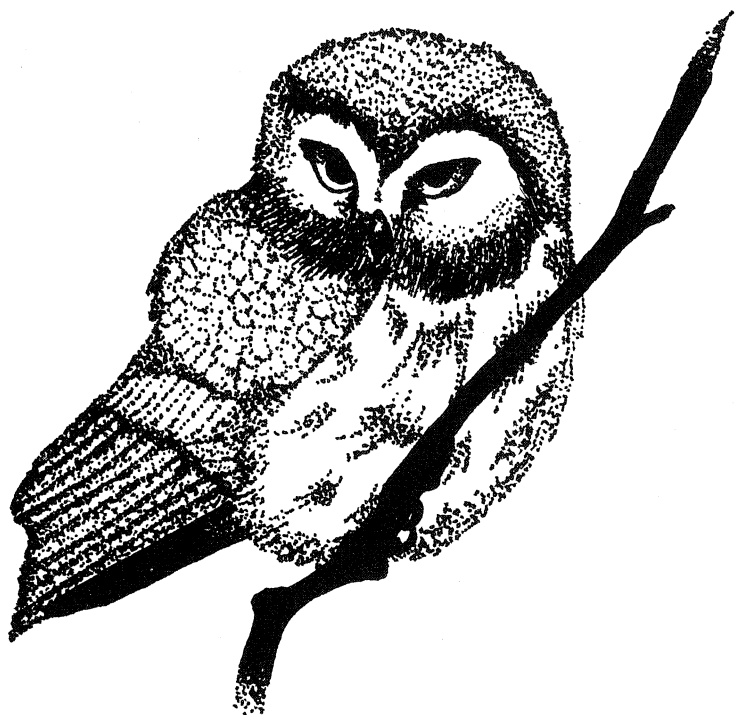


*Nova Scotia
Birds*



January 1988

N O V A S C O T I A B I R D S
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Happy New Year

FROM YOUR

1987 - 1988

EXECUTIVE



From the left:

Bob Dickie (Past President), Carin Somers (Director), Joyce Purchase (Membership), Sandra Myers (Vice President), David Currie (Director), Richard Stern (President), Don MacNeill (Treasurer), Shirley Cohrs (Editor) and Ken Gregoire (Director)--missing, Phyllis Bryson (Secretary).

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I would like to call the meeting to order and welcome you to the 1987 Annual General Meeting of the Nova Scotia Bird Society. Our meeting is one month earlier than in previous years because of a change in our membership renewal policy.

In previous years, we sent out our membership renewal forms with the January issue of Nova Scotia Birds. When members do not renew, the January issue is lost to us, so to avoid losing these magazines, we decided to send out the renewal forms with the Fall Flyer in September. Thus, January issues are sent out to those who have sent in their membership dues.

Because many members sending their dues promptly, we would have received a large amount of money during the previous fiscal year. This would have caused confusion on our books, so we pulled the A.G.M. back to October, closing our books earlier, before the membership money came in.

The Society has a substantial slide collection which was taken over this year by Bill Caudle, who has organized the slides and placed them in carousel trays. Anyone wishing to either donate to or borrow these slides please speak to Bill.

Your executive felt that the Society should advertise itself more to the public. It was decided to run ads in the Mayflower Magazine for three weeks, February 13, 20 and 27. This resulted in 460 requests for brochures.

Our brochures are now being professionally produced and feature on the front cover, an American Bittern drawn by John H. Dick and featured in Birds of Nova Scotia by Robie W. Tufts.

We were approached by a group of birders in the Antigonish area who expressed an interest in setting up a branch of our society in their area. It was agreed, however, that there was no advantage to either them or us in such a venture.

We are approached from time to time by other bird and naturalist societies to exchange newsletters. We usually do not do this because these magazines are of minimal interest to our members and giving away issues of Nova Scotia Birds is costly. One exception is The Ring from Poland. We are advised that there is a great dearth of naturalist materials in Iron Curtain countries and publications like Nova Scotia Birds are prized by their people.

This winter the CBC ran a program on the "Nature of Things" series entitled "The Sea Raven", a documentary about the Double-Crested Cormorant. At the request of the executive, I wrote to producer Jim Murray on your behalf, congratulating him on this excellent presentation.

We have continued our struggle for a provincial bird and have had several communications with the Minister of Lands and Forests and the Canadian Wildlife Service about it. Again we were promised that a selection would be made but, again nothing was accomplished. We have concluded after so many years of trying that this government is simply not willing to declare a provincial bird at all. We have decided finally to let the matter drop.

We have new membership cards. The new cards feature a "water

mark" style Barn Swallow. It is felt that this presents an improved image to our members.

At the March executive meeting I had the pleasure of presenting Honorary Life Membership to Shirley Cohrs for her long and devoted service to the Society.

I attended, on your behalf, the introduction of the Provincial Government's new Wildlife Policy on April 3rd. I also attended the "launching" of a new book entitled A Naturalist's Notebook by C.R.K. Allen, at Yarmouth. As many of you know, Charlie is a founding father of our Society.

In August I was pleased to represent you at the official re-introduction of the Peregrine Falcon (Anatum) into Nova Scotia, at Blomidon Provincial Park.

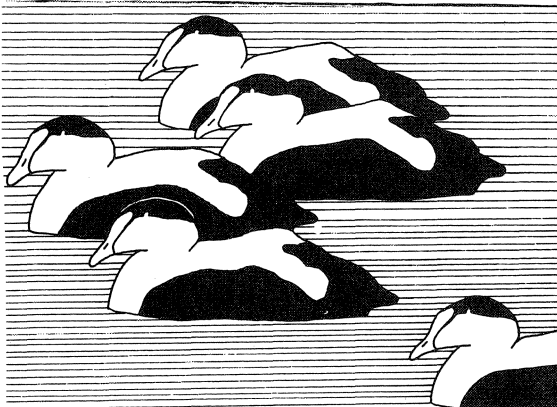
During August, the Society participated in the Senior's Leisure Festival, where we were represented by Marg Slatkin.

We were asked by Bowater Paper Company to "check out" a new nature park being constructed by them near Milton. Shirley and John Cohrs visited the park and reported the bird species back to the company. This is a delightful place with many resident birds.

With the resignation of Bob MacDonald as field trip co-ordinator, this task is being taken on by Dave Currie and his old job of mailing out Nova Scotia Birds to our members will be handled by Azor Veinneau. I want to thank Bob for his efforts in setting up an excellent array of field trips for the past two years.

I want to thank the members of the Executive for their hard work over the past year and to thank you for entrusting me with the office of President. I have enjoyed my term and look forward to serving the Society in whatever way I can.

Bob Dickie
President



FALL MIGRATION 1987

Weatherwise, the nesting season was great. June, July and August were sunny and warm with July and August being unusually dry. Nova Scotia became so dry in August that a ban was placed on open fires in wooded areas. Precipitation totals for the Halifax Metropolitan area was 42% below normal for the month of August and Yarmouth was 70% below normal. September came to the rescue by dumping well above average amounts of rain on us. Yarmouth's rainfall for September was 12% above normal. October remained damp but mild and pleasant.

There are conflicting reports on the state of Migratory birds, some tell us they are "down", while others report them as being "abundant everywhere". We have, of course, had two very cold, wet breeding seasons which could account for a poor showing of the song birds but we also get disquieting reports of massive deforestation in the birds' winter range in South and Central America, which could have disastrous results. In any event, we did receive 2000 reports from 125 birders recording 294 species, including 18 not on our check list.

