brier I.	1	KJM
Oct 18-31	<i>Digby, Lun</i> , 5 locs.	150 ++ birds	7 obs.
November	<i>Shel</i> to <i>Rich</i> , 27 locs	235+birds	eBird +9 obs.

Common Redpoll

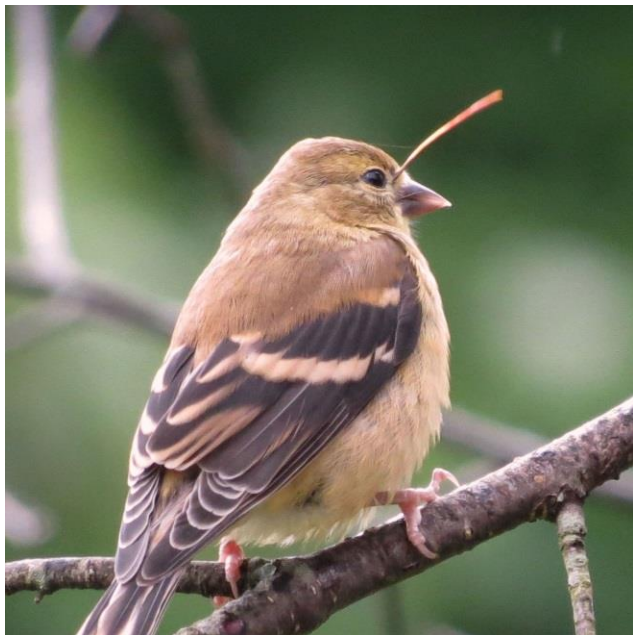
Since early Oct.	Canso	small flock	TOK
Oct. 4	Pt. Hawkesbury	1 at feeder with siskins	DJO
Oct. 6	Hartlen Pt., <i>HRM</i>	1	DGA
Oct. 20	Big I., <i>Pict</i>	heard overhead	KJM
Oct. 25	Pt. Williams, <i>Kings</i>	1 at feeder	Nancy Nickerson
November	<i>Yar to Ant-Guys</i> , 14 locs	258birds	eBird+3 obs.

Pine Siskin

August	Brier I. to <i>Ant</i> , 6 locs	10 birds	eBird
September	Brier I. to <i>Pict</i> , 5 locs	11 birds	eBird
October	Brier I. to <i>Pict</i> , 14 locs.	188++birds	eBird+4 obs.
November	<i>Shel to Pict</i> , 13 locs.	70+birds	eBird+3 obs.

American Goldfinch

August	Brier I. to <i>Ant</i> , 68 locs.	366+ birds	eBird+2 obs.
September	Brier I. to <i>Inv</i> , 57 locs	646 birds	eBird+1 obs.
October	CSI. to <i>Pict</i> , 39 locs	312 birds	eBird+1 obs.
November	<i>Shel-Anna</i> , to <i>Pict</i> , 56 locs	318 birds	eBird+1 obs.
October	Brier I. to <i>HRM-Kings</i> . 9 locs.	40 birds	eBird
November	<i>Dig</i> , to <i>Ant</i> , 16 locs	256 birds	eBird



Like our children, this young AMERICAN GOLDFINCH Sept 10 at Cape George, *Rich*, was apparently accident prone, but the splinter should have been easily dislodged [Photo Jeannie Shermerhorn]

Evening Grosbeak

Aug. 18	Tremont, <i>Kings</i>	3	WPN
Sept 3	Kempt, <i>Queens</i>	6	EL
Sept. 9	Tremont, <i>Kings</i>	3	SL
Sept. 13	Cape George, <i>Rich.</i>	1	JSH
Sept. 22-29	Tremont, <i>Kings</i>	4	SLH
October	Brier I. to <i>HRM-Kings</i> . 9 locs.	40 birds	eBird
November	<i>Dig</i> , to <i>Ant</i> , 16 locs	256 birds	eBird



This fall heralded a new eastward surge of EVENING GROSBEAK, and this fine male, photographed in Lr. Sackville, shows why we welcomed them. [Photo Paul Lindgreen]

House Sparrow

Through season	CSI to <i>Rich</i> , 20 locs	170+ birds	eBird +3obs
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A Portfolio of Vagrant Sparrows, Fall 2011



FIELD SPARROW like this one (at left), Oct 27 on CSI, at was formerly a more regular fall vagrant here, but not so much in recent years.

