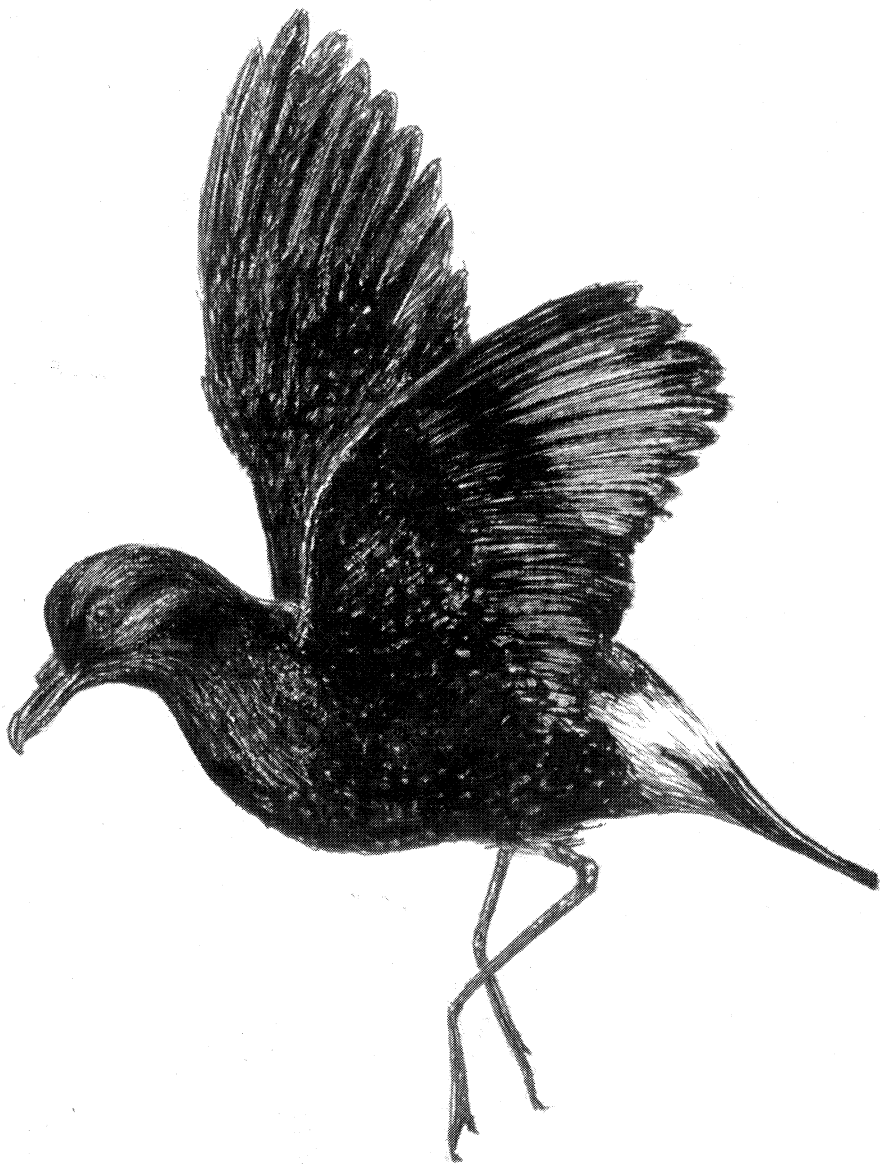


# **NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS**



**January 1986**

NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS  
a publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society

Volume 28 Number 1

January 1986

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor-in-Chief	Shirley Cohrs
Records Editor	Bob Dickie
Photographic Editor	Ian McLaren
Christmas Counts	Mary and Ross Anderson
Seasonal Bird Reports	C.R.K. Allen R.G.B. Brown Francis Spalding Phyllis Dobson Ian A. McLaren Shirley Cohrs
Cover: <i>Leach's Storm Petrel</i> by R.B. Dickie	

Table of Contents

President's Report	1
Fall Bird Report	2
Field Trip Reports	34
Upcoming Field Trips	44
Book Review-- <u>Sea of Slaughter</u>	47
Birding Cole Harbour to Chezzetcook	49
Fall Migration at Sea	56
Chestnut-sided Warblers	58
Another look at the Glaucous Gull	60
The Illusive Water Ouzel	67
Letters to the Editor	69
Annual General Meeting	74
Conservation and Environmental News	80

Use of photographs from NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS  
requires written permission from the photographer.

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

ISSN 0383-9567

Second Class Mail

Reg. No. 4628

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

We have met here about eight times during the past year and I would like to thank the Museum people for letting us use this auditorium. I would like to thank James McLaren for his efforts in arranging the slate of speakers and John Cohrs for his work as the Master of Ceremonies each night. Thankyous also go to Millie Lawrence for the coffee and cookies at the end of each meeting and to Dave Currie and his wife for their efforts at sorting the mail into Postal Code packages for each mailing of NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS.

The efforts of all these people have contributed in no small measure to a very successful year for our Bird Society.

Financially we are in good shape and have a reasonable quantity of decals, crests and stationery and a new computer upon which we will maintain our membership list. The computer will be kept in the home of our membership secretary and no doubt arrangements can be made for its use by members who wish to use it to maintain or analyse bird statistics. By looking at the financial report you will see that the cost of printing Nova Scotia Birds is up by about \$1000.00. This is not just an increase in printer's costs. Shirley Cohrs and her contributors have stepped up production. The January 1985 issue was 80 pages long compared to 68 pages for January 1984. Many thanks Shirley and company.

The Raptor Rehabilitation program has been very successful this year. We are now writing to all the Veterinarians in the province to bring them up to date.

I would like to thank Ian McLaren and his team of editors for their efforts on the third edition of Tuft's Birds of Nova Scotia. The Museum gave us a grant of \$2,800.00 for this work. We spent \$1,400.00 on the computer and the rest on research of records for the editors. I must thank Fulton Lavender for this lengthy data searching and number crunching to get the facts together for the new book which we hope to see next year.

Environment Canada has just celebrated 100 years for Parks Canada. In appreciation of the efforts of the Nova Scotia Bird Society toward a Management Plan for Kejimikujik National Park, and toward the Woods property, the Society was presented with a plaque last June. It is here tonight if you haven't seen it yet and I have made arrangements with Peter Hope to have it placed on permanent display in the Visitors Reception Centre at Keji.

I could talk for hours about our society--but time is marching on; we still have some business to attend to before we get to the wine and cheese part of the evening--this year again arranged by Phil Bryson. Many thanks to her for her work.

One last item: thanks go to Bob MacDonald and the leaders of many field trips. The birders report many interesting sightings even if the poor spring resulted in a lower than normal population. We will have to wait and see what effect it will have on next year's birding. I know Bob is already on the go with a good selection of interesting trips.

Bill Caudle

## FALL BIRD REPORT, 1985

Reports have come from different parts of the province complaining of the scarcity of song birds during the summer. What happened, was it the wet, cold weather?

June, 1985, will go down as one of the wettest and coldest in the province's history. This June, Halifax almost doubled its previous record rainfall for that month. Truro set the highest June rainfall record in 113 years and C.F.B. Shearwater, near Dartmouth, recorded a rainfall 400% above normal. July was more charitable but even then, Shelburne reported precipitation 125% above normal.

This is certainly not a healthy situation for nesting birds. Those that feed on insects are hard hit because cold rains kill insects, delay their hatch and causing flying insects to remain on the ground. Without insects, many young birds will starve.

Shirley Cohrs has noted that several people found many young birds that had died before fledging. While it is common for many single brooded species to re-nest if the first nest is destroyed, she feels that the young may have developed sufficiently to satisfy the parent bird's brooding instinct and with no young to tend, they may simply have migrated early.

In any event, we did get some great birds this time. In all, 96 reporters sent in a total of 2125 reports on 296 bird species including 18 species that do not appear on our check list. Of the 298 species that do appear on our current check list, only 20 were not reported.

The most frequently reported bird was the GREATER YELLOWLEGS followed at some distance by BLACK BELLIED PLOVER, MERLIN AND MOURNING DOVE.

Incidentally, September and October were generally sunny and dry. Ironically, Truro which had the wettest June in 113 years, experienced the driest September in the same 113 years.

I would like to thank Keith Keddy, a member of our Society and an employee of Environment Canada, for contributing the weather data and finally, a special thanks to the following who submitted the bird reports.

C.R.K. Allen, Ann Almon, Mike Almon, Norman Bay, Pearl Bay, Betsy Brown, Otis C. Chipman, Margaret Churchill, John Cohrs, Lisè Cohrs, Shirley Cohrs, Otis Cossitt, Russell J. Crosby, George Crowell, Dave Currie, Delisle d'Entremont, Raymond S. d'Entremont, Jerome K. D'Eon, Michell D'Eon, Ted D'Eon, Bob Dickie, Helen Dickie, Stewart Dickie, Phyllis Dobson, Chris Field, W. Foote, Bernard Forsythe, Roger Foxall, R.B. Fraser, Sylvia Fullerton, Connie Gallagher, Ross Gallagher, J. Gates, June Graves, Hubert Hall, Tim Hall, Sharon Hawboldt, Ruth D. Hebb, C.W. Helleiner, Marion W. Hilton, John Kearney, Keith N. Keddy, Fulton L. Lavender, Betty Learmouth, Steve Manuel, Sara MacLean, Edie MacLeod, David MacKinnon, W. MacKinnon, Carol MacNeill, Don MacNeill, Jack MacNeill, E. MacRury, Diane Matteau, Rene Matteau, Ian McLaren, James McLaren, Alan McLeod, Peter McLeod, Bruce McTavish, Eldon Meikle, Bernice Moores, Eric Mills, Ethelda E. Murphy, Linda Payzant, Peter Payzant, Kitt Peters, Nancy Peters, Warren Peters, Arthur Porter, Don Purchase, Joyce Purchase, Pam Rhyno, Jean Richards, Barbara Ruff, Eric Ruff, David Sibley, Francis Spalding, A. Spencer, Richard B. Stern, Clarence Stevens, Jim Taylor, Bill Thexton, Brenda Thexton, Stuart Tingley, Miriam Toms, Jean Timpa, G. W. Tufts, Judith Tufts, Azor Vienneau, Eleanor Waldron, Tony White, Doug Whitman, Herb Wilson, Jim Wolford, David N. Young, Joan Young.

--Bob Dickie (Records Ed.)

LOONS, GREBES

RED-THROATED LOONS were here in good numbers during the migration period. There was an early one at Brier Is., Aug. 17 (RBS) and another quite early at L.W. Pubnico, Sept. 22 (DJD'E). High counts were up to 35 at Seal Is., Oct. 13-23 (SJF) and 30, Crescent Beach, Nov. 2, seen by the Cohrs who said there were probably more beyond telescope reach, out at sea. Besides these, there were about 10 other sightings of from one to three birds in Cape Breton, Bay of Fundy and South Shore.

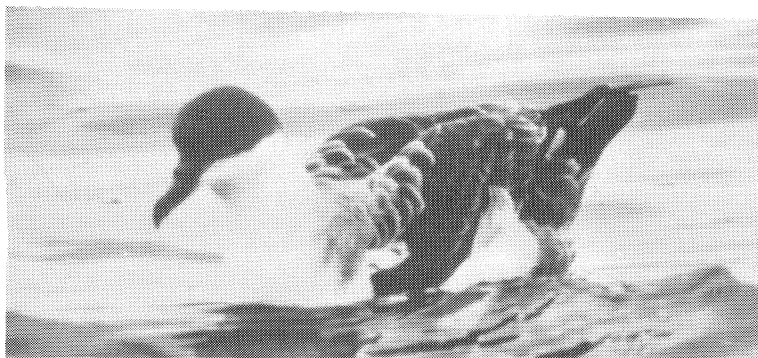
What can one say about COMMON LOONS in summer? They nested on little islands on the larger lakes, produced their downy young, raised their gangling fledglings, not as commonly as in former years before the out-boards, but still hanging on. In late summer and early fall they began to gather as usual in loose companies: 8 at Porters Lake, Aug. 4 (BRD), 45 sub-adults, Tidnish, Sept. 10 (SIT), 45+, Lewis Head, Oct. 2, and about 15 going by in a few minutes at Hartlen Pt., Oct. 5 (IAM). Wintering birds are seen in two's and three's in the usual places so far.

The two breeding reports of PIED-BILLED GREBES are both from Fulton Lavender: an adult with 3 downy young on Nirvana Pond, Aug. 8, and an adult with two downy Bissett Lake (near Dartmouth) Aug. 9. He also reports two at Russel Lake in the same area, Aug. 22, where Bob Dickie saw two on Nov. 2. The only other sightings are of singles at Seal Is., Aug. 27 (EM) and at Cole Harbour, Sept. 7 (R&DM).

A fluky HORNED GREBE in full breeding plumage was seen by the Cohrs, Margaret Churchill et al., July 27 - Aug. 6, at Green Bay. The first "normal" HORNED GREBE sighting was one at Marriott's Cove, Sept. 20 (RSH). The highest counts were 15 at Tidnish, Oct. 15 (SIT) and 30, Oct. 12, Lewis Head (MC&JG).

RED-NECKED GREBES showed up unusually early this year. There was one in partial breeding plumage at Brier Is., Aug. 30 (SIT&FS), and one Sept. 6, at Cranberry Head, Sept. 6 (JG,PH&CJ). Stuart Tingley saw 135 adults in breeding plumage off Tidnish Dock, Sept. 10, and 225 there Oct. 5, and says: "I can't help but wonder if (early large movements) are due to drought conditions in the prairies resulting in unsuccessful nesting?"

--CRKA, ed.



Greater Shearwater off Brier Island on the N.S.B.S. field trip, September 2, 1985. --Photo Eric Ruff

## FULMARS TO CORMORANTS

I think it's easiest to take our 'tube nose' sightings-- NORTHERN FULMARS, GREATER, SOOTY, MANX and CORY'S SHEARWATERS, and LEACH'S and WILSON'S STORM-PETRELS--in one gulp, so to speak, because most of the sightings come from ferry crossings and oceanographic cruises. On June 22 - 23, J. Finne from Montreal made the ferry crossing between Argentina and North Sydney. He saw at least 10,000 Greater Shearwaters, 500 Sooties, 3 Manx and 6 probable Cory's ("I have never seen the species before...but the description in the book matched") on the Newfoundland side. They must have been feeding on capelin in Placentia Bay. Cory's are warm water birds and unusual, but not impossible, so far north. Next morning, on the Nova Scotian side, there were only two Greater Shearwaters, but 80 Fulmars, and 500 Wilson's plus 300 Leach's Storm Petrels. The SIT and WINGS group saw 500 Fulmars from the North Sydney-Port aux Basques ferry on July 4. On July 12, however, at the shelf break 40 miles NNE of Scatarie, there were no Fulmars at all, and only the occasional Greater and Sooty Shearwater--but rafts of Leach's and Wilson's Storm Petrels instead (Wilson's predominating), sitting on the water (RGG). On July 31, Charlie Duncan (University of Maine at Machias) counted 303 Greaters, 4 Sooties, and 2 Manx Shearwaters on the Nova Scotian half of a "Bluenose" crossing. (We had Cory's as well, but only on the Maine/New Brunswick side.) There were also 32 Leach's and 145 Wilson's Storm Petrels. In early October, Fred Dobson on CSS Dawson in Roseway Basin, SE of Lockeport, saw both of the storm petrels, and Greater and Cory's Shearwaters, if only in small numbers. There were a few Fulmars too; he estimated the ratio of Light to Dark birds at 20:1.

Apart from that, we have 35 Cory's Shearwaters off Little Harbour on Sep. 23 (D&J Young), and the usual Greater and Sooty sightings from the Atlantic and SE Fundy coasts of the province. Raymond S. d'Entremont, out on a fishing boat off Yarmouth and on the Canadian edge of Georges Bank, says that the shearwater flocks peaked in June, but were almost all gone by October. Sooties made up about half the total in June, but "I saw only one Sooty Shearwater in October". He saw a Manx on Georges on Sept. 9, and occasional Cory's from August to as late as October 24. He asks "How long do Cory's stay in our area?". I'm not sure, but the answer is probably "as long as they like". Our Cory's Shearwaters are young birds that have spent a leisurely winter off Argentina, and are working their way back, by way of Georges Bank, to their colonies in the Canaries and the Azores.

Greaters seem to have been especially abundant off Brier Is., Yar. Co. on Sept. 2--though their numbers had fallen off by Sept. 14 (RBS). Birds were still trickling by on Sept. 30, however. These must have been non-breeding adolescents, because the breeding adults are back on Tristan da Cunha in the South Atlantic Ocean, claiming their burrows and territories, by mid-Sept. Most of the adolescents stay up north until November--and a few never bother to go home at all. The flock of 80+ Sooties off Brier on Sept. 2 (FLL) is interesting; they're another Southern Hemisphere species, and they usually pass straight through Canadian waters en route to the eastern Atlantic. However, a small pocket of birds always stays behind in Fundy--probably to feed on the shrimp there, along with the whales. Manx Shearwaters, on the other hand, have been breeding in southern Newfoundland since the mid-'70s, and it's only a matter of time before they reach Nova Scotia. People on yachts at night, in lonely anchorages, should listen for a screeching noise like a bat out of hell, with the rhythm of an early morning smoker's cough. That's the sound of a courting Manx Shearwater.

Wilson's Storm Petrels usually stay well out to sea, off the

south of Nova Scotia. However, there were 150+ of them on Sept. 8, 25 miles off Eastern Passage, Halifax Co. (James Taylor). The Cohrs' field party say that the Leach's on Bon Portage Island were whooping and hollering there as usual, on August 26 - 29.

NORTHERN GANNETS were, as usual, seen regularly. Their fall migration south reached a peak of 50+ off Seal Island on Oct. 21 (Stephen P. Manuel), and 100+ were going past Hartlen Pt., Hfx. Co., on Oct. 26 (FLL). They were still going past Hartlen Pt. - 20 in sight at a time, all adults and all heading SW - on Nov. 17 (Cohrs).

GREAT and DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS were both with us, and were reported from all around the province. The Double-crested is the migratory species, and Alan MacLeod saw a flock of 50 flying SW at Big Bras d'Or, Cape Breton, as early as Sept. 7. Migrating flocks were also seen near Queensland, Hfx. Co., on the same day (KNK); at Grand Pré on Oct. 4. (JT,BT); off Seal Is. (along with Great Cormorants) on October 12-14, and again on Oct. 21 (IAM, Stephen P. Manuel); and off Crescent Beach on Nov. 2 (Cohrs). Bob Dickie's bird at Herring Cove, Hfx. Co., on Nov. 24, is our latest sighting. Phyllis Dobson's half-dozen, "remaining among the Ring-billed Gulls fishing in Eel Brook" at the back end of October, sound a little lost.

--RBBB, ed.

*Many of the birding areas in Nova Scotia "crop up" regularly in the reports. To prevent repetition of the locations of these areas in the body of the text, we include this list of references:*

Yarmouth Co. (Yar. Co.)	Arcadia, Pinkney's Point, Tusket, Cranberry Head, Eel Brook, Chegoggin, Melbourne, Bartlett's Beach, Overton
Shelburne Co. (Shel. Co.)	Cape Sable Is., Matthews Lake, Lower Ohio, The Hawk
Queen's Co.	Port Joli, Port Hebert, Caledonia, Cadden Bay, Summer-ville Beach
Lunenburg Co. (Lun. Co.)	Cherry Hill, Broad Cove, Petite Riviere, Green Bay, Crousetown, Crescent Beach, Bayport, Lower LaHave, Second Peninsula
Halifax Co. (Hfx. Co.)	Three Fathom Hbr., Conrad's Beach, Lawrencetown, Cole Hbr., Mooseland, Rocky Run, Conrad's Road, Queensland, Waverley, Martinique Beach, Hartlan's Point
Colchester Co. (Col. Co.)	Economy
Annapolis Co. (Anna. Co.)	Wilmot, Round Hill, Paradise, Sandy Bottom Lake, Clementsport
Kings Co.	Wolfville, Greenfield, Melanson, Canard, Lockhartville, Black River Lake, Gaspereau, Grand Pré
Cumberland Co. (Cumb. Co.)	Lusby Marsh
Hants Co.	Shubenacadie
Guysborough Co.	Hazel Hill

HERONS AND RELATIVES

AMERICAN BITTERNS were seen in ones and twos during breeding season at Mavillette, Digby Co., Dartmouth, Yarmouth Co., Birch Grove in C. B., and W. Chezzetcook and Three Fathom Hbr. in Hfx. Co. I wonder where they do and don't actually breed. Eleven probable migrants were reported to have been seen between Aug. 28 and Nov. 30 (the last by JT at Hartlen Pt.). GREAT BLUE HERONS were sparingly reported. A late spring migrant (?) was Sable Is., on 11-20 June (M. Malone). Post-breeding and migratory concentrations included "many" at Grand Pré on Aug. 11, 15 near Canso on Aug. 14, 20+ at Cole Hbr. on Sept. 3-7 and again on Oct. 4, and 18 still there on Nov. 11.

For some reason a section of my spring report got omitted from the last issue, so I am weaving in those observations, from Snowy Egret to Little Blue Heron, for the record. SNOWY EGRETS arrived in April, with an individual at Woods Harbour on April 11 (2 near there May 19-20), and others at Annapolis Royal on Apr. 21, at Cape Sable on Apr. 28, Seal Is. on May 27, Crescent Beach on May 31, and Glace Bay Sanctuary on June 2. Stuart Tingley and Edgar Spalding found 2 on Bon Portage Island roosting among Black-crowned Night Herons in mid-May, and suspect that they nest there. However, none was seen there on a brief foray by IAM et al. on June 8. An adult at Cole Hbr. and 2 at Martinique Beach on July 2, and another at Matthew's Lake, Shel. Co., on July 6, were probably the vanguard of post-breeding dispersal from the "south". An adult seen by many around Conrad's Beach from Aug. 10 to Sept. 7. when it was joined by an imm., could have been one of these earlier birds. Three on Bon Portage Is. on Aug. 26-29 perhaps had indeed summered there. A GREAT EGRET near Northport, Cumb. Co., on May 12 and another near Amherst later in May were photographed for confirmation respectively by the Caldwells and Bob MacNeill. A bird at Matthew's Lake on July 13 may have been the same one seen there between Aug. 11 and 24 (D&JY). A bird seen on Cape Sable Is., on Oct. 6 was said by locals to have been on the Cape proper for some days previously. Adult LITTLE BLUE HERONS were at Forest Glen, Yar. Co., on Apr. 8 (JD"E), at Seaforth, Hfx. Co., on May 11 (FLL et al.), and on Cape Sable Is. on May 20-26 (sev. obs.). Another adult was at Breton Pond, C.B., July 3-10 (EW), and an immature was on Bon Portage Is. on Aug. 26 (JSC,DC). A CATTLE EGRET in breeding plumage was at Grand Pré on Aug. 6-7, and one convincingly described to KNK was at the Ross Farm Museum during summer. Later birds were at Chegoggin on Oct. 1 (JG) and (same bird?) at Sanford, Yar. Co., on Oct. 15 (AP).

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERONS are now clearly resident in the southwest counties, and are known to nest on Bon Portage Is., where there were at least 8 adults in late Aug. RSD'E notes that the pattern around Pubnico is adults in spring, and juveniles in late summer. The 2 juveniles with 2 adults on Seal Island in August (ELM,IAM) were thought to have nested locally. However, the up to 5 young birds around Lusby Marsh and A.P.B.S. in Sept. may have come from afar. There were also 2 immatures (not this year's) at Grand Pré in mid-Aug., and an apparent 2 year old at Conrad's Beach on Sept. 21 (FLL), our latest report. A YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON at Petite Riviere on Aug. 3 (LAC&JLC), an adult at E. Jordan between Aug. 7-18 (RLC), and an immature at Lusby Marsh on Sept. 15 (R. Foxall) were our only reports.

A single GLOSSY IBIS turned up near Maccan, Cumb. Co., on July 21 (RJC). More amusing was a dull, immature GREATER FLAMINGO closely observed at Wallace Bay Wildlife Refuge by Graham Cooch (a highly competent ornithologist with C.W.S.) on Aug. 3. It was said by locals (who alerted Graham to this 'crane' with a 'bent beak') to have been in the area for about a month. Of course such a bird almost certainly escaped from one of many captive flocks, probably in



nearby United States, but presumably did not come from a Nova Scotia source; does any reader know differently?

--IAM, ed.



Small numbers of year-old Arctic Terns turn up at our colonies each summer; although they do not breed, they may pick up pointers--Terns in this distinctive plumage were once thought to be a different species, Sterna portlandica, until matters were sorted out. This "Portlandica" tern was photographed by Ian McLaren on Wedge Island, St. Margaret's Bay, June 22, 1985.

GEESE AND DUCKS

One "BLUE GOOSE" visited Chegoggin, Yar. Co., briefly and was seen by a number of birders.

BRANT were sparsely reported: none at all this fall and only two spring sightings: 150, May 20, Grand Pré (B&BT) and 100+, May 28, Sand Point (RBD).

There is little change in CANADA GOOSE reports. Bob Dickie again saw a family group with 4 downy young in the Elderbank area, and sighted 100+ early migrants in a field at Shubenacadie, Aug. 28. Other first sightings were: 30+ at Glace Bay and 12+ at Melbourne. Other reports are routine with 1000 or more being seen at Tidnish, Oct. 27 (SIT), Martinique, Nov. 3, Port Joli, Nov. 10 (IAM) and an estimated 1000 between Tatamagouche and River John (RBD).

WOOD DUCK reports are more numerous than for this period last year and cover a wider time span, there being a fair number of sightings for late summer and fall. The only brood reported was one of 7 well grown young at Three Fathom Harbour, Sept. 2 (IAM). Bob Dickie saw up to 4 birds at Drain Lake during July and FLL reported 6 at Nirvana Pond (Three Fathom Harbour) Sept. 21. There were 9 other sightings of a total of 11 birds at points near Halifax, and at Seal Is. and Digby Neck.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL seem to be keeping their numbers up. There was a flock of 20 adults and immatures at Drain Lake, July 19 (RBD) and good sized flocks in several locations during October: 50 at Big Glace Bay Lake (OC) Oct. 3; well over 100 at Sheffield Mills, Oct. 10 (associating with a big flock of Pectoral Sandpipers) (JT&BT) and again 120 there Oct. 21 (RBS). There were 140 at APBS, Oct. 27 (SIT), and over 80 at Melbourne on the same date PRD,CRKA). Smaller numbers were reported from Matthew's Lake, Central Chebogue and Seal Is., during October.

There are surprisingly few reports of BLACK DUCKS. Perhaps people just aren't bothering with such common place birds. If so, they should at least get their wrists slapped. Our common, everyday birds should be the backbone of this report. End of sermon! The Matteaus report a brood of 9 nestlings, May 25 at Cole Harbour and 20 immatures at Cow Bay along with 3 adults June 8. There was another brood at Sunday Pt., June 24 (PRD,CRKA). Besides these there are only ten other reports for the whole province, all from the south shore area, except a wintering flock of 400+ at Glace Bay (OC&SM). The only other flocks of 100 or more were at Cole Harbour, Sept. 7 (R&DM) and 600+ at Melbourne from Nov. 12 on, varying somewhat in numbers from day to day, and this last is the ONLY report of this species since the end of October!

The 9 MALLARD reports sound, from their location, like wild birds, although Sara MacLean isn't entirely sure about the resident flock at Glace Bay Sanctuarv. The Matteaus saw the only brood--5 immatures with a male and female, at Eastern Passage, July 4. Once again with the exception of Glace Bay, all sightings were along the south shore, and mostly of from 2 to 6 or 7 birds with one high count of 52 at Crescent Beach, Oct. 5 (Cohrs).

There are 7 reports of NORTHERN PINTAIL, mostly of singles up to 5 birds and this time the Bay of Fundy gets into the act with the majority of sightings and top numbers: 100 at APBS, Oct. 19 (FLL&JT), and 20 at the same place, Oct. 27 (SIT). There were also two reports of single birds at Canard Pond on Oct. 8 and Nov. 8 (RBS). The south shore came in a poor second with 3 at Martinique, Sept. 8 (RBD), 5 at Nirvana Pond, Sept. 21 (FLL et al.) and one at Matthew's Lake, also

Sept. 21 (D&JY).

Good sized flocks of BLUE-WINGED TEAL were seen during Sept.: 40-50 on the 2nd at Matthew's Lake (D&JY), 25 at Martinique, Sept. 8 (RBD) and 30+ at Nirvana, the date not included but because of the size of the flock, a guess would be also Sept. (FLL, JT). There was a late bird at Nirvana Pond, Nov. 11, and a very late one at W. Chezset-cook, Nov. 14.

The Tufts found 2 pairs of NORTHERN SHOVELERS in one day, June 22; one was at Canard Pond, the other in a pond at Port Williams. Other sightings are of 8 at Lusby Marsh, Sept. 16 (IAM) and 2 at APBS, Oct. 13 (SIT).

GADWALLS were all over the place this fall--12 reports of a total of over 27 birds from various points in the Bay of Fundy and south shore regions. Most sightings were of one or two birds but there were 6 in Barrington Bay, Sept. 25 (MC&JG), 5 at Canning, Oct. 27 (MT et al.) and another 6 at Three Fathom Harbour, Nov. 14 (Cohrs & Purchases). In both cases they were reported to be associating with Blacks, Mallards and both species of teal.