Our surprise bird this time was the Yellow-billed Cuckoo, with 20 birders having reported them. Sadly, there were no reports of Roseate Tern.

I want to once again thank Keith Keddy for providing the weather information and each of the following for the bird reports.

CRK Allen (CRKA), George Allestin (GA), Daryl Amirault (DA), Dan Banks (DB), Norman Bay (NB), Pearl Bay (PB), Roy Bishop (RB), J. Sherman Blakeney (JSB), R. Blakeburn (RB), Mike Boudreau (MB), Sheila Connell (SC), Karen Casselman (KLC), E. Chant (EC), Margaret Clark (MAC), John L. Cohrs (JLC), J. S. Cohrs (JSC), Cyril Coldwell (CC), Peter Comeau (PC), Otis Cossett (OC), Donna Crosby (DC), G. Crowell (GC), Dave Currie (DAC), W. Currie (WC), Delisle d'Entremont (DJD), Jacqueline d'Entremont (JD), Lisette d'Entremont (LD), Raymond S. d'Entremont (RSD), Jerome K. D'Eon (JKD), Reginald D'Eon (RD), Ted D'Eon (TCD), Faith deWolfe (FD), Jan Dexter (JD), Bob Dickie (RBD), Helen Dickie (HD), Phyllis Dobson (PRD), Mike Dodswell (MD), Mark Elderkin (ME), Helen Ellis (HE), Margaret Ellis (MEE), D. Fergusson (DF), Bernard Forsythe (BLF), Roger Foxall (RF), R. B. Fraser (RBF), Sylvia Fullerton (STF), J. Gates (JG), Dean Gertridge (DG), Merritt Gibson (MG), Gilbert Goodwin (GG), Sadie Goodwin (SG), June Graves (JLG), Helen Hall (HJH), Hubert Hall (HGH), Jennifer Hall (JH), Dan Harris (DH), Dave Harris (DH), J. Hartley (JH), Carol Haycock (CH), C. W. Helleiner (CWH), Barbara Hinds (BAH), June Jarvis (JNJ), Fulton Lavender (FLL), Andree Lamolette (AL), Lance Laviolette (LL), Bud Lisk (BLO), Zoe Lucas (ZL), John Mack (JM), Wally MacKinnon (WM), Sara MacLean (SM), Alan MacLeod (AM), Peter MacLeod (PM), Don MacNeill (DM), Carol MacNeill (CDM), Jack MacNeill (JM), Rob MacNeill (RM), Blake Maybank (BM), K. McKeeish (KM), Ian McLaren (IAM), Jannie McNicol (JM), Eric Mills (ELM), George Montgomery (GM), Nancy Moore (NM), Bernice Moores (ABM), Jean Morse (JM), Eric Munty (EM), Thelda Murphy (TM), Sandra Myers (SM), Janet Ness (JN), Reg Newell (RN), Lolita Parkes (LP), Linda & Peter Payzant (L&PP), W. Peach (WP), Doris Peters (DP), Ken Peters (KHP), Nancy Peters (NWP), Warren Peters (WJP), Pam Rhyno (PJR), Barbara Ruff (BR), Eric Ruff (ER), P. C. Smith (PCS), Nellie Snyder (NS), Francis Spalding (FS), A. Spencer (AS), Richard Stern (RBS), Clarence Stevens (CS11), Wendy Tay (WT), Jim Taylor (JWT), Bill Thexton (RET), Brenda Thexton (BET), Allison Thompson (AT), Jean Timpa (JET), Stuart Tingley (ST), Gerry Trueman (GMT), G. W. Tufts (JCT), Lillian Tufts (LT), Azor Vienneau (AJV), L. Wadman (LW), Eleanor Walden (EW), Jim Wolford (JWW), Dave Young (DY), Joan Young (JY), Marion Zinck (MZ).

PLACE NAMES

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:

Guysborough Co. (Guys. Co.)	Hazel Hill
Halifax Co. (Hfx. Co.)	Harrietsfield, Cranberry Lake, Hammond's Plains, Drain Lake, Russel Lake, Hartlen's Point, Lewis Lake, Sullivan's Pond, Three Fathom Harbour, Martinique Beach, Conrad's Beach, Lawrencetown, Cole Harbour, Waverley, French Village
Lunenburg Co. (Lun. Co.)	Cherry Hill, Broad Cove, Petite Riviere, Crousetown, Green Bay
Queen's Co.	Port Joli
Shelburne Co. (Shel. Co.)	Matthew's Lake, Little Harbour, Cadden Bay, Cape Sable Island, The Hawk, Seal Island, Bon Portage Island
Yarmouth Co. (Yar. Co.)	Arcadia, Chegoggin, Sand Beach, Pinkney's Point Tusket, Overton, Pleasant Valley, Pleasant Lake, Sunday Point, Eel Brook, Cape Forchu, Raynardton, Melbourne, Carleton
Digby Co.	Brier Island
Annapolis Co. (Anna. Co.)	Eleven Mile Lake, Annapolis Royal, Upper Granville, Paradise
Kings Co.	Grand Pré, Starr's Point, Canard Poultry Pond, Black River Lake, Wolfville
Hants Co.	Shubenacadie
Colchester Co. (Col. Co.)	Economy, Truro, Brookfield
Cumberland Co. (Cumb. Co.)	Port Howe, Lusby Marsh, APBS (Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary), Linden
CBC	Christmas Bird Count



DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF REPORTS

FOR
THE APRIL ISSUE
FEBRUARY 25, 1988

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

LOONS AND GREBES

A surprising RED-THROATED LOON described as an "immature" was spotted by the Cohrs on June 6 at Green Bay. The more usual fall reports began in early September with small numbers in the Hartlen's Point and Evangeline Beach areas. The only large concentration was the 20+ seen by FLL, MA and AJV from Hartlen's Point on Nov. 14.

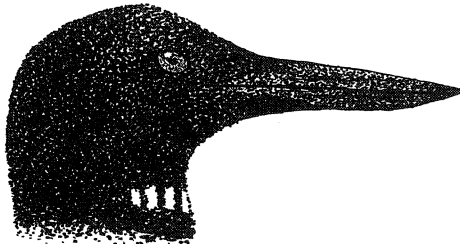
Our only breeding report for COMMON LOON comes from DAM and CDM, who saw an adult with two young on June 20 at South Branch. As far as I could tell, pairs of loons on all the lakes which I watch regularly failed to produce young this year. An article in the Spring '87 issue of The Living Bird Quarterly, may point to a possible cause: the author describes how acidification of lakes reduces the production of the invertebrates that adult loons feed their young in the early stages of their development. The young loons simply starve to death because the adults are unable to locate any food small enough for the young birds to eat. The adults, however, remain well fed because some species of fish which are not as sensitive to the acidification of the lake remain in sufficient numbers. It would be most appreciated if readers could send in their observations on the breeding success of the Common Loon for use in future issues.

PIED-BILLED GREBES were sparsely reported, with no breeding reports. The only concentrations were 8 at Sand Point, Colchester County on Sept. 15 (DAM), and 5 in the pond on Seal Is., Oct. 10 (IAM). There were 13 other reports, all of single birds.

HORNED GREBES were far more plentiful, with 8 reports of about 78 birds. The earliest was an individual in full breeding plumage at Crescent Beach on July 4 (Cohrs), which was present to at least Aug. 3. Presumably this one decided that the joys of raising a family simply didn't justify continuing the long flight to the westward where the rest of his clan were breeding. The first fall migrant showed up on Sept. 23 at the Canard Poultry Farm (GWT). Ruth Hebb reports a build-up of 17 birds at Sandy Cove on Oct. 18, which had faded to by the 29th, and there were about 45 in the Green/Crescent Beach/ Broad Cove area on Nov. 5 (JSC).