HARRIS'S SPARROW (at right) breeds in the taiga of the far NW Canada and winters in the central US, and is the three species shown here. This one was photographed by its lucky finder Oct 22-24 in Hants. [Photo Michael Haynes]

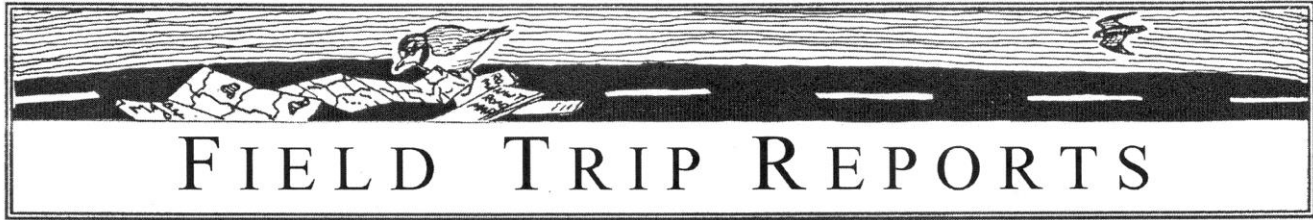


Among several **LARK SPARROWS** this fall, the perky individual at left was one of two found in late August (here Aug 29) at Hartlen Pt., *HRM*. [Photo Paul Murray]

List of Contributors Represented by Initials.

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

AAD	D'Entremont, Alix A.	DMW	Welch, Dottie M.K.	KST	Steele, Kate
AAM	MacLean, Angus	DOC	Cameron, Dorothy	LAL	Lavolette, Lance
ACO	Covert, Alan	DOU	Doull, Elizabeth	LOC	Codling, Lois
AGH	Horn, Andrew	DPO	Poole, Dorothy	MAM	Mills, Maureen
AHM	Mills, Anne	eBird	eBird Online Checklist	MCR	Rice, Maggie
ALM	Murrant, Allan	ELM	Mills, Eric L.	MIK	King, Michael
AND	Dean, Andy	FMC	McEvoy, Fritz	MMI	Millard, Margaret
AVM	Nagy-MacArthur, Avery	GAM	MacLean, Gayle	MZE	Zelenietz, Marty
AZV	Vienneau, Azor	GDE	D'Entremont, Giselle	PBG	Giffin, Patrick & Barbara
BBU	Burke, Bernard	GFO	Forsythe, George	PHE	Paul Evans
BEC	Crowell, Beverly	GMU	Murray, Gary	PKE	Kelly, Patrick
BID	Digout, Billy	HAT	Toom, Hans	PLC	Chalmers, Patricia L.
BJS	Smith, Betty June	HEK	Hank Kwindt	PMC	McKay, Pat
BKW	Woodworth, Brad K.	IAM	McLaren, Ian	PMU	Murray, Paul
BLF	Forsythe, Bernard	JAH	Hirtle, James	RAH	Hoogenbos, Rachel
BLM	Maybank, Blake	JAN	Mills, Jane	RAS	Smith, Rachel
BUS	Bussey, Bill	JCT	Tufts, Judith C.	RBS	Stern, Richard
CAH	Haycock, Carl	JCZ	Czapalay, Joan	RDE	D'Entremont, Ron
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CJF	Field, Chris J.	JOB	Belbin, John	SAH	Hiltz, Sandy
CLD	Diggins, Claire	JOK	Kearney, John	SAN	Nickerson, Sandra
CHP	Pepper, Chris	JON	Nickerson, John	SEM	Myers, Susann
CST	Stoddard, Clyde	JQA	Alexander, Jane	SJF	Fullerton, Sylvia
DAC	Currie, David	JRU	Rubin, John	SLH	Hulford, Sheila
DAM	MacNeill, Don	JSC	Cohrs, Shirley	SMA	Marler, Sharron
DAW	Walmark, David	JSH	Shermerhorn, Jeannie	STV	Vines, Steve
DGA	Garratt, Dennis	JUO	Obrien, Judy	SYP	Penner, Sydney
DHH	Hipperrn, Dennis	JVA	Vandermuelen, Josh	TEB	Boswell, Terry
DHY	Young, David H.	JWW	Wolford, Jim	TOK	Kavanagh, Tom
DJC	Crosby, Donna J.	KEL	Lantz, Kevin	WMA	MacPhail, Weldon
DJO	David Johnston	KFS	Spicer, Kathleen	WPN	Neily, Wayne
DMC	Cormier, Dominic	KJM	McKenna, Ken J.		



Following the regular field trips sponsored by the Society, a few leaders report on the outings, although the bird sightings are of course incorporated in the seasonal reports. Here we include the two submitted accounts and also a third that, while it was not a Society-sponsored, was enjoyed by a group of long-standing members.