A male EURASIAN WIGEON with 2 females in attendance appeared in a seaside pond at Seaforth, Nov. 3, where it was seen by the McLarens and Shirley Cohrs and Joyce Purchase. "Surely fresh in from Iceland or somewhere", says Ian. The birds were still there Nov. 14.

Amherst Pt. and Lusby Marsh produced 250 AMERICAN WIGEON for Ian McLaren on Sept. 16, and APBS alone produced 180 for Stuart Tingley, Oct. 18, where Fulton Lavender and company found 320 on Oct. 19. There were just 15 there Nov. 9 (SIT). The only other large number was 60 seen by FLL at Three Fathom Harbour, Sept. 21. There was a pair at Antigonish and a single female at Baddeck, July 6 (BMacT) and 2 at Canning, Oct. 30, but the Wigeon which made the headlines, was a female which dropped in to the pond in the Halifax Public Gardens on Oct. 28, and made the Rare Bird Alert. Sullivan's Pond doesn't have it ALL its own way!

An immature male CANVASBACK was seen by at least six observers at Cow Bay, Nov. 4 & 5. (RBD et al.).

Three immature or female REDHEADS seen by Ian McLaren at APBS, Sept. 16 were, he thinks, probably local birds as a few nest there and at Wallace Bay. He also saw a male coming out of eclipse at Three Fathom Harbour on Sept. 29.

There were broods of RING-NECKED DUCKS at Three Rathom Harbour on July 28, when a brood of 10 was seen, and again Sept. 1, when there were 15 birds, largely immatures, (IAM, ELM). Bob Dickie saw 30+ Ring necks at Drain Lake, one of their favourite summering and breeding places, on July 1 and again July 19, counted 45 mixed adults and young. By Oct. 12 there were just two left there (Cohrs). A flock of 30+ was at Three Fathom Harbour, Sept. 21, probably departing (FLL, DMacN).

A few GREATER SCAUP were seen in July: a moulting bird at Baddeck on the 14th (DS & Wings group), a male in St. Patrick's Channel on the 16th and a male and female at Three Fathom Harbour on the 27th (FLL et al.). There is no record of any numbers till Nov. 3, when there were up to 35 at Three Fathom Harbour, increasing to 40 by Nov. 9 (IAM, FLL). On this same date Bob Dickie estimated over 1000 along the north shore between Malagash and Pictou Harbour, and the Cohrs counted 72 off Crescent Beach, Nov. 23.

The only definitely identified LESSER SCAUP were 3 females at APBS, Oct. 19; a female, Nov. 2 at Three Fathom Harbour (FLL et al.) and two males at Three Fathom Harbour, Nov. 4 (PM).

Summering COMMON EIDERS were few and far between except for 60+ seen by the Matteaus at Grand Pré, June 28-29, and a brood of 13 partially grown young attended by two females (mother and aunt?) at Green Bay, July, seen by the Cohrs. When disturbed, these birds headed out to sea in the direction of distant Indian Island where they may have hatched.

At Evangeline Beach, they increased from 9+, July 31 to "many" by Oct. 22, and stood at 50, Nov. 11 (JCT).

June Graves reports that on Oct. 21, there were great rafts of eiders "all over" St. Mary's Bay, and estimates their numbers at over 7000. Bob Dickie also reports that there were the usual large numbers around Brier Island in late summer and fall.

OLDSQUAW sightings are a bit scanty; perhaps they haven't arrived yet. A very early sighting was of 2 males and a female at Crescent Beach, Aug. 18 (JSC&LC). There were 50 at Linden, on the north shore, Oct. 27, (SIT), 8 at Hartlen Pt., Nov. 16 (JT), about 30 at Brier Is., and 4 or 5 in Digby Harbour, Nov. 20 (RBS) and 25 at Lawrencetown Head, Nov. 23 (RBD).

Scoters were, on the whole, commoner, or at least more frequently seen this year than last but with a reversal in relative abundance. Last year BLACK SCOTERS were most often seen with WHITE-WINGED at the bottom and SURF SCOTERS in the middle. This year, Blacks were only reported 3 times compared to 14 for White-wings, and Surfs of course, still in the middle. The only considerable number of Blacks was 100+ at Green Bay, Oct. 19 (JSC). The other sightings were of 3 at L.W. Pubnico, Nov. 4 and 2 there Nov. 10 (RS and DJd'E).

There were 8 early Surf Scoters at Crescent Beach, July 27, with a mixed flock of the other two species (Cohrs). The Greatest number was 250 at Tidnish, Sept. 10 (SIT). Other reports are of ones and twos at Green Bay, Digby, Chegoggin, Tatamagouche and Cape Forchu.

White-winged Scoters were "general" being reported in numbers ranging from one to a dozen from all coastal waters. Higher counts were: 500+ Morien Bay, June 24 (SM), 20 at Mira Gut, Oct. 6 (OC), 50 Evangeline Beach, Nov. 14 (JCT, GWT) and 60 Grand Pré, Nov. 19 (RBD).

COMMON GOLDENEYES are scantily reported: 8 at Canard Pond, most of Oct. (RBS, JT, BT). There were 15 at Tatamagouche, Nov. 9 (RBD) and 10 at Crescent Beach, Nov. 22, and that is all!

Six BARROWS GOLDENEYES were consorting with a flock of scaups in Pictou Harbour, Oct. 30 (AJV) and a single was with a small flock of Common Goldeneyes at Crescent Beach, Nov. 22 (Cohrs).

First sighting of BUFFLEHEADS was at Annapolis Royal, Oct. 21, by Sharon Hawboldt, who saw 200 there on Nov. 16. She also reported 12 at Clementsport, Nov. 3. There were up to 3 birds at Digby, Three Fathom Harbour and Tatamagouche, Oct 30 to Nov. 9. Higher counts were: 50+ at Melbourne, Nov. 12 (PRD, CRKA) and 35+ at West Chezzetcook, Nov. 14 (Cohrs & Purchases).

HOODED MERGANSERS are well-reported: 13 sightings--8 in Oct., 5 in Nov.--for a total of 46 individuals. Eight reports were from points along the south shore from Halifax, 4 from the Valley region and one from East River, Pictou. The greatest number in one report was 15 at the "Puddle", a long-time Hooded Merganser resort, near

Hubbards Halifax Co.

Only one sizeable assemblage of COMMON MERGANSERS has been reported so far: 200-300 at River John, Nov. 9 (RBD). Except for one other smaller group at White Rock, Kings Co., of 30 birds (BLF) all other sightings--7 in all--were of 8 birds or less.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSERS also appeared in small numbers--up to 10 --at Seal Is., Seaforth, Eel Lake and Pinkney's Pt. There were 12 at Glen Haven, Oct 14, and 20 immatures at Tantallon, Nov. 10, (AJV) and the only truly large numbers were 200 at Linden and 200 at Caribou on the north shore, Oct. 27, and 29 respectively (SIT).

There was a female RUDDY DUCK at Seal Is., Aug. 12, and another or the same bird again, Aug. 27--Sept. 3 (IAM,ELM). There were two at APBS, Oct. 19, and again possible "repeats" there Oct. 29 (SIT). At Three Fathom Harbour there were 2, Oct. 26 and one, Nov. 14 (FLL et al.), and two were at Cow Bay, Nov. 3 and 5 (PM,RBD). There was an immature at Russell Lake, Oct. 29 (FLL) and another near Truro, Oct. 30 (AJV).

--CRKA,ed.



This Blue Goose, at Cheggogin Point near Yarmouth on Nov. 10, 1985, was a lucky find by Eric Mills and Ian McLaren (photographer), visiting this fascinating part of the province.

DIURNAL RAPTORS

After a summer of nil reports, the appearance of 2 TURKEY VULTURES on Brier Is. on Sept. 15, suggests that they did not breed in the immediate vicinity. In late Sept., more appeared, and several observers reported both adult and immature birds, up to 8 all told according to RBS, still 6 on Oct. 13 (ELM,IAM), and 1 on Nov. 16. A bird at Cranberry Head, Yar. Co., on Nov. 14 (JG) was routine, but individuals at Hazel Hill, Guys. Co. on Aug. 12 (W&NP) and Sydney on Oct. 12 (OC) were unexpected.

OSPREYS were under-reported, as usual. In mid-June one spent some days on the oil rig "Zapata Scotian", making periodic forays to the eastern tip of Sable Island, only to be chased off by terns (fide M.Malone). The Matteaus report 3 nests on an islet in Cow Bay, Hfx. Co., and there were 3 on an islet near Chester (RDH). Early signs of movement were 7 over Bridgewater on Aug. 18, and there were 6 at Brier Is. on Sept. 30. RSD'E reports on a very tired bird on the rigging of his vessel on George's Bank on Oct. 5, and FLL reported the latest, at Port Howe, Cumb. Co., on Oct. 19. BALD EAGLES were also sporadically reported. It is perhaps noteworthy that July adults were seen in Kings Co. and in the Cole Harbour-Conrad's Beach area. Recently fledged birds were at Three Fathom Harbour on Aug. 17 (FLL et al.) and a "bedraggled" young bird was at S. Maitland on Aug. 10 (B&BT). Later birds appeared more widely in the southern counties. NORTHERN HARRIERS were seen during summer at Boularderie, Chebogue Pt., Dartmouth, Cole Harbour and Middle Musquodoboit, but this is no firm indication of local nesting. An impressive 5 to 8 during August at Grand Pré (B&BT, JCT) may have included local offspring. A bird on Seal Is. on Aug. 11 was presumably an early migrant and scattered birds appeared widely in early Sept. There were 20+ on Brier Is., on Aug. 31 - Sept. 2 "numbers...most of the time" on Sept. 12 - 12, and only 1 - 3 there between Oct. 15 and 23. One snatched a laggard from a flight of shorebirds at Brier Is. on Sept. 17 (RBS), a feat usually managed only by falcons. The latest to date was on Nov. 15.

Two SHARP-SHINNED HAWKS were "toying with a flock of Barn Swallows over Wolfville Ridge" on Aug. 11 (JCT), and scattered ones and twos were seen more widely thereafter. As usual, the islands are more revealing of patterns. On Brier Is., there were only 2 on Aug. 17, but they were rated as "numerous" by RBS on Aug. 31 - Sept. 2 and again on Sept. 13 -15. Between Sept. 28 and Oct. 6, RBS estimated that an average of 8 were in sight during any one minute, all moving W to E, hence possibly up to 4000 per day during this peak period. There were only 10 or so on the island on Oct. 13, and 35 next day up Digby Neck (ELM,IAM). Counts elsewhere support this picture, although less grandly. There were only 2 on Seal Is. on Sept. 1, up to 30 on Oct. 12 - 13, 10 on Oct. 15, diminishing thereafter. There were 8 at L.W. Pubnico on Sept. 14, 12 - 15 at Big Tusket Is., Yar. Co., on Sept. 29, and 57 at L.W. Pubnico on Oct. 12. Only a dozen, in ones and twos, were reported from other places. An immature COOPER'S HAWK on Bon Portage Is., on Aug. 28 - 29 was ticked "after much deliberation" by the Cohrs, Purchases, D. Curry and S. Fullerton. Noted were the "large head, long rounded tail with broad white tips...at least 16 - 17 inches when perched" (JSC). Another immature bird was identified by RSD'E at L.W. Pubnico on Oct. 12 on the basis of its "decidedly larger size" and "well rounded tail" compared with a nearby sharpshin. Another good field mark of imma. Cooper's, compared with either Goshawk or Sharp-shin, is the more extensively whitish belly of the Cooper's. Our GOSHAWKS seem to lie low until winter comes. A female with 2 young were at E. Jordan, Shel. Co., on June 9 (RC), and there were 2 summer reports from Cape Breton. Migrants were at Broad Cove on Sept. 15 and Brier Is. on Oct. 13.

An immature RED-SHOULDERED HAWK at Brier Is on Sept. 1 was convincingly described by FLL. A few BROAD-WINGED HAWKS were noted during the breeding season in Kings Co. and inland Hfx. Co., but 4 at Wolfville on Aug. 17 were presumably on the move. The "usual several hundred over Brier Island" were noted by RBS on Aug. 31 - Sept. 2 and between Sept. 29 - Oct. 6. A flock of 44 over Big Tusket Is., Yar. Co., on Sept. 29 was part of the latter movement, but as usual they did not get as far south as Seal Island in numbers, the only sighting there being 4 on Oct. 20. Elsewhere only a dozen, on ones and twos, were seen, the latest being a bird at Habitant, Kings Co., on Nov. 11 (JCT) and at Brier Is. on Nov. 15 (RBS). Seven RED-TAILED HAWKS at Grand Pré on Sept. 1 (B&BT) can be taken as an initial migratory stirring. Two on Sept. 15 at Argyle Head were the first reported for the Yarmouth region, where there were several more through November. Seal Island had 1 on Oct. 21, and none were reported from Brier Is. (although doubtless seen there). A flight of 35+ over Cape Sable on Sept. 29 is a satisfactory peak (EM); note that these big buteos may be better able to risk flights along the outer coast, whereas our Broad-wings always seem to be scurrying back up the Digby Neck, or right across to Maine. The first ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK was early at Delaps Cove, Anna. Co., on Sept. 9 (well described by SH), and the next was not until Oct. 12 at Windsor Forks Hants Co. Thereafter, a dozen were seen ( 4 noted as light phase, 5 as dark) in widely scattered localities; this is more than usual.

Breeding-season AMERICAN KESTRELS were reported from Kings Co. (probably 2 pairs), Argyle Head, Boularderie, Wentworth and Middle Musquodoboit. The migration was unimpressive (or under-reported), with only ones and twos in Yar. Co. from Sept. through Nov. (4 on Sept. 19), birds "everywhere" (10 in one group) on Sept. 20 in Anna Co. (SH), but with maxima on Seal Is. of only 7 on 14 Oct. and 5 on Oct. 20 and on Brier Is. of 8 on Oct. 13. A pair of MERLINS at Hazel Hill, Guys. Co. in early to mid-August were persistently agitated (W&NP), another pair in Blomidon Park defended their territory against crows throughout August, and occasional sightings of summer Merlins in Halifax's South and West Ends suggested that they still nest somewhere in the fastnesses of Point Pleasant Park. There were no large peaks of migration. There were 10 on Brier Is., Aug. 31 - Sept. 2, 5 at Conrad's Beach on Sept. 3, 8 - 10 at Little Harbour, Shel. Co., Sept. 12 - 13, 6 at L. W. Pubnico on Sept. 14, "several" on Brier Is. next day, 7 on Seal Is. on Oct. 12 - 13, and 6 there on Oct. 21. Elsewhere about 25 were noted, mostly in ones and twos, around the province. The earliest PEREGRINE FALCONS were on Sept. 8, 1 at Chebogue (PRD,CRKA), and a bird at Martinique Beach identified as of the northern race tundrius (BD). At least one was around Wolfville and Evangeline Beach tundrius on Sept. 10 - 15, and at least 3 ( 1 identified as tundrius, FLL) were around Halifax on Sept. 21 - 22 (sev. obs.). Thereafter, about 11 were spotted in the southern part of the province including Seal and Brier Islands, 3 specified as adult, 4 as immature and 2 more as tundrius. A fair show, although only about two thirds of last year's total.

#### GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

Our only reports of GRAY PARTRIDGES in their secretive season came from B&BT, who saw 3 during August in Kings Co. They also saw 2 male, 2 female and 18 young RING-NECKED PHEASANTS in 3 separate flocks at Grand Pré on Aug. 15. Elsewhere 1 or 2 or a few pheasants were reported from A.P.B.S., Clementsport, Stewiacke, Middle Musquodoboit, L.W. Pubnico and Tusket, and RDH reported them as "plentiful" around Marriott's Cove, Lun. Co. Eight reports of 11 adult SPRUCE GROUSE, including females with 5, 3 and 1 young, are more than usual. These were in C.B., and from Guys., Hfx., Kings, Col. and Cumb. Counties. We have some 20 reports of the more common, and

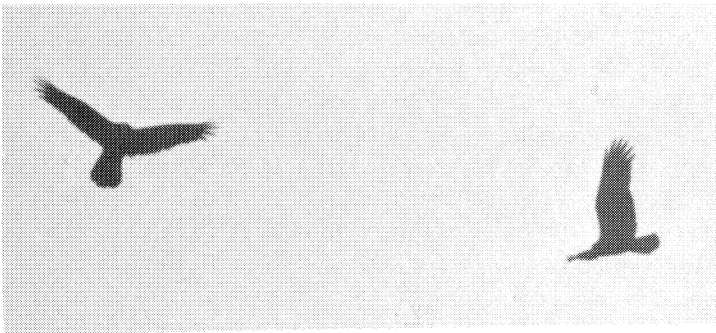
more delicious, RUFFED GROUSE. Broods were seen in C.B. and Hfx. Co., and a half-grown young flew into CRKS's window, often a sign of population pressures. They were rated as "abundant" in Yar. Co. (Rsd'E) and "common" in Lun. Co. (CN). Altogether this series of sightings seems to confirm CRKA's prediction (last issue) of a "peak" year.

### RALLIDS

Our only VIRGINIA RAILS were migrants or transients, with the possible exception of a bird in the marsh at Malagash Mine, Cumb. Co., on Aug. 10 (FLL et al). Other individuals were at L.W. Pubnico on Sept. 15 (an imm., DJd'E), at Seal Is. on Oct. 12 and 21 (PM), and at A.P.B.S. on Oct. 13 (DC). A spring migrant SORA at Cow Bay on May 25 was a first for R&DM. Breeding-season birds were at Port Williams and Starrs Pt., Kings Co., Bissett and Drain Lakes, Hfx. Co., and Malagash Mine (4birds). A female and 2 chicks were found at the Port Williams site on June 23 by B&BT, and BLF found a nest with 12 eggs at the Starrs Pt. marsh on June 10. These latter hatched over several days so that by June 29 there were only 2 infertile eggs left. Migrant Soras were at Little Harbour, Shel. Co., on Aug. 24, Seal Is. on Aug. 27, Hartlen Pt. on Sept 2, and at a half dozen places between Oct. 4 and Nov. 4.

COMMON MOORHENS no doubt nested as usual at A.P.B.S., where only 1 was seen on Sept. 8, but 10 or so on Sept. 22 (ISM). Four adults and 3 full grown young were at the Malagash Mine marsh on Aug. 10 (FLL et al.). Most surprising, the bird dismissed by me as "doubtless transient" at Three Fathom Harbour in May (see July issue) turned out to be one of a pair that successfully bred (Dottie & Cliff Willis): IAM saw an adult and 2 young birds there in late August. The AMERICAN COOT population of A.P.B.S. departed unusually early, with only 2 left on Nov. 9 (SIT). The earliest migrants away from the border area were individuals at Russell Lake, Dartmouth, on Oct. 19 and at Seal Is. on Oct. 19. The rest were Nov. birds, 8 from Hfx., Kings, and Yar. Counties.

--IAM, ed.



Two of up to 8 Turkey Vultures over Brier Island in fall, 1985. Photo Ian McLaren, Oct. 13.



SHOREBIRDS

The BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER was well-reported, though nowhere in very large numbers. Two were at Conrad's Beach by July 5 (BM). At Evangeline Beach there were 100+ Aug. 5 (FLL); on the other side of the Minas Basin there were about 300 at Economy (FS), from mid-August to mid-September. On Oct. 5, 120 were at Crescent Beach (JS&JLC), on the 13th still 150 at Economy (FS), and on the 27th still 50 at Cherry Hill (CN). The last noted in this reporting period were 4 at Brier on Nov. 16 (RBS). The LESSER GOLDEN PLOVER was also well-reported, and in goodly numbers: the first three were at Evangeline Beach, Aug. 11 (HW), with 56 at Amherst on the 24th (SIT). Early September saw peak numbers of 205 at Cole Harbour on the 2nd (IAM) and 275 at Amherst on the 6th (SIT). Last reports were of late birds at Pinkney's Pt. on Nov. 3 (PRD,CRKA) and at Cape Sable, Nov. 4 (EEM).

Two independent sightings of a possible COMMON RINGED PLOVER occurred at Cherry Hill. On Nov. 2, John & Shirley Cohrs saw an apparent immature Semipalmated Plover whose call reminded them of the Black-bellied Plover's. Listening to recordings at home led them to conclude they had heard a Ringed Plover. Then, on the 9th Sylvia Fullerton found in the same place a charadriid plover whose call was totally unfamiliar to her but reminiscent of the Black-bellied's. Since both reports mention the bird's pale coloration, it is safe to assume they refer to the same individual. Sylvia was able to study it long enough to provide an interesting description, but the immatures in particular are said to be very difficult to distinguish visually in the field.

There were 10 SEMPALMATED PLOVERS at Conrad's Beach by July 17 (FLL), 150 there on the 24th (BM). Peak numbers occurred in early August with 1000 at Evangeline Beach on the 5th and 2500 at Cherry Hill on the 6th (JSC). There were still 100+ at Cole Harbour, Sept. 7 (R&DM), with smaller numbers from mid-month into Oct. One, very late, was at Crescent Beach, Nov. 23 (JS&JLC). The PIPING PLOVER was not noticed in the fall, but reported breeding results were poor. All told, only 11 young were noted on five of its regular breeding beaches. KILLDEER with young were found at Cherry Hill, June 23 (SJF) and Truemanville, Cumb. Co. July 5 (JT). A large post-breeding gathering of 100+ was at Upham Creek, Col. Co. (FLL). There were 50 at Melanson, Kings Co., Oct. 4 (GWT) and still 4 at L.W. Pubnico Nov. 1 (Jd'E).

An AMERICAN AVOCET was at Big Cove, Little Dover in the Canso area, for much of September, positively identified there on the 18th (D&LG).

The first GREATER YELLOWLEGS away from its breeding grounds was at Melbourne, July 1 (PRD,CRKA), another was at Conrad's Beach, July 5 (BM). Thereafter, numbers built to maximum of 100, also at Conrad's Beach on Sept. 25 (IAM). There were still three on the north shore, at River John, on Nov. 9 (RD) and one, with a broken wing, at Pinkney's Pt., Nov. 16 (BR). The LESSER YELLOWLEGS was unusually numerous. There were 5 at Conrad's Beach, July 5 (BM), numbers there rising from 170 on the 13th (FLL,RD) to 225 on the 24th (BM) with a further 175 at Chezzetcook the same day (BM). Numbers at Conrad's were down to 40-50 on Aug. 10 & 17 (FLL&CMacN) with a last 4 at Cherry Hill on Oct. 19 (JS&JLC). The first SOLITARY SANDPIPERs appeared at Shubenacadie, July 6 (BM). There were groups of 4-5 in late Aug. and early Sept. at East Jordan, Shel. Co. (RJC), Brier (NSBS), and Canard (RBS). Adding singles, about 25 were noted this fall--last was one at Sullivan's Pond (!) on Oct. 14 (CS). WILLETS nest early and leave early; chicks were seen at Tusket, June 12 & 20 (CRKA) and June 24, "good sized" ones, at Glace Bay (SM). Concentrations of 65 and 55 in

the Halifax area from mid-July on (IAM,BM) may therefore have been post-breeders. There were 50 at Malagash Pt., Aug. 10 (FLL et al.). Three western willets were identified at Cole Harbour, Sept. 2 (IAM, JDM). Last were two (nom.) at Economy, Sept. 3 (FS). The SPOTTED SANDPIPER was little noticed. There were indications of nesting at Cow Bay (R&DM), Marriot's Cove (RH) and Tatamagouche (FS), and unfledged young at Salmon River, July 27 (SM). Fall maximum was four, Oct. 4, at Canard (JCT), and the last was one at Seal, Oct. 22 (SM).

Two UPLAND SANDPIPERS appeared this fall, the first, Aug. 11 at Hemeon's Head (D&JY), the other at Musquodoboit Harbour, Sept. 7 (FLL). Flocks of 20-40 WHIMBREL were seen in SW Nova Scotia from July 19 through Sept. (JG,MC,HH,AP) with small numbers elsewhere (the Valley, C.B., and the Hfx. area). Last were two at Cape Sable, Oct. 2 (EEM). A very early HUDSONIAN GODWIT was at Conrad's Beach, July 1 (IAM,ELM) and 5th (BM). There were 70 at Glace Bay, Aug. 17 (N.S.B.S.), the only sizable gathering. The last were two at Pinkney's Pt., Oct. 23 (MC,JG). There were two MARbled GODWITS at Cherry Hill, Sept. 14 (Cohrs).

The RUDDY TURNSTONE went through early. One was at Conrad's Beach, July 14 (IAM), the number there rising to 50 by the 24th (BM) and 100 on the 29th (HW). At Cherry Hill there were 75 on Aug. 4, 56 on the 21st (numbers considered unusually light for the area (SJF). Small numbers were noted in Sept. and Oct. with one last, Nov. 23 at Cherry Hill (JS&JLC). Large numbers of RED KNOTS also appeared early, with 200+ at Martinique Beach, July 26 (FLL,BM) and a like number at Evangeline Beach, Aug. 5 (FLL et al.). There were 30 at Cole Harbour Sept. 2 (IAM) and only a few others reported in Sept. and Oct. In Nov. there were 16 at Martinique and 6 at Conrad's on the 3rd (IAM), two on Cape Sable on the 4th (EEM) and a last single at Cherry Hill on the 23rd (JS&JLC). The first SANDERLINGS were three at Economy, July 14 (FS); by the 24th there were 130 at Conrad's (BM). Maximum numbers reported were c. 300 at Economy, Sept. 28 and Oct. 13 (FS). There were still a few at Brier, Nov. 16 (RBS) and doubtless others are still present. An early SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER was at Conrad's Beach, July 1 (IAM), 20 there by July 13 (FLL), and 2500 by July 24 (BM). Numbers peaked in early Aug.: 10-20,000 at Cape Sable, Aug. 4, with similar numbers at Evangeline (BS), although an estimate next day puts the concentration at 45,000 (FLL). There were also tens of thousands at Pinkney's Pt., Aug. 10 (PRD,CRKA), suggesting the species had a very successful breeding season. The last were a few at Grand Pré, Nov. 14 (JCT). A single WESTERN SANDPIPER was at Seal, Oct. 21 (SPM). First LEAST SANDPIPERS were two at Conrad's, July 5 (BM) and 80 at Round Bay, July 9 (IAM). Numbers reached 250 at Conrad's by July 24 (BM). On Aug. 20 there were 200+ at Hartlen Pt., 100+, Sept. 2 (FLL). No high numbers were reported thereafter, the last being one at Lawrencetown, Oct. 29, and a few, Nov. 14, at Grand Pré (JCT). An early WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER was at Glace Bay, July 6 (SM). By July 24, there were 15 at Conrad's (BM) with the only sizable flocks at Chezzetcook, 50 on Aug. 8 (FLL et al.) and at Hartlen's Pt., Oct. 26 (JWT,FLL). There were still at least 25 in the Halifax area, Nov. 2 (IAM), the last few at Brier (RBS) and Hartlen Pt. (JWT,FLL) on Nov. 16. The first BAIRD'S SANDPIPER was noted at Seal Is., Aug. 14-15 (IAM), the last at Matthew's Lake, Sept. 21 (D&JY). About a dozen were reported in all this fall. Unusually large numbers of PECTORAL SANDPIPERS were noted this fall: first were two at Lawrencetown, July 17 (FLL,RD) but not until, Oct. did the flood begin: 50 at Cape Sable, Oct. 6, (IAM), at mid-month 25 at Grand Pré (B&BT), 52 at Conrad's (JSC), 25 at Seal (IAM) and Hartlen's Pt. (FLL,JWT). At Sheffield Mills there were no less than 200 estimated on Oct. 19 (JT,BT) where RBS counted 120 on Oct. 21 and JCT 100+ on Oct. 22. Late singles were at Cherry Hill (SJF) and Hartlen's Pt. (FLL,JWT) on Nov. 16. A PURPLE SANDPIPER in alternate plumage at Crescent Beach on June 16 (Cohrs) presumably was, or had been, northward bound.

Equally unexpected was one at Seal on Aug. 28 (ELM). Four wintering birds were at Crescent, Nov. 3 (JSC&JLC), 47 at Pollack Pt., Lun. Co., Nov. 24 (JSC). The first DUNLIN of the season, still in alternate plumage, was at Cape Sable, Aug. 4 (IAM). Small numbers were reported through Sept., the maximum being 30 at Economy on the 28th (FS). A like number was at Cape Sable, Oct. 6 (IAM), and 50 at Cole Harbour, Oct. 26 (FLL,MA). Last reported, were 120 at Conrad's, Nov. 3 (IAM), but some will doubtless appear on Christmas Counts. The first STILT SANDPIPER was at Round Bay, Shel. Co., July 10 (IAM); in its favoured W. Lawrencetown haunts there were 26 on Aug. 12 (HW). The last was one on Brier, Sept. 1-2 (RBS,FLL). A BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER was at Matthew's Lake, Aug. 24 (RJC); three were there a week later (D&JY), at which time there were 5 on Brier (NSBS). One was at Sevim Beach, Sept. 8 (MC,JG), the last two, Sept. 16, at Cherry Hill (BH,SJF). A REEVE in dark alternate plumage was at Cherry Hill, Aug. 11-15 (Cohrs, SJF).