RED-NECKED GREBES began arriving in July, with two birds reported at Queensland Beach on the 1st (Andy Dean). They were present near the coast in small numbers at least until the end of November, when there was a single individual at Hartlen's Point (FLL, DAM, Peter MacLeod).

LPMP, ed.



ALBATROSSES TO CORMORANTS

There were no albatrosses, I'm sorry to say--though storm-petrels make acceptable, if miniature substitutes. Captain Hubert Hall, on the Bluenose ferry to Maine, found WILSON'S STORM-PETRELS common, but LEACH'S scarce over the Lurcher Shoal in early June. That's par for this particular course. James W. Taylor also found Wilson's common, on his fishing trips out of Eastern Passage, Dartmouth, in August. Gareth Harding picked up a storm-blown Wilson's in downtown Halifax on Oct. 14--it was trying to crawl into a massage parlour--and released it into the harbour. However, the Leach's were still at their colonies in early October. The Acadia Biology Department caught and banded 51 of them, on Bon Portage Island.

Hubert Hall saw a SOOTY SHEARWATER from Bluenose on June 15, and a NORTHERN FULMAR the next day. ("I was on lookout for 70 miles and only saw the one Fulmar.") There were "many" GREATER SHEARWATERS--some of them moulting their flight feathers--but there was only one MANX among them. He also saw a single Manx on July 26, two on July 30--and a Sooty off Cape Forchu on July 25. The Youngs, on a 50 km trip from Port Medway to Little Harbour on June 14, saw 26 Greater, 5 Sooties, and 9 Leach's Storm Petrels. They were "in fog", so this is certainly an underestimate. Eric Mills stood a seawatch off Brier Island for an hour and three quarters on July 21. He counted 1 Manx, 6 unidentified shearwaters, and 3 Wilson's Storm Petrels. James W. Taylor saw a Manx, 1500 Greaters and 80-100 Sooties off Eastern Passage on August 21-21. Ian and James McLaren made a Bluenose crossing, in doubtful visibility, on September 1; they counted 200 Greaters, 20 Sooties and 7 Manx. Raymond S. d'Entremont saw 4 Manx on Georges Bank, on August 6. He also saw 8 Fulmars there on September 23-26, along with thousands of Greater Shearwaters. "You say to yourself: if this is the case all over Georges Bank, then the number of shearwaters on Georges must be staggering". (Yes, indeed: there are at least 5 million of them. The world population of Greater Shearwaters breeds in the Sub-Antarctic and spends its winter - our summer - on Georges and the Grand Banks.) Raymond's trip to Georges also provides our only CORY'S SHEARWATERS: 2 birds on September 25. ("I saw very few Cory's Shearwaters this summer."). The latest words on large tubenoses are Hubert Hall's 2 Fulmars from Bluenose on October 5, 25 miles WNW of Yarmouth Light, and the Sooty Shearwater and 30 Greaters that the NSBS party saw off Brier Island, on October 11 (JWW).

I saw a NORTHERN GANNET from Bluenose II, off Point Pleasant Park on September 11th: a nice, adult bird. It's unusual to see them quite as close inshore as this. More to the point, the Gannets' fall migration was very well reported this year: by the Youngs, the Cohrs, Richard Stern, Fulton Lavender--and the rest of the Nova Scotia Bird Society. "Hundreds" and "thousands" of Gannets were streaming down the Atlantic coast of Nova Scotia in October, on their way south to the Caribbean. There was a very big flight off Brier Island on October 3-5 ("10% adults"; that's the young birds leaving early). An even bigger wave of Gannets came past Little Harbour on October 28, at the rate of 2,000 birds an hour; by then 90% of them were adults.

As Sara MacLean puts it, GREAT CORMORANTS in Cape Breton are "as usual". I suspect that's true of DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS as well. Both of them are birds we tend to ignore. Sara believes they are in the middle of a population explosion. I wouldn't go as far as that, but Fulton Lavender's and Peter MacLeod's estimate of the Double-crested Cormorant population on Bon Portage Island on October 11-12, was 2,000-2,500+ birds. That's a very hungry flock of cormorants indeed. It's lucky that they only eat trash fish.

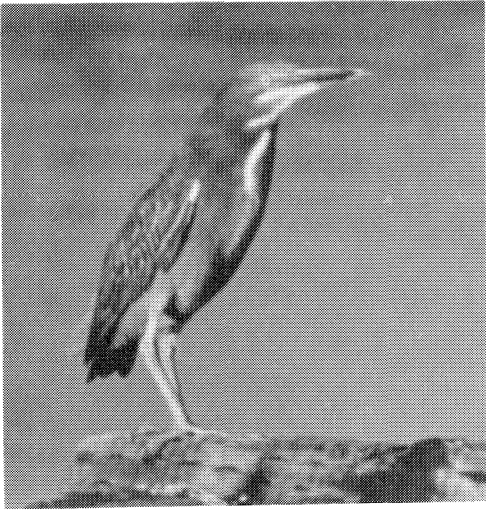
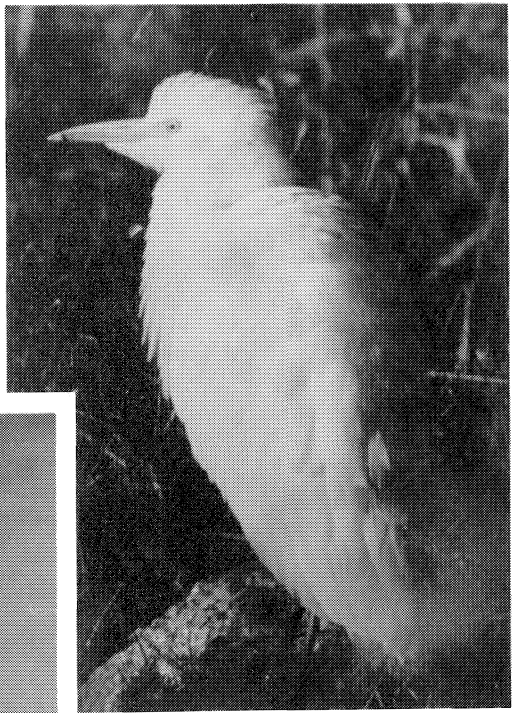
HERONS AND ALLIES

There were only 8 reports of pairs or singles of summering AMERICAN BITTERNS (some "pumping") from Yarmouth Co. to Cape Breton Co., and only 7 individuals in fall. The Tufts thought GREAT BLUE HERONS were "down" in Kings Co., while Sara MacLean thought they had a "very successful year" in C.B. Co. An early migrant 40 km W of Yarmouth was flying towards the coast of Maine on Aug. 13 (HH). The usual post-breeding gatherings began with counts of 20 at Conrad Beach on Aug. 9, and there were larger groups routinely through September, notably a total of 120 in four localities along Northumberland Strait on Sept. 19. A flock of 40 sailed past Seal Island on a chilly nor'easter on October 13. However, there were still 50+ on the "Lawrencetown circuit" on Oct. 18 and a dozen there on Nov. 22.