Point Michaud Beach, August. 25

By Billy Digout

On Saturday, Aug. 25, 13 birders took a walk on Pt. Michaud Beach in *Richmond*. It was a beautiful sunny day, and even though there was a surfing competition at the east end of the beach, this didn't bother us or the birds, as we walked to the north-west end, over a km away. The only things that seemed to make the birds move were some soaring eagles, a Harrier and a Merlin, of which the latter chased a few shorebirds for a while. Several hours later, after we left the beach, we checked out a couple of ponds in Lower L'Ardoise, and then had a wonderful lunch in Rockdale, hosted by Leah Jeffrey and Sheila Digout. As birding went, it was rather uneventful, with 10 species of shorebirds and 38 species overall, but it was a trip enjoyed by all, with a good mix of new birders and veterans

Bon Portage Island, Labour Day Weekend

By Claire Diggins

On Friday, Aug 31, four of us set off from the Prospect Pt. Wharf, Shag Harbour, aboard the fishing boat *Eider* with skipper, Lee Adams. The weather was warm and sunny with a definite swell on. The island was quiet, with a light wind. We greeted a tiny petrel and its parent in a burrow before turning in. The remaining three days on the island were hot and sunny and we hiked continuously on the lookout for birds to add to our list. We spotted: Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, and Black-and-White Warblers, Common Yellowthroat, Northern Waterthrush, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, Swainson's Thrush, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Boreal Chickadee, Song Sparrows, and an abundance of Red-breasted Nuthatches. Many raptors were present: Northern Harrier, Peregrine Falcon, Merlin, Sharp-shinned Hawk, and American Kestrel. We also had a Black-crowned Night-Heron, and two Great Blue Herons. A highlight was a Nelson's Sparrow, but my favourite was a Great Horned Owl.

As always, our sense of community prevailed for the weekend and it was with regret that we left on Monday afternoon. Jeff White, Ingrid and Burkhard Plache, and myself.

Spectacular Migration on Brier Island, late October

By Eric Mills

During Oct 22-26 Don MacNeill, Ian McLaren, Eric Mills, Bernice Moores & Judy O'Brien spent most of this week on the island. Monday (Oct 22) featured an estimated 12,000 Great Shearwaters, 200 Sooty Shearwaters, and about 300 kittiwakes between 0730 and 0930 off Northern Point. The birds of the day were a fine cooperative White-eyed Vireo and a Clay-colored Sparrow at Northern Point. Also of interest were Wood Duck, Blue-winged Teal, both Scaup, 2 Pied-billed Grebes, Peregrines, a Puffin, a Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Red-bellied Woodpecker, E. Phoebe, White-breasted Nuthatches, a migrant Northern Cardinal, and an Evening Grosbeak.

Tuesday (Oct 23) was extremely windy and cold. Nonetheless, we saw all 3 Scoters, a nice selection of hawks, a late Spotted Sandpiper, a few Semipalmated Plovers, a Northern Shrike, a N. Mockingbird, a Nashville Warbler, Ipswich Sparrows,

several White-crowned Sparrows, a Rusty Blackbird, a Pine Grosbeak, numbers of White-winged Crossbills, and scattered Pine Siskins in small groups, in addition to most of the species seen before. The bird of the day was Black-capped Chickadee - we estimated at least 300 seen and noted that they were everywhere on the island.

Wednesday (Oct 24) brought a massive arrival of land birds, including 75 Blue Jays, ca. 150 Chickadees (numbers down slightly), 6 Boreal Chickadees, 30 Golden-crowned Kinglets, 7 E. Bluebirds, 1000+ Robins in many flocks at Northern Point in the morning, 150 Yellow-rumped Warblers, 12 Palm Warblers, 30 Chipping Sparrows, 3 Nelson's Sparrows, 2 Fox Sparrows, 200+ Song Sparrows, 30 White-throats, 30 White-crowns, an estimated 700 Juncos, 12 Cardinals, 75 Grackles, at least 100 White-winged Crossbills, and 80 Pine Siskins. Others of interest included migrating Double-crested Cormorants, 44 Turkey Vultures, 30 Sharp-shinned Hawks, Sanderlings, a White-rumped Sandpiper, a Dunlin, a Woodcock, Hairy Woodpeckers, Hermit Thrushes, Blue-headed Vireos, Swamp Sparrows and Red-winged Blackbirds. It was a spectacular Brier I. birding day.

Thursday (25Oct) brought another huge arrival of birds, in the morning at Northern Point notably Robins, Siskins, White-winged Crossbills, Grackles, and thousands of Juncos, which were spread over the island (later in the day I saw countless thousands more along Long Island, on Digby Neck, and along back roads into Annapolis County). Before dawn I saw 30 Hermit Thrushes along the Brier Island roads, and by noon I estimated that I had seen 50. There were also at least 100 Robins, many Song Sparrows and countless Juncos in my car's headlights. The Bluebird flock had grown to 9 by the time I left the island in early afternoon. Some birders remained on the island until Friday and probably had additional sightings.