An early SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER was at L.W. Pubnico, July 1 (DJd'E). There were 8 at Conrad's, including one hendersoni, on July 8 (IAM, ELM). Another hendersoni was at Round Bay, July 9-11 (IAM). In the Valley early flocks of 300 as early as July 6 rose to 1000 a month later (HW,FLL, et al.) and roughly similar numbers apply to the Hfx. area (FLL,BM). The last was one at Conrad's, Sept. 21 (FLL,DM). LONG-BILLED DOWITCHERS appeared at APBS, Oct. 13 (4 juv.-SIT), at Cherry Hill, Oct. 20 (1 juv. - JS&JLC), Lawrencetown, Oct. 26-29 (1 juv. - FLL,IAM) and Cole Harbour, Nov. 11 (JWT). Larger than usual numbers of the COMMON SNIBE were reported this fall, with 12 at Malagash Pt., Aug. 12 (JWT), 48 at Cranberry Pond, Sept. 6 (JG), 12-14 at Grand Pre, Oct. 12-19 (JT,BT) and a maximum of 25 at Seal, Oct. 13-23 (IAM,SPM). There were still 6 at Hartlen's Pt. on Nov. 16 (FLL,JWT). There were only two post-breeding reports of the AMERICAN WOODCOCK: one on Long Is. (J&GT) and three at Eastern Passage, Oct. 24 (JWT).

--FS, ed.

#### PHALAROPES

The sea PHALAROPES, REDS and RED-NECKED, appeared in the fall as usual. Charlie Duncan (University of Maine, at Machias) counted 219 Phalaropes at the Nova Scotian end of a "Bluenose" crossing, between Bar Harbour, Yarmouth and back on July 31. All the identified ones were Reds. We expect these off Brier Is., in August, but there were only about 100 there on Aug. 17 (RBS), and perhaps 1000+ on Sept. 2 (NSBS field trip). It seems a long way down from the 10,000+, in dense "smoke flocks", flying high over Brier in the early 1970s. However, if this is a real decline, it could be for any number of reasons outside Fundy: anything from a bad summer up in the Arctic, to an 'El Nino' warming of their wintering seas off West Africa, or even to a chance change in the Gulf Stream.

Apart from that, there were perhaps 20+ Red-necks among the Reds off Brier, on the NSBS field trip on Sept 2. WILSON'S PHALAROPE, our breeding species, dispersed from APBS and wherever else it nests. The latest sightings are of two birds at Conrad's Beach on Sept. 7 (Bob Dickie), and an adult female there, in basic plumage, on Sept. 14 (FLL, Mike Almon). Wilson's Phalaropes aren't supposed to go to sea, but Dave and Joan Young saw eight off Hemeon Head, 4-5 miles offshore, on July 21, and two more of McNutts Island on Sept. 18.

--RGG

JAEGERS TO AUKS

We probably have a SOUTH POLAR SKUA at last. Raymond S. d'Entremont says that one of the skuas he saw over George's Bank on July 29, about 130 miles SW of Yarmouth, had "the entire neck and collar and underparts of buff-brown". I've never seen an undoubted South Polar Skua myself, but your average NORTHERN SKUA on the Banks of Nova Scotia--a two-year-old, fresh from its colonies in Iceland or Scotland--is a heavy bird with a stout beak, and dark brown all over. Raymond's report sounds right, but it still has to be confirmed. I've said before that I think we have South Polar Skuas here--but I'll continue to be sceptical until somebody sends me a meticulously detailed identification, preferably with photographs.

Apart from that, James Taylor saw a Skua of one species or another, fishing off Eastern Passage on Sept. 8, and there were single POMARINE JAEGERS off Three Fathom Harbour on 17 Aug. (FLL), and off Brier Is., on Sept. 2 (Herbert Wilson and FLL). Raymond S. d'Entremont saw 4 on Georges Bank on Aug. 23, a LONG-TAILED JAEGER on Aug. 25, and 5 PARASITICS on Oct. 5.

I think we can take our HERRING and GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULLS for granted. Our oldest LESSER BALCK-BACKED GULL was back at Digby for its 15th year on Oct. 14 (ELM,IAM,RBS). On the same day, there was a bird at the Fairview Container Port in Halifax, and another at the Volvo Plant, "Definitely 2 different birds", says Bob Dickie. GLAUCOUS and ICELAND GULLS are beginning to move south. There was a 2nd-year Iceland at Cape Sable Island as early as Oct. 6 (ELM,IAM, Roger Foxall), and Sara MacLean saw an Iceland at Glace Bay on Nov. 9. Our only Glaucous Gull report is as far south as it's possible to go in Nova Scotia: a bird on Seal Is., on Oct. 14 (IAM).

The first-summer COMMON/MEW GULL seen in the spring in Eastern Passage was still there on July 28, its plumage looking increasingly 'ratty' (IAM). By Oct. 26, when Ian McLaren photographed it, the bird had moulted into 2nd winter plumage 'and looked quite spanking'. Sara MacLean reports single, immature RING-BILLED GULLS at Glace Bay on Sept. 17 and Oct. 31, but notes that "they are never numerous here, rather scarce, in fact". But, on the mainland, there were 50+ off Hartlen Point on Aug. 21, and 60+ next day on Sullivan's Pond, Dartmouth (FLL, JWT, Bob Dickie). Phyllis Dobson and Charlie Allen plot the birds' autumn build-up in Yarmouth County, at Abrams River 'Dyke'/Eel Brook: 20-30 on Sept. 7, 43 on Sept.15, 75+ on Oct. 20, and 350+ on Oct. 26--with fluctuations after that.

LAUGHING GULLS no longer breed in Nova Scotia, as far as I know, but perhaps they're trying to come back. At any rate, there was a bird at Cranberry Pond, Yar. Co., on June 1 (June Graves), a one-year-old in the Lawrencetown area on July 14 (IAM,SIT), a bird at Seal Island on Aug. 23 (ELM and IAM), and an adult in winter plumage in Yarmouth Harbour on Aug. 25 (Hubert Hall). I don't want to treat our BLACK-HEADED GULLS as brusquely as I do Herrings--but our former rarity is now commonplace, and there really isn't much to say about it. We have had the usual scattering of sightings--usually of single birds--from all around the province. Sara MacLean says that the Glace Bay flock had settled in for the winter by Nov. 7. Our first BONAPARTE'S GULL sightings come, as usual, from the Northumberland Strait area: 14 first-summer birds in Antigonish Harbour on July 3, and 10 on July 6 (SIT, Bruce Mactavish). There were two birds in non-breeding plumage at Matthew's Lake on July 13 (Dave and Joan Young); but the 14 at Lake Ainslie, Cape Breton, on July 29, were all adults still in summer plumage (AJV, Fred Scott). The numbers along Northumberland Strait built steadily up: 50+ at Caribou Is., Pictou Co., on Aug. 10 (FLL); 125 at Northport on Oct. 13, 125 at Linden on

Oct. 27, and 70 at Caribou Is., plus 150 at Pictou Causeway on Oct. 29 (SIT and the WINGS group). Most of our reports, mainly of singletons, come from the Atlantic coast--but that, of course, is where most of our observers are. The adult at Cherry Hill on Aug. 21 was the earliest--and Sylvia Fullerton considered it "unusual here". Richard Stern says the same for the two first-winter birds he saw on the Fundy side, at Kingsport, on Sept. 23.

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKES have founded a handful of small colonies in eastern Cape Breton during the last couple of decades: just enough to make them genuine Nova Scotian birds--but nothing to compare with the enormous colonies in Newfoundland. At all other times they're oceanographers' gulls: out at sea on the colder parts of the Scotian Shelf, on the Atlantic side of Nova Scotia, and seldom in sight of land. This is why we have so few reports of so common a bird. Offshore islands are the best places to see them. They were common off Brier on Sept. 2 and 14, and through the week of Sept 28-Oct. 6 (RBS), and scores of them were on the move off Seal Is., on Oct. 12-14 (IAM). Raymond d'Entremont's couple of Kittiwakes on Sept. 5, on the Lurcher Shoal west of Yarmouth, were probably part of this migration. Apart from these, we have only the Kittiwakes which the NSBS Field Trip saw off the Bird Islands, Cape Breton, on June 22, and the birds which James Taylor saw off Eastern Passage: one on Aug. 28, and three on Sept. 8.

Our best tern sighting is the adult GULL-BILLED TERN which FLL saw off Martinique Beach on July 1; its stout, all-black bill, long, heavy wings and very pale mantle were well seen. Also our two FORSTER'S TERNS: single, immature birds on Lawrencetown Lake on Oct. 13 (Cohrs), and at the freshwater barachois at Forchu Bay, Cape Breton, on Oct. 20 (IAM). Ian McLaren wonders, "if these are really quite regular here in fall"--as opposed to being blown to Hell and Halifax by hurricanes. These two rarities are freshwater strays from the south and west of us. CASPIAN TERNS are freshwater birds, too--most of the Canadian population breeds on the Great Lakes--but the handful in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and Newfoundland is enough to make them honorary Maritimers, and to bring them to the attention of the Nova Scotia Bird Society. Raymond S. d'Entremont's bird landed on the bow of his fishing boat, out on Georges Bank, on June 3. There were single adults at Antigonish on July 3 (SIT, Dave Sibley & Co.), and at Freeport, Long Is., Digby Co., from Aug. 30 to Sept. 1 (SIT, RBS, Fran Spalding, and the NSBS). Another stray--a 1st.-year LEAST TERN, was picked up on Sable Is., on July 1 (Mike Malone).

ROSEATE TERNS are the species we ought to worry about. They are being caught for food in their winter quarters, in Venezuela and West Africa, and it's seriously predicted that the population north of Florida will become extinct in 2002. The ones that still survive, north of Florida, are mainly on islets off Long Island, N.Y., and farther south. Our own small population is hanging on by its eyelids to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Sable Island, and a few spots in southern Nova Scotia. However, the birds are still alive, well, and breeding. Dave and Joan Young saw at least 3 birds "carrying minnows"--probably to chicks--at Matthew's Lake on July 7. The birds were still in and around the Lake as late as Aug. 24 (Russel J. Crosby). Eric Mills and Ian McLaren counted at least 12 Roseates among the COMMON and ARCTIC TERNS on Wedge Island, St. Margaret's Bay, on June 22. The only other reports are of single adults off Cherry Hill Beach on July 13 and Aug. 3 (Cohrs), and a couple of 'passage birds' off Seal Is., on Aug. 11-12 (IAM).

Rene and Diane Matteau's couple of Arctic Terns near Halifax, on May 19, were early spring birds. The Cohrs found about 120 Arctics and Commons breeding on a gravel spit off Jordan Bay, Shel. Co., on

June 14. At the other end of summer, the birds in Cow Bay were still feeding their dependent--but fledged?--young on Sept. 7 (IAM,ELM). Common Terns were 'long gone' from Cow Bay by Sept. 28, but a late Arctic Tern was still there (R.D.Hebb). However, the latest sightings were all of Commons: 3 at Linden, Pictou Co., on Oct. 27 (SIT), 'still present' at Russel Lake on Nov. 8 (FLL), and one at Three Fathom Harbour on Nov. 11 (FLL,Bernice Moores).

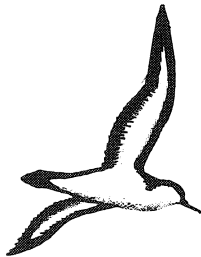
Our only BLACK TERN report is the winter-plumaged bird which Sylvia Fullerton saw at Cherry Hill beach on Aug. 29.

DOVEKIES are like Kittiwakes: they come from a long way away, they stay in cold water, and they're only occasionally blown inshore. We've had no major Dovekie wrecks--yet--this winter. The bird which the Blair Wheaton family found alive, near Ellershouse, Hants Co., on Nov. 9, is the exception. Sylvia Fullerton's bird in the surf off Crescent Beach, also on Nov. 9, is our only other report.

We don't hear much about murres for the same reasons. All we have is a very unusual THICK-BILLED MURRE, swimming around the wharf at Little Harbour, Shel. Co., on Nov. 11 (Dave and Joan Young). RAZORBILLS and ATLANTIC PUFFINS were alive and well on the NSBS field trip to the Bird Islands on June 22 (Sara MacLean), but our only other reports are of a few Puffins off Yarmouth, on July 29, on the Nova Scotian side of a BLUENOSE ferry crossing (Hubert Hall), two Puffins on the same route on July 31 (Charlie Duncan, RGBB), and 3-4 off Brier Is., in early Sept. (RBS).

BLACK GUILLEMOTS, on the other hand, are perhaps too coastal and run-of-the-mill for anybody to notice them. They breed in jumbled rocks, close to the waterline, all around Nova Scotia. Sara MacLean reports them from the Bird Islands, C.B., on June 22 NSBS field trip. Ian McLaren estimates that there were "only about 35 birds around Seal Island in mid-August--low". Stephen Manuel saw no more than two there, on Oct. 21-33.

--RGBB, ed.



DOVES, CUCKOOS

Two to 15 ROCK DOVES were being catered to at L.W. Pubnico (watch out, DJd'E), and 10 summered around the Ross Farm Museum. On July 4, a banded individual turned up on Sable Island (M. Malone). June Graves and Margaret Churchill were astonished and delighted on Sept. 8 to discover a WHITE-WINGED DOVE, the province's 6th, at Little Harbour, Shel. Co., and were able to show it to Dave and Joan Young. It appeared travel-worn and did not stay, poor mad thing. There were no reports on breeding MOURNING DOVES in the Valley, where they are certainly well established. RBD notes that they are now quite regular around Halifax-Dartmouth in summer. There were several reports from Lun. Co., and RDH at Marriott's Cove writes that this is the first summer in which the doves have stayed. Had one at Jersey Cove, C.B., on Aug. 13 (ELW) summered locally? Others, beginning with 1 on Sept. 24 in Yar. Co., seemed to represent the usual pre-winter build-up in the province. Some large counts were: up to 24 since Oct. 20 at Hazel Hill, Guys. Co., 24 on Oct. 20 at L.W. Pubnico, 8 at Lawrencetown, Hfx. Co., on Oct. 26, up to 30 on Seal Is. in mid-Oct., and 10 at Hartlen Pt. on Nov. 16.

Summering BLACK-BILLED CUCKOOS were reported only from around Dartmouth, 1 in mid-June (J. Holme) and another on July 31 (FLL, BM). Migrants were on Seal Is. on Aug. 24 and 28, in Yarmouth on Sept. 3 (a window-kill), and very late at L.W. Pubnico on Oct. 30 (JD'E, RD'E). As usual, errant YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOOS were more frequent. One in Dartmouth on June 15 (CSII) was presumably a late spring "overshoot". The earliest in fall was a bird at Hartlen Pt. on Sept. 29. Thereafter 6 individuals turned up in Hfx., Shel. and Yar. Co. (not a big year), the latest on Nov. 9.

OWLS

A GREAT-HORNED OWL nest in a white pine in the Kentville Bird Sanctuary had 2 young on May 10, banded next (BLF); they began to fledge about May 20. There were 8 other reports of breeding-season birds, and of 1 being mobbed by corvids at Crescent Beach on Nov. 2. A SNOWY OWL appeared in the LaHave Islands area in November, as reported by Lands and Forests personnel, but no details are available. Apart from one at Keji Park on July 17 (KNK), all 8 reported BARRED OWLS could have been residents or migrants. RSD'E says laconically of one in his backyard in L.W. Pubnico on Oct. 16: "many birders came to stare at it and it stared back". Our only SHORT-EARED OWL reports came from Grand Pré, single birds in May and June (R&BT) and 2 on Nov. 14 (JCT). Ian McLaren and Eric Mills were entertained by at least 1 LONG-EARED and 2 SAW-WHET OWLS calling and flying around Eric's camp on Brier Is. in the late evening of Oct. 12. There were strong indications that the former was pursuing the latter, as it came swooping at Ian when he mimicked a Saw-whet's song.

GOATSUCKER, SWIFT, HUMMINGBIRD, KINGFISHER

COMMON NIGHTHAWKS began to move perhaps as early as July 14, when 1 appeared at Sluice Pt., Yar. Co. Two near Liverpool on Aug. 4 and 3 at Wolfville on Aug. 5 were on the move. As Chris Naugler noted for the Bridgewater area, flocks this year of 5 - 20 in early to mid August did not make much of a show. Chris Helleiner also noted very few on his weekly trips between Halifax and Pictou Co. Only 2 were reported from Cape Breton, where sometimes hundreds are seen. Small flights elsewhere were 17 at Sandy Cove, Lun. Co., on Aug. 20, 25 over Brier Is. on Aug. 30, 4 near Bridgewater on Sept. 5, and 8 over Tantallon, Hfx. Co., on Sept. 8. The latest was at Glace Bay on Sept. 12 (JD'E, DD'E, JFK).

There were no reports of the subsequent performance of all those spring CHIMNEY SWIFTS on the Acadia campus, although JCT reported a couple in the general vicinity of Wolfville. One inland in Yar. Co., June 16, was the only one seen by PRD and CRKA this summer and there were only two other mentions for Jun - July: what happened? An individual at Little Dover, Guys. Co., on Oct. 19 (W&NP) was late, but 2 at Herring Cove, Hfx. Co., on Nov. 9 were only a day short of the all-time late record for the species in the province. They were watched "in amazement" by Dave Currie for an hour as they swooped back and forth in the lee of the sewage outfall site at Herring Cove. Observers should perhaps be alert to the remote possibility that the far-western Vaux's Swift could turn up as a late-fall vagrant. We have only 8 reports of migration-season RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRDS. The only indication of a "peak" were 10 on Aug. 30 and 15 on Sept. 2 on Seal Is. (ELM). The latest were 4 at Marble Mt., C.B., on Sept. 8 (SM).

There seemed to be the usual numbers of summering BELTED KING-FISHERS. Distinct movements were first reported in early September, notably 14 at Conrad's Beach on Sept. 2 and 6 at Martinique Beach, Hfx. Co. on Sept. 8. The latest to date were on Nov. 16.

#### WOODPECKERS

I assume, but stand to be corrected, that the adult RED-HEADED WOODPECKER at Chebogue on June 2 (JG,MC) was the same bird seen that day at Melbourne, Yar. Co.(E&BR). There seems to be a great shortage of YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKERS. Single birds were seen at E. Jordan, Shel. Co., on June 14 (RJC) and in the Wentworth Valley on July 5 (JT), and Bob Dickie found a nest with young at Stewiacke, Col. Co., on June 15. The only migrants noted were single birds on Seal and Brier Is. on Oct. 12 - 13 and another on Seal Is. on Oct. 21. We have 7 reports of 15 DOWNY and 13 reports of 18 HAIRY WOODPECKERS. A Downy nest was found at Wolfville (JCT), and a Hairy nesting 3.3m up in a poplar tree fledged 2 young in the 3rd week of August (BLF). A male Downy appearing at JCT's feeder on Nov. 20, tried unsuccessfully to rout a male Hairy from a suet bag and then, after standing by impatiently for some time for the larger bird to depart, went to another bag; as JCT says, "contrary creatures". A THREE-TOED WOODPECKER (specified as "Northern", but with no details) was reported from Boularderie, C. B., on May 29 by RBF. If confirmed, it is one of only about a dozen for the province and only the second one in the breeding season. The other was near Glace Bay on Aug. 8, 1975; I wonder if they're nesting somewhere in the Highlands? Only 1 BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER was reported, a female at Big Bras d'Or on Sept. 7 (AM).

NORTHERN FLICKERS were feeding young in a nest in a telephone pole near Chebogue on July 21 (CRKA,PRD). They began to gather and move in late August, but were first rated as "numerous" (SH) on Brier Is. on Sept. 15, and were still so, there between Sept. 28 and Oct. 6 (RBS). On Seal Is. there were estimated to be 180 on Oct. 12, but these dwindled to a few, 2 weeks later (SPM et al.). There were 8 reports of 10 PILEATED WOODPECKERS, about par; one at Boularderie, C.B., on May 25 (RBF) is worth noting.



FLYCATCHERS

Numbers of OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHERS seemed normal except at Skir Dhu in Cape Breton where for the first time in twelve summers, none were seen. The small migration reported was from August 28 to September 2. On the 28th, there were four on Bon Portage Island, two the next day, while on the 30th there were four on Brier. On Sept. 2, two each were seen on Seal and Brier (SC et al., SIT, FLL, ELM).

EASTERN WOOD-PEWEES were reported as plentiful in their appropriate habitats, with two nests documented on Wolfville Ridge. A small migration took place at Crousetown on Aug. 25 (6 birds) and on Bon Portage, Aug. 28 (4 birds) (JSC). YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHERS were exceptionally well reported from all areas. The only note of any migratory movement was from ELM on Seal Is., Aug. 26-Sept. 2, when numbers soared from one to an unprecedented 10. There was a large migration of empidonax on Bon Portage, Aug. 28-29, but only one was identified as a yellow-bellied, the other 49 being mixed LEASTS and ALDER. There were 10 ALDERS at the old Dartmouth "Piggery" Aug. 22 and 12 on Brier, Aug. 30, the same that 50 were on Seal. There were 90 LEASTS on Brier, Aug. 30, but no large numbers elsewhere. To sum up these three species, the southward movement of all was from Aug. 23 to Sept. 2, when they were going steadily through the offshore islands at the SW end of Nova Scotia. A very late empidonax was noted on Seal on Oct. 17 (SPM).

Only five or six reports of the EASTERN PHOEBE came in--surely there must have been more about. Bob Dickie heard one at Stewiacke, June 15, Judy Tufts documents a pair nesting at Coldbrook, Kings Co., (3-4 young fledged June 25) and one June 4, at Indian Brook. Fall Phoebe's were on Seal Aug. 30 and Sept. 1 (same bird?). GREAT-CRESTED FLYCATCHERS fared better--nine reported ('tho one was dead!). These were from Waverley (May and June), Tusket (June 16), Second Peninsula (hit the window June 21) Bedford (July 6), Kentville (July 16), two together at Waverley (July 23) and two on Seal (Aug. 29) (P&LP, CRKA, CC, JCT, B MacT, ELM). It is possibility that the Waverley sightings were of the same bird/birds--perhaps nesting? There were three WESTERN KINGBIRDS--one very early on Aug. 30 at L.W. Pubnico (Rsd'E), one Nov. 8-9 at Little Harbour, Shel. Co. (Dave and Joan Young) and one at Portuguese Cove, Nov. 21 (IAM). Curtis Chipman tells of EASTERN KINGBIRDS in June, taking strips of cotton he put out, perching on a trellis to fold them up and then bearing them off 300 yards to a spot in a tall ash tree. Sightings of many kingbirds on the wires is a sure sign of fall, especially in SW Nova Scotia and, as usual they began to move at the end of August. There were 5 on Bon Portage, Aug. 28 and 40-50 at L.W. Pubnico on Sept. 8. (JSC, JD"E). A rare SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER was seen by Margaret Churchill on July 8 near the Yarmouth Hospital.

HORNED LARKS TO CORVIDS

HORNED LARKS returned (predictably) in October to spend the winter entertaining the beach birders. The first birds (all alpestris race) arrived at Cherry Hill, Oct. 20 (40). By the 22nd, there were 15 at Grand Pré and by the 27th, 70 were at an Amherst sod farm. On Nov. 3, 150 (alpestris) were at Cole Harbour, 45 at Daniels Head and the first 6 of the season reached Cook's Beach (JSC, JCT, SIT, IAM, EEM, CRKA, PRD). From then on numbers built and by the 14th there were "many flocks all around Grand Pré" (JCT).

The only news of the PURPLE MARTIN colonies is of the new one at Oxford, at the Dept. of Lands and Forests depot. They arrived there on May 1 and by the 21st about 50 were in residence. What happened

in Amherst? Three "stray" martins were seen: 1 male, July 21, at Chezzetcook, 1 female or immature over Pond Cove, Seal Is., on Sept. 1, and one (m or f?) on Seal Is., Oct. 12 (JSC,SIT,SM).

Most of the TREE SWALLOW reports were of successful nests and normal numbers except one from Keith Keddy who felt that numbers were down in Hammond's Plains. No one noticed them leaving, no concentrations were reported, but 5 late birds were still around on Seal Is. on Oct. 18. Bob Dickie reported a NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW at West Chezzetcook on July 6, and the Cohrs found it still there on the 21st. Another was seen by IAM "stooping" at a Piping Plover at Round Bay on July 9. Three others were seen by Steve Manual on Seal, Oct. 18. Three active colonies of BANK SWALLOWS were noted: six nests at Cow Bay, May 28, a large colony of 200-300 birds at Ingramport, June 3, and a small colony at Martinique Beach, on June 8 (R&DM,RBD). Three hundred gathered at West Grand Pré on July 30 and "hundreds" Aug. 4 at East Grand Pré (B&BT). There were no other reports of departing flocks. An interesting report of CLIFF SWALLOWS comes from Jack MacNeil at Big Pond, C.B. There were 44 nests in the colony on his house and one oddly marked bird "survived the long journey once again, and nested for the fifth successive year". Six to ten pairs nested around the restored buildings in Sherbrook Village (B&BT) and eleven nests were going strong on the church at Marble Mountain (EC). They departed unobtrusively as usual with one or two stragglers in September and one quite late bird at Little River Harbour on Nov. 10 (JG). BARN SWALLOWS were "abundant as usual" On July 21, 50 nests were counted by Azor Vienneau and Fred Scott under a bridge near Tantallon. No one saw them go.

#### CORVIDS THROUGH WRENS

GRAY JAYS are usually quite scarce in summer as they retreat into deeper woods to nest. This year they seemed even lower in number than usual and were rarely seen except by Bob Dickie who sent in seven reports from various areas! (he may know something the rest of us don't know). There were three reports of family groups: June 15 (very early) adult and four young at Stewiacke, July 6, two adults and two young at Mt. Pleasant (Lun. Co.) and Aug. 12, 2 adults and three young at Northport (RBD,CN,JT). A somewhat spread-out nesting season! BLUE JAYS came back enmasse, to gobble up seeds at feeders in September--a few being encountered during the summer. In mid Oct. Marion Hilton wrote of a "very trying pair that disturbs the smaller birds and eat more than their share". This seems to be the norm for the aggressive and greedy bluejays, but we might miss the flashing blues and grays if they were absent. One correspondent wrote of "hearing" a JACKDAW at Russel Lake, Sept. 28. Another wrote of hearing a "Jackdaw" sound coming from the beak of a crow!! Names can be supplied upon request! Although there are many AMERICAN CROWS about nobody mentions them while other birds are around to engage their interest. The only reports were of 19, Sept. 16 at Big Bras d'Or and 20, Nov. 10 at L.W. Pubnico (AM, JD"E). NORTHERN RAVENS also tend to be neglected in summer and fall, although Bob Dickie sent in a report of an adult with four young on June 15 at Stewiacke.

A successful nesting of BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEES, producing four young was observed at Lewis Lake, Hfx. Co., by Azor Vienneau and other reports show that black-caps were abundant all summer with even more becoming regular at feeders in the fall. A single bird was seen on Seal Is., Oct. 13 by IAM--a rarity for Seal, which abounds in Boreals but hardly ever black-caps. BOREAL CHICKADEES were very well reported this season, as they were in 1984. Before that they were not, so perhaps they are becoming more numerous. The Matteaus had a pair at a suet feeder all May and June, back again in November. A large movement of 75+ birds were on Seal, Oct. 15-23. RED-BREASTED NUT-HATCHES were plentiful; many nests were observed in summer and many

birds came to feeders in the fall. Quite often there are huge migrations of these birds, but in 1985 only three small movements were reported. On Aug. 30, there were 60 on Brier and on Seal, two waves went through in October: Oct. 15 to 18 (up to 45) and 20 to 22nd (up to 10) (SIT,SPM).

Twelve of the rarer WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCHES were noted from May to November, only three being "wild". The feeder birds were mostly in October and November at Waverley, Dartmouth, Annapolis Royal, Yarmouth, Hammond's Plains, Pubnico and Kentville. Twenty-two BROWN CREEPERS were about, widely distributed.

#### WRENS TO MIMIDS

Two HOUSE WRENS were seen in Halifax city! One was feeding in a hedge in front of the N.S. Museum on Sept. 20 (AJV) and one in Fairview Cemetery, Nov. 30 (Dave Currie et al.)

On Seal the picture is more complex. There could have been two or six. Here are the dates: Oct. 12 - 2, Oct. 13 - 1, Oct. 17 - 1, Oct. 21 - 1, Oct. 22 - 1. Steve Manual is sure that the birds he saw on Oct 21 and 22 were different birds!

WINTER WRENS were low as usual. Two were heard in July--on the 5th at L.W. Pubnico and the 9th at Caribou Is., Pictou Co. (R.S.dE, CWH), the other few being fall birds. A wren was seen on Oct. 9 at Tantallon, one, Oct. 22 in Dartmouth and two to four on Seal between Oct. 13-23 (IJV,FLL,IAM,SPM). No SEDGE WRENS appeared and only two MARSH WRENS, at Russel Lake, Oct. 31, and Hartlen Pt., Nov. 3 (FLL, IAM). The latter bird was pale bellied and therefore probably a coastal bird from farther south (IAM).

Fall groups of GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLETS were moving through Chester Basin by July 26 (RDH) and many were seen in small flocks of 2-6 up to press time. A large migration passed through Seal, Oct. 15-23--above 50+ per day. RUBY-CROWNED KINGLETS stopped singing very early this year and, as usual, late birds were around in Sept. and Oct. Between Oct. 15-23, they passed through Seal at from 10 to 50 per day. The latest bird seen before reports were due was one Nov. 2 at Green Bay (JLC).

Four BLUE-GRAY GANTCATCHERS were seen this fall--three (2 female) on Bon Portage, Aug. 28 (Cohrs party) and one at Green Bay, Sept. 15 (JSC)

There was a male EASTERN BLUEBIRD at Big Marsh, near Antigonish on July 3 and another (no sex given) Oct. 12 at Chegoggin (Fide SIT, JE&MCC). No VEERYS were seen or heard after Aug. 22 and before that date less than a dozen were reported.