It was a good year for southern herons. GREAT EGRETS were on Sable Island Oct. 5-16 (2 birds; Z. Lucas), at L. W. Pubnico on Oct. 8 and Barrington on Oct. 17 (sev. obs.), and near Mira in early October (DF). Later individuals turned up at L. W. Pubnico on Nov. 8 (JFK) and at Grand Desert, Nov. 1-6 (sev. obs.), and a "probable" was reported (fide JWW) near Digby on Nov. 21. A SNOWY EGRET at L. W. Pubnico on May 30, missed the last issue. Another was there on Aug. 8, and one a week earlier at Conrad Beach. Were the two on Bon Portage Is. on Sept. 8 (PM) local? The rest came in October: 1 at Lingan Beach on Oct. 4, up to 3 between Oct. 9 - 17, on Cape Sable Is., and 1 on Conrad Beach, Oct. 18-21. a LITTLE BLUE HERON was at Conrad Beach with the Snowy on Oct. 19 (sev. obs.), and others were near Middleton on Sept. 16 (PM), near Medway during October (NS), and near Queensport, GuYS. Co., for two weeks from September 28 (WJ&NP). The rarer TRICOLORED HERON was at Conrad Beach on October 17 (AC see photo); another was indirectly reported to have occurred in Yar. Co., but we have no details. CATTLE EGRETS were a fair show, with 1 on Seal Island, Oct. 13-16, 4 NE of Kentville on Oct. 21, with 1 still around Oct. 31 - Nov. 16 (sev. obs.), another at W. Chezzetcook on Nov. 1 (sev. obs.), and 1 near Lingan on Nov. 9 (S. Harris).

Two GREEN-BACKED HERONS lingered through June on Seal Is., according to locals. An adult was on Bon Portage Is., Oct. 7-12 (sev. obs.). BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS were as usual around Cape Sable Island, the Pubnicos, and Bon Portage Island. An immature at Broad Cove on Sept. 5, was the only exception. Two immatures YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS surprised Jim Taylor by landing on the fishing boat during his private pelagic trip 70 km off Halifax on Aug. 20. Two more immatures were at Broad Cove on Sept. 7 (SJF,BH), another on Brier Is. in early October (sev. obs.), and the latest was near Medway on Oct. 18 (NS).

IAM, ed.



It was a good year for "southern" herons. Alan Covert was able to sneak up on the immature Tricoloured Heron (Conrad's Beach, Oct. 17) and Cattle Egret (West Chezzetcook, Nov. 3) to secure portraits. Ian McLaren's Green-backed Heron (Seal Is., 7 June) was quite wary, and accordingly "fuzzy".

GEESE AND DUCKS

We have a SNOW GOOSE in the records again this year: Ian McLaren reports a juvenile of the "Greater" race (wing length 44.5 cm) on Seal Is., Oct. 12. It was shot.

We had a grand total of three BRANT reported this time. While a modest improvement on the zero we got last year, I suspect that this low number is due to a lack of reporting birders rather than a lack of birds. IAM had a singleton, Oct. 10th on Seal Island--"First I've seen there. Arrived on brisk westerlies", and Nellie Snyder reports 2 from Port Medway Harbour on October 28.

The first migrating CANADA GEESE were seen by PRD and CRKA on August 11 as a flock of 500+ flew over Melbourne, Yar. Co. Among five birds which arrived at the home of Tom Taylor in Kentville on SEpt. 15, was one wearing a yellow neckband (Thextons fide JWW). Other banded birds were present in a flock at Lower Onslow (RGT, BET, Thextons fide JWW). The numbers were read by scope and reported to Cornell University, and in time the observers learned that the birds had been banded in New Jersey and North Carolina, as far back as 1984. In November of 1987, the Birds column in the Globe and Mail reported instances of these neck bands accumulating ice and drowning geese during a sudden cold wave in Ottawa.

By November, flocks had built up to 1000-2000 at each of Wallace and Tatamagouche (Thextons fide JWW, RGT, BET), Lower Onslow (RGT, BET), Bay Head (RGT, BET) and Port Joli (JKd'E). CSM reports the "largest build-up ever" (450 birds) in Lingan Bay on Nov. 15.

Human nature, I suspect, leads us to report the scarce and beautiful, and keep silent about the dull and ordinary. This is unfortunate from a scientific point of view, but may account for the 24 reports of WOOD DUCK in this issue. First reports were in late May and early June. A female with 9 young was on Drain Lake on June 30 (GWT, JCT) and another was seen at Sheffield Mills on the same day (GWT, JCT). Jim Taylor had the satisfaction of a family in one of his nest boxes, and says that the species was very numerous last summer and fall. Other observers report small numbers at varying locations, until the fall migration got under way, when there were up to 7 in view at Sheffield Mills in early October (GWT, JCT, RBS, Thextons).

An adult GREEN-WINGED TEAL with 7 young was in the Pubnico area on June 26 (Peters', Thelda Murphy). Small numbers were in the usual spots until the fall migration started in early September, when there were 60+ in the Canard pond (GWT, JCT), 75 at Matthew's Lake (Bill Caudle, John Cohrs), and 200 at Sheffield Mills (GWT, JCT). The Sheffield Mills group eventually swelled to about 400 by October 10 (GWT, JCT, JWW).

The AMERICAN BLACK DUCK has been declining throughout North America at a rate of about 4% per year since the mid-1950's, according to Christmas Count data. The situation in Nova Scotia may not be as serious as elsewhere, but numbers do seem to be down in recent years. Of 17 reports, only 4 mention young ducks. Flocks of over 100 were reported from only four locations: 150-200 at the Canard pond on August 25 (GWT, JCT), 120 at Lingan Bay on October 5 (CSM), 600 at the Harris' pond in Canning on Oct. 31 (GWT, JCT), and 450-500 at Port Joli on November 7 (JKd'E).

There were only 5 reports of MALLARDS: 3-5 throughout the summer at Morash Park in Dartmouth (JWT), 22 in a pond at Starr's Point on October 18 (JWW), 48 in a rain-flooded corn-stubble field at North

River, Col. Co., on October 20 (RGT,BET), 8 at Annapolis Royal on Nov. 4 (RGT, BET, and 10 at the same location on Nov. 24 (IAM/ELM).

The elegant NORTHERN PINTAIL was reported from only three locations: single birds at the Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary on May 30 (GWT,JCT) and Lake Milo, Yar. Co., Sept. 19 (PRD,CRKA), two females at Sheffield Mills on Oct. 8 (GWT,JCT), and a little group at the Canard Poultry Pond which began with two females on Oct. 11, grew to 8 by Oct. 24, and was down to a single male on Nov. 15 (GWT,JCT,RBS,JWW).

BLUE-WINGED TEAL were reported in ones and twos from Cape Breton to Yarmouth. Two family groups totalling 19 birds were at East Grand Pré on July 30 (RGT,BET). John Cohrs and Bill Caudle caught the only big migrating group reported when they saw over 200 at Matthew's Lake on Sept. 10

NORTHERN SHOVELLERS were reported from 4 locations. CSM saw two males with one female at Lingan Bay on May 15, and IAM reports a pair on Seal Island on June 5. Residents there report that the female hatched 4 ducklings in July. DHY had a pair at Matthew's Lake on June 10, and reports that "lately the female has been keeping company with a male Blue-winged Teal". Finally, a single female at Canning from mid-October to mid-November was reported by several observers.

The Cohrs and friends saw all the GADWALLS that were to be seen, apparently, with 4 at Lower Three Fathom Harbour on Sept. 25 (JSC, Purchases), 2 at Digby Neck on Oct. 2 (Cohrs', DAC), and eight (!) at Three Fathom Harbour on Oct. 18 (Cohrs').