Nova Scotia's First Burrowing Owl

By David A. Currie and Ian A. McLaren

Discovery

On Feb. 17, 2013, CBC television presented a "Land and Sea" program on islands of Nova Scotia. A viewer named Dan Buell from Prince Edward Island contacted DAC through the Nova Scotia Bird Society Website, writing that if we had missed the program, there was what he thought was a Burrowing Owl in a sequence on McNabs Island, in Halifax hbr.. Since he hadn't seen the program, DAC went to the internet and watched the story from start to finish. There was no doubt that the Land and Sea episode had indeed included a short segment with a stunning Burrowing Owl exactly as Dan Buell had described.

DAC then emailed Lee Anne Gillan at CBC who had been corresponding with him earlier about the NSBS-owned Outer Bald Island featured in this same program. She was sure the video sequence was taken on McNabs I., and put him in touch with the cameraman, Wade Cornell. He confirmed that the owl was not dubbed into the program for appeal, that he had filmed it at Fort McNab on Oct. 18, and was positive that it wasn't a pet of the island's sole resident whom they interviewed on the program.



Figure 1. BURROWING OWL, *Athne cunicularia* on McNabs I., Halifax Hbr., Oct. 18. 2013. [From Video image, Wade Cornell]

On Mar. 3, 2012, DAC and Dominic Cormier visited Fort McNab to find out if the bird was, by some miracle, still alive and to photograph the area and confirm the type of post the bird was perched on (see image above). They explored a good part of the island and checked each fort bunker that they could enter and, not surprisingly, did not find the owl. Several fence posts, though, were the same as the one used by the owl in the film and exactly where Wade Cornell said they were. Subsequently we learned that Mary-Colin Chisholm some time during October had seen a small owl “perched on a concrete form” in the same locality, undoubtedly the Burrowing Owl (Dominic Cormier, pers. comm.).

Amazingly, the images indicated that owl did not appear to be from the from the migratory western N. American population, but were a much better match for the nominally non-migratory Florida subspecies. This can be seen by comparisons of Fig. 1 with photographs of the western (Fig. 2) and Florida (Fig. 3) subspecies. Peter Pyle, whose identification guide (Pyle 1997) is useful in subspecies determinations, has indicated (*in litt.* to P.A. Buckley, copy to IAM) from the retained juvenile lesser coverts (worn, brownish on Fig. 1) that our bird was in its first year. Next we review the two subspecies and the differences between them.

Subspecies

The two North American subspecies of Burrowing Owl were described in the 19th century. Of these, *Speotyto* (now *Athene*) *cunicularia*, includes the largely migratory western N. American subspecies *hypugaea*. (The subspecies name was given by Bonaparte in 1825, and was later changed by others, including Ridgway, to *hypogaea*, but *hypugaea* has priority.) Ridgway had earlier designated the Florida bird a “variety” of *cunicularia*, but later (Ridgway 1914) as a species *Speotyto floridana* of Florida and Hispaniola. The possibility remains that they should be classed as different species, as genetically they are quite distinct, but relatively uniform within their separate ranges (Korfanta et al. 2005). Both are threatened and the western subspecies is almost extirpated in Canada. The plumage of the western birds is paler brown than the more chocolate-brown to blackish of the Florida subspecies, which also has larger, whiter dorsal and chest spots, and is more thickly barred below (see Fig. 2, 3). Differences in the feathering of legs (as in Pyle 1996) are difficult to evaluate, as both may vary in thickness and extent of bristle-like feathers on the legs.



Figure 2. Burrowing owls of the western subspecies *hypugaea*. The two at left were photographed late in the day Apr. 30, 2012, in the N. Dakota badlands, and the one at right during June 2012 in Grasslands NP, SK Both show the characteristically brown plumage, with smaller buffy spotting above and on upper breast, and widely-spaced barring on lower breast and belly. [Photos: left two, Dominic Cormier; right, Allan Murrant].