Three GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSHES were reported (none last year): Aug. 30 on Brier, Sept. 29 at Hartlen Pt., Oct. 20 on Seal Is. (SIT, IAM,SPM).

There were very few SWAINSON'S THRUSH reports this year and indeed their song was not heard much after the end of July. Both RSD and RDH felt that numbers were very much down. A late bird occurred in Hemlock Ravine, Oct 4 (CS). HERMIT THRUSHES were plentiful at arrival time but their song also stopped early and the woods were quiet. This might suggest an early departure because of a poor nesting season due undoubtedly to the cold wet weather in June and July. There were a few lingerers, as usual, the latest being Oct. 23 on Seal Is. (SJF). A single WOOD THRUSH was encountered by the party on Bon Portage on Aug. 25.

A huge wave of AMERICAN ROBINS passed through Petite Riviere and Green Bay, Sept. 14-16--"thousands, everywhere, all moving" (JSC&JLC) This was the only real migration noted. CRKA wrote from Yar. Co: "no great waves of Robins yet (Oct. 20)--possibly due to lack of rowan berries in the area". There were small movements here and there of 50 - 100 birds and a few were still about in November--potential overwinterers?

#### CATBIRD TO STARLING

GRAY CATBIRDS seemed normal in number. A nest fledged three young in early July on Wolfville Ridge. Several stayed late to be seen in late Sept. and in Oct. and three made it to November--the 4th in Halifax, 16th L.W. Pubnico and 20th Broad Cove and Halifax. (Fide IAM, Rsd'E, SJF, DC).

There were two interesting summer sightings of NORTHERN MOCKING-BIRDS on June 3 in Canso and three, July 4 in Dartmouth. In the latter case two males were fighting over a female, although no nest was ever discovered (J&SJ, CS). They were, as usual, much more in evidence in late fall with two sightings in October and nine for November, more than in 1984. BROWN THRASHERS were very scarce, even on the islands. There were only two seen--one summerbird, June 3 in Canso and one fall bird, Oct. 12 on Seal Is.

The transient WATER PIPITS were well reported. They arrived first at Grand Pré, where 12+ were seen Aug. 28. On Sept. 14, they had reached Cherry Hill and by the 21st, Hartlen Pt. It was the 25th before the first pipits arrived at Chebogue Pt., and after that date numbers rose until the end of the month when flocks began to diminish. High numbers were 130 on Seal, Oct. 13 and 220 there, Oct. 18. There were 50 at Hartlen Pt., Oct. 16, 20 at the Piggery, Oct. 22 and 20 at Pinckney's Pt., Nov. 16, the same day that 50 were at Pond Cove, Brier Is.

Three reports of BOHEMIAN WAXWINGS came in, hopefully presaging a waxwing winter. A flock of twelve was at Malagash Pt., Nov. 9, eighteen were at Sable River, Nov. 10, and a pair at Clyde River, Nov. 16 (RBD, RT, EEM).

Sixteen people reported CEDAR WAXWINGS from June to November. Some of the larger concentrations were on Seal, Aug. 29 (150+) at Big Bras d'Or, Sept. 3 (26), Chester Basin, Sept. 16, Lr. W. Pubnico Nov. 2 (18), and Hazel Hill, Nov. 18 (30).

There was a NORTHERN SHRIKE at L. W. Pubnico from Nov. 12 to 14 and one immature at Broad Cove Nov. 23 (RSdE, SJF&BH). A well documented LOGGERHEADED SHRIKE was seen by Herb Wilson and Betsy Brown near Belle Isle on July 18 (descriptive details upon request). A migration of EUROPEAN STARLINGS went through Seal between Oct. 15-23 with numbers going from 2 to 80 and down to fifteen. Two large flocks, 200 each, occurred at Eastern Passage, Oct. 13 and Hammond's Plains, Oct. 31 (JD'E, KNK).

--JSC, Ed.

VIREOS

Five species of Vireo have been reported for the summer-fall season: SOLITARY, YELLOW-THROATED, WARBLING, PHILADELPHIA and RED-EYED. The first and last of these are our regular species, and were seen and heard generally and in usual numbers May 11 to October 14 for the Solitary; June 1 to October 20, 1985, for the Red-eyed.

Rare species were: YELLOW-THROATED, one each seen at Seal Is. and Bon Portage in late August and early September (ELM,SJF); WARBLING, one each at Seal Island, Aug. 8 to Sept. 2 (ELM) and in Halifax, Sept. 16 (IAM); PHILADELPHIA, one in June, Halifax Co. (RBD), one late August, Bon Portage (Cohrs party), 1 to 2 late August to September 5 at Seal Is. (ELM), one, Brier Is., Sept. 2 (BBS), one at L.W. Pubnico, Sept. 14 (JD'E) and 1, Sept. 15 at Green Bay (J&SC).

We had 10 reports of the Solitary Vireo adding up to over 30 individuals, seen from Cape Breton to Yarmouth; for the Red-Eyed, about 40 individuals plus two reports with simply "numerous" for the count. These also were distributed well all over the province, heard singing as usual until late in the summer.

WOOD WARBLERS

Thirty-two species of Wood Warbler have been reported for the season, all of our regular nesters, well seen in their usual habitats plus nine unusual visitors, these as follows:

The BLUE-WINGED WARBLER, seen Aug. 23 on both Bon Portage and Seal Is. (Cohrs party, ELM). As noted above it was on this date that the Yellow-throated Vireo was also seen on both of these islands by the same observers. ELM has written that on Aug. 28-29 (1985) a major migratory movement was observed on Seal Is., where 20-30 species, mostly warblers were present, some species numbering up to 50 individuals. Another rare warbler, the YELLOW-THROATED was seen by four observers, Nov. 10-11, at West Middle Sable (B&ML,D&JY); six PINE WARBLERS were reported by three or more observers, Sept. Oct. and Nov., all sightings in the Halifax area (IAM,RBD,CS II); PRAIRIE WARBLERS, 8-10, were reported in August and September on Brier and Seal Is. (IAM,RBS,FLL,JT,ELM); CERULEAN, 2, 1 each on August 14 and 27 by IAM and ELM. PROTHONOTARY, one report, Aug. 27, Seal Is., arrived the same day as the Cerulean (ELM); a WORM-EATING WARBLER, well described, was reported for May 26, 1985, seen at Brier Is., by Herb Wilson; two HOODED WARBLERS (male and female) were seen at Lewis Head, Sept. 1 by MC and JG of Yarmouth; at least six YELLOW-BREASTED CHATS have been reported, late Sept. to mid-Nov., seen in the Eastern Passage area, Halifax County, at Broad Cove and Seal Is. (JT,FLL,IAM,ELM,CSII,BH and SJF).

For future reference the data on our native warblers has been condensed as follows: between late May and the last of October, we have seen the TENNESSEE, 6 reports of at least 8 birds in all; NASHVILLE, 17 reports of 20 birds; PARULA, 6 reports of at least 13; YELLOW, 15 reports, "numerous" (numbers not given any other way in many cases); a Yellow seen near Canal St., on Nov. 30, was the latest record for Nova Scotia (JSC); CHESTNUT-SIDED, 5 reports, "numerous", with a migratory movement noted on Seal of 50, Aug. 20; BLACK-THROATED BLUE, 4 reports of 9; YELLOW-RUMPED, 26 reports, "very numerous", with 50+ at Seal Aug. 28; BLACK-THROATED GREEN, 13 reports, "numerous"; BLACKBURNIAN, 9 reports of 15, plus over 100 at Brier Is., Aug. 31; PALM, 16 reports of 20+ (+'s mean some reporters used such terms as "several", "a few", etc.); BAY-BREASTED, 5 reports of 8, with two migratory movements noted: 15 at Seal Is., Aug. 20, and 20 at Bon Portage, Aug. 29; BLACKPOLL, 4 reports of 8, with 20 at Seal Is., Aug. 28; BLACK-AND-WHITE, 8 reports of 12; AMERICAN REDSTART, 11 re-

ports of 35, with 20 on Seal, Aug. 28 and 30 on Bon Portage, Aug. 29; OVENBIRD, 11 reports of 15+, noted as "abundant" at Stewiacke, June 15; NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH, 6 reports of 7 birds; MOURNING WARBLER, 4 reports of 7 plus 10 individuals Sept. 2 at Seal Is. (only 1 there Aug. 28); COMMON YELLOWTHROAT, 16 reports of 28, plus 25 at Seal, Aug. 28 and 20+ at East Jordan, Shel. Co., Aug. 25-26; WILSON'S, 6 reports of 7 birds; CANADA, 3 reports of 4, and called "common" on Brier Is. Aug. 30 - Sept. 2, 1985.

#### TANAGERS TO DICKCISSEL

Our only TANAGER noted this season was the SCARLET, seen and heard May 24, at Wolfville Ridge, "singing in our garden", by JFT. A singing Tanager can scarcely go un-noticed, and they appear, from our reports to have kept on singing up to mid-July at least, when one, possibly the same one (?) was seen and heard at Kentville Research Station by BLF. We have records this year of 10-12 of these birds: 3, in early May in Yar. Co., one, late May, in Kings Co., to one in Oct. on Seal Is. The rest were well scattered over the province, although none reported from Cape Breton. The NORTHERN CARDINAL is still with us, becoming native: 5, certainly present, perhaps 8; a male and a female reported in two areas of Yarmouth town, and a female often seen alone at a feeder across town; a male and a female in the Pubnicos; a female at Second Peninsula, Lun. Co., and a male at Little Harbour, Shel. Co.

There were no reports from Cape Breton of either of the above species but two, for the next, the ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK: 1, May 3 at Glace Bay and 1, Sept 2, at Big Bras d'Or; besides these there were 6 more reports of 8-10, distribution general but "small flocks" seen August and September passing through the Wolfville area.

Three reports of the BLUE GROSBEAK Oct. 14 to Nov. 8 come from Halifax, Lun. and Shel. Co.s one each--a tiny migratory movement. The INDIGO BUNTING was seen both spring and fall but very few this year: in May at Sydney, June at Birch Cove Park, with the fall movement, Sept. 13 (2 on Seal Is.) to 1, at Dartmouth, Nov. 9, 10 birds altogether this year. The DICKCISSEL showed up in fall migration, but also in scanty numbers: 2 at Seal Is., Aug. 28-30; 1, at Russel Lake, Dartmouth, Oct. 4; 2, at L.W. Pubnico, Oct. 9; 1, at Seal Is. Oct. 13; 2, there Oct. 18; 1, again Oct. 23.

#### SPARROWS

One of the rare birds which visit us during migrations, usually found on Seal Is. is the CLAY-COLOURED SPARROW. Two were observed (and carefully described) this year, one at Broad Cove, Sept. 27-28, seen by the Cohrs, SJF and BH; and one on Seal Is., Oct. 13-22, seen there by numbers of the NSBS. This bird needs careful observation as it closely resembles the Chipping Sparrow, but is distinguishable by its gray nape (right across), buffy stripe over the middle (top) of the head and brown (not gray) rump. Another Seal Is. speciality (or it used to be) is the RUFOUS-SIDED TOWHEE, one seen there Oct. 22 by SJF&SM.

We seem to have had at least ten AMERICAN TREE SPARROWS so far, 5, seen Oct. 12 at Seal Is. (IAM et al.) and 5, Nov. 18 at Russel Lake, Hfx. Co. (FLL). They seem slow to come in this fall, or perhaps they will continue to be scarce. CHIPPING SPARROWS on the other hand are up in number. One "confirmed breeding" date is June 10 at Musquodoboit (RBD), the only other June date of 1, June 24 at Cape Breton Highlands Park (SM). Early migrants were on Seal Is., Aug. 12-14, major arrival Aug. 25 (29 birds) and "hundreds" in flocks along the roadsides on Digby Neck, Oct. 14. It has been some years since we have seen such numerous roadside flocks of Chipping Sparrows,

but September brought them to Yarmouth Co., continuing here and in Digby Co. until the last of October. At Seal Is., a flock of 35 of these birds Oct. 12 had diminished to 15 by the next day. The FIELD SPARROW was seen only in October this fall, 1 in the Dartmouth area, 1, at Green Bay and up to 13 (highest count there) at Seal Is., Oct. 23. The VESPER SPARROW was seen, only one at a time, in June on Lynn Mountain, Cumb. Co., in August at Little Harbour (Shel. Co.), in Oct. at L.W. Pubnico, Cranberry Head and Seal Is. (all in Yar. Co.). An even tinier movement was that of the LARK SPARROW: 1, immature, August 19, at East Jordan, Shel. Co.; 2, August 28 at Seal Is., and 1 (imm.) Nov. 2, at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co.

SAVANNAH SPARROWS were present in usual numbers, "abundant" at Martinique Beach in June, also called abundant at Cherry Hill Beach throughout the summer, and reports in general from Cape Breton to Yar. Co., gave normal good numbers for this species. SAVANNAH SPARROW "IPSWICH" was noted as "very scarce this fall" by IAM, and was reported from Hartlen Point, Hfx. Co., Cherry Hill, L.W. Pubnico, Brier Is., Seal Is. and Cape Sable. At the last named place an Ipswich Sparrow was found "on territory" Aug. 4; IAM calls this the first indication of breeding outside of the eastern shore.

One GRASSHOPPER SPARROW was present on Seal Is., Oct. 13-22, seen there by IAM and Field Trip Party, reported by SPM. The SHARP-TAILED SPARROW was first reported June 1 (early) from L.W. Pubnico and a further June record also in Yar. Co.; by July they were abundant in the West Chezzetcook area and common throughout the season in Lun. Co.; one only lingered (in that area) to Oct. 19. (Note by JSC: one, Oct. 28, 1984 at the same place in Petite Riviere). A SEASIDE SPARROW was identified Aug. 20 at Hartlen Point by Roger Foxall and Ian McLaren who had excellent looks at the "undoubted postjuvinal Seaside Sparrow, discovered by Fulton Lavender and J.W. Taylor. The back was as dark as adults' but a buffy streaked breast, the ear patch with posterior dark margin, unlike adult. The wonderfully long bill, long legs and frequently cocked tail, were all evident."

A small migration of the FOX SPARROW went through Nova Scotia, Oct. 8 in Guys. Co., to Nov. 23, in Yar. Co., mentioned at various points along the south shore in between, about 35 birds in all. The SONG SPARROW became abundant by mid-May and according to W&NP was "feeding young at the kitchen window", June 7 and on. This sparrow as usual was well distributed about the province, Cape Breton to Shelburne, with birds collecting in September for the major fall movement in October which reached a peak late in that month: 30 at Seal Is., Oct. 20-21, 40+ at the Dartmouth Piggery, Oct. 23, on which date also 8 of these birds were found feeding on the huge marsh at Wedge Point, Yar. Co., no doubt preparatory to taking off --no other birds to be seen there at that time. November sightings may be of late migrants or of wintering birds, some of which have definitely settled in at feeders. Ian McLaren noted "a curious 'blond' Song Sparrow without dark streaks on the breast, etc., on Seal Is. in August, as seen last year. "Sometimes mutants survive" was his comment.

The LINCOLN'S SPARROW, seldom seen elsewhere this season, was reported as "abundant" in the Musquodoboit area, July 10 by RBD and FLL, who wrote also that breeding was confirmed there. The only other reports were in September: 1 each at Big Bras d'Or, L.W. Pubnico, and Seal Is. Reports of the SWAMP SPARROW have come mainly from the Halifax County area and the southwestern part of the province with numbers about as usual: "many seen around lakes near Halifax" according to AJV and FS; and from Seal Is., migration dates were 20 down to 10, Oct. 12 to 13, reported by IAM for the NSBS party there;

also a report of five Swamp Sparrows, Oct. 17 up to 30 on the 18th came from Seal Is. (SPM).

The WHITE-THROATED SPARROW came into full song late April and adults were observed bringing young birds to feeders by early June. Reports indicate that this, our chosen NSBS bird for Nova Scotia, is universally present in the province this year, and at all seasons. Fewer of course in winter, but this season are having good breeding success. Nine reports of the WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW add up to at least 40 individuals seen from Sept. 29, at Hartlen Point, Hfx. Co. to Nov. 2, 4 at Chebogue Point, Yar. Co., (one male and two immatures or females). On Seal Is., 20-30 were seen Oct. 12-13, noted by IAM as equal in number present, as Whitethroats. All other reports of White-crowns were from Halifax and Pubnico areas.

The DARK-EYED JUNCO was, as always, universally present at all seasons, both at feeders and in the wild. Reports from Cape Breton to Yar. Co., indicate normal numbers over the province, and breeding normal: 3 immatures were observed being fed by an adult June 1-15 at Eastern Passage (R&DM); five young were being fed at a window feeder at Hazel Hill from July 6 on (W&NP), and Richard Keddy found a nest with eggs at Hammonds Plains July 13. From Seal Is. indication of the migration of some of the Juncos came from Stephen Manuel: Oct. 17, 10 birds; Oct. 18, 45; Oct. 21, 90; Oct. 23, 30. One "pink-sided" or Oregon Junco was observed at Russel Lake, Hfx. Co., Oct. 22, by Fulton Lavender.

#### LARK BUNTING TO SNOW BUNTING

A LARK BUNTING was identified by Sylvia Fullerton, seen at the north end of Seal Is., Oct. 22, an "immature; small, stout bird with Savannah Sparrows, about the same length but double in breadth. Large gray bunting bill, short notched tail, heavy striping on sides; whitish-buff belly, brown crown with no striping, and buff wing-bars."

The LAPLAND LONGSPUR was first noted at Cherry Hill, Lun. Co., 1, on Sept. 21; 3 there Sept. 29; 3, at Hartlen Point, Hfx. Co., Sept. 28, and 2, there Oct. 16; 2, at Seal Is., Oct. 12. Thereafter flocks were observed: 5, at Grand Pré, Oct. 22; 30 at Hartlen Pt Oct. 26; 15+ at Amherst Oct. 27 and 20 at Cole Harbour, Nov. 3. A CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPUR was observed by Stephen Manuel and Sylvia Fullerton at Seal Is., Oct. 23. Both observers have sent convincing detailed descriptions (which, may be had upon request), and Sylvia photographed the bird (see centerfold). Its call was also heard. The first sighting of the SNOW BUNTING was of 1, Oct. 14 at Cherry Hill, Lun. Co.; then 4, Oct. 19 at the Grand Pré, 5 the same day at Crescent Beach, Lun. Co. A number came in at Seal Is., Oct. 21 (up to 8 birds); 6 in a flock seen Oct. 23 at Wedge Point, Yar. Co.; by Oct. 27, there were about 75 at Cherry Hill, a quarter of them in winter plumage, the others moulting (according to Chris Naugler); another big flock, Oct. 27 at Amherst sod farm; even larger - 120 - at Brule Point, Oct. 29 (SIT). From Nov. 3 to the end of the month large flocks (from 20 to 100+) were observed at Cole Harbour, Silversands, Cherry Hill, Brier Is., Dan'l's Head and Chegoggin Point--right around the perimeter of the southwest end of the peninsula of Nova Scotia.

#### BOBOLINK TO ORIOLES

The BOBOLINK arrived here in May in its usual large excited flocks, noted especially in areas around Halifax, at Wolfville and on the Grand Pré, flocks numbering 10 to 30, and soon spread very generally over the province--four reports from Cape Breton, numbers not given, but said to have gone by the end of July. Evidently fall



migration starts early and goes on for some time for these birds, as over 100 arrived on Seal Is. Aug. 29; 175-200 at L.W. Pubnico, Aug. 30. By Oct. 13, one only Bobolink was left to be counted on Seal. The REDWINGED BLACKBIRD was also widely distributed over the province: six reports from Cape Breton, one of which gave a high count of 20 for early September, at which time Sara MacLean noted them to be "very busy in the sunflower seed". In October, large flocks were reported from Kings and Annapolis counties (flocks up to 100); by November down to 1's and 2's generally, although MWH in Yarmouth complained of 8, at the feeder, Nov. 5-21; and some of course do stay all winter. One only EASTERN MEADOWLARK has been reported: at Broad Cove, Nov. 23. Two YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRDS were seen, one, a sub-adult male noted on Cape Sable was photographed by IAM; the other, a female, seen November 3 and after at Hazel Hill, Guys. Co., by Jean Richards, identified by Nancy Peters.

As usual there were few reports of the RUSTY BLACKBIRD: 1, Aug. 30, at New Ross, the only one on the mainland! At Seal Is. there were a few every day, Oct. 12-21, the highest number at one time, 6, on the 21st. However, a note from Alan MacLeod at Big Bras d'Or says "a high count of 45 Rustys was here Sept. 18, arrived and left in late afternoon "moving through treetops in a mixed grove of maples, birches and soft woods". AM added that a wave of Blackbird species (about 220) went through Sept. 20 and included some Rustys. So, we now know where do all the Rustys go.

A BREWER'S BLACKBIRD was observed and identified Oct. 27, seen beside the road near Shelburne by Margaret Churchill and June Graves. The COMMON GRACKLE was present in numbers usual for this season, noted very generally. The Matteaus observed 7 immatures being fed by 2 adults at their feeder for a week early in July. By August flocks of 100 or more were noted at Lower Truro, Waverley, Centreville and Hammonds Plains. In September 50-60 were at West Pubnico; up to 40 hanging around a feeder in Yarmouth, and on Oct. 31, a wall-to-wall flock of over 100 completely blackened a lawn at Lr. Eel Brook. Numbers diminished by November, but Grackles were still present, by now in flocks of 5-25, noted in Cape Breton, Stewiacke and the Pubnicos. The BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD has been "numerous" from May to November, according to reports around the province, and is likely to remain so, as Bernard Forsythe found Cowbird eggs in 9 songbird nests in the Wolfville area this summer (1985). Chris Naugler saw a Cowbird chick being fed by a Yellow-rumped Warbler (once every 20-30 seconds) at the Bridgewater Park, July 15. Very few seem to have migrated, if any: at Seal Is., only 2 at a time were seen, Oct. 18 to 23, and on Nov. 2, BT at Granville counted over 250 in a pasture beside the road; there were that day 200+ at Chebogue Point (CRKA) and 40, Nov. 3 at L.W. Pubnico (DJD'E). Only one ORCHARD ORIOLE has been seen this year, Aug. 28, by the Cohrs party on Bon Portage Is. The NORTHERN ORIOLE was reported May 25 at Glace Bay, and May 28 at Hazel Hill, Guys. Co. Two more settled in during June, present at the Kentville Bird Sanctuary June 2, also on that date at Tusket, Yar. Co., where one continued to sing through the month, trading back and forth among the huge old shade trees characteristic of that village. From that time on there were no reports until August, when SIT counted 25 at Brier Is., Aug. 30; and ELM counted 20 that day at Seal Is., over 30 there by Sept. 2. A few remained on through October, seen in the Halifax area, at Clementsport, Pubnico Head and Hazel Hill, where (in the last-mentioned locality) Warren and Nancy Peters fed two of these Orioles on seeds and oranges, and the birds were "still coming, Nov. 20". (no wonder!)

PINE GROSBEAK TO HOUSE SPARROW

The PINE GROSBEAK was not seen frequently this season: 1, a May report from a Field Trip in Cape Breton: 1, July 10, at Middle Musquodoboit (RBD); 1, Sept. 15-21, at Big Bras d'Or (AM), then from mid-October on "large groups" in the Hazel Hill area and one report of 1, Oct. 30 at New Ross. November reports added up to 16 birds altogether, widely scattered but few to be seen: Nov. 5 to 23, a few seen at East Jordan, Shel. Co., a few also Nov. 12, east of Kentville, 5, at Tusket, Nov. 19 and 6 seen on the Waverley Road, Nov. 23. The PURPLE FINCH left our feeders in late May, a few appearing sporadically through the summer and are only now returning, in fairly good numbers. At Lower Eel Brook there were 5-6 all summer at a feeder, half-and-half adult and immatures or females but they disappeared late in August and have not (barring an occasional visit of one or two, very brief) returned, until Nov. 7, a few more Dec. 8. There were 16, Oct. 2 at Big Bras d'Or and JC noted "migrating flocks" Oct. 22 at Canning, Kings Co. MWH at Yarmouth had them present more or less all summer at the feeder, very few in October; returned in numbers (around 36 at the most, usually 15-24) after Nov. 6. There were 30, Oct. 20 at L.W. Pubnico; 40 at Seal Is. around that date--not really a good year for the Purple Finch. S. Manuel heard the bird, S.J. Fullerton saw it, an undoubted HOUSE FINCH, on Seal Is., Oct. 23 (well seen and described), the only one reported this season. RED CROSSBILLS were reported from August 29 (10 or more at East Jordan, Shel. Co.) to Oct. 13 (2 at Seal Is.) and Nov. 2 (6, at Victoria Park, Truro). WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILLS were seen much more frequently, May through November: a flock of 15 (7 males), May 28 near Chester, seen by Ruth Hebb who saw White-wings seven times at least, late May and early June, in this area. These birds were also seen June through November: twice in Cape Breton (a pair at Louisbourg and 8, at Big Bras d'Or); in Hfx Co. (2); New Ross (1); Seal Is. (up to 30); Victoria Park, Truro (40+); Malagash Point, Cumb. Co. (12) and at Bush Island, Lun. Co. (20+). The COMMON REDPOLL was evidently plentiful to the north of us but barely dipped into Nova Scotia, 2's and 3's seen in a few places in late October, except for 25 at Northport, Oct. 27. On Caribou Is., Pictou Co., however, after a few birds seen Nov. 3 "large flocks, (200-300 birds) were present Nov. 9-11" reported by CWH. Neither was the PINE SISKIN present in any number this year generally in Nova Scotia: 35-40 birds all told were scattered from Cape Breton to Seal Is., September through October. A few summered in the Valley, June through August, highest count there was 8 at Wolfville Ridge, August 11.

A EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH came aboard a lobster boat the middle of May off Soldier's Ledge, west of Seal Is., and stayed for an hour or so, identified there by Larry MacKenzie, who gave a completely convincing description of this--really unmistakable--red faced bird. The AMERICAN GOLDFINCH remained with us throughout the summer and fall in good numbers; staying at feeders well into June, then seen, widespread about the countryside, mostly in flocks of 20-50, and often found in the same locality time after time. JCT reported a female gathering nesting material (supplied) July 1 at Wolfville Ridge, and Rsd'E saw a parent bird feeding a fledgling, Sept. 18 at L.W. Pubnico--a long or erratic breeding season. The American Goldfinch seems to be most abundant in Yarmouth County as just half of our reports came from this region. The first date for a goldfinch back at a feeder was November 16, 1985.

A late spring date for departing EVENING GROSBEAKS was May 26, "a flock of 6 in trees by a stream", near Stanley, Hants Co. (RDH) A Pair came to Hazel Hill, Guys. Co., June 11 (W&NP) and C.W. Helleiner writes: "Evening Grosbeaks present through the summer in pairs, Caribou Island and adjacent mainland, Pictou Co.; not seen here

in previous three summers." Several were seen in July at Middle Musquodoboit by R.B. Dickie, but the earliest date of fall returns was Sept. 29, at Broad Cove. Several more reports came in October, but the main return was during the two weeks Nov. 1-14, when 40-50 birds were reported, widely spaced over the SW part of the province.

According to the (rather few) reports received the HOUSE SPARROW appears to be still universal in distribution in Nova Scotia, but not increasing in numbers, possibly even decreasing. It continues to be a nuisance at the nesting season (of other birds); otherwise can be tolerated unless too numerous at feeders.

--PRD, ed.

## DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF REPORTS

FOR  
THE APRIL ISSUE

FEBRUARY 25, 1986

Bird reports to the Records Editor--

Mr. Bob Dickie,  
43 Deepwood Crescent,  
Halifax, N.S. B3M 2Y5

Articles, sketches and letters to the Editor--

Mrs. Shirley Cohrs,  
8 Rosemount Ave.,  
Halifax, N.S. B3N 1X8

Photographs to--

Dr. I. A. McLaren,  
1755 Cambridge Street,  
Halifax, N.S. B3H 4A8

FIELD TRIP REPORTSMay 25 - Cape Breton - Grove's Point Warbler Day

On May 25, the Cape Breton members of the Bird Society, as well as a few guests, set off on our Warbler Day outing. This is always one of the very best field days. Everything is promising; we are able to forget the cold, the wind, the snow, the ice, and think summer. The birds feel that way, too.

One of the first places we visited was a rather unattractive little bog, but it contained riches. In a very small area there were Mallards, Black Ducks, and two pairs of Green-winged Teal, all nesting.

Next, we stopped by the waterside. In the bushes were Kingbirds, as we had been promised, and in the bay, on the glassy water, sailed Great Cormorants, Double-crested Cormorants, terns, and a pair of loons. The cormorants were turning summer-saults, the way they do, but the loons were more dignified. They were catching tiny little flat-fish. These, small as they were as flat-fish go, were just a little too wide for the loons to down at one gulp. There was considerable juggling and rearranging going on before each fish could be swallowed. It looked as if one loon of the pair was sitting watching and advising the other about the best way to deal with flat-fish.

We continued on our way, and stopped at an open place, no special merit--an old clearing on one side with a few straggly trees in it, and on the other, a spruce forest rising up from the roadside. Under the spruce were Juncos and White-throats. In the clearing was absolutely everything--we simply remained, strolling about and listening--Ovenbirds, a thrush, Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers drumming, a grouse, a toad, trilling away in a little wet patch, while a Pine Grosbeak sat above. More, more--Goldfinches, Purple finches, Grackles. Farther on we saw the Killdeer in the Killdeer place--they nest in the same spot each year.