AMERICAN WIGEON did well last fall, with 12-25 at Harris' Pond in Canning throughout Sept. and Oct. (GWT,JCT,JWW), and up to 25 at Sheffield Mills in the same period (RGT,BET,GWT,JCT,JWW). The only other reports were of 6+ in the Shubenacadie River on Sept. 15 (AJV), and 29 at Nirvana Pond, Lower Three Fathom Harbour on Sept. 26 (FLL,DAM,Peter MacLeod).

A single female REDHEAD was at Port Howe, Cum. Co., on Sept. 26 (JWT).

RING-NECKED DUCK were about as usual, with broods reported from Conguerall Mills (Nellie Snyder), Brooklyn (JWW) and Liscomb (L&PP). There were 12 males and 4 females in Drain Lake, Hfx. Co. on June 30 (GWT,JCT) and similar size groups in several other locations. Numbers declined from mid-October, but there was still a single bird at Annapolis Royal on November 24 (IAM/ELM).

DAM saw 178 rather early GREATER SCAUP on Sept. 19, at the Pictou Causeway. This group remained until at least Nov. 14, when it was estimated at 200+ by RBD and HD. The only other sizeable group was the 25 birds at Nirvana Pond, Three Fathom Harbour, seen on Oct. 25 by the Purchases.

The first LESSER SCAUP showed up on Sept. 19 at the Canning Sewage Pond (JWW). There was a single female at Grand Desert on Oct. 18 (DAM, Alan Covert, Peter MacLeod), and another in company with a pair of Ring-necks on Sable Is., Oct. 24 (IAM). The Canard Poultry Pond was a popular spot, with no less than 9 reports of Lesser Scaup from 7 observers, reaching a peak on Nov. 11 with 20 birds (RBS).

COMMON EIDERS were breeding all around Nova Scotia as usual this year. Numerous families were visible along the Eastern Shore in mid-June (L&PP), and other families were reported from Green Bay (JSC), Evangeline Beach (GWT,JCT), and Cherry Hill Beach (GWT,JCT). EAM reports two families at Pond Cove, Brier Is., where he says that they "rarely succeed in breeding". By September and October, groups of

several hundred were seen at many locations.

An immature male HARLEQUIN DUCK was at Bon Portage Island on Oct. 7 (FLL, Peter MacLeod). The Cohrs' saw 3 diving in the surf at Crescent Beach on November 7, and a single female swam off Chebucto Head on Nov. 20 (FLL, Peter MacLeod).

Does anybody remember what OLDSQUAWS look like? Only two birds were reported: a female at Crescent Beach on Aug. 6 (JCT), and an individual of non-committal gender at Brier Island on Oct. 16 (RBS).

All of our BLACK SCOTERS came from the same area, what there were of them: 3 at Green Bay on Aug. 29 (Cohrs'), a "small flock" at Crescent Beach on Sept. 27 (RDH), and about 200 at Green Bay on Nov. 11 (Cohrs'), with "60 here and there elsewhere in the area". Perhaps the big flight of SCOTER species that IAM saw passing Seal Island on Oct. 13, contained some more.

The Purchases report about 30 SURF SCOTERS at Merigomish, Pictou Co.: "About half were males in bright plumage. Having never seen them in this plumage, we were impressed by their vivid pattern." The only other big group was the 110 at Mahone Bay on Oct. 17 (DAM).

As usual, WHITE-WINGED SCOTERS were reported more often than the other two species, with seven reports of about 10 birds at 4 locations. All were 10 or fewer, with the exception of the 125 off Evangeline Beach on Nov. 8 (Thextons fide JWW,RGT,BET).

COMMON GOLDENEYE were reported from five locations in as many reports. On Nov. 7, FLL, DAM and Peter MacLeod had 4 females at Three Fathom Harbour, and the Cohrs' had a single female at Broad Cove. RBD and HD report about 50 at Pictou Harbour on Nov. 14, JKD'E had 15 at Carleton a day later, and IAM/ELM saw a single bird at Annapolis Royal on Nov. 24.

BUFFLEHEAD, I suspect, suffer from the same disease as Wood Ducks: they are pretty, not often seen by many of us, and so get reported with somewhat more enthusiasm than other less fortunate species. An early group of 15 was seen at the Melbourne Sanctuary on Aug. 11 (PRD,CRKA). A single male at Three Fathom Harbour had blossomed to 50 by Nov. 11 (Purchases, FLL, DAM, Peter MacLeod), and the 125 at Annapolis Royal on Nov. 4 were down to about 50 on Nov. 24 (RGT,BET,ELM,IAM).

BLF reports a female HOODED MERGANSER incubating 10 eggs in one of his nest boxes near the Black River, Kings Co. She stayed with them for at least 6 days, but they were all infertile. Bernie did not see a male in many visits. They were nowhere very common, although Eric and Anne Mills saw a group of 19 at Annapolis Royal on Aug. 29, and another of 25 birds at Head of St. Margaret's on Nov. 1, which was present at least until Nov. 25. There were many other reports of ten or fewer birds.

COMMON MERGANSERS were well reported from Kings Co., where they were observed in numbers ranging from 60-100 at Methals Lake, White Rock, Lumsden Reservoir, and Black River. BLF had a nest box containing 19 eggs, of which 18 hatched. JWW reports 120 Common Mergansers feeding on juvenile gaspereau at White Rock, and speculates that the fish could have been injured ones which had passed through the hydroelectric turbines.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER numbers seem to be down again, after a promising jump last year. There were seven reports, but only two mentioned seeing more than 6 birds. G. Crowell had a "flock" in the

Cheticamp area on August 1, and A. Spencer reports a flock of mostly young birds at Mira on Aug. 17.

Last year at this time I was surprised to have four reports of RUDDY DUCK. This year I am even more so. We had a total of SIX reports, covering probably four different occurrences. Ruth Hebb begins the list by reporting 7 or 8 birds near Tantallon on Sept. 8--"white faces, cocked tails". A single bird at the Canard Poultry Pond from Oct. 12-15 was reported as a female or immature by JWW,GWT, and JCT. Three Fathom Harbour "harboured" a single female on Nov. 2 (Cohrs', Purchases), which became two birds on the 7th (FLL,DAM, Peter MacLeod). Finally, the Cohrs' report a solitary male on Lake Banook in Dartmouth on Nov. 1.

LPMP, ed.



Merlins were much in evidence this fall. This female, easily identified by her molted outer tail feathers, hung around Hartlen's Point for some days in late Sept., making forays to harass shorebirds along the beach. Photo-Ian McLaren

DIURNAL RAPTORS

The usual 1-3 TURKEY VULTURES were over Brier Island during Sept. and early October, but there is no word of their presence during summer. "Extralimital" birds were at Tiddville, Digby Co., on Aug. 24 (JFK), Bon Portage Is., on Oct. 12, and Cape Sable Is. on Nov. 1 (JG). Much more exciting was an injured BLACK VULTURE which appeared near Baddeck on Oct. 9 and was captured next day by Dan Banks (Dept. Lands & Forests) after complaints about its behaviour (among other things, eyeing a pet cat hungrily). It is recovering at Shubenacadie Wildlife Park and will be released in spring.