Figure 3. Burrowing Owls of subspecies *floridana* photographed early May 2011 (two at left) and April 1989 (right) at Cape Coral, FL Note their more chocolate brown upperparts, more extensive barring on lower chest and belly, and larger, whiter spotting on back and upper breast compared with the western birds in Fig. 2. These spring birds may be a little faded and so not so dark as the newly moulted McNabs I. bird. [Photos: two at left, Ian Murray; at right, Larry Taylor]

Precedents

Small numbers of Burrowing Owls have wandered to the northeastern U.S. and eastern Canada. The following attempts to list (by date) all those that have occurred in coastal states and provinces north of New Jersey, including those identified to subspecies. The records have been gathered from Davis (1977), Forbush (1922), and the pertinent seasonal accounts in the journal *American Birds* (later *North American Birds*), with the assistance of several correspondents

Location	Dates present	Status	Subspecies
Newburyport, MA	May 15, 1875	Specimen	<i>hypugaea</i>
New York City, NY	Aug. 8, 1875	Live (escape?)	
Dover, NH	Feb 19, 1922	Found dead, specimen	<i>hypugaea</i>
Westhampton, Long I., NY	Oct. 27, 1950	Specimen, lost	<i>hypugea</i>
Cedar Bch., Long I., NY	Oct. 27, 1976	Sight record, same as below?	
Cedar Bch., Long I., NY	Dec. 27-28, 1976	Captured, released in FL	<i>floridana</i>
Near Fort Beausejour, NB	June 21-26, 1978	Sighting, then remains	
New Haven, CT	Dec. 19-28, 1979	Photo, specimen	<i>floridana</i>
Plymouth Bch., MA	May 13, 1980	Sight record	
Greenwich Pt., CT	May 24, 1980	Sight record	
Monomoy I., MA	June 6, 1980	Sight record	
Marthas Vineyard, MA	July 12-Oct. 1, 1980	Photos	<i>hypugaea?</i>
Grand Manan I., NB	June 5, 2000	Sight record*	
Washington Co., ME	July 15- Aug 25, 2006	Photo record	<i>hypugaea</i>

*A detailed description and sketches by two observers, suggesting *hypugaea*, was rated “identification uncertain” by the NB Bird Records Committee, possibly because of the lack of experience of the observers.

Discussion

There seems little doubt from its appearance that the McNabs I. bird came from Florida. Although that population is rated as non-migratory, the previous records in n.e. U.S.A. indicate that it does wander. Wandering from a Caribbean population (several subspecies, including possibly *floridana* in Cuba), which are believed to be highly sedentary, does not seem worth considering. The question remains: was it a “hitchhiker” on one of the vessels that entered Halifax Harbour in preceding days or weeks, or victim of a hurricane or lesser meteorological event of the kinds that have brought us birds from s.e. U.S.A. and possibly the Caribbean in the past (McLaren et al. 2000, McLaren and Mills, 2006). There are several Web reports of western Burrowing Owls on ships at sea off the West Coast, and a widely-reported Web example of one that was removed from a cruise ship at Port Everglades, FL on Sept.18, 2010, before the ship departed, and released in suitable habitat. Sykes (1974), in reporting a first specimen from North Carolina, mentions some occurrences on boats near the coasts of Florida and Virginia. There is also an interesting record in Ridgway (1874), of a critically identified *floridana* taken “at sea, 200 miles off the coast of Georgia”. This does not answer the issue of whether this bird boarded the vessel far at sea or close to the Florida coast. The 2012 fall hurricanes all passed well offshore or landed (Sandy) well south of Nova Scotia. Good numbers of “southern” vagrants appeared this year in September through November, without a major “fallout”, although increased numbers of Yellow-breasted Chats, Indigo Buntings and some Blue Grosbeaks appeared in the days following Oct. 12 (see the appropriate summaries). There is clearly more to be learned about the vagrancy of “non-migratory” Florida Burrowing Owls.

Acknowledgements

We appreciate assistance and information from Paul Buckley Matt Garvey, David Christie, and several other correspondents whom they invoked to discuss records of wandering Burrowing Owls. We are grateful to Wade Cornell for his alertness and skill in establishing this record, and to the photographers (named in the captions) who supplied other images.

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Nova Scotia's Second Confirmed Dusky Flycatcher

Brad Woodworth
Middleton, NS

The flycatcher we caught at the Atlantic Bird Observatory on Bon Portage Island on Oct 18, 2012 was a hatch-year bird and was banded and measured by Janice Chard (bander-in-charge at ABO). Here are observations and measurements that were used to identify the bird:

The bird vocalized several times while in the hand. Most of these were individual call notes; however, it twice made extended vocalizations that Ryan Dudragne (ABO volunteer) is highly confident incorporated elements of the Dusky Flycatcher song. Having never encountered this species before I couldn't confirm that the longer vocalizations were those of a Dusky Flycatcher; however, they did not sound like any Least Flycatcher I have heard before. Unfortunately, we were unsuccessful in our attempts to record these vocalizations -- once we had the voice recorder ready the bird stopped calling.