Then we went into our clearing where the warblers gather. Blackburnians were flaming there, Redstarts, a Wilson's Warbler, Magnolia, and of course the Yellow Warblers and Myrtles.

We encountered a snake, all shining and new for spring, but not yet very active. One of our number picked it up and got bitten until the blood ran--served him right. I didn't think it would bite so deep; it wasn't a very large snake either.

This was all eagle country but we only came across one eagle all day. I don't know why. That is one of the things that make a field day interesting--the things we don't find. Not one heron did we record, yet the place is full of them--we know that. Instead of the heron we saw the Kingfisher hovering and splashing down. A most satisfying day, full of wonders.

One doesn't need to go searching for some poor emigrant, lost, far, far from home. The lovely things we see all around us are marvel enough, and to feel that one can go back to the same field, the same path, almost the same tree, and there is the dear little treasure that was here last year. To me that is so much more worthwhile than striving for curiosities.

--Sara MacLean

May 25 - Yarmouth - Perry Road Warbler Walk

Fifteen Cockawhitters and Yarmouthians met in Carleton school yard at 9:00 a.m., for the annual Perry Road Warbler Walk. The day was sunny, warm and windless, and from the school yard we were given a good send-off, by a Northern Oriole, very melodious, and an unmelodious Catbird! We were soon among the warblers in the Perry Road beechwoods.

Highlights of the trip were a couple of Nighthawks and a Chimney Swift--both rare now in these parts--and most fantastic good luck--the sight of Parula Warbler building its hanging basket (of a nest) of usnea lichen: so hard at work it took no heed of us, standing below with our mouths open.

The twelve species of warbler seen all co-operated nicely, letting themselves be viewed at leisure by the party. Black flies were a mild nuisance but ticks were scarce.

--C.R.K. Allen

June 22 - Bird Island Trip

Today we went once again to the Bird Islands, and, once again, it was a completely satisfactory thing to do. For fourteen years, the boat has been taking people out there and I have never heard anyone say he was disappointed. Granted, some tours are better than others. One that I can remember took place on a really hot, summer day. The big gray seals were hauled out on the rocks getting a sun-tan. Another time it was so rough, we couldn't round the islands and were only able to go along the southern side.

Today wasn't warm and it rained some and there was a fair bit of a swell on, so that the tough young Van Shaik handling the boat gave us some hard bumps over the rollers. However, that is only part of the regular little difficulties that always arise. One learns to ride over them and enjoy the good part. It's all fun.

The good part?--well, there was no glare, so that even though it was misty, visibility near at hand was very good indeed, and the birds were most obliging.

The first island inhabitants to greet us are always the guillemots, busy on important errands. Of course they are important errands--they are a matter of life and death to a generation of guillemots.

As the boat came nearer to the islands, the frieze of cormorants around the top edge came into view. There were Double-crested Cormorants and a good lot of the Great Cormorants flying, roosting, contributing to what the less experienced watchers called "those white rocks", and to what I politely call whitewash. I swear, no matter how high the wind, there is a whiff comes off those islands--fish-meal plant crossed with poultry yard. We need all the fresh air available to be able to go near them. You should see the poisonous, nitrogenous green of the vegetation on the top where the cormorants and Herring Gulls and Black-backs nest. The earth there must be deep in pure dynamite.

Winging its way over from the mainland, one Great Cormorant was carrying a bunch of green stuff in its beak. Now why?--cormorant nests are not very comfortably furnished--they think a small piece of fishing net to add to the usual clutter of sticks supplies real luxury. There is no shortage of green vegetation on top of the island. Perhaps this bird was delivering a superior kind of baby-food.

Interesting behavior, even if a puzzle.

There were plenty of Bank Swallows at the western end, as there always are. The Puffins seemed to be in good numbers this year, more than we saw the last couple of years, I'd say. Razor-bills were much in evidence, such well-dressed birds, with their snowy fronts. They were perching on the cliffs near their nests and in one place a large flock--a couple of score--were floating on the waves; a pretty sight.

The pretty little Kittiwakes have their swallow-like nests on the north side. There are hundred of them.

All in all, we had another good field day, in good company and with fascinating things to see.

--Sara MacLean

July 13 - McNab's Island (list of birds viewed)

Double-crested Cormorant	Bank Swallow
Great Blue Heron	Northern Raven
Black Duck	Common Crow
Green-winged Teal	Black-cap Chickadee
Osprey	Gray Catbird
Semipalmated Plover	Robin
Black-bellied Plover	Starling
Ruddy Turnstone	Red-eyed Vireo
Greater Yellowlegs	Black-white Warbler
Least Sandpipers	Nashville Warbler
Short-billed Dowitcher	Northern Paula Warbler
Semipalmated Sandpiper	Yellow Warbler
Sanderling	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Great Black-backed Gull	Black-throated Green Warbler
Herring Gull	Bay-breasted Warbler
Common Tern	Blackpoll Warbler
Arctic Tern	American Redstart
Flicker	Common Grackle
Eastern Wood Peewee	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Barn Swallow	White-throated Sparrow
Tree Swallow	Song Sparrow

Remarkably, Sharp-tailed Sparrows were absent from the marsh in which they were abundant last year. Heavy rain in June may have washed them out. A fine day trip for a round dozen members.

--Roger Pocklington

July 27 - Cape Breton - Big Pond

The edge of a tropical storm had brought drenching rain and high winds to Cape Breton overnight; nevertheless, five carloads of die-hard birdwatchers assembled in the mist and rain at St. Mary's Church in East Bay to see what the day would bring. In the event we were not disappointed and as the day wore on the weather improved steadily, until by noon we were under blue skies and a warm sun.

The plan was to spend most of the field trip exploring the gravel road that runs past Loch Uist and Loch Lomond from Big Pond to Hay Cove. However, we stopped first to observe the eagles' nest which has long been an East Bay fixture, and from which young birds have "migrated" to the U.S.A. Mr. Ivan Doncaster kindly lent us his verandah and, in spite of the rain, we were able to see the two young

eagles which are its current occupants.

We then drove along Highway 4, spending a short time in Ben Eoin picnic park, where Juncos, Robins, Blue Jays and White-throated Sparrows were much in evidence. Next we went to Big Pond and down Glengarry Road. A flock of Cliff Swallows had built a continuous line of some thirty nests under the eaves of a nearby house and we stopped to watch the adult birds flying in and out with food for their young ones. A few miles farther on, where the road ended, we parked in an open space beside the river, bordered also by several large (and live) old elm trees. Chipping Sparrows and Goldfinches were plentiful here, along with Song and Savannah Sparrows and the occasional Flicker. A rooster and a white domestic duck were also reported, having been spotted in the yard of one of the two dwellings hereabouts.

We turned back and headed towards Loch Lomond from Big Pond. This leisurely journey was full of delightful surprises: a Rusty Blackbird picking its bright-eyed way among the water lilies at the edge of a swamp; Kingbirds perched on a roadside wire fence; two pairs of Bobolinks which were evidently rearing young in a farm meadow; flocks of Barn Swallows and Tree Swallows swooping and wheeling over our heads where we stopped for lunch beside Loch Uist. By the time we reached Loch Lomond and stopped at the Middle Passage bridge, we had added shore birds and warblers to our list and here we spotted some Cedar Waxwings and a pair of Common Loons.

We came back to the highway and headed east, pausing at the Irish Cove look-off long enough to explain to some travellers to Cape Breton from Alabama what we were all looking for, as our field glasses scanned the woodlands and the shoreline. Finally came the journey's end at the More's cottage in Ben Eoin, a swim in the Bras d'Or for five of us, and cups of tea all round. A Red-breasted Nuthatch and a Kingfisher were added to the list, and the day ended as it had begun, with an adult Bald Eagle flying low along the shore. Our count for the day was thirty-one species.

--Nancy More

#### July 28 - Crescent and Cherry Hill Beaches

The fantastic Cohrs' luck with the weather continued for another year and thirty plus birders were able to enjoy the shorebird show at Crescent and Cherry Hill. The tide was just right for the hungry birds to descend to feed as we walked up Crescent in the morning. All the expected shorebirds were around; dowitchers, "semis" (both types), Black-bellies, Sanderling, White-rumps and Least. Scoters (including a pair of Surfs) were around the Pollies, with Loons and an unseasonable Oldsquaw. A few warblers and sparrows and finches were about in the trees at the top of the beach; Sharp-tails gasped in the marsh grass and many Great Blues fed in the shallow ponds.

After lunch at Risser's Beach (accompanied as usual by the, now mandatory, enormous ice cream cones) the party proceeded to Cherry Hill where more shorebirds, including Pectorals were viewed. There were no rarities this time, but some excitement was generated by a confrontation with an all terrain vehicle. The species tally taken as the party rested by the cars--62, about usual for the trip which concentrated on shoreline birds.

--JSC

### August 10 - Yarmouth Shorebird Trip

About ten cars showed up at the usual meeting place, C.P.R. Station, Yarmouth, and at the usual time of 9:00 a.m. After a bit of car pooling to simplify parking at the various stops, we arrived at Sandbeach, the first of these. The tide was well out and a good assortment of large and small shorebirds dotted the flats--Dowitchers and Semipalmated Sandpipers predominating.

Sharp-tailed Sparrows were numerous in the marsh back of the beach and still in full song--if what they produce can be so described.

After two more stops at Sunday point and Chebogue, not as productive as the first, the party took time out for lunch in Tusket, followed by a short recuperative loaf.

In the afternoon the first trip was inland to Belle Neck, and turned out to be a Flycatcher Walk, with Olive-sideds and adult and young Kingbirds and Wood Pewees (with a few warblers thrown in) providing most of the interest.

Next the big stone dyke at Glenwood gave a grandstand view of many hundreds of Dowitchers and 'peep', plus many dozens of Greater Yellowlegs.

The final trip of the day was to Cook's Beach where flood tide brought incredible numbers of shorebirds to their roosts. The numbers of 'peep' far surpassed anything any of us had ever seen before, rivalling Evangeline Beach at its most crowded. There was a Harrier and a small falcon in the vicinity and the flocks were alert and restless, and the great clouds of birds flashing silver as they turned and banked, merging and separating was a thrilling sight.

The total species for the day was 65, including five species of hawks: Osprey, Red-tailed, Broadwing, Harrier and the small falcon; not too bad considering nearly all of the time was spent in the special habitat of shore and marsh.

--C.R.K. Allen

### August 11 - Shorebirds at Grand Pré

We had about a dozen cars and perhaps 30 people for this combined outing for the Blomidon Naturalists and N.S.B.S. As usual we first drove across the dykelands at high tide, and we stopped at a couple of ploughed open fields where groups of shorebirds were roosting. We saw a few Harriers, but a hunting Merlin provided a highlight as it chased a starling literally right through our group as we stood there gawking. When someone asked, "How do we know it's a Merlin?", a now-famous line from Norm McGuinness was given in response: "If two or more people say it's a \_\_\_\_\_, then it's a \_\_\_\_\_" (fill in the blanks with any species for other similar problematical situations).

We went on to another open field, but this one was grass-covered and held lots of shorebirds and gulls and five Whimbrels. A 'lowligh' of this trip was the superabundance of no-see-ums (biting midges) that were very hungry for our blood; they were in hordes on the dykelands.



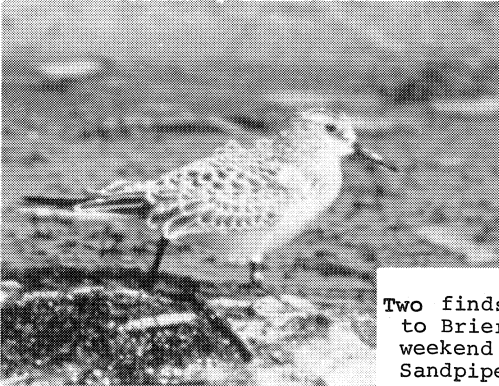
We drove to a point east of Evangeline Beach to view roosting flocks of "semi's and semi's" (Semipalmated Sandpipers and S. Plovers, with other 'peeps' mixed in). However, this year we split into two groups. Bernard Forsythe took half the group back to the dykelands to search (fruitlessly) for a Black-billed Cuckoo he had heard earlier that day. The rest of us walked the beach toward Boot Island as the shorebirds began to get active with the ebbing tide. The day's overcast skies made the flights of the big flocks less spectacular than usual. Here I am referring to the simultaneous flashing of their white bellies as they turn in the air. However, we did get decent looks at feeding Black-bellied Plovers, a Greater Yellowlegs, dowitchers, Red Knots, and several Hudsonian Godwits.

Some of us finished the trip by searching the dykelands again for the Cattle Egret and immature Night Heron that had been there a few days previously. We found only a group of six Lesser Yellowlegs.

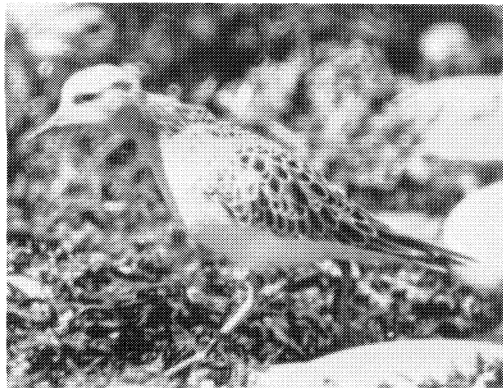
--Jim Wolford

August 30 - September 2 - Brier Island

Various birders, some in groups, some in pairs, some accompanied by children and dogs, and some on their own, descended on Brier Island for the Labour Day weekend. Most arrived on the Friday evening, just in time for the heaviest and most prolonged rainstorm of the whole summer. It poured torrential rain, sometimes lashed into horizontal sheets by high winds, until Saturday evening. The poor unfortunates who were camping got wet, but most stayed on anyway. The even more



Two finds on the N.S.B.S. field trip to Brier Island on the Labour Day weekend were Baird's and Buff-breasted Sandpiper. --Photo Richard Stern.



unfortunates that camped at Sandy Cove had a Bluegrass festival held on site to contend with as well.

However, the rain did not stop the birds, so several groups toured the island to see what was about. The main road in the rain resembled a tidal mud flat, both the human and avian observers and Whimbrel, Solitary Sandpipers and a Hudsonian Godwit were all seen at various times standing in the path of oncoming traffic. Stuart Tingley and Co. went over to Freeport to look for shorebirds and found a Caspian Tern so Jim Wolford went later to the same spot and found a Royal Tern--yes, definitely well-described and different birds.

On Saturday evening, when the rain finally stopped the Warblers came and the trees at the west end of the island were alive. The commonest species were Blackburnian, Cape May, Black and White, Redstarts and Bay-breasts, with a smattering of other species as well as Red-breasted Nuthatches.

On Sunday, it was still too windy for an pelagic trip but while several of the group were deciding what to do for the day, an Osprey, 6 Canada Geese and several Sharp-shinned Hawks flew by. Different birders then did different things, the majority going over to Freeport to look for the rare terns again with most people seeing the Caspian. By high tide the beach at Pond Cove looked like a tripod and telescope owners convention but observers were rewarded by 5 Buff-breasted Sandpipers, a Baird's Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper and Red Knots, Merlin, Purple Martin, Black-headed Gull as well as the more common shorebirds. Meanwhile the warbler hunters in the woods found a Philadelphia Vireo among other things. Later that day another wave of warblers appeared and included two slightly different plumaged Prairie Warblers.

Finally on Monday, it was calm enough for a pelagic trip but not before people had been to Northern Light to watch the Acadia University Bird Banding operation in full swing, with numerous warblers, and another Philadelphia Vireo. By mid-morning two boats went out and went searching for seabirds--Greater, Sooty and Manx Shearwaters were all seen as well as Puffins, Wilson's Petrels, Gannets and two species of Phalarope. However, for many people the climax of the whole weekend was a non-birding event. First one boat then both got within a few feet of two hump backed whales who proceeded to show us, close-up, their eyes, faces, and flippers and several times sounded, raising their magnificent tail flukes high in the air above the boat. We were able to follow them for about half an hour and the "oohs" and "ahhs" and clapping and total excitement of the onlookers in the boats exceeded any birding event that I have ever experienced.

Furthermore, we were then treated to a fabulous display by White-sided Dolphins, several with young, whizzing beside and under the boat.

Most people felt that anything after that was anticlimactic and left. The total bird count for the weekend varied from party to party but nearly everybody that stayed the whole weekend got over 90 species and a few were up to and over 120. All in all it was a very successful weekend.

--Richard Stern

### September 7 - Cape Breton - Louisbourg

The final field day for 1985, as far as the Cape Breton folk go, was September 7, and we went to Louisbourg.

It was a calm and lovely day and seventeen of us took part in the outing, which we think a very good number, considering the fact that we exist more or less in a vacuum.

We didn't get to Louisbourg right away. Oh no, that isn't our method at all. In fact, it seems that we are adept at the poke-along way of getting anywhere. We went in on the New Boston road, a good place to go. For one thing, there isn't much traffic, and nobody minds a string of cars parked along the edge. Out on the busy highway it may or may not be safe to go climbing in and out of cars and wandering along staring into bushes. A Broad-winged Hawk made us stop to look, then we kept on down a wood road and along the edge of the forest. There were many Goldfinches flitting and twittering, feeding in a clump of birch. Some of them were feeding young. The young ones were perfectly well able to fly, but still begging and fluttering. Some Siskins were in the flock, too. There was a Yellow-throat nearby, some Cedar Waxwings and a jay or two--a busy corner.

Our slow wandering took us to a halt on a little bridge over a fast-running stream. A "black brook", but then almost all the brooks in that peaty southern part of the island are "black brooks". Over the water danced a vast swarm of white midges, probably shedding their eggs in the rapids. How nature protects these delicate beings! A month earlier, and flycatchers and warblers would have feasted until the whole flight would have been devoured. In September, they were unmolested. You think that considering swarming midges isn't birdwatching? Think again! Sometimes it is the things we don't see that are most interesting and provocative.

There is a turn in the Havenside Road where one comes very close to the water. The little beach there is almost always productive and proved to be so once more. There were Yellow-legs and Semipalmated Plover on the mud, along with several Hudsonian Godwits. Those who had been on the August field trip to Fuller's bridge scorned four or five godwits--they said they had seen seventy or more. However, I thought the ones at Louisbourg were pretty nice. They were so close we could see every feather.

As we were watching this little curving beach, someone spied a couple of birds perched on a post a good way off. They proved to be a pair of White-winged Crossbills. Never a common bird, they have been non-existent during the budworm years. However, a few must have survived along with the squirrels, until now when the trees have cones once more. It is lovely to know that they still visit us.

We stopped at the pretty little picnic park below the lighthouse to watch the gulls and cormorants, do a bit of botanizing and have our lunch. Before we parted, we planned next year's field days. There are so many good and productive, and yes, beautiful too, places to go in Cape Breton, there is always a debate in choosing targets for next year.

--Sara MacLean

#### September 29 - Grand Pré Shorebirds

About 30 people of all ages, from the N.S.B.S. plus the Blomidon Naturalists' Society, enjoyed the beautifully sunny and warm day. To kill some time until high tide (my fault for a poor choice of time for this trip), we drove to Canard Poultry Pond. There we were fortunate to be able to closely compare Greater versus Lesser Yellowlegs together; also Pectoral Sandpipers were with them.

#### HONORABLE MENTIONS AND SOME PORTRAITS

In this issue we complete our display of winners of last year's photo contest.

Ted D'Eon submitted a number of beautiful slides of which two gained honorable mentions. (We had to break the rule that no-one could have more than one winning slide--Ted had so many to choose from) His Common Eider's nest, with the surf rolling inshore in the background is full of feeling. His very crisp portrait of a Hairy Woodpecker is about as perfect, technically, as such a shot can be.

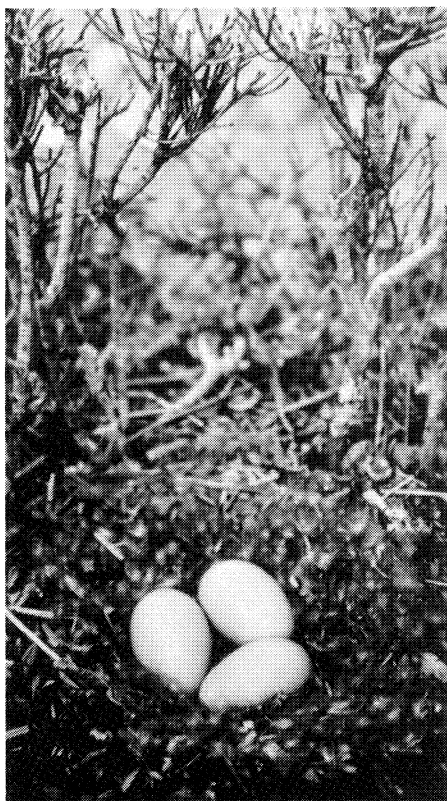
Peter Payzant's slide, an honorable mention, of shorebirds on the wing, is a very different sort from Ted's two. Here the fact that the birds' motion was not 'stopped' by the slow shutter speed--a technical "fault" in most cases--has produced a frantic rush of wings over waves, you can almost hear them whirring.

Lisè COhrs' Mourning Dove, looking bundled up against winter, of course cannot show the lovely, soft colors of her original slide, deemed worthy of an honorable mention.

The remaining portraits, all from color slides, were not contest entries, although some surely could have contended.

Rosemary Eaton has been troubled by a rather greedy creature at her bird feeder, as her picture shows so well. As this is a bird journal it must be a bird, but I can't find it in Tufts or Peterson.

The wonderful portrait of a Greater Yellowlegs on its nest by Harry Brennan was made at the Liscombe Game Sanctuary, the first confirmed nesting of the species in Nova Scotia outside the Cape Breton Highlands.



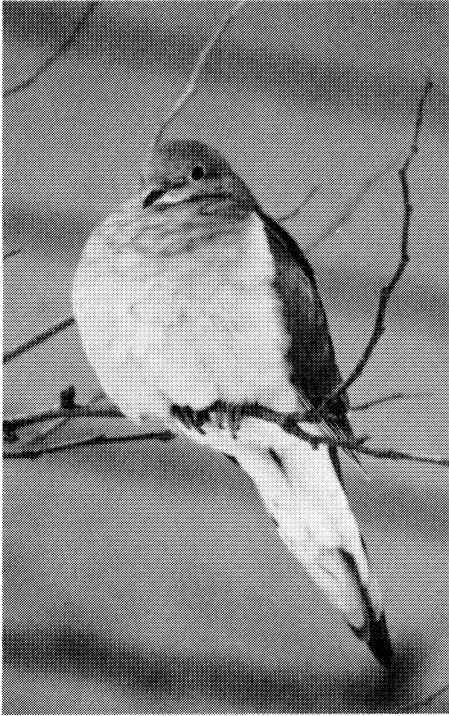
EIDER'S NEST, TED D'EON



HAIRY WOODPECKER, TED D'EON



SHOREBIRDS, PETER PAYZANT



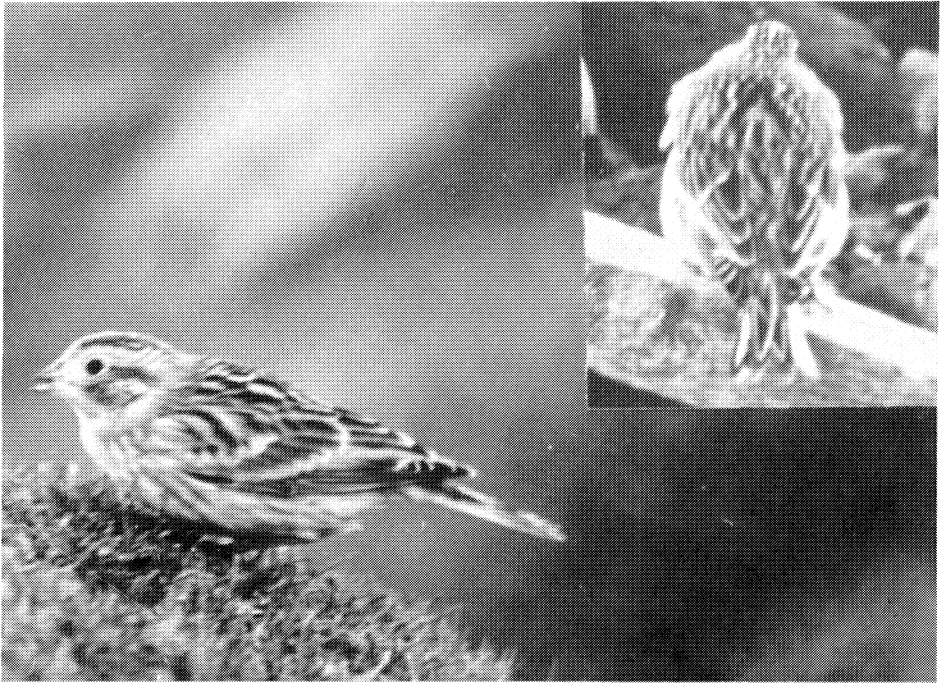
MOURNING DOVE, LISË COHRS



UNIDENTIFIED BIRD, ROSEMARY EATON



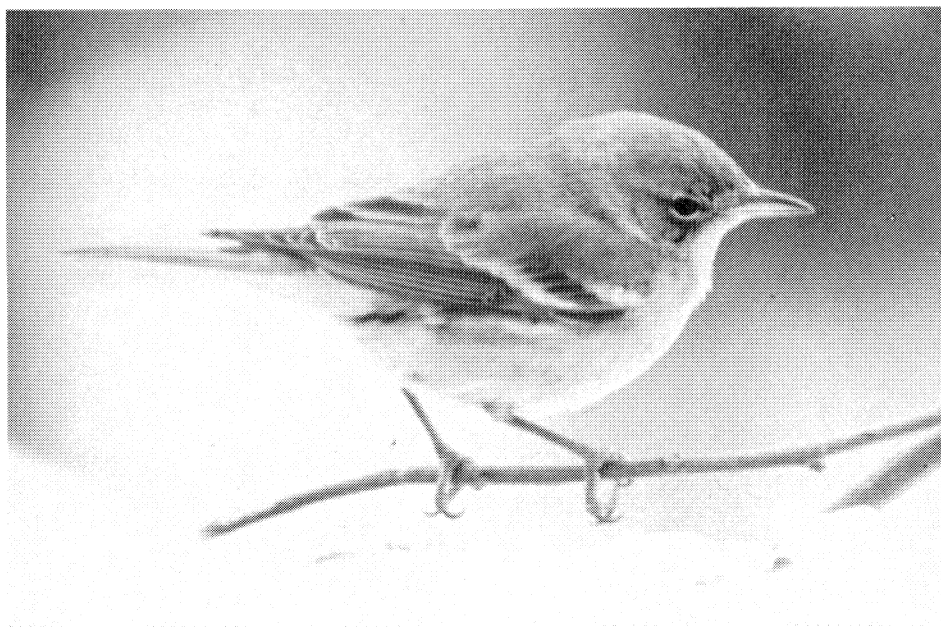
GREATER YELLOWLEGS, HARRY BRENNAN



CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPUR, SYLVIA FULLERTON



LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER, IAN MCLAREN



**PINE WARBLER, SHIRLEY COHRS**



**FIELD SPARROW, IAN MCLAREN**



Sylvia Fullerton's several slides serve to establish beyond doubt this occurrence, on Seal Island on October 23, 1985, of the sixth Nova Scotia record of the Chestnut-collared Longspur. All the others have been spring birds, four of them unmistakable males. The recent individual, evidently an immature female, was a bit tricky, although its double call note was useful in the field. The rather extensive breast streaks and the lack of pronounced hind margin on the face patch help to eliminate the other three longspurs as possibilities. While the tail was rather disarrayed, and seems to have some feathers missing, two feathers on the insert--the almost all white one on the right (one of the two outermost white ones) and the black-bordered one on the left (evidently the third outermost one) --are together diagnostic of the tail pattern in this species.

The Long-billed Dowitcher, which I photographed on October 29, 1985, after a rare-bird alert is a juvenile, indicated by its dark back and wing feathers, thinly margined with rufous on the original. The lack of barring on the tertials (the hindmost wing feathers showing on the picture) is diagnostic of this species vs. the Short-billed Dowitcher.

Shirley Cohrs' needle-sharp portrait of a Pine Warbler was taken in early February 1985. It was the last of several that attempted winter in Halifax-Dartmouth last year. Note the diagnostic large bill (for a Dendroica warbler), wingbars, plain back and light area behind the face patch.

The Field Sparrow was one of good numbers in spring 1985, this one posing obligingly for its portrait on Seal Island on May 1.

Then we caravanned back to Grand Pré, where the dykelands produced only 2 Mourning Doves, several Northern Harriers and a few distant Water Pipits. The east end of Evangeline Beach, an hour after high tide (the ideal time for your visits), was more productive, and the shorebirds there were quite co-operative for good viewing. In approximate order of decreasing abundance, there were 75 Black-bellied Plover, 75 Sanderling, 20 Dunlin, 3 Red Knots, 2 Semipalmated Sandpipers, 2 Least Sandpipers, 1 Pectoral Sandpiper, 1 Semipalmated Plover, and a Whimbrel.

From the beach, we also saw 5 Canada Geese, 50 male Common Eiders and 15 White-winged Scoters.