Two OSPREY summered at Lingan, C.B. Co., where they have been absent for three years (CSM). One off Porters Point, Lr. Blomidon, on Aug. 13 may have been an early migrant, as they are rare there (RS), yet young were still on the nest on Bon Portage Is., Sept. 7-11 (PM). Six immatures were on Brier Is., Sept. 20, and the latest reported was on Oct. 20. Two were seen from a trawler on the S. edge of the Grand Banks on Sept. 28 (fide JWW). BALD EAGLES were certainly under-reported. Lands and Forests personnel keep track of them, and a new nest site was reported (location kept fuzzy) near Bridgewater. An adult and an immature were "fishing" on the Gaspereau on Sept. 14, and 3 ponderous young ones were on Brier Is. in early Oct. The Peters watched a notable flyby of 12+ while they were attending the Olympic Flame procession at the Canso Causeway on Nov. 20. There were good numbers of N. HARRIERS about in summer. Breeding was confirmed near Cambridge (AJV) and suspected (food exchange) near L. W. Pubnico. Presence of several during summer in C.B. Co. was thought noteworthy (CSM). Migration was palpable by early Sept., with 5 near Cherry Hill on Sept. 4-7, but not strong until later, with 10 at Grand Pré, Sept. 20, and a peak of 10 on Seal Is., Sept. 26. The peak on Brier Is., Oct 2-5, was of 12 on Oct. 4. There were 7 on Bon Portage Is., Oct. 7 and 5-6 every day on Seal Is., Oct. 11-16. Summering SHARP-SHINNED HAWKS were under-reported. Migration was impressive on our islands. There were only 10-15 on Brier Is., during the rainy 19-22 Sept., but a peak of 75 hit Seal Is., on Sept. 26. The following outlines the later "waves": on Bon Portage Is., 3-400 Oct. 4-12 (FLL,PM); on Brier Is., 300+ on Oct. 2, 950++ on the 3rd, 75 in the a.m. and only 10 in the p.m. of Oct. 4 (DAC&Cohrs); on Cape Sable Is., 50+ and on Oct. 7 (JKdE); on Seal Is., 35, 150, and 25 on Oct. 12, 13 and 14 respectively (sev. obs.). Peter MacLeod sent an excellent description of adult female COOPER'S HAWK on Bon Portage Is. on Oct. 5. There were only 6 reports of 9 N. GOSHAWKS in migration.

Two early summer RED-SHOULDERED HAWKS were reported from Halifax Co. One near Harrietsfield on June 16 was rated as "unmistakable" by DAC, and an immature seen near the Hammonds Plains Road on June 20 was detailed by JSC and JLC. One was identified by several observers on Brier Is., Oct. 2, and reported in some detail, but later withdrawn, although I think probably unjustifiably. Much is made of the "windows" in red-shoulder wings, but it should be known that broad-wings often show large windows as well. As nicely depicted in the new (highly recommended) Peterson series Field Guide to the Hawks, the "windows" in the red-shoulder are crescentic. There will probably be a better picture of summer distribution of the BROAD-WINGED HAWK when we're through atlassing. They were reported from seven localities, and nested at Delaps Cove, Anna. Co. Migration was as usual funneled through Brier Is. "Hundreds" were said by locals to have kettled over the island on Sept. 19, but for the next few rainy days only a disconsolate handful drooped in the trees, occasionally seizing such fare as drowned earthworms on the road (IAM). There were 250+ on Brier on Oct. 3, dropping to only 6 on the 5th (Cohrs & DAC). Perhaps they were displaced eastward, as there were ca. 25 on Cape Sable Is. on the 6th (JKd'E). The species is seldom seen on Seal Island, where 42 beating northward on October 13 had

certainly been sent by the strong westerlies at the time. There seemed to be no great movement of RED-TAILED HAWKS--ones and twos, here and there. An apparent partial albino (not infrequent among red-tails) was reported by H&RD. A dark-phase ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK was a treat on the Society's field trip to Fuller's Bridge, C.B. Co., on Aug. 15. They have been occasional on Cape Breton Island in summer. A light-phase immature just over the N.B. border on Sept. 12 (IAM) might also have summered in the region. A dark bird on Brier Is. on Sept. 20 (IAM) was certainly a migrant, and 19 since then promise a good winter. An immature bird was reported by CWS to have entertained residents of central New Waterford by taking earthworms on the lawn of Dr. and Mrs. Joe Roach over a couple of weeks! (Is this contagious?)

An immature GOLDEN EAGLE gave Jim and Bernice Taylor a fine 15 minutes of scoping on Brier Is on October 14.

There were few reports of summering AM. KESTRELS. There were early movements of 10-14 on Brier Is. on Aug. 21-23 (sev. obs.), and 9 around Petite Riviere Sept. 4-7. Peaks on Seal Island were 40 on Sept. 27 and 25 on Oct. 11. On Brier Is. there were 100+ on Oct. 2-3, 30 on the 4th, and 200 on Oct. 5. Bon Portage Is. managed only 5 on Oct. 7-12. A MERLIN at Wolfville on July 17 (JWW) was thought unusual. They seemed to be whizzing about everywhere this fall, with some 30 scattered sightings plus the usual island flights. On Seal Island there were a few on Sept. 5-7 (some catching dragonflies), 30 on Sept. 26-27, and 10-20, with turnover, Oct. 10-16. On Bon Portage Is., there were about 25 between Oct. 4-12. On Brier Is. there were 4-5 on Sept. 5-7, and up to 10 during the rain Sept. 20-23; the peak was only 15 between Oct. 2-5. One seen from the M.V. Bluenose was "eating a small bird on the fly, all the while maintaining speed of slightly over 20 mph" (HH). A large female on Seal Is. in mid October, specialized on Mourning Doves; she chased them several times over a 3 day period, knocked down one and regurgitated the feet of another. One at Acadia University on Oct. 5 was, even more ambitiously, chasing Rock Doves. A flurry of 4 reports of 6 PEREGRINE FALCONS between Aug. 29 and Sept. 1, included 3 juveniles chasing shorebirds at Evangeline Beach; these were probably local anatum, of which 5 chicks were "hacked" in Blomidon Park this year. One adult at Three Fathom Harbour on Aug. 31 was thought to be an early tundrius (C.W. McCormick). There were 19 reports of at least 31 birds thereafter. The peak on Seal Is. was on Oct. 10, with 3 juveniles, 2 adult females, 1 adult male, all apparently tundrius (sev. obs.). Of 5 immature and 3 adults on Bon Portage Is. between October 4-12, 3 were thought to be anatum and 5 tundrium. A very large, dark unbanded anatum was on Seal Is. on Oct. 15 (IAM). Another like bird was harassing Mourning Doves on Sable Island between Oct. 24 and Nov. 18 (ZL). It seems clear that reintroduction of these beauties is working. Our only GYRFALCON was a dark phase immature at Conrad Beach on Oct. 18 (JS&JLC).

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

Good flocks of GRAY PARTRIDGE were 11 near Port Williams, Oct. 21 (BLF) and 24 on the Wolfville Ridge on Nov. 2 (GWT). Five broods of 2-7 RING-NECKED PHEASANTS were spotted at Grand Pré, their usual headquarters (RGT,BET). It's hard to tell if the numbers in some areas are due to natural spread or local release. Nellie Snyder notes that a large number were let go around Petite Riviere in fall 1986, and that several nested; the Cohrs found an adult and 4 downies on July 5. At Marriott's Cove a brood of 5 was seen on June 30 (RDH). Odd individuals were around W. Lawrencetown and Hartlen's Point in fall. One was road-killed near Mira on Oct. 18 (SM). Our only breeding-season report of SPRUCE GROUSE was of a hen with small chicks near Liscombe on June 27 (L&PP), but surely other atlassers stumbled on them. Jack MacNeill found them common on back roads in late fall near Big Pond, where "they must have had a very good breeding season." RUFFED GROUSE broods were near Liscombe on June 27 (L&PP) and Kennetcook on Aug. 1 (RGT,BET). There were 4 other reports of 10 birds, including one "drumming" near Mira on Oct. 3 (G. Crowell).