Primary 6 was emarginated [distinction from Alder/Willow]

Tail length = 59 mm [near upper limit for Alder/Willow & Least]

Wing length (unflattened) = 65 mm to longest primary

Wing length - Tail length = 6 mm [near lower limit for Alder/Willow & Least]

Bill width = 4.9 mm [at lower limit for Alder/Willow]

Bill from nares = 7.8 mm

Primary 6 – Primary 10 = 64 mm - 56 mm = 8 mm [just below lower limit for Alder/Willow & Least]

Primary 9 – Primary 5 = 63 mm - 60 mm = 3 mm [below lower limit for Alder/Willow & Least]

Longest secondary = 56 mm

Longest primary (65 mm) - Longest secondary (56 mm) = 9 mm

Longest primary – Primary 6 = 1 mm [below lower limit for Alder/Willow]

These measurements are a good match to those of Dusky Flycatcher (see Table 3 in Pyle's [1997] Identification Guide to North American Birds: Part 1) and eliminate the possible confusion species, Least, Alder, and Willow. The photos below add further convincing evidence.



DUSKY FLYCATCHER in the hand shows plumage features that are different from our usual eastern *Empidonax* species. The gray face and nape, contrasting with the olive back and crown are alerting features, and unlike Alder/Willow and most Least, and the very different Gray Flycatcher. The nearly straight sides of the bill differ from those of all eastern *Empidonax*, and from the much shorter straight-sided bill of Hammond's Flycatcher. [Photos: left Brad Woodworth); right, Ryan Dudragne]

Introduction to Acoustic Migration Monitoring

by John Kearney

Background

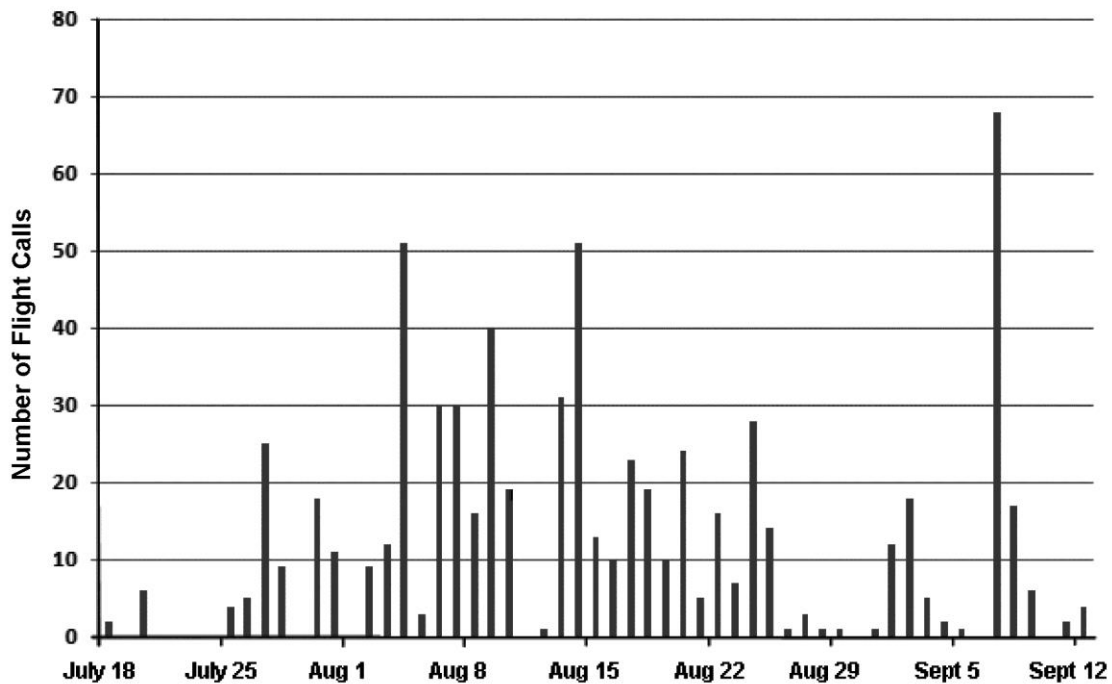
When I first started doing assessments of the risk of wind farms to birds in 2007, it seemed illogical that all of the required studies were done during the daytime. The vast majority of the known mortalities of birds at wind farms were of passerines, which were mainly nocturnal migrants. It made more sense to monitor birds flying over the proposed wind facility at night. Thus began my interest in acoustic monitoring.

My efforts progressed from going out at night to listen, to developing some primitive microphones and recording equipment, to purchasing equipment designed specifically for recording the night flight calls of birds. By 2012, I had recorded a full spring and fall migration of birds going over my home located in Doctor's Brook, *Antigonish* County. At the same time, I had become convinced that acoustic monitoring could greatly contribute to our understanding of bird migration in Nova Scotia.