--Jim Wolford

#### September 26 - The Margot Kanigsburg Field Trip

This was the fifth year for this trip with the Grade XII Honours Biology class from Halifax West High School. For the fifth time we had lovely weather, interested students, enthusiastic teachers and co-operative shorebirds. Should anyone feel somewhat disenchanted with today's youth, a day in the company of these polite and intelligent young people should change their minds.

The pre-trip illustrated lecture at the school was given a couple of days ahead of time so that the class had some idea of what was in store. When the bus arrived at Crescent Beach the thirty-five students and accompanying teachers were divided into five groups, each with a leader (from N.S.B.S) and a telescope. Extra binoculars and field guides were distributed and it was off up the beach in a hurry, as the tide was just right to see the birds close to the road. There were good views of Black-bellied Plovers in a selection of plumages, many Semipalmated Plovers and a few Semipalmated Sandpipers. Several dowitchers were stitching along the water's edge (these were a great hit!) and Sanderling and Dunlin ran amongst the waves on the beach. Blue and Green-winged Teal, Red-breasted Mergansers, Mallards, herons, scoters, loons and cormorants were added to the list before returning to Risser's Beach for lunch. This was a delicious repast of homemade submarine sandwiches, various fruit juices and crisp valley apples.

Afterwards, a trip up the boardwalk yielded yellowlegs and more plovers and the opportunity to see three species of gulls in six or seven different plumages. The way back down the beach proved poor as far as birds went, but excellent as an example of dune reclamation. After a short gathering to compare lists and hear something about the Society, the bus departed for Halifax and the leaders departed for the Cohrs cottage to consume a few gallons of tea. Thanks go to John Cohrs and Bill Caudle who went to the school beforehand, to Bob LeBlanc, Biology teacher at Halifax West, and leaders Bill Caudle, Shirley Cohrs, Eric Cooke and Joyce and Don Purchase.

--Shirley Cohrs

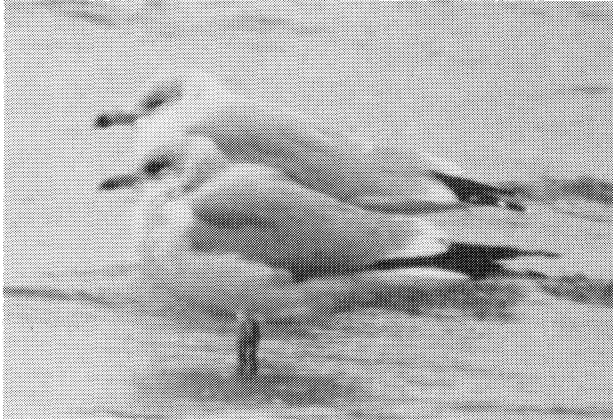
November 30 - Eastern Shore

A group of 15 birders met on November 30, 1985, to see what birds were present from Dartmouth to Chezzetcook on a sunny day with the temperature rising from  $-12^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $0^{\circ}\text{C}$ . We were able to find most of the expected species somewhere along the route. Highlights included a very good look at a Dickcissel near Creighton Park, a Coot in Sullivan's Pond, a close view of a Lesser Scaup in Dartmouth Cove, 8 Red Knots accompanied by a Dunlin at Conrad's Beach, with a Forster's Tern, a Common Tern and a Rough-legged Hawk overhead in the same area and a Bald Eagle at the Causeway.

Most of the party were able to see 45-50 species and, including the additions from small groups on side trips, a satisfying total of 70 was reached. One of the most interesting sightings was that of a Yellow Warbler in excellent plumage seen near Dartmouth Cove in the afternoon--the latest date on record for that species.

It was a pleasure to see the large flocks of Canada Geese and to welcome back our wintering ducks--Oldsquaw, Goldeneye, Bufflehead, etc. Considering the fact that most of the fresh water was covered with ice and the temperature has been unseasonably cold, there were good numbers of birds. Let's hope they stay around for the Christmas counts.

--Joyce Purchase



Many observers saw the year-old Common (Mew) Gull at Eastern Passage in May. What was evidently the same bird was seen occasionally through summer, and by Oct. the bird was into fresh second winter plumage. The small bill and large eye, compared with those of the adult Ring-billed Gull, are quite evident. Photo--Ian McLaren, Oct. 26, 1985.

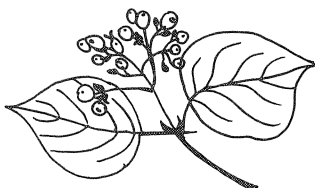
UP-COMING FIELD TRIPS

- Saturday  
January 25      STEWIACKE - wintering Bald Eagles. Leader: Ross Hall (1-893-9665). Take Exit 11 from the 102 at Stewiacke and meet at the House of Hay (the chicken place) at 0930 hours. From here we travel up the Shubenacadie River to Riverside where Mr. Herman Berfalo has a Bald Eagle feeder in operation.
- Sunday  
February 2      GRAND PRÉ, WOLFVILLE, KENTVILLE AREA - raptors and other winter birds. Leader: Richard Stern (1-678-1975). This will be a combined trip with the Blomidon Naturalists. Meet at 1000 hours in the parking lot of the Acadia University Gymnasium. Bring a lunch and warm, waterproof footwear. If weather looks bad, contact Richard concerning possible cancellation.
- Saturday  
February 15      WINTER BIRDING IN HALIFAX COUNTY - various habitats, several locations. Leader: Dave Currie (443-0490). Meet at 0900 hours in the parking lot of the 24-hour Sobey's on the Bedford Basin at Hammonds Plains Road (next to Wacky Wheatley's) in Bedford. We will visit the Mill Cove pollution plant next door, possibly other spots on the Basin, Hammonds Plains Road and the Head of St. Margaret's Bay. The trip will end in the early to mid-afternoon so bring a lunch.
- Sunday  
February 23      SEWER STROLL II - Leader: Bill Caudle (469-7841). A full day tour of the waterfront areas which attract birds from Herring Cove to Hartlen's Point. Meet at 0830 hours in the Canadian Tire parking lot in Spryfield. Bring a lunch and lots of hot coffee.
- Saturday  
March 22      GLACE BAY SANCTUARY - lingering winter birds. Leader: Sara MacLean. Meet at Dearn's Corner at 0800 hours.
- Sunday  
March 23      EASTERN SHORE - Late winter birds. Leaders: Don and Joyce Purchase (434-5199). Meet at 0900 hours at the Bank of Nova Scotia parking lot at the corner of Wyse Road and Nantucket Ave. (opposite the Holiday Inn) in Dartmouth.

- Saturday  
April 19      CADDEN BAY PROVINCIAL PARK - waterfowl, shorebirds (perhaps Piping Plover). Leader: Eric Cooke (1-766-4457). If time permits we may be able to visit the Society's newly acquired Kelsey Property adjacent to the Park. Meet at 0930 hours at Schnare's Grocery Store, Port Joli, on Highway 103. Be prepared for a reasonable walk.
- Saturday  
April 26      TWO RIVERS PARK (CAPE BRETON) - early migrants. Leader: Hedley Hopkins. Meet at Marion Bridge at 0800 hours.
- Sunday  
April 27      GRAND PRÉ, KINGS COUNTY - waterfowl, early migrants - our annual safari. Leader: Jim Wolford (1-542-7650). Meet at 1000 hours at the Grand Pré Historic Site parking lot or at 0945 hours at the Acadia University Gym parking lot. A joint trip with the Blomidon Naturalists.
- Sunday  
May 4        AMHERST POINT, JOHN LUSBY - waterfowl, shorebirds and other early migrants. Leader: Con Desplanques (1-667-3790). Meet at the APBS parking lot at 0900 hours (take exit 3 from the TCH at the Wandlyn Inn and proceed a few km towards Nappan). We will visit APBS in the morning and JLM after lunch.
- Saturday  
May 10       HALIFAX-DARTMOUTH PARKS - a search for early warblers especially unusual ones. Leader: Fulton Lavender (469-0352). Meet at 0700 hours in the parking lot at the end of Tower Road in Point Pleasant Park. After Point Pleasant, we hope to visit Laurie Park and Waverley Park.
- Wednesday  
May 14       HALIFAX COUNTY - early morning warbler walk. Leader: Fred Dobson (852-3042). Meet at 0630 hours in the parking lot at the junction of the Prospect Road (Route 333 and the St. Margaret's Bay Road).
- Saturday  
May 17       MOOSELAND - spring birds. Leaders: Carl and Wendy Tay (463-1646). Meet at 0800 hours at the Tay's cottage, "Swallow Hollow", 10 miles (16 km) up the Mooseland Road which is 60 miles (100 km) east of Dartmouth on Highway 7. The cottage is at the first lake just past the dam. We will bird along the road in the early a.m. and then proceed down to Taylor Head Provincial Park in the late a.m. for lunch. Fly dope may be required. If the weather is uncooperative, the trip will be postponed until Sunday.
- Sunday  
May 18       HOPEWELL AREA (PICTOU COUNTY) - nesting owls and raptors. Leader: Harry Brennan (1-923-2780). Meet at 0800 hours at Saint Columba's churchyard, about 1 mile south of Hopewell.
- Wednesday  
May 21       SHUBIE PARK - early morning warblers. Leader: Dave Currie (443-0490). Meet at 0630 hours in the main parking lot of Shubie Park for 2 hours of birding before work.

- Saturday  
May 24      PARADISE/BRIDGETOWN REGION (ANNAPOLIS COUNTY) - warblers and other songbirds. Leaders: Bill and Jean Morse (1-584-3417). Meet at the Morse residence at 0800 hours. Travelling west on route 201, the road south of the river between Bridgetown and Paradise, theirs is the first house within the stone wall on the right (about 1 mile east of the golf course).
- Sunday  
May 25      SHUBENACADIE AREA (HANTS COUNTY) - mainly warblers. Leader: Roslyn MacPhee (1-758-3265). Meet at 0600 hours in front of Scott's restaurant in Shubenacadie.
- Saturday  
May 31      GROVE'S POINT (CAPE BRETON) - Warbler Day. Leader: Eldon Meikle. Meet at 0800 hours at the Woolco store in Sydney River.
- Saturday  
May 31      HANTS COUNTY DAY - various habitats; many species. Leader: Margaret Clark or John and Shirley Cohrs. Meet at 0800 hours at the railway crossing in Mount Uniacke.
- Saturday  
June 21      ATLAS DAY - details to come.

Any questions on mainland field trips or suggestions regarding future trips should be addressed to Field Trip Coordinators, Bob and Wendy McDonald (443-5051).



#### A Few More Birdy Collectives

- A retreat of Bonapartes
- A meal of Crow
- A road of Rails
- A spell of Merlin
- A cradle of Buntings
- A hood of Robins
- A sauna of Whiterumps

## BOOK REVIEW

### SEA OF SLAUGHTER

By Farley Mowat

Published by McClelland and Stewart - Bantam Limited, Toronto. 1984.

438 pp.

Price - \$9.95 paper

Reviewer - Keith Keddy

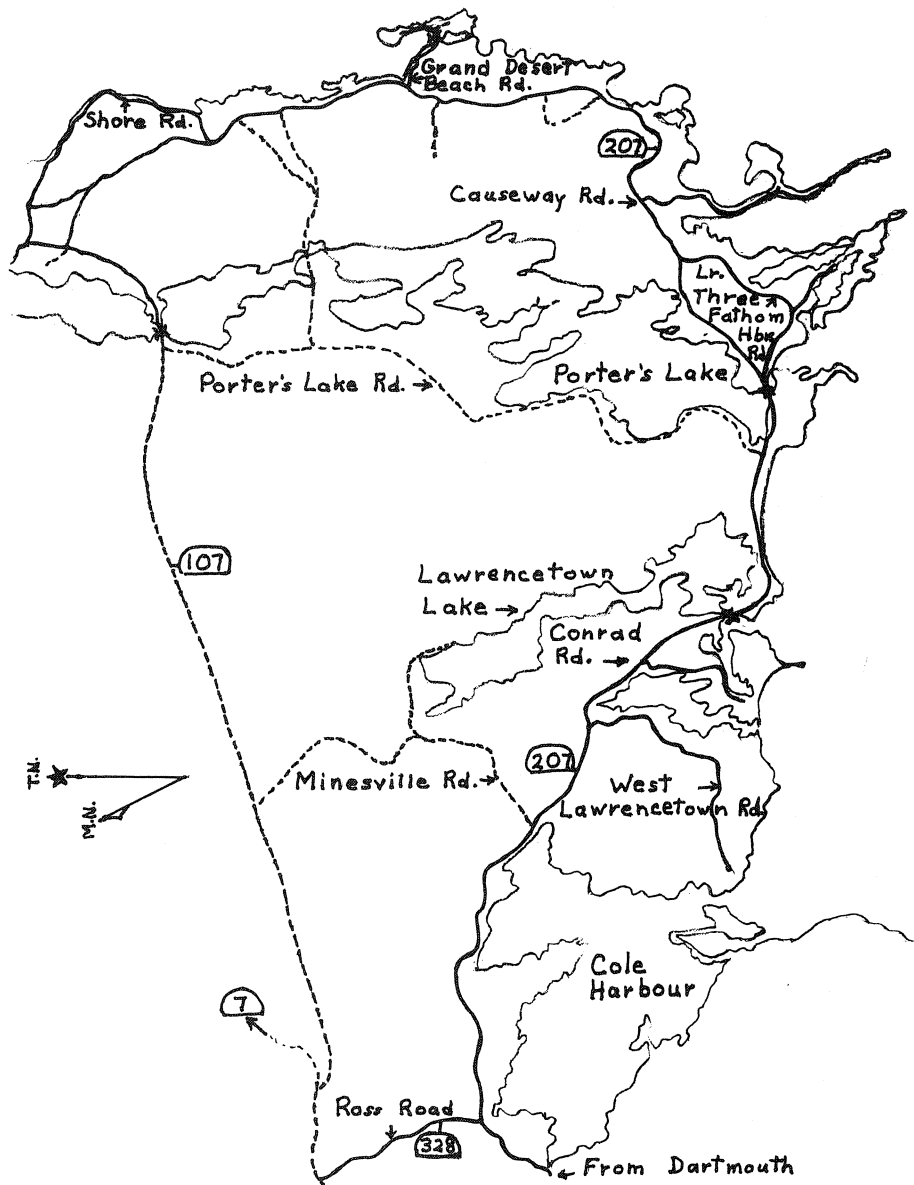
Mr. Mowat calls Sea of Slaughter, the culmination of five years of work, his most important book. In a time frame of circa 1500 to the present, the book chronicles the diminution of natural life on the northeastern Atlantic seaboard. An impressive ten-page Select Bibliography attests to Mowat's diligent research.

This not a comfortable book to read! Man is called "the most lethal animal ever to have appeared upon this wasting planet". His appalling deeds of wanton destruction, his barbaric acts of cruelty, his insatiable greed and undeniable stupidity--all make me ashamed that I am a member of the human species. The pervading central theme, that of man's exploitation, in some cases to the point of extinction, cannot be forgotten at any point; but Farley Mowat the storyteller still shines through. Often quoting from early journals, he uses his talent to vividly illustrate teeming virgin wildlife populations and the blood-and-guts reality of their downfall.

The book is divided into five sections. Part I, "The Fowls of Sea and Air" deals, of course, with birds. Some seventy pages cover annihilation of the Great Auk; the plight of seabirds such as petrels, gannets and alcids; the decimation of the vast flocks of Eskimo Curlew, the struggle of shorebirds, past and present, to elude the "sportsman's" gun; and more. The status of waterfowl, waders, game birds, raptors and songbirds are evaluated, and the prognosis is not too encouraging. Though there are very few words of optimism in this book, Mowat describes birders as "shafts of light"; because in learn-about birds for themselves, rather than for their meat or feathers, birders provide "grounds for hope that we may be able to find our way back into that lost world, when all life was one".

The remaining four sections of the book investigate land mammals, fish, cetaceans (whale family) and seals respectively. Half the book is dedicated to sea mammals, as these have the greatest chance of recovering should mankind mend its ways. Slaughter of these creatures perhaps "best" highlights man's sickening and death-dealing cruelty in his drive for the almighty dollar. Mowat closes by boldly wading into the seal hunt issue--that continuing bitter and volatile dispute involving sealers, governments and animal welfare groups.

I would by all means recommend you read this book. It is ironic that those who stand to learn the most might be turned off by its gory descriptions, hard-hitting implications, and its cloying, more scientific style in contrast to some of Mowat's family favourites such as The Boat Who Wouldn't Float and Never Cry Wolf. The message is clear that the living world is dying in our time. Resources are not infinite and inexhaustible, and well we know it--ignorance is no longer an excuse! Sea of Slaughter helps us comprehend the consequences of our misdoings, so we may change our attitudes and activities before it is too late for us all.





## BIRDING COLE HARBOUR TO CHEZZETCOOK

Joyce A. Purchase

The Eastern Shore of Nova Scotia stretches away from the entrance to Halifax Harbour, red headlands thrusting out between long estuaries and quiet bays fringed with light sand. Houses are slowly spreading out from the City of Dartmouth, but the forest, a mixture of hard and softwood, still covers most of the area.

Conveniently, an old abandoned railway (the tracks recently removed) runs near the shore, crossing marshes and lakes, winding deep into the silent woods. Walking along the road bed is a good way to find birds if you have the stamina to walk for miles but it is an idea to have a friend pick you up at some prearranged spot where the rail line meets a road.

For most of us it is better to set out by car from Dartmouth along Portland Street, which eventually becomes the Cole Harbour Road. Not many years ago, this was a dirt road used by the farmers of Lawrencetown and beyond to bring their produce to market, a long and arduous journey with a horse-drawn wagon. Now it is busy with the traffic from the burgeoning housing developments of Colby Village and Forest Hills. Pause for a moment at the top of Long Hill. The old meeting-house on the right always marks the end of the hustle-and-bustle for me.

Spread out before you is the first of the salt marshes that draw the birds to the calm shelter of these productive wetlands. In the late winter, thousands of Canada Geese feed on the eel grass left exposed by the retreating ice. They are usually accompanied by a variety of Bay Ducks in small flocks. The Micmac called this place by a name which meant "flat water" but we know it as Cole Harbour. In years past, a dyke was built up along the outer edge and sheep grazed on the resulting meadows. Now, in most places, the water is shallow enough for Great Blue Heron to feed at low tide.

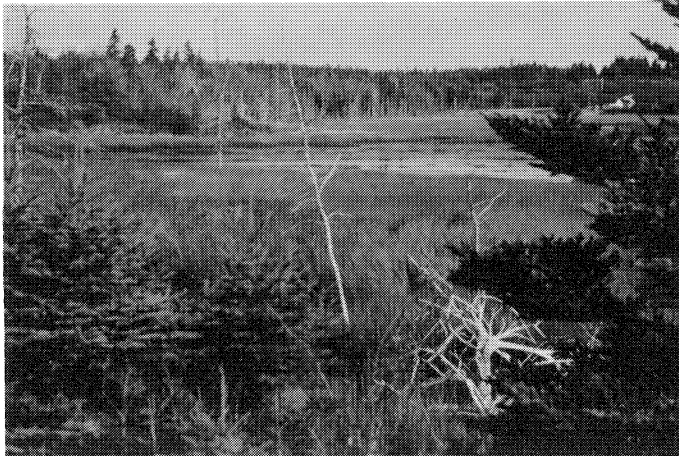
In the winter, ice covers this shore so it is best explored in the warmer seasons. In fact, the easiest way to search out its bird life is to use the railway track from the crossing at Bisset Road. We always do this as a separate trip or in conjunction with a drive around Hartlen Point and Cow Bay.

Our route takes us along the inner edge of the Harbour but not, at first, near the shore. This part of the road makes the transition from suburbs to houses lining the roadside and small farms; from hills to low country--part land, part water--never far from the sea. Route 207, which begins where Ross Road intersects Cole Harbour Road, is part of the scenic Marine Highway that passes through Lawrencetown, Three Fathom Harbour, Seaforth, Grand Desert and West Chezzetcook before joining Highway 107: we call it the Lawrencetown Loop. All the small roads leading off to the left (inland) side will produce a variety of woodland birds according to the season but the roads leading to the ocean (right-hand side) will be more rewarding.

The first of these is the West Lawrencetown Road, about 5 kilometers from the Ross Road corner. Travel in for approximately 300 meters and stop where the old rail line crosses the water of West Marsh on your left. A trip along the track in any season is worthwhile; even in winter a nearby feeder will keep the finches, sparrow, chickadees, nuthatches, Blue Jays and Mourning Doves around. Warblers are plentiful in spring and fall migrations. If there is any open water, look for the resident Kingfisher and Black Ducks. In spring and fall, there are usually Green- and Blue-winged Teal, Ring-necked

Ducks, all three Mergansers, sometimes Common Teal in April, and the common shorebirds on migration south in late summer. From late spring through summer we see American Bittern, Great Blue Heron, nesting Snipe, Double-crested Cormorants and all four swallow species. Look for Wilson's Phalaropes, Stilt Sandpipers and Ruffs in the autumn. You may continue down this road to the ocean but it is generally not worth your time.

Returning to Route 207, driving east again takes you along the edge of West Marsh where a quick stop gives a different view of the pond with, perhaps, different birds. The next turn-off to the right, Conrad's Road, takes you to Conrad's Beach, which is part of a Coastal Heritage Park System, now under development. Low tide exposes the mud flats in the area and these are heavily used by migratory shore birds. The small ponds on the east make good hiding places for Pintail, Mallards and Black Ducks. Sanderlings can be found winding along the beach. Piping Plover and Willets nest here in suitable habitat, as do Savannah Sparrows. The more common gulls, Black-backed and Herring are abundant: Ring-billed, Black-headed and Bonaparte's Gulls show up in early winter. Arctic and Common Terns fly about in summer--check the terns seen in late fall: they are likely to be Forster's. Watch for hunting Northern Harrier and Osprey. The rocky island on your left as you look over the sea from the top of the sand dunes can be reached at low tide and Purple Sandpipers feed among the exposed rocks in the winter. Sea ducks are plentiful at this time: Common Eider, Oldsquaw, all three Scoters, Red-breasted Mergansers along with Common Loons in their sober winter plumage...and, once, a Harlequin Duck. The small grove of trees is excellent for passerines in migration; the dune grasses attract Horned Larks and Snow Buntings in winter, Meadowlarks possibly in the fall.



West Marsh Pond from the Railway Track

Continuing along Route 207, brings us to Lawrencetown Lake which drains to the sea under two bridges, one for the railway, one for the road. It is worth walking along the old rail line from here to the point where it meets the road again. The wooded island to the north supports two, sometimes three, Osprey nests. At any time of year, there are ducks on the lake. In early and late winter, you could find in addition to those that may already have been seen, Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Widgeon or Gadwall. Look for Bald Eagles in the trees at the back. The marshy areas will sometimes attract Little Blue or Tri-



Railway Bridge at Lawrencetown Lake

coloured Heron in the spring. Listen for Sharp-tailed Sparrows in the summer. Off Rocky Beach, just past the road bridge, there are large concentrations of Common Loons in late winter accompanied by Great Cormorants. Climb to the top of MacDonald Head for a likely look at Red-necked and Horned Grebes, sometimes a Pied-billed Grebe or a Red-throated Loon. Unfortunately, the restaurant at MacDonald House is not open in winter--just when we need it--but makes a welcome stop in the warmer months.

As you start down the other side of the hill, take a moment to enjoy the view, especially if the surf is rolling after a storm. That is another part of Lawrencetown Lake on the left as you pass the recreational portion of Lawrencetown Beach. For many years, Snowy Egrets and/or Glossy Ibis regularly arrived here in spring and stayed until the cold weather sent them south again. We wondered if a nesting colony might be established but that did not happen, in fact, they are now seen infrequently and the clump of stunted spruce where they perched at the edge of the marsh looks empty. Snowy Owls do not often wander this far south but, when they do, the dunes provide snow-free hunting.

Farther along, where the bridge spans Rocky Run, is a road leading right, which passes through Lower Three Fathom Harbour. Again, it is crossed by the rail line and we often walk to the right along the old line, carefully negotiating the trestle bridge and continuing through some scrub, keeping a lookout for seasonal offerings: Redpolls, Gold- or Purple Finch, Pine Siskins, Boreal Chickadees, Woodpeckers, perhaps a Brown Creeper in the cold months, warblers through spring to fall, Ruffed Grouse drumming in spring. If you continue past the marsh where we find nesting Red-winged Blackbirds in summer, you will come to a hill on your left that overlooks the water. A rough road winds along the east side of the hill to Chimney Point (marked Half Island Point on maps). There are usually seals in the channel. Scaup dot the water in the winter and, very occasionally, a Dovekie or one of the murrens is sighted. On the way back to the car, visualize a Scarlet Ibis standing in one of the moss hung Spruce trees overlooking a hidden muddy bay--we may not be able to count it as a wild bird but it made an exotic picture.

At one place, the road forks. Before circling left back to the main road, explore the possibilities of this dead-end section.

The area offers a nice combination of water-oriented and woodland birds like Grey Jays, Juncos, Pine Grosbeaks or the Cross-bills. Crows, of course, are everywhere but a Raven should be heard if not seen.

Travelling east on 207, it is only a short distance to Causeway Road, which leads to an attractive fishing community on a long spit of land ending at Wedge Island, reachable over a rough causeway at low tide. This is another good spot for Purple Sandpipers. The best birding, however, is enjoyed before this point is reached. Three Fathom Harbour begins in a long shallow bay cut by the road, giving an excellent view from the car. Shorebirds abound in late summer and early fall. Here, as elsewhere along the shore, we find Black-bellied and Semipalmated Plover, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Spotted, Semipalmated, Least, White-rumped and Pectoral Sandpipers, Dunlin, Short-billed Dowitchers, Turnstones; rarely Knots, Lesser Golden Plover or Killdeer. Later, we see Canada Geese, Bufflehead and Goldeneyes...look carefully for a Hooded Merganser among them. Arctic and Common Terns find good fishing all summer. This is the place to watch for a wandering Black Tern. It is also a photographer's delight at any time of year.



Pond at Three Fathom Harbour

Enroute once more, it is time to look for Red-tailed or Rough legged Hawks, any of the falcons or a Northern Shrike. When you have driven through Seaforth, watch for the sign indicating the turn-off to Grand Desert Beach (sounds like a contradiction in terms) and explore along this road in all directions. In winter, great flocks of Canada Geese float in and out of the inlet with the tide. Avoid the area in hunting season--the birds do, too. Shorebirds linger late on these shallow flats. The thick stand of trees attracts Waxwings and Kinglets, as well as the passerines already noted. Swamp Sparrows may be found along the wet edges of the alders. We saw our first Ipswich Sparrow here but they can be seen in small numbers all along the Eastern Shore except in winter.

West Chezzetcook is an attractive village which marks the end of our usual safari. Following the Shore Road takes us past the last of the ponds and marshes that mark the end of the inlet. Sometimes a Shoveler or Pintail graces a pool; Bay Ducks bob in the water beside the ice of early and late winter--infact, just about any type of species could show up here from Hawks to Hummingbirds. Continuing to the end of our loop will bring you to Highway 107 for a quick trip home.



East Bay at the Causeway

Water and woodlands each attract different species and, because here the two are so closely linked, there is never a season without birds. This shore seldom produces real rarities but there is always something interesting, often unexpected, so we turn the corners with anticipation and every journey is its own reward.

### ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

MEMBERS WHO HAVE JOINED US SINCE OUR ANNIVERSARY YEAR IN 1980, MAY NOT KNOW OF OUR SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY ISSUE WHICH CONTAINS THE HISTORY OF THE NSBS, ARTICLES ABOUT OUR VARIOUS ACTIVITIES AND MANY PHOTOGRAPHS. IT IS AVAILABLE FOR \$2.00 PLUS \$1.00 FOR POSTAGE FROM THE MUSEUM ADDRESS: NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY,  
c/o NOVA SCOTIA MUSEUM,  
1747 SUMMER STREET,  
HALIFAX, N.S. B3H 3A6

## THE FIRST OF A SERIES ABOUT MEMBERS...

## PROFILES.....

Meet Bill Caudle,  
Bill made himself comfortable in his easy chair and with a broad grin said,

"You know, when I was at Air Materiel Command Headquarters in Ottawa, my job took me across Canada several times and into more than half of the United States."

Then, laughing, he added,

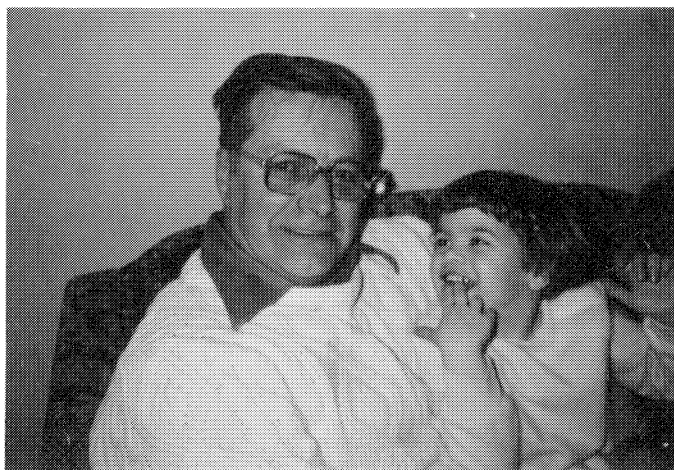
"Unfortunately I wasn't a birder, in those days."

William George Caudle was born in Gloucester, England, on August 17, 1925. He received his education in Evesham, Worcester and in 1941 was employed in radar research at the Royal Aircraft Establishment in Farnborough. He remained there for sixteen years and during that time he met and married Elise LeHequet, a girl from the island of Jersey.