RALLIDS, CRANE

The season's most tantalizing find was a BLACK RAIL, reported by Peter MacLeod at the small, rich coastal marsh between Hartlen's Pt. and Cow Bay. The circumstances warrant some details. On the morning of Sept. 29, he found that a number of VIRGINIA RAILS and SORAS had arrived on the overnight westerlies, and were wandering about on the open mud, very actively feeding and vocalizing, some even giving breeding-season calls. Then he stumbled across a tiny, dark rail in a slightly isolated patch of marsh grass. It ran up a large stalk where he observed it at about 2 m as it posed briefly, facing him, below eye level. He saw the small, black bill, white-spotted black back, greyer underparts, and even the reddish nape area! Then it simply melted away, but he did see it much less clearly a few minutes later. Others were alerted, and the place was searched to no avail later in the day. Richard Stern and Clarence Stevens thought they saw a small, dark shape dash across an opening (seemed to RS not a sparrow, and very short-legged compared with downy Soras, but he couldn't swear it wasn't a mouse!). Others, including a bigger party effort at dawn on Oct. 3, produced 4-5 each of Virginias and Soras, some still wandering in the open, but no hint of the little stray.

Other more routine reports follow. The Tufts successfully enticed Virginia Rails with tapes at APBS on May 30 (NSBS field trip), and in two different places near Sheffield Mills, Kings Co., June 8 and July 7. Helen Ellis found an adult with young near Victoria Beach, Anna. Co., on June 21 (fide JWW). One at Three Fathom Harbour on Aug. 9 may have bred there, but a juvenile at Glace Bay Sanctuary on Sept. 6 (CSM) was presumably underway. There were 6 other migrants, the latest on Nov. 14. RBS designated this "the summer of the Sora" in Kings Co.; there were pairs in most marshes and at least 4 broods sighted (sev. obs.). A lone chick was at Three Fathom Harbour on Aug. 1 (IAM). An amusing account was sent by JCT of 2 Soras at New Minas vocally responding to the challenge of the Kentville fire siren in mid-afternoon of July 8; some cheek! There were 3 reports of migrant Soras other than those at Hartlen's Point, the latest on Oct. 11.

A PURPLE GALLINULE was found dead a month or so on Sable Is., in late Sept. (Zoe Lucas). Single COMMON MOORHENS turned up on Sable Is. on Oct. 6 and Seal Is. on Oct. 13-16. There were no reports on summering AM. COOTS at APBS. Individuals near Upper Granville on May 19 (J&WM) and near Brooklyn, Hants Co., on June 24 (JSC,JP), suggest that they may be prospecting elsewhere. The first migrant was at

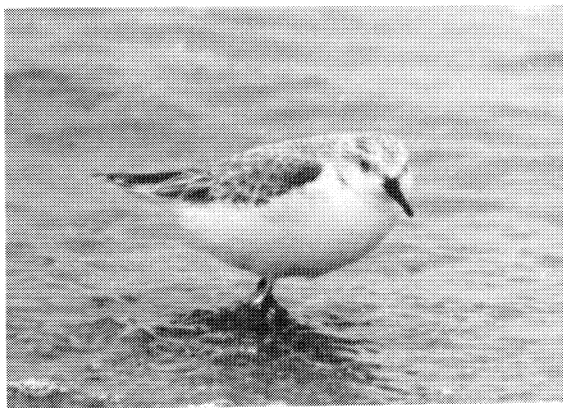
Three Fathom Harbour on Sept. 25, and there were 5 at Sand Pt., Col. Co., on Sept. 19 (DAM), 4 scattered birds in Oct., and the usual stragglers in Hfx. Co., including 5 at Three Fathom Harbour and 2 on Sullivan's Pond on Nov. 14.

We have yet another report of a summer SANDHILL CRANE, this one seen flying near Hatchet Lake, Hfx. Co., in mid- Aug. by Maurice Mandale (letter to IAM). One spotted by Sheila Connell on Oct. 1-6 near Scotch Village, was duly rare-bird-alerted, so that others might see it.

IAM, ed.



The very shy American Oystercatcher of Cherry Hill Beach was a big thrill for many last spring, in here documented for posterity. Photo-Ian McLaren



This Sanderling got through last winter at Crescent Beach. Let's hope they have an easier time of it this winter! Photo Shirley Cohrs.

SHOREBIRDS

The BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER made its usual leisurely way through the province; first noted at Evangeline Bleach, July 22 (GW&JCT), it was nowhere reported as especially numerous - 150 at Lingan, Sept. 15 (CSM) being the maximum. There were still 60 at Cherry Hill, Nov. 7 (JSC) and at Grand Pré, Nov. 11 (BLF). The LESSER GOLDEN PLOVER, more apt to merit a written report, received as much attention as the Black-bellied. 150+ individuals were noted: first were singles, Aug. 19, at Crescent and Petite Riviere (JSC). The largest numbers were 70 adults and 14 juveniles at the Amherst "sod farm", Sept. 12 (IAM), 24 at Grand Pré, Sept. 15 (BLF), and 45+ there Sept. 19 (JWW). The last were 6 on Seal Is., Oct. 24 (IAM). The SEMIPALMATED PLOVER was first noted at Crescent and Cherry Hill, July 18 (JSC); by Aug. 1, there were 250+ at Conrad's (FLL,MA), 170 at Lingan, Aug. 17 (CSM) and still 140 in the Halifax area, Sept. 1 (NSBS). Last were singles at Cherry Hill, Nov. 11 (SJF) and Hartlen's Pt., Nov. 21 (FLL). Reports of nesting PIPING PLOVERS were sadly few: two pairs (and no more than three or four young) were at Cherry Hill (SJF,JSC), and a probably nesting pair at Matthew's Lake, not a regular nesting area in recent years (DHY). The only reports from elsewhere were of singles at Hartlen's Pt., Aug. 15 (FLL) and, very late, (without comment) at Lockeport, Oct. 17 (DC). KILLDEER nested at Petite Riviere (JSC) and Wolfville (the High School roof), where hatching day was May 15 (fide JWW). A gathering, variously estimated at 75+ to 100+ at Gaspereau, Sept. 19, was the largest noted; there were still 6 at Sheffield Mills, Nov. 15 (GW&JCT, JWW).

An out-of-season GREATER YELLOWLEGS was at Sheffield Mills, July 5 (JWW). A pair may have bred near Port Dufferin, found in deep woods exhibiting agitated behaviour, July 15 (L&PP). September saw large numbers: 150 around Lawrencetown, Sept. 25 (JSC,D&JP) and 64, Sept. 23, at Canning (GW&JCT). There were still at Hartlen's Pt., Nov. 21 (FLL). First LESSER YELLOWLEGS were at Sheffield Mills, July 24 (GW&JCT); by Aug 1, there were 20+ at Conrad's (FLL,MA) and Sept. 6 there were 19 at Lingan (CSM). Last were 3 at Sheffield Mills, Oct. 24 (JWW). All told, 50+ were noted this fall.

Fourteen observers sent in reports of the SOLITARY SANDPIPER, most of singles (3 max.), from July 17 at Black River, Kings Co. (BLF), to Sept. 20, at Sheffield Mills (JWW). WILLETS are too dependable to elicit such attention, though 40 at Brier, July 21 did (ELM). They nested "as usual" at Marriott's Cove, and unrecorded, in many of our salt marshes. Not a late migrant, the last noted were 9 at Lingan, Sept. 6 (CSM) with the same number at Melanson, Kings Co., Sept. 19 (GW&JCT). The SPOTTED SANDPIPER in not a highly visible migrant; one was at Seal, Sept. 5 (GW&JCT) another, quite late, was at Lawrencetown, Oct. 25 (MAC). Breeding reports came from the Hebert River, Hants Co. (JWW), Five Islands (FS) and five "from Northport to Hartlen's Pt." (JWT).