There are a few dimensions of acoustic monitoring that make it unlike our daytime birding experiences. The first is that the night flight calls of birds can be quite different from the calls that they make in the day, including their daytime flight calls. A good example of this is the YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER that has a distinct flight call in the day ("chek") and another, quite different one ("vsee") during the night. Second, since we can't see the bird making a call, it is not possible to tell if a series of calls is made by one bird repeating the call or several birds making the same call. Thus counts consist of flight calls of a particular type and not number of birds. Related to this is the fact that the flight calls of some species are very similar and can't be separated at the species level. A good example is the Swamp Sparrow and Lincoln's Sparrow. Here the identification of the call is to the closest taxon possible, in this case, the genus, *Melospiza*. A number of warbler species in Nova Scotia of the genus *Setophaga* can also be very difficult to separate to the species level. However, if you are recording the night flight calls, the spectrogram of a call can be a very helpful aid in identification.

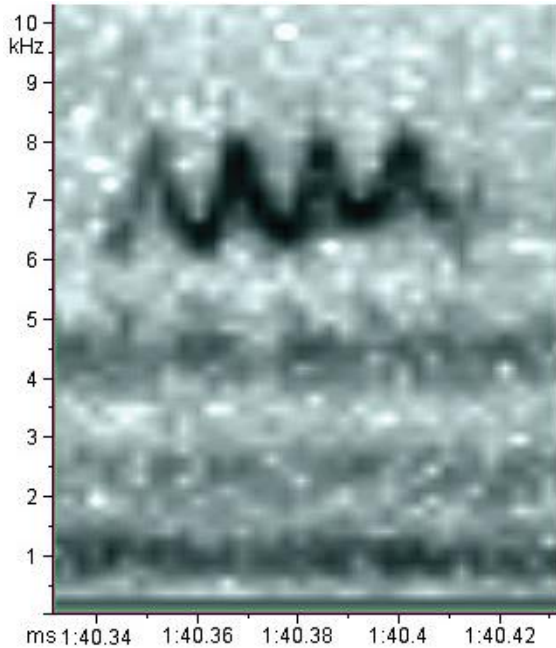
Another difficulty is that the identification of night flight calls is still a relatively new scientific field of study. Thus, it is not known how much overlap there may be in the calls of birds having somewhat distinct but similar calls. An example of this in Nova Scotia is the night flight calls of the MAGNOLIA WARBLER and NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH.

On the other hand, some of the problems associated with counting birds during the day are similar to those encountered during the night. One of these is the detectability of birds. If we are walking in a forest, we are reasonably certain that we are seeing most of the birds within a few metres of the path, but not so certain how many birds may be lurking deeper in the forest. Similarly at night, one can detect the birds at low altitudes directly over the microphone or our ears, but we don't know too much about how many birds are flying at greater heights or closer to the horizon. This is further complicated by the fact that we don't know under what circumstances birds call when they are flying. Do they call all the time? Or do they call only under certain conditions? Science has not figured this out yet. You might be asking yourself, given all these uncertainties, what value is acoustic monitoring to the study of bird migration? My answer would be that it is much the same as most census methods. We are taking a sample of the birds detectable by a certain method at a given point in time. It is through the accumulation of these samples over a season or several seasons and in a variety of locations that patterns begin to emerge that enhance our understanding of bird migration. One aspect of last year's autumn migration that surprised me was how early in the season was the nocturnal passage of AMERICAN REDSTART. I had previously thought their peak was in early September. This is true. But, as seen in the graph below, most birds passed overhead during the month of August.