While working at the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Bill was sent on two memorable business trips: one to Egypt in 1950, and another to Churchill, Manitoba two years later. He liked Canada so much that he and Elise moved to Montreal in 1955 to work for C.A.E., but within a few months the company transferred him to Air Materiel Command Headquarters at Ottawa.

During a trip to California at this time, Bill had the opportunity to witness the famous return of the swallows to Capistrano. (San Juan Capistrano is a city 97 km. southeast of Los Angeles. It grew up around a mission founded in 1776. The mission is famous for the CLIFF SWALLOWS which leave every year about October 23rd. to winter in the south and, reputedly always return to Capistrano on March 19, to nest in the walls of the old mission.) Bill reported that the swallows did arrive on time. (But they have been known to miss that date.)

When his eldest son, Kevin, joined the Boy Scouts, Bill became a Scout leader and for the first time came into contact with bird identification. It was however, on a family vacation to Acadia National Park that the birding bug finally bit.



With the children involved in park activities, Bill decided to fill part of his time by going on a bird walk. The walk proved so fascinating that he bought a bird book and went on three more walks accumulating one hundred bird species for his life list. Returning home that summer, he joined the Ontario Field Naturalists and has been involved in birding ever since.

Bill's work with the Boy Scouts took him to the world jamboree on Prince Edward Island. At this time he had been with the federal government's Department of Supply and Services for three years after an eight year stint with Leigh Instruments. On his return from the jamboree he was advised of job opening in Dartmouth. Both Elise and Bill loved the Jersey sea coast and when a chance to live near the ocean arose, they were quick to make the move.

One of the first things Bill did after arriving in Nova Scotia was to join the Bird Society. Within one year he was elected its Secretary, a position he held for three years when he became Vice-President and within another year, he became President.

Bill is very interested in young people and is a strong supporter of the annual Junior Field Trip which is held each fall with students from Halifax West High School.

He has four children and two grandchildren. He plans to retire in about four years and to spend his retirement here, in Nova Scotia.

--R.B.D.



## PLANNING A TRIP?

We have a list of bird clubs and societies in every Canadian province and territory, every State in the United States, the Bahamas, Belize, Bermuda, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, St. Pierre and Miquelon, Trinidad and Tobago.

If you plan a trip to any of these areas, let us know and we'll send you the club's name, address, contact persons, best birding areas and any other information we have.

Write to Bob Dickie, 43 Deepwood Cres., Halifax, N.S., B3M 2Y5.

FALL MIGRATION AT SEA: CSS DAWSON, 5-15 OCT. 1985

It was cold in Halifax,  $-10^{\circ}\text{C}$ , about the temperature of the water, when we sailed on Saturday morning for ten days of new equipment trials conducted in 4 km depths, about 25 km to the south of Yarmouth and later a few km off Cape Sable. I have been to sea in October before in these waters, and so was prepared with wet gear, touque, heavy sweaters, etc., as well as with my customary supply of Grivol (never needed of course; I only carry it to help those poor unfortunates who suffer from mal de mer).

We steamed southwards for 24 hours. The ship's motions having been to some extent mastered by that time, we sallied forth from our stifling cabins to find, to our surprise, that it was almost as stifling outside! The reason was as clear as the pale blue Gulf Stream water in which we now rode. The water temperature was  $19^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and climbed to  $22^{\circ}$  over the next few days. So much for my sweaters.

We soon established a routine: my work was scheduled first in the morning (it could often be done in parallel with that of others), the more complex acoustics trials were done in the afternoon, and the chemistry was done through the night, since their work required going right to the bottom, and tended to last for 8-12 hours at a stretch. This seemed good to the inveterate birder (as usual I was quite alone in my interest, and got the usual mystified looks and scatological ribbings). And as usual, most of the interesting ornithological events took place in the morning, in the middle of one crisis or another.

Now to the birds (at long last, sighs the reader!) The usual range of seabirds was present: Fulmars (20-30 most days; white:brown about 25:1), Greater Shearwaters (30-50 near Halifax & Cape Sable; 2-5 in the Gulf Stream), both Wilson's (following the ship most days) and Leach's Petrels (from time to time, most often dancing above the slicks made by us or the Sargassum weed: I saw 15 on one slick alone), a single Gannet, immature and seen on the continental shelf, a Parasitic Jaeger or two, a few Herring and Black-backed Gulls (everywhere except off Cape Sable, but I'll come to that in a minute). Just to keep Dick Brown's records straight, we encountered no other shearwaters (neither Manx nor Sooty) nor Alcids, and it was not from failing to look.

We got some 35 knot winds later in the cruise, and the shearwaters showed us their utter grace, flying just over the wave crests, their wingtips seeming to gently brush the surface of the surging foam, their continued soaring denying the touch. They played their "dynamic soaring" game, using the waves and the fact that the wind is much weaker near the surface than it is higher up to sail effortlessly into the teeth of the gale. The Fulmars, stiff-winged and efficient, were much less appealing, but they got the job done, no question. The gulls had to take in a reef.

However, it was the landbirds that made the trip exciting for me. The first of them came fluttering down out of a particularly violent frontal passage (The wind went from the SW at 24 knots to NW at 15 in less than ten minutes, the sky went black, then opened like a dam bursting). Landing, bewildered, on the strange, hard "ground" of the ship's deck, they seemed quite unable to decide which surface to choose; they found safety on canvas or hemp more by luck than good management. First came a Yellow-rumped Warbler, then a Dark-eyed Junco, and then a White-crowned Sparrow, all in quick succession as I was retrieving my equipment after a disastrous deployment. The scientists and crew alike were taken by surprise;



they immediately mustered water and crackers, and so, I suppose, kept at least the Junco and Sparrows alive until they saw shore (I'm sure the former stayed with us until we returned to Halifax ten days later).

As the days went by the weather improved steadily; the winds remained northerly as the high built over us, but dropped to zephyrs; the skies cleared. The day following the front, a Cape May Warbler, immature, appeared on the foredeck; I checked it for the yellow collar from two feet without binoculars. It was so tame I could have held it in my hand.

The next day, the best bird of the trip arrived. It flitted around the forecandle among the bollards and anchor chains, hiding itself from me for a good fifteen minutes before I was sure: a Yellow-throated Warbler in full plumage. I showed him off to my vaguely interested colleagues for as long as I could; he stayed for four days. During that time, we also had a Golden-crowned Kinglet, an immature Dickcissel, another Yellow-rump and a pair of Catbirds, chasing each other and a large moth across the decks (I did a double take: a moth, out here?). The birds were all extremely active and obviously in full migration condition, flying up into the wind again and again, only to return, skidding to a stop on a stand pipe or an oil-smear steel deck. Also, lying on the steel deck for every day of the first four days, and then fluttering in the lights at night, was a Night-hawk. When approached, it opened its enormous mouth and hissed; otherwise it showed no sign of life--during the day.

We then moved inshore, into the colder waters of the continental shelf, and I needed my sweaters. We stayed for a day, at the edge of the shelf, doing some acoustics and towed instrument tests. As we approached the coast, the number of gulls around us increased steadily, until by the time we had sighted the loom of the light on The Hawk, there must have been 300 gulls: 80% Herring, the rest Black-backed, with our normal complement of 30 Fulmars and 50 Greater Shearwaters. The land birds continued to drop in on us: a Red-breasted Nuthatch and two or three Goldfinches on one day, two Water Pipits on another, another Cape May Warbler on a third.

The most spectacular night of the cruise was the second last one: Thanksgiving. A steady cold drizzle began to fall on the ship as she steamed slowly past nightfall into the darkness. The ship soon became surrounded with an aura of drifting, sparkling droplets, suffused with the golden shine of the ships lights and reflected for as far out as we could see from the backs of hundreds of crying gulls, each with its head down, keeping pace with us and plunging sharply downwards whenever a fish showed its silvery head in the illuminated water.

From above, into this golden aura, fluttered a continuous rain of twittering warblers, oscillating in and out of the gloom above. The most persistent was a larger bird: I watched it for a full thirty minutes, sometimes almost close enough to touch, then only a greywraith above me in the mist. I decided that it must be a sand-piper and after much eye strain and soul searching, concluded it was a White-rumped. I suppose it could have been a Ruff, but the white seemed continuous across the rump. That night the only other migrant I identified for sure was another Yellow-rumped Warbler, but it was fantastic Thanksgiving fare for a birder.

The sail home was uneventful; we docked at BIO in our sleep, at two in the morning of the 15th. We must have been, throughout the entire cruise, on the migration path of all those birds. My colleagues were doubtful: how could any of these bits of fluff, which could only just keep up with the ship if she steamed into anything more

than a 15 knot wind, make it from Nova Scotia to the next stop to the south, which is, of course, Bermuda? Were they all doomed? I think so. Only those that manage to stay high, using strong, favourable winds, live to come home again next spring. We'll be waiting on a Wednesday morning next May...

--Fred Dobson

#### PROBLEMS OF NESTING CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLERS

Bernard Forsythe

In Kings County the beautiful Chestnut-sided Warbler is one of the most common nesting warblers. Quite a change from the past when this bird was very rare. Audubon only saw it once. The Chestnut-sided Warbler was one of several birds that benefited greatly from the edges of woods and fields created as man settled North America. This habitat provided a perfect place for it to feed and nest. During the summer of 1985, I located seven Chestnut-sided Warbler nests near my home on Wolfville Ridge. However, the year turned into a disaster for them as they all failed. There were two main causes. June was very wet and resulted in the failure of a couple of these nests, but the Brown-headed Cowbird was a far more serious problem. Here are a few brief notes on these nests.

- Nest #1 was poorly fastened and was found collapsed on the ground with a warbler egg, plus a cowbird egg that it contained on June 18.
- Nest #2 contained 1 warbler egg, plus 2 cowbird eggs on June 16. Two cowbirds were all that fledged from this nest at the end of June.
- Nest #3 held 4 young warblers, plus 1 young cowbird newly hatched on July 5. On July 12, I found this nest predated.
- Nest #4 contained 4 young with pinfeathers starting to show that were all dead on June 28. Most Chestnut-sided Warbler nests are loosely built and water would pass through, however, this nest had a lot of plant down in its walls that would hold water. We had had a week of heavy rain and the young probably died of exposure.
- Nest #5 On June 20, there was 1 warbler egg, 1 warbler young, newly hatched, plus 1 cowbird egg in this nest. By July 3, the nest was predated.
- Nest #6 held 2 warbler young, plus 1 cowbird young, newly hatched, on June 23. On July 4, I found the nest had been predated.

Nest #7 contained 2 warbler eggs, one of which had a small hole in its shell on July 23. The female was on the nest on July 29 and was not flushed. By July 31, the nest contained only the egg with the hole in it and had been abandoned. As cowbirds usually remove or puncture some of the nest owners eggs before they lay their own egg in the nest, the hole in this egg could have been made by a cowbird. This might also explain the small clutch size. The cowbird may not have laid her egg because of the late date. The late date could also mean that this warbler had failed in an earlier nesting attempt.

With results like the above, one would wonder how long the Chestnut-sided Warbler can continue to be a common bird. Although many of the nests were predated before any young fledged, it is not likely that any warblers would have fledged as nests with one or two young, plus cowbird young, only fledge cowbirds. This was a small sample from a small area and probably does not show the whole picture. Warblers in areas with fewer cowbirds would have higher success rates, and those that lost their first nests to the weather could have had a successful second nesting. Any extra young from successful areas could fill in the gaps left in areas like mine that fledged no young. Chestnut-sided Warblers suffer high predation from cowbirds because their nests are usually in bushes from one to three feet from the ground near the edges of fields, and can be easily spotted by the cowbirds as they perch in the higher trees watching the nest building songbirds. I will be watching for this warbler in the coming seasons and hope that I will have a more favourable report in the future on this most delightful summer visitor.



This female House Finch, on Brier Island in April, 1981, came to light in the Societv's slide collection. It is reproduced here as the only one thus documented for the province. --photo, Robie Denton

## ANOTHER LOOK AT THE GLAUCOUS GULL

Peter Payzant

Last winter, birders in the Halifax-Dartmouth area were tantalized by a large all-white gull which spent several weeks in the Sullivan's Pond area of Dartmouth. Eventually it was identified as a Glaucous Gull, although it was not a very convincing one. In this article I will look at the field marks that this bird showed, and examine the arguments in favour of the decision that it was a Glaucous Gull.

Plumage

A quick glance at the bird showed that it was virtually all white, lacking any dark on the wing tips, or barring on the secondaries or tail. As can be seen in the accompanying photos, however, most of the bird, with the exception of the nape and back, were finely marbled with brown.



1. Note primary projection beyond tail

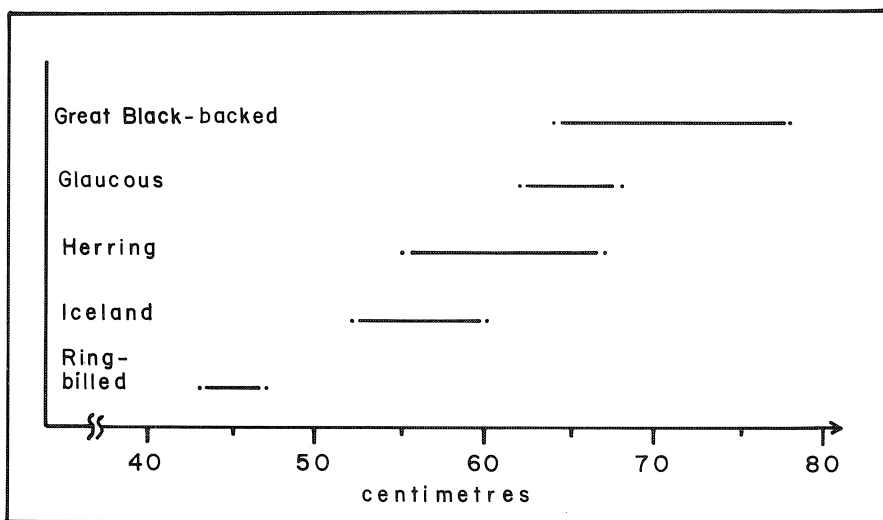
Leaving out the possibility of albinism or hybrids (which I will discuss later), this overall light plumage eliminates most of the gulls in our area with the exception of the Glaucous and Iceland gulls. I am also going to ignore the possibility that this is an exotic stray, on the principle that initial effort in identification should concentrate on the more likely species.

Both the Glaucous and Iceland gulls are "four-year" birds; that is, their plumage takes four years to reach the final adult one. An important step in identifying any gull is to attempt to determine which plumage the bird is in. A good quick reference for gull plumages is the National Geographic Society Field Guide (1983). Based on their illustrations, we can be quite confident that this is a 1st winter bird, judging solely by the plumage. By the second winter, both species are beginning to develop some evidence of a grey mantle, which was lacking in our individual. Also, the dark iris rules out anything later than first winter.

Once we are satisfied that it is not an adult bird, the presence or absence of dark areas in the primaries is no longer of any importance in determining the species, since neither the Glaucous nor the Iceland gulls have dark in the primaries in this plumage.

### Size

Size is almost worthless as a field mark unless there is a reference of known size almost beside the bird you are looking at. Peter Grant (1983) has made a convincing argument to show that even experienced birders can misjudge relative size of objects if they are at different distances. The effect is more pronounced when binoculars or telephoto lenses are used.



**FIG. 1- SIZES OF GULLS**

However, there were many opportunities to make close comparisons of the size of this bird to the adjacent Herring and Ring-billed gulls, and it seemed to be about the same size or a little smaller than most of the Herring Gulls. Unfortunately, the sizes of gulls within each species are quite variable. Measurements quoted in Cramp (1983) for some of our common gulls are shown in Figure 1.

Even with an accurate size measurement, our four common large gulls overlap to such an extent that size can only be used where the bird is clearly outside the range of sizes for other possible species. In our case, where the bird was about the size of a Herring Gull, it could have been either a Glaucous or an Iceland, since both overlap the Herring Gull's size.

### Structure

Frant (1982) describes the structure of the Glaucous and Iceland Gulls as follows:

*"A typical Glaucous Gull has a long, heavy often massive bill, and a long, rather flat-profiled contour to the forehead and crown; bill and head shape combine to give a strong, aggressive look. Iceland Gull has a comparatively short bill (but still occasionally as large as that of a small Herring Gull), more rounded profile to the forehead and crown, and a proportionally slightly larger and more centrally*

placed eye: these features combine to give a more gentle expression...

"A useful general rule is that Iceland Gulls' bill is less than half its head length, whereas that of Glaucous is greater, but this may be complicated by the effect on apparent head length which different postures may produce."

My own measurements of photographs of 17 Glaucous Gulls and 4 Iceland Gulls show the bill-to-head-length ratios given Table I.

Table I: Bill Length to Head Length Ratios

Species	No. of Birds	Minimum	Average	Maximum
Iceland Gull	4	.35	.38	.39
Glaucous Gull	17	.39	.53	.67

This indicates that a more useful "decision point" might be around 0.4.

The bill length on our bird is almost exactly half the head length. The bird is in a hunched posture, though, and this would tend to bunch up the feathers on the back of the head, thus increasing the apparent head length. If we take 0.4 as the dividing line between the two species, then we have some evidence for thinking that the bird is a Glaucous Gull. Also, the forehead and crown contour and head shape are more suggestive of illustrations of the Glaucous Gull than of the Iceland Gull.

Grant goes on to say:

*"When perched, the projection of the primaries beyond the tail is a good distinction: on Glaucous the projection is comparatively short, always the same or less than the bill length (from the forwardmost extension of feathering on the upper mandible to the tip), whereas on Iceland the projection is obviously much longer than its bill length. This distinction applies throughout the first year and on older individuals which have not dropped or partially regrown the outermost primaries during the complete autumn/winter moult."*

Photograph #1 shows that the primary projection is about the same as the bill length, which suggests a Glaucous Gull.

Regarding the relative size of the eye, Grant (pers. comm.) has said that in the Glaucous Gull, the length of the eye is usually less than 1/5 the bill length, while in the Iceland Gull, with its proportionally larger eye and shorter bill, the length of the eye is usually more than 1/5 the bill length.

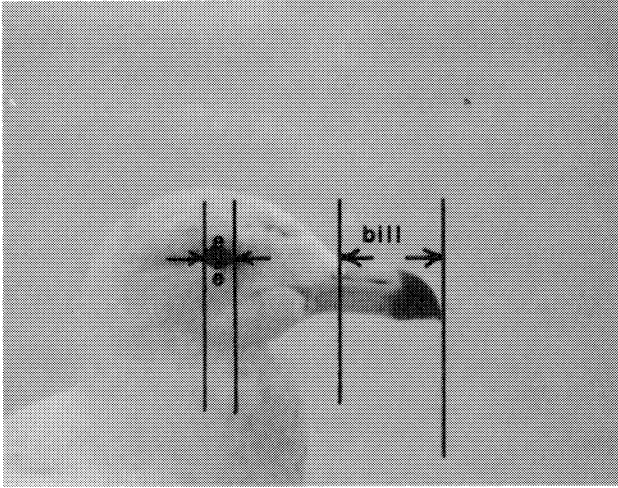
My own measurements of the same photographs as before show the eye-length to bill-length ratios given in Table II.

Table II: Eye-Length to Bill-Length Ratios

Species	No. of Birds	Minimum	Average	Maximum
Iceland Gull	4	.31	.36	.41
Glaucous Gull	17	.15	.22	.30

This indicates that a more useful "decision point" for the eye-length to bill-length ratio might be around 0.3

The eye and bill lengths are marked on photograph #2. The ratio of the lengths is about 0.26, which again points to the bird being a Glaucous Gull.



2. Eye and Bill Lengths

### Bill Pattern

Grant (1982) has this to say on the bill pattern:

*"On first-years there is a diagnostic difference in bill pattern. Glaucous Gull always has the basal two-thirds bright flesh-pink to yellowish-cream and a clear-cut black tip extending very slightly, if at all, back along the cutting edges: this bill pattern not shared by any other first-year large gull..."*

*"Iceland Gull has a slightly variable bill pattern, typically with at most the basal half of the bill dull flesh or greyish and an extensive black tip which usually shades into the pale base and extends back in a wedge along the cutting edges. At long range...the bill may look wholly dark, which is never the case on Glaucous. The bill pattern difference holds good throughout the first year at least..."*

Cramp (1983) describes the bill of the first winter Glaucous Gull as follows:

*"...becomes distinctly patterned in first winter, with basal two-thirds pale pink and tip solidly black (and sharply delineated across depth of bill)."*

The bill of the first-winter Iceland Gull is described in Cramp (1983) in these terms:

*"Bill horn-brown (not pink), with dark brown or almost black distal half not always sharply delineated and extending towards base along top of lower mandible: lack bold contrast of L. hyperboreus [Glaucous Gull]."*

Our photographs show a good match for the Glaucous Gull bill pattern. In the originals, the colour of the light part of the bill is between flesh and pale pink, and is certainly not "greyish" or "horn-brown". If we can believe that the bill pattern is a diagnostic feature, then this is a strong argument in favour of the bird being a Glaucous Gull. The picture of a faded first winter Glaucous Gull in Farrand (1983) is quite a good match to our bird.

### Other Possibilities

To get back to the possibility that our bird was something exotic, the combination of plumage, eye colour, size and bill pattern rule out virtually every other gull (in normal plumage) but the two under consideration.

A complete albino (of, say, a Herring Gull) would be all white. Our bird shows brown marbling, so it isn't a complete albino. The dark eye restricts us to considering only immature partial albinos, and the bill pattern (always retained in immature partial albinos) is said to be diagnostic: no other large immature gull has this pattern. Once again, we are led to believe that this bird is a Glaucous Gull.

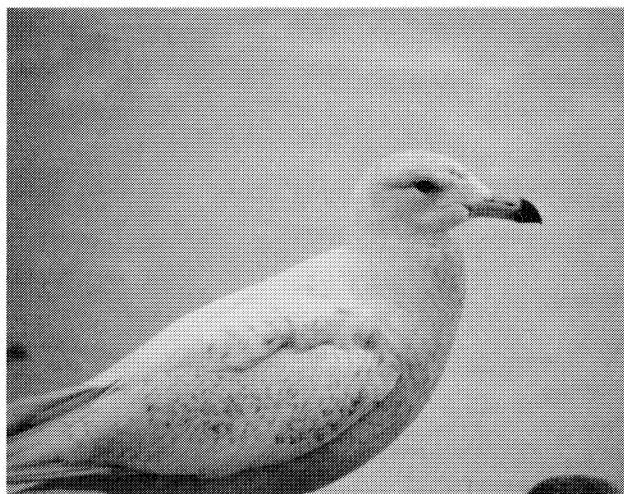
The final possibility to consider is that we have a hybrid between a Glaucous and some other gull. Harrison (1983) says that Glaucous gulls have been recorded as hybridizing with Herring, Lesser Black-backed, Iceland and Great Black-backed gulls. However, he goes on to say that

*"hybrids show one or a combination of the following characters: darker primaries, a secondary bar, blackish ear-coverts, indistinct tail band."*

None of these is to be seen on the Sullivan's Pond Bird.

### Summary

We have looked at the Sullivan's Pond bird with respect to its plumage, size, structure and bill pattern. The size of the bird was inconclusive, since it was not clearly larger than all Iceland Gulls. Every other field mark indicated, more or less strongly, that the bird was a Glaucous Gull. We have also been able to eliminate the possibility that the bird was an albino or hybrid.



3. Note marbling of plumage



## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Ian McLaren for his helpful suggestions on this article, and for pointing out the possibility that this individual might have belonged to the small northwestern subspecies L. Hyperboreus barovianus.

## References

- Cramp, S. (ed.) (1983) The Birds of the Western Palearctic Vol. III, Waders to Gulls.
- Farrand, J. (1983) The Audubon Society Master Guide to Birding, Vol. 2, Gulls to Dippers.
- Grant, P.J. (1982) Gulls, A Guide to Identification
- Grant, P.J. (1983) Size-illusion, in British Birds, Vol. 76, No. 8, Aug. 1983.
- Harrison, P. (1983) Seabirds: An Identification Guide
- National Geographic Society (1983) Field Guide to the Birds of North America.

## "ATLASSING"

The Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas is gearing up for its first field season. Early in the new year, we will have appointed regional coordinators to help direct Atlas activities at the local level. Their names and addresses will be listed in an upcoming issue of the Atlas newsletter.

If you are interested in having an Atlas workshop or presentation in your area, or would like to receive the Atlas newsletter, please contact:

Judith Kennedy  
 Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas  
 c/o Natural History,  
 Nova Scotia Museum,  
 1747 Summer Street,  
 Halifax, N.S. B3H 3A6  
 (902) 429-4610

## RAPTOR REHABILITATION PROGRAMME NEWS

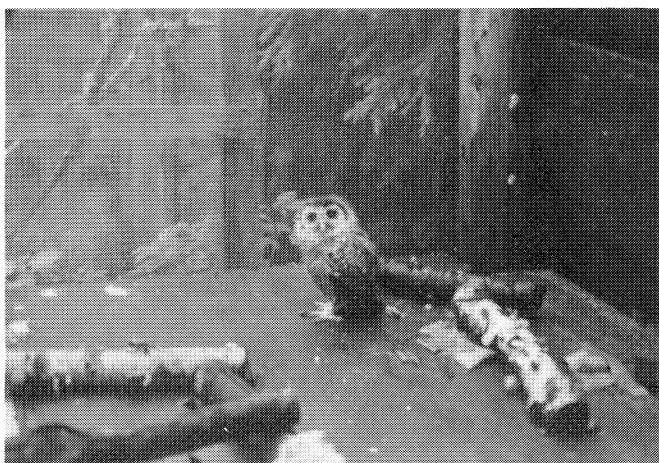
Our participating veterinarians are continuing to treat injured raptors and our participating rest and rehabilitation centre operators are continuing to feed and care for them before releasing them to the wild. All is done quietly, without fuss, but with much dedication.

As several new veterinarians have joined the scheme and as three years have elapsed since the programme was begun, we have sent out another letter to every practicing veterinarian in the province bringing them up to date and enlisting their help.

The two photographs which follow were taken at the Kew's Mason's Point rehabilitation centre. The first shows the new flight cage nearing completion and the second, a young Barred Owl which had been brought in uninjured but unable to look after itself. It was fed and protected until it "grew up", was introduced to live food, and when ready to become independent was banded and released.

--JSC

Co-ordinator RRP



## THE ILLUSIVE "WATER OUZEL"

Margaret A. Clark

When I left Halifax last July on my "retirement trip" with Margaret Slatkin, in our motorhome, my mind was made up: I would not leave British Columbia until I had seen an American Dipper! On two other trips west, one to the C.N.F. Conference in 1984, I was in the wrong place at the wrong time so this was to be THE year of discovery.

So it was that, as we reached the Rocky Mountains, every campground, even campsite was selected with birding in mind; the rivers and streams were searched evening and morning for a glimpse of the little gray bird--to no avail. On we drove into the Kamloops area and while connecting the COBRA at a campsite overlooking the South Thompson River, a flock of about forty Sandhill Cranes flew over! So thrilling! But the search for the Dipper continued through to Prince George, Prince Rupert, the Queen Charlotte Islands and Vancouver Island. There were other rewards in birding--seeing three species of Loons and Scoters, Harlequin Ducks, Wrens, four species of Grebe, Auklets, Murrelets, not to mention all the birds of prey, land birds, as well as being in awe of the remarkable scenery on the shores of west coast B.C.

The weeks went by and our travels took us into Victoria. We parked the COBRA by Clover Point and quickly discovered both Black Turnstones and Surfbirds picking about on the rocks. It just takes a pair of binoculars backed up by a telescope for a local birder (dressed in business suit, shirt and tie), to introduce himself and a discussion of birds, eastern and western, to follow. My last question to the birder from Duncan was, "Do you know where I can be sure to see a Dipper?".

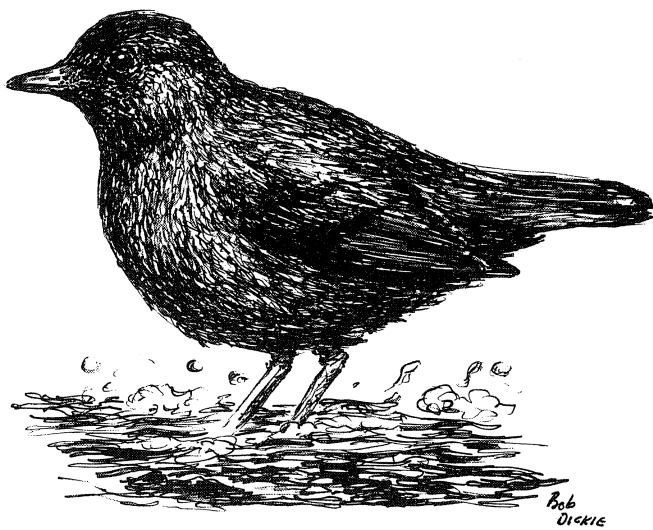
The following morning found us headed north on Route 1 to Goldstream Provincial Park where we spent much time walking the rough terrain up and down the river--again to no avail. We moved on to the picnic park farther along Route 1, but saw "nary a bird". Frustration set in and to offset that we drove up the scenic Malahat Drive for a few miles. On the return drive, we made a last ditch stop at the Goldstream Picnic Park. I walked along the shores of the stream. Nothing! Then with my binoculars I scanned the stream, the rocks, the logs--and spotted a small pale gray bird standing on a log preening. It was an immature American Dipper (Water Ouzel)! I dashed back to the COBRA to get Margaret and camera, returning to find the bird still preening. Then it stopped as if satisfied with that and began to sing--such a bubbling clear song! It was impossible even with binoculars to see an open bill because of the lighting (a dull day) but it was possible to notice the ripples in the throat. Now I could at last add this illusive young bird to my life list.