The only UPLAND SANDPIPER was at the Amherst "sod farm", Sept. 12 (IAM). The WHIMBREL failed to appear in large flocks this year. The first was one at Lingan, Aug. (CSM); 1 at Matthew's Lake, Sept. 4 (FLL) and 12 at Cole Harbour, Sept. 7 (RE), appear to represent a disappointing peak. The last was one at Bon Portage, Oct. 4 (FLL). A few HUDSONIAN GODWITS were present in early August, at Lingan (CSM), Evangeline Beach (ELM) and Conrad's (FLL,MA), and early Sept. at Matthew's Lake (FLL,PM), and one last at Grand Pré, Oct. 6 (RBS). A MARBLED GODWIT was at Port Howe, Sept. 26, seen by Tony Erskine (fide JWT).

RUDDY TURNSTONES first appeared Aug. 1 at Crescent, Cherry Hill and Pembroke (JSC,H&HH). Largest numbers were 53 on Aug. 9 at Three

Fathom Harbour (DAM) and at Cheverie, Aug. 12 (GW&JCT). There was still one at Three Fathom Harbour, Nov. 15 (RBD). Twelve RED KNOTS were at Cheverie, Aug. 12, 25 were there Sept. 16 (GW&JCT), with very few thereafter until Nov. 2-7, when 20-30 were at Three Fathom Harbour (FLL, JSC et al.). First SANDERLINGS were 5 at Evangeline Beach, July 22 (GW&JCT). The largest flock was of 200+ at Crescent, Nov. 5-6 (JSC). The first few SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPERS were at Canard, July 7; at Evangeline Beach there were 6000-7000, July 22. Of (only) several hundred there Aug. 7, one bore three leg bands. 1000+ at Hartlen's Pt., Sept. 12 (FLL), suggest a second peak. IAM reports that short-billed western birds there Sept. 1, were replaced by long-billed Holarctic individuals. He also reports a WESTERN SANDPIPER (no date), two more of which were at Three Fathom Harbour, Nov. 2 and allowed lengthy observation (JSC,D&JP). LEAST SANDPIPERS received little notice except at Martinique Beach, where there were 500+, July 28 (GW&JCT). Only small numbers of WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPERS were noted this fall, from Aug. 1, at Cherry Hill (JC) and Conrad's (FLL) to 15 at Hartlen's Pt., Nov. 11 (FLL,PM). As with the other common "peeps" many probably went unreported. The much less common BAIRD'SANDPIPER was much more fully covered. From Aug. 29 through early Sept. 7-8, were at Cherry Hill (JSC,SJF, BH, GW&JWT), 6 at Matthew's Lake (FLL,PM) 12 at Brier (ELM), 4-5 elsewhere. The last was one at Hartlen's Pt, Oct. 18 (DMC,AC,PM). The PECTORAL SANDPIPER was present unusually early and in most unusual numbers. 150 were at Sheffield Mills (Ells Bros. farm) on July 5 (JWW). There were still 45-50 there Oct. 1, 50, Oct. 15, and one Nov. 8 (GW&JCT,RBS,JWW). Elsewhere there were 31 on Cape Island, Oct 6 (JKd'E et al.) and 20 at Hemeon's Hd., Oct. 22 (DY), plus several single digit flocks, the latest of which was at Hartlen's Pt., Nov. 1 (JSC). DUNLIN reports range from 4 at Port Morien, Aug. 17 (CSM) to 40 Nov. 6 at Crescent (JSC) and 60 Nov. 14, in the Lawrence town area (FLL et sl.), with very few intervening records. The same area usually has a near monopoly on the STILT SANDPIPER but this year had only one, Aug. 8-9 (FLL et al.), whereas, there were two at amazing Sheffield Mills, Sept. 18-20 (JWW) with one still there Oct. 12-13 (JWW,RBS). In addition, there was a rare Cape Breton appearance in Cheticamp, 1 Aug. 18 (DC).

The only BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPERS were singles, Sept. 12 at the Amherst "sod farm" (IAM) and at Hartlen's Pt., Sept. 12-13 (FLL,PM,AV). First SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHERS were 4 at L. W. Pubnico, June 29 (RSd'E). Numbers built quickly to 150 in early July (JSC,RBS,GW&JCT). By July 19, there were 800 on Cape Sable (IAM) and 250 in the Lawrence town area (IAM,FLL). Oct. 17 marked another peak, with 250 at Barrington (JKd'E et al.). Interesting is the report of two that alighted July 11 on a whale-watching boat about 5 km off Brier Is., They were carefully studied and photographed by RBS, who concluded that they belonged to the western race hendersoni. After seeing the slides, IAM concurred, noting that this is the first confirmed record of the subspecies for the province, though there have been several sight records in recent years. A LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER, Aug. 9, in alternate plumage was seen and heard at Lawrence town, further evidence that western shorebirds may arrive here early in the fall migration. Another (or the same), an adult in winter plumage, was at Three Fathom Harbour, Nov. 21 (FLL,PM,DM). Six COMMON SNIPE were at Sheffield Mills, Oct. 24 and Nov. 15 (JWW), 8 were at Hartlen's Pt., Nov. 1 (JWT) and still one at Morash Park, Dartmouth, Nov. 16 (JWT). Eight AMERICAN WOODCOCK reports were received this fall, the last 2, Nov. 24 on Digby Neck (ELM,IAM). For the record, a full clutch of eggs found Apr. 22 near Greenfield by Violet Levy, hatched May 9 (JWW).

PHALAROPES TO AUKS

Eric Mills, off Brier Island on July 21, saw 'hundreds of RED PHALAROPES far out in dense flocks along Northwest Ledge', Brier Is., as well as "200 COMMON TERNS feeding offshore". The only NORTHERN PHALAROPES were the 4 birds that James W. Taylor saw off Eastern Passage on Aug. 20, and Francis Spalding's bird, feeding just off the gravel bar at the mouth of the Economy River, on Sept. 8. Hubert Hall, from the bridge of Bluenose on June 3, saw a flock of 10 phalaropes about 30 miles WNW off Yarmouth, and 2 more, on the regular course to Maine, 20 miles offshore. Reds, he says, were "common in the Gulf of Main, July 23-30, especially July 28, when many hundreds were seen flying south. It was great to see these birds in summer plumage!" This was on the usual Bluenose course, 60 miles west of Yarmouth. Apart from these birds, JWW saw 6 phalaropes--probably Reds--between Grand Manan and Machias, Seal Is., Aug. 1. Richard Stern saw "the usual several thousand" Reds off Brier on Aug. 20-25, along with "at least 2 or 3 Northern Phalaropes identified amongst them". Finally, there were 2 Reds off Hartlen's Point on Sept. 30, and 4 probable Reds off Brier on Oct. 11 (NSBS).

Am I right in thinking that WILLSON'S PHALAROPES are unusually common this fall? We have the bird in winter plumage that Azor Vienneau, Clarence Stevens and the Cohrs saw on Lawrencetown Lake on August 8-9; the Tufts' bird at Harris Pond, Canning, on Sept. 10-13; and the adult male that Fulton Lavender, Peter MacLeod