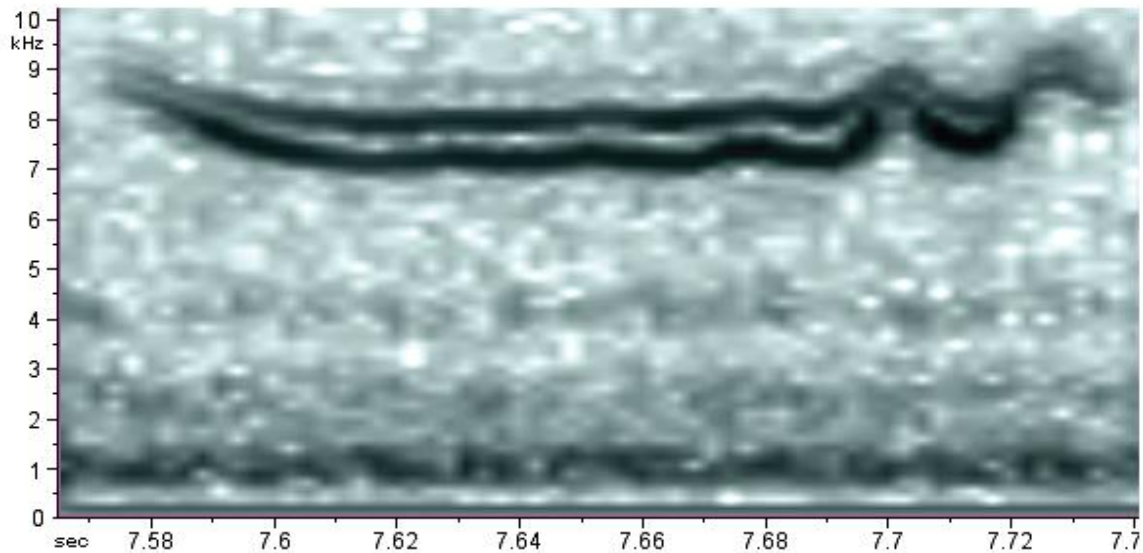
ID Basics – How to Tell a Warbler from a Sparrow

When I first started bird identification in my youth, I would ask myself if the bird in question was the size of a crow, pigeon, robin, sparrow, or warbler. That was the start of the identification process for me. I think this approach can be used as well for the identification of night flight calls by their spectrograms. So first we need to know the difference between the spectrogram of a warbler and a sparrow.



On the spectrogram at left from a Magnolia , the vertical axis is the frequency of the call in kilohertz (kHz) and on the horizontal axis (ms) is the duration of the call in milliseconds. As a warbler in the genus *Setophaga*, the Magnolia Warbler has a night flight call similar to other species in this genus (with multiple “bumps”). But its call is somewhat longer in duration (70 milliseconds) than others and has a rising quality which makes it similar to the Northern Waterthrush. The daytime flight call of the Magnolia Warbler is pretty much the same as its night flight call. Phonetically, it sounds like “szzip”

The next spectrogram is of the WHITE-THROATED SPARROW. Note how much longer it is in duration than the Magnolia Warbler’s; more than twice as long (167 milliseconds). It is also at a higher frequency. You can sometimes hear the White-throated Sparrow give its night flight call when it is skulking in a woodpile or thick brush. It sounds like “tseedt”.



In general then, warblers have short night flight calls less than 70 milliseconds in the 5-9 kHz range while sparrows have long, over 100 millisecond, calls in the 6-10 kHz range.

Birds in Our Past

Long-time NSBS member Eric Ruff has forwarded news items gleaned from the archived "Yarmouth Herald". Clearly Nova Scotians more than a hundred years ago had a more utilitarian view of birds. We'll have more glimpses of those times in future issues of Nova Scotia Birds.

From the Yarmouth Herald, Nov 10, 1886

Wild Pigeons by Millions.

A despatch from Tahcquah, Indian Territory, to the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*, says that near that place is the greatest wild pigeon roost in the United States. A man from the Sore Snake district says the trees covering a mile of square timbered land are literally as full as the limbs will bear at night with these birds. Millions of pigeons are there, and at night when they come in to roost they make noise like mighty thunder. Birdmen say there are only two droves of wild pigeons now in North America. This is the larger one. A great many people are encamped around the roost engaged in trapping, netting, and killing them for shipment,

which they are doing by the thousands. New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis, and other places in the States of less note, are represented at this roost. For dead ones the slayers get an average of \$2 per 100; for live ones the netters get \$4 to \$6 a hundred. Sometimes as many as forty dozen are caught in one fly of the net. This makes several years in succession these birds have come to this place to roost, after nesting and summering away up among the lakes of Minnesota and adjoining country. A great many Indians are making from \$2 to \$3 a day in the pigeon business, while the speculators and shippers from the cities are making from \$20 to \$25 daily when they have anything like luck.

Even at that late time, there seems to have been more celebration of the bounty than concern for the species.

From the Yarmouth Herald, 29 Dec 1886

A bird about the size of a robin is making war upon the English sparrows in Bangor and other places. It follows and strikes the sparrow down and kills it with a few blows from its long, sharp bill. It is also able to easily carry a sparrow away. The appearance of these murderers should be hailed with delight, as the English sparrow is one of the worst pests

belonging to the feathered tribe. Commissioner Stilwell informs the *Whig* that the bird which is making war on the sparrow is known as the American shrike. This bird after eating a part of the sparrow hangs the latter on a tree branch or more often a thorn bush "for future reference."

Readers will readily guess the id of "the American shrike"