But read on, that is not the end of The Illusive Water Ouzel Story! As we watched and listened, three adult American Dippers swooped down into the rapidly moving mountain stream. The immature followed them and for the next fifteen to twenty minutes Margaret and I watched these stocky little birds chase one another, walk in the water, search for morsels from the water, constantly "curtsying" all the while.

To me the word "curtsying" seems more descriptive than does "bobbing", for as we watched, they seemed to be bending from the knee joint rather than bobbing the tail as do Spotted Sandpipers, for example. Another humble observation was that the National Geographic Field Guide shows the immature and adult Dippers as we saw them. The eye ring was more evident in the juvenile bird than in the adult.

The illusive Water Ouzel was illusive no longer and the anticipation of seeing other "lifers" as we travel into California, across the Gulf Coast to spend the winter months in Florida, cannot surpass the thrill of seeing those four American Dippers!

--Margaret A. Clark



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor, NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS:

I was asked recently how I celebrate Canada Day and I told them that my wife and I have established a tradition. On that day we count the birds at Hereford and Ciboux Islands.

At 1:30 p.m. we travelled to Mount View By the Sea at Bras d'Or and joined Captain Schaik and 22 others to travel to the Bird Islands. This year the weather was sunny with a brisk breeze and the Puffins were obliging. The Puffins for the most part occupy burrows on the north sides of Hereford and Ciboux Islands. I saw no Puffins close to burrows near the grassy slopes at the top of the cliffs. Avoiding such sites helps the Puffins escape predation from the many Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls. In fact, I saw Herring Gulls only on two occasions parked close to Puffins at their burrows. Incidentally, I read the recent book, The Puffin, by M.P. Harris, published by T & A D Payser Ltd., Tan Head House, Colton Waterhouses, Staffordshire, England. The chapter on Puffin behavior is hilarious. Did you know Puffins have an average life span of 25 years and they do not breed until they are three years old. Mr. Harris says the kingdom of Puffindom is in good shape and we need not worry--perhaps. I recommend this book before your trip.

The following are the figures for this year's bird count and I wish to thank my wife Shirley who was busy recording and did not get a chance to look much. Also, a nice young couple from Moncton, N.B., Debbie and Chris Collins helped to report Puffins in the air or on the water. The Black Legged Kittiwake count may not be accurate as this was during a period of great Puffin activity. The gulls are nesting mostly on the grassy slopes at either ends of the Islands. The Cormorants were on the top ledges and the Razorbilled Auks and Black Guillemots occupy the lower ledges. The grey seals performed and they seem to enjoy watching us as we them. We saw 14. However, Captain tells me there are 30 in the area. By the way, the Puffins arrive in mid May and most of them are gone by mid August.

BIRD	HEREFORD	CIBOUX	TOTAL
PUFFINS - water/air	80	80	
- burrows	13	4	
RAZOR BILL AUK - water/air	8	2	177
- nest	28	17	
			55
GREATER CORMORANT -adults	150	245	
- juveniles	1	2	
			398
LESSER CORMORANT - adults	26	45	
- juveniles		1	
			72
BLACK LEGGED KITTIWAKE	20	188	
			208
HERRING GULL	104	760	
-on nest		300	
			1164
GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL	63	332	
		20	
			415
GUILLEMOT	1	7	
	1		
			9

--Clive S. Macdonald,  
New Waterford, C.B., N.S.

Editor, NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS:

On Thursday, 22 August 1985, at about 5:00 p.m., I saw a rather unusual sight: a flock of about thirty to fifty gulls catching insects on the wing! They seem to have been Bonaparte's and/or Black-headed Gulls.

This happened over land, though at the edge of coast, on Deer Island, New Brunswick, at the outskirts of either Lords Cove or a little fishing village of Richardson. We were touring the island, and stopped for about twenty minutes at the spot. During that time the birds were whirring around in what appeared to be an habitual activity.

I am a budding bird watcher, and am very intrigued as to whether what I saw was really unusual and whether the birds were in fact the species mentioned above.

--J. Gruca

Editor, NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS:

Throughout August of 1980 I had the good fortune of being able to watch a family group of five or six Great Crested Flycatchers on Wolfville Ridge. They were seen in an apple orchard and nearby mixed growth woods where some of their time was spent darting out from perches after honey bees that were coming and going from hives the farmer had placed in his orchard. Their varied calls made a pleasant contrast to the familiar songs of the many birds living in this area. No conflict was noted between the flycatcher family and the resident birds.

During the last four or five summers, Great Crested Flycatchers have been seen on the grounds of the Research Station in Kentville and it was suspected that they were nesting. In mid June, 1985, Lance Laviolette saw a pair of these flycatchers scolding around a large white birch on the station grounds. On June 22, I accompanied Lance and Mark Elderkin on a search for the nest. The well kept lawns of the Research Station have many scattered mature mixed species trees and various rhododendron bushes around a lily pond. As we approached the birch the flycatcher calls told us we were not wanted. The tree was climbed but the nest was not found that easily. Back on the ground we retreated to watch the flycatchers and look for clues as to the whereabouts of the nest.

There was a Robin's nest containing young in the birch. The adults were very excited about our presence as they kept an eye on the nearby flycatchers. In a nearby pine, a Yellow-rumped Warbler and a Wood Pewee were singing. The scold notes of a Catbird came from the rhododendrons under the birch. Soon things quieted down and the Great Cresteds were seen pursuing insects around the pond. After quite some time of watching we saw one heading back to the birch with insect wings protruding from its bill. Back at the birch more time was spent carefully inspecting its branches and all of a sudden, there was what we were looking for. The nest cavity could only be seen from one position on the ground. It was twenty-five feet up and eight feet out from the trunk in an almost horizontal branch. It was a natural cavity about six inches deep, lined with pine needles, grasses, cellophane, and fur. It contained three newly hatched young, plus one piped egg. While the adults scolded when we were near the nest tree they seemed to quiet down when we were right at the nest.

My next visit was on June 30, when the adults were seen feeding the four pinfeathered young that the nest now contained. The

neighbouring birds were peacefully looking after their own affairs. Several trips were made to the area in late July. The family group of Great Cresteds were seen feeding and learning to hunt in the trees along one side of nearby Elderkin Brook. There was no interaction between them and the family of Redwing Blackbirds also using the area. Other birds observed at the site were a Downy Woodpecker, Juncos and a Hummingbird.

Great Crested Flycatchers have in the past been rare in Nova Scotia, so let's hope recent sightings indicate an increase of these colorful insect eaters. It would be a natural range extension on their part. However, it is not likely that we will see much of an increase, because of the real enemy of our native cavity nesters--the Starling. Starlings nest early and are so numerous that any Crested Flycatchers around will have a hard time to find an empty cavity. Nest boxes might help. The whistles of Great Crested Flycatchers would be welcome at any time in my yard. They make a most enjoyable and exciting addition to our more regular bird friends.

--Bernard Forsythe

Editor, NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS:

Some of your readers will have read or heard of the book Gulls: A Guide to Identification by P. J. Grant. My wife and I had the pleasure of meeting Peter Grant in April of 1985. It turns out that he is gathering material for a second edition of this book.

One of the problems he is working on is that of the Iceland Gull/Kumlien's Gull complex. Various authorities suggest that Kumlien's Gull is a race or subspecies of the Iceland Gull, or even a distinct species. In Nova Scotia, we are told, all individuals we see are Kumlien's Gull. However, the amount of grey in the wing tips of the gulls we see is variable, down to almost no grey at all, and this indicates that the situation regarding the status of these birds is far from clear.

Peter Grant has requested any information we may have on these gulls in our area. To quote from a letter he sent us:

"Any information on *glaucoides/kumlieni* in your area really would be very useful to me, along the following lines:

1. The first step, of course, is to be sure that you are dealing with real *Larus glaucoides*, using structure to eliminate the chance of *Glaucois*, and upperparts colour etc. to rule out *Thayers* (we should be so lucky!)
2. Note number of *L. glaucoides*, with date and location of each, with note of wing-tip pattern of each. A simple split between number of *glaucoides*-type and *kumlieni*-type is the main aim, but if they do allow precise notation of their wing-tip pattern, this would be useful too, for each individual.
3. The above applies only to adults. If you can do the immatures, too, that would be useful. Perhaps a separate sheet for each age-group, noting for each individual bill-tip pattern and wing-tip pattern.
4. Photographs would be useful, of course. Slides will be fine: if they are good enough for publication, I can arrange conversion to B+W. You can trust me with originals: I'll get copy slides/B+W made as necessary, and return the originals to you fairly promptly. Any pictures are useful, but flight shots showing upperwing are the real aim.

The above may all sound a bit daunting, but I've outlined the ideal study. Believe me, however, that I would welcome any information on *L. Glaucoides*, even a simple e.g. "we saw six Icelands this winter, all of which had some *kumlieni*-type grey on the wing-tips", or whatever. Best of luck with this, and I look forward to hearing from you. Any views on the topic from local gull-watchers would also be of interest."

This is an opportunity for N.S.B.S. members to see their work put to good use. I would be happy to forward any such information to Peter Grant, or members may wish to write to him directly at the following address:

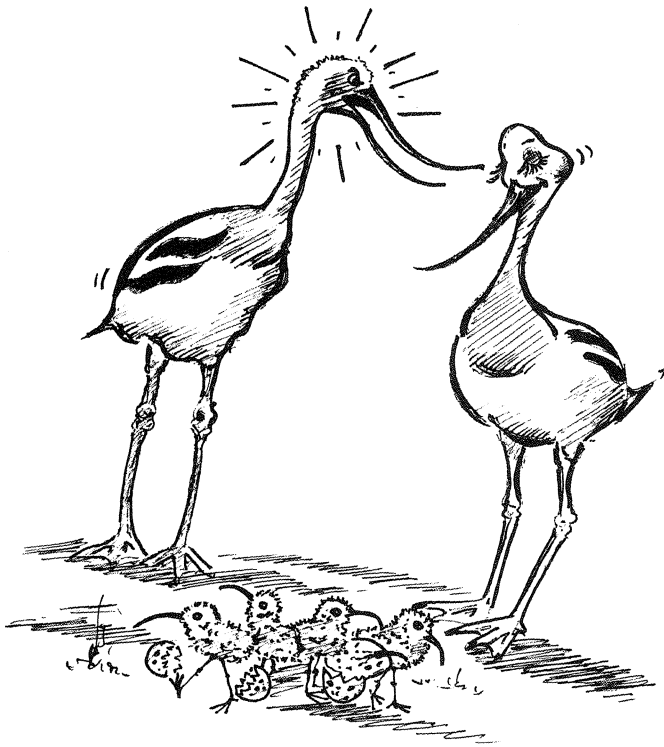
P. J. Grant,  
14 Heathfield Road  
Ashford  
Kent TN24 8QD  
United Kingdom

--Peter Payzant  
P.O. Box 2, Waverley  
N.S. B0N 2S0

## G I F T   M E M B E R S H I P S

SHOULD YOU WISH TO GIVE A GIFT MEMBERSHIP IN N.S.B.S TO A FRIEND, CONTACT THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY, NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY, c/o NOVA SCOTIA MUSEUM, 1747 SUMMER STREET, HALIFAX, N.S. B3H 2A6. A SUITABLE CARD WILL BE SENT IN YOUR NAME, ALONG WITH THE MEMBERSHIP CARD,





1985

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

## Nova Scotia Bird Society

The 1985 A.G.M. of the Nova Scotia Bird Society was held on November 28, 1985, at 8:15 p.m. in the auditorium of the Nova Scotia Museum, Halifax, N.S. The President, Mr. William Caudle, was in the chair and 56 members were present. Prior to the meeting, at 7:45 p.m., a drawing was held for the privilege of buying 24 second editions of The Birds of Nova Scotia by Robie Tufts. The names (24, plus an additional 5 for insurance) were drawn by Debbie Burleson of the Museum staff; the draw was arranged by Shirley Cohrs, Editor, Nova Scotia Birds.

Copies of the minutes of the 1984 meeting, published in the January, 1985, issue of Nova Scotia Birds, were distributed to the attending members. It was moved by Ethel Crathorne, seconded by James Morrow, that the minutes be accepted as distributed. Carried.

Business Arising from the Minutes: None

Financial Report

Chris Field tabled his report for 1985. The present balance is \$4,150.42 compared to \$861.15 for 1984. This year's balance includes the grants of the Nova Scotia Museum for two years, 1984 and 1985. Receipts from membership dues are higher than usual because of the implementation of multi-year memberships for the first time. A grant of \$2,800.00 was received by the Society for assistance in the preparation of the 3rd edition of R. Tufts' The Birds of Nova Scotia by several experienced members. The cost of preparing the mailing list for Nova Scotia Birds in accordance with the requirements of the Post Office has risen alarmingly so a computer and printer have been purchased for \$1,572.77 and will be placed in the home of the Membership Secretary. It was felt that the grant would nearly cover the purchase price and, in any case, the savings realized from doing our own wordprocessing would pay off the expenditure in about two years.

It was moved by Chris Field, seconded by Eric Cooke, that the report be accepted. Carried. Chris announced his retirement this year and brought to the attention of the members the Cash Book which has been in use since 1956. The budget for that year was \$500.00, compared to \$17,251.08 for 1985.

Membership Report

Shirley Brothers presented her report for 1985:

Single:	296
Family:	191
Senior Citizen:	145
Student	10
Institutional	12
Life	11
Total	665

Total number in memberships: 923

It was moved by Shirley Brothers, seconded by Wendy Tay, that the report be accepted. Carried. Shirley is retiring this year and thanked those who assisted in improving the address labels by the inclusion, in the corner, of the year of the paid-up membership.

### Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund

Eric Cooke presented the financial statement on behalf of the Board of Directors of this Fund. Items of interest include the acquisition of the Kelsey property, Port Joli, which was donated to the Society. This property is mostly wooded, with a small frontage on the sea, and is next to the new Cadden Beach Park, thus serving as a buffer to the Park as well as a valuable addition to our properties. Expenses for the Raptor Rehabilitation programme were down, reflecting the conclusion of the payment for building a flight cage at Mason's Point. The two-year survey of public use, etc., of Conrad's Beach has been concluded and it is hoped that the facts acquired will be useful in setting this property aside as a protected zone. Mention was made of the growing Marie Henry Fund and the members were asked to suggest suitable uses to which the money might be applied. It was moved by Eric Cooke, seconded by Shirley Cohrs, that this report be accepted. Carried.

In addition, John Cohrs reported that negotiations were still being carried out for the leasing of a small island in Minas Basin. The Jr. Field Trip will now be called the Margo Kanigsberg Memorial Field Trip, since it is made possible by using the interest from a fund set up in her name by Mr. R. Kanigsberg. \$1,200.00 was paid for the flight cage for raptor rehabilitation at Mason's Point, which was used by the Kews last year to house an Osprey, a Merlin, a Great-horned Owl and a Saw-whet Owl. It now contains a second Merlin. With regard to the survey done at Conrad's Beach, John mentioned that the person employed to do the work also did a very good job of public education with those using the area.

### Margo Kanigsberg Memorial Field Trip

Shirley Cohrs reported that a successful field trip was taken by 30 students from the Grade XII Honors Biology Class at Halifax West High School to Crescent and Risser's Beaches on Sept. 26, 1985. As usual, John Cohrs and Bill Caudle gave a talk and showed slides to the class before the trip and, as usual, the weather on the day was beautiful. Tribute was paid to the late Ed. Richard, whose keen participation will be missed. Thanks were expressed to the members who assisted in leading the groups of students.

### Conservation and Environment Committee

Peter Payzant, Committee Co-Chairman, presented a report of their activities for 1985 which included publication of informative articles in Nova Scotia Birds; contacts representing the Society with the Department of Lands and Forests, the Canadian Wildlife Service, the Department of External Affairs, Mr. Alan Ruffman, Parks Canada, Public Works Canada and Ducks Unlimited; and assistance in the organization of the Maritime Breeding Bird Atlas. Peter encouraged members to contact this committee for assistance with any conservation or environmental problems.

### President's Report

The President's report and the Puffin-of-the-Year Award to Linda and Peter Payzant appear elsewhere in this issue.

### Nominating Committee

Shirley Cohrs, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, announced that the Honourary Auditor, James Morrow, and the Honourary Solicitor, Leonard Kitz, had agreed to serve for another year. The following slate of officers for 1986 was presented:

President	Bill Caudle
Vice-President	Bob Dickie
Secretary	Don MacNeill
Treasurer	Sandra Myers
Membership Secretary	Joyce Purchase
Editor	Shirley Cohrs

It was moved by Shirley Cohrs, seconded by Don Purchase, that this slate be accepted. Carried.

Nominations for the three Directors positions were then called for and the following were nominated:

<u>Nominee</u>	<u>Mover</u>	<u>Seconder</u>
Carin Somers	John Cohrs	Ethel Crathorne
Bob MacDonald	Eric Cooke	Don Purchase
Alan Covert	Chris Field	Bernice Moores

There being no further nominations, it was moved by Ethel Crathorne, seconded by Wendy Tay, that nominations cease. Carried.

New Business: There was no new business.

The meeting was declared adjourned by the President at 9:00 p.m.

--Joyce Purchase  
(Acting Secretary)

NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY  
(Incorporated 1957)

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

For the twelve months ending October 31, 1985  
(with comparative figures for the year ending October 31, 1984)

	<u>1985</u>	<u>1984</u>
Balance from previous year	861.15	5,782.30
 <u>RECEIPTS</u>		
Membership dues (year 1)	5,522.67	5,123.54
(year 2)	433.00	
(year 3)	147.00	
Savings interest	153.28	269.14
GIC interest (217.52)	135.52	(153.67) 89.67
N.S. Museum Grant (1984 and 1985)	4,000.00	-
Sale of publications etc.	2,285.21	1,198.97
Life Memberships	240.00	480.00
Mailing list cost recovery	40.00	50.60
Auction of books (W.J. Mills estate)	556.25	-
Grant re: Birds of N.S.(preparation 3rd edition)	2,800.00	-
Miscellaneous	67.00	12.00
	17,251.08	13,006.22
 <u>DISBURSEMENTS</u>		
Three issues of N.S. Birds	6,326.93	5,376.31
Postage, stationery, wordprocessing	2,052.23	1,636.75
Editor's expenses	227.62	170.89
Subscriptions	51.55	50.91
Monthly meeting expenses	62.74	109.62
AGM meeting	236.98	257.18
Printing of membership cards and forms	412.61	-
Guaranteed Investment Certificate	-	483.34
Equipment maintenance	67.95	-
Environmental committee	-	31.87
Bank charges	60.47	58.15
Field trips (coordinator's expenses)	30.48	-
Purchase of computer and printer	1,572.77	-
Payment for work on Birds of N.S.(data compilation)	1,400.00	-
Awards, gifts	24.75	275.00
Photographic contest	283.58	-
Breeding Bird Atlas grant	290.00	-
Environment committee	-	31.87
Slide collection	-	77.83
Checklists	-	442.43
Birding N.S.	-	2,181.00
Crests	-	892.85
Archives	-	22.04
President's expenses	-	18.00
Miscellaneous	-	61.00
	13,110.66	12,145.07
Balance in Royal Bank of Canada	4,150.42	861.15
	17,251.08	13,006.22

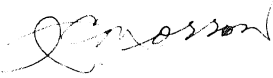
## BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS		
Electric typewriter (cost 296.45)	2.88	62.17
Steel filing cabinet (cost 99.96)	1.00	1.00
Steel filing cabinet (cost 98.99)	43.55	63.35
Computer and printer (cost 1,572.77)	1,572.77	-
Guaranteed investment certificate (1st Apr. 86)	2,096.58	2,096.58
Balance in Royal Bank of Canada (savings 3,170.93 , current 979.49)	4,150.42	861.15
	<u>7,867.20</u>	<u>3,084.25</u>

## LIABILITIES

Surplus	7,867.20	3,084.25
---------	----------	----------

Audited and found correct  
according to the books



J. Morrow  
Auditor



W. Caudle  
President

C. Field  
Treasurer



Nova Scotia Bird Society Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund

Assets

	<u>October 31, 1985</u>	<u>October 31, 1984</u>
<u>Bank Accounts</u>		
Current Account	\$ 368.91	\$ 43.05
Savings Account	1,649.77	2,055.50
Savings Account (MH)	<u>4,014.36</u>	<u>3,768.23</u>
	\$ 6,033.04	\$ 5,866.78
<u>Debentures</u>	\$ 15,900.00	\$ 15,900.00
<u>Sanctuaries</u>		
Outer Bald, Middle Bald, Half Bald and Mossy Bald Islands	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Hertford Island	160.00	160.00
Indian Island	12,000.00	12,000.00
N. Kemptville property	1,500.00	1,500.00
Peter's Island	20,000.00	20,000.00
Kelsey Property, Port Joli	<u>13,000.00</u>	<u>-</u>
	\$ 47,660.00	\$ 34,660.00
Total Assets	\$ 69,593.04	\$ 56,426.78

Nova Scotia Bird Society Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund

c/o Nova Scotia Museum, Summer St., Halifax, Nova Scotia

Board of Directors - Dr. I. McLaren, Chairman	Dr. G.K. Gregoire
Dr. B.K. Doane	C.R.K. Allen
J.L. Cohrs	R.A. Kanigsberg
C.H. Chipman	E.H. Cooke

Financial Statement from November 1, 1984 to October 31, 1985  
with comparative figures from November 1, 1983 to October 31, 1984

	<u>To October 31, 1985</u>	<u>To October 31, 1984</u>
<u>Balance Forward</u>	\$ 56,426.78	\$ 55,962.98
 <u>Receipts</u>		
Debenture Interest	\$ 1,889.14	\$ 1,255.01
Bank Interest	387.90	522.02
Regular Contributions	688.00	192.00
Estate of R. Tufts	-	2,000.00
Kelsey Property, Port Joli	<u>13,000.00</u>	<u>-</u>
	\$ 15,965.04	\$ 3,969.03
 <u>Disbursements</u>		
Bank Charges	\$ 83.09	\$ 77.26
Taxes	387.39	299.36
Student Field Trip	572.03	149.75
Miscellaneous	52.09	20.12
Raptor Rehabilitation	1,001.18	1,733.74
Conrad's Beach Survey	<u>703.00</u>	<u>1,225.00</u>
	\$ 2,798.78	\$ 3,505.23
 <u>Net Worth</u>	 \$ 69,593.04	 \$ 56,426.78

CONSERVATION & ENVIRONMENT NOTES1. COSEWIC Update

The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) has re-classified the following species:

King Rail	-rare
Prairie Warbler	-rare
Piping Plover	-endangered

2. Notes from ICBP

The International Council for Bird Preservation (ICBP) has sent notice that the Jackdaw is now recognized as a North American bird and that the following species have been split:

Arctic Loon to Arctic and Pacific Loons,  
Western Grebe to Western and Clark's Grebes,  
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker to Yellow-bellied  
and Red-breasted

3. Piping Plovers (reprint from Nature Alert)

This spring, on the sandy beaches of Prince Edward Island, 43 Piping Plovers came to nest. In June, disaster struck. A major storm wiped out the first nesting entirely, and only 14 pairs re-established nests. Over the July holiday weekend, more birds were lost due to human disturbance. Only 9 pairs were left to struggle for survival.

COSEWIC moved the status of the Piping Plover from threatened to endangered at its April 1985 meeting. This is the first instance since the Committee was formed that a species, once identified as being in danger, declined in numbers rather than improving.

It is not only in the Maritimes, however, where the plover needs help. Prairie wetlands and Great Lakes shorelines once provided habitat for the small, secretive shorebird, but during the past decade the population of the Piping Plover has declined to dangerously low levels. It is all but extirpated in Ontario. Saskatchewan and Manitoba lakeshore habitats are in danger. Shoreline development, drainage and damming threaten the sand and gravel beach areas frequented by the bird.

The Canadian Nature Federation has initiated an action plan calling for co-operation between government agencies and naturalists groups across Canada. A high priority of the CNF will be to gather data, monitor the bird and protect its habitat.

The Canadian Wildlife Service is developing a national recovery plan for the Piping Plover. One of their first steps was to appoint Gerry McKeating, wildlife biologist, as national co-ordinator of the federal project.

4. Colour-marked Snow Buntings (reprinted from Nature Alert)

The Canadian Wildlife Service would like to be notified if anyone sees colour-marked Snow Buntings (dye markings of red, blue, green, yellow, orange or purple, marking outer wing and tail feathers). Take note of the date, location, colour of dye and send the information to the Bird Banding Office, Canadian Wildlife Service, Ottawa, K1A 0E7

If you see a large flock of Snow Buntings (with or without coloured dye markings), please write to Wayne Ferguson of the Ontario Bird



Banding Association, 28 Livingston Road, Th#79, Scarborough, Ontario, M1E 4S5. No other song bird shows as much white as the Snow Bunting. Early sightings also welcome.

#### 5. Port Wade Double-crested Cormorants

The Conservation and Environment Committee received an enquiry from Public Works Canada regarding a Double-crested Cormorant nesting site at Port Wade, N.S. The birds were nesting on top of pilings which were to be removed, and our opinion on the conservation aspect of this was requested. Since the breeding population of the D.C. Cormorant is very healthy in Nova Scotia (around 12,000 pairs, according to the Department of Lands and Forests), and since the pilings were to be removed after the nesting season was over, we had no objections to their removal.

#### 6. Cape Breton Highlands National Park

Parks Canada had produced a new management plan for CBH and held a public meeting in Halifax on July 15, 1985, to allow the public to comment on the plan. Members of the Conservation and Environment Committee of the N.S.B.S. attended the meeting along with representatives from several other associations and societies. A presentation was made by Leslie Grant, a park planner and then the meeting was open for questions. Dave MacEachern, Superintendent of CBH was also available at the meeting to answer questions.

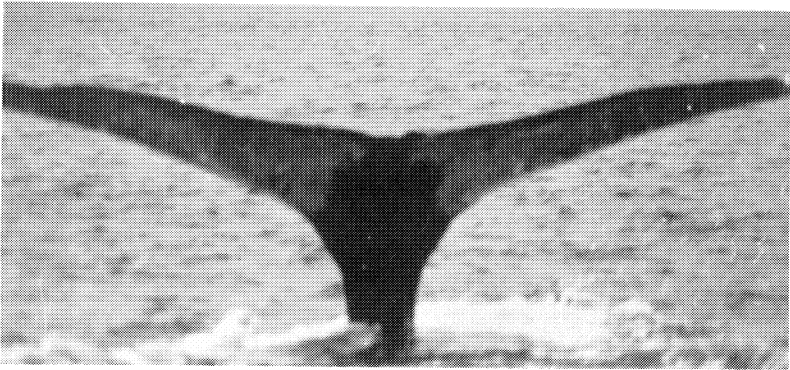
It was stated that "the primary purpose of CBH National Park is to protect a significant and representative part of the Maritime Acadian Highland Natural Region of Canada".

The management plan divides the park into five zone classes:

<u>zone</u>	<u>name</u>	<u>%age of park</u>
I	Special Preservation	15
II	Wilderness	66
III	Natural Environment	15
IV	Recreation	2.8
V	Park Services	0.2

The Special Preservation areas contain unique, rare or endangered species or a best example of some feature. Access to these areas will be strictly controlled and will be by non-motorized means only. Five areas, making up a total of 15% of the park have been designated to this zone class.

Linda Payzant  
Conservation & Environment Committee



THE END

Humpback tail , Brier Island. -- Photo Eric Ruff

NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY  
c/o Nova Scotia Museum,  
1747 Summer Street,  
Halifax, N.S. B3H 3A6

1985-1986 Executive

President - Bill Caudle  
Vice-President - Bob Dickie  
Secretary - Don MacNeil  
Treasurer - Sandra Myers  
Editor - Shirley Cohrs  
Membership - Joyce Purchase  
Executive Member - Caren Somers  
Executive Member - Alan Covert  
Executive Member - Bob McDonald  
Solicitor - Leonard Kitz  
Auditor - Jim Morrow

Membership Fees

Life Membership	\$240.00
Single Membership	8.00
Family Membership	10.00
Student Membership	6.00
(available to those under 18)	
Institutional	12.00
Senior Citizens	6.00

Note: U.S. and foreign please add \$1.00

NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS  
a publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society

Volume 28 Number 1

January 1986

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor-in-Chief	Shirley Cohrs
Records Editor	Bob Dickie
Photographic Editor	Ian McLaren
Christmas Counts	Mary and Ross Anderson
Seasonal Bird Reports	C.R.K. Allen R.G.B. Brown Francis Spalding Phyllis Dobson Ian A. McLaren Shirley Cohrs
Cover: <i>Leach's Storm Petrel</i> by R.B. Dickie	

Table of Contents

President's Report	1
Fall Bird Report	2
Field Trip Reports	34
Upcoming Field Trips	44
Book Review-- <u>Sea of Slaughter</u>	47
Birding Cole Harbour to Chezzetcook	49
Fall Migration at Sea	56
Chestnut-sided Warblers	58
Another look at the Glaucous Gull	60
The Illusive Water Ouzel	67
Letters to the Editor	69
Annual General Meeting	74
Conservation and Environmental News	80

Use of photographs from NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS  
requires written permission from the photographer.

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

ISSN 0383-9567

Second Class Mail

Reg. No. 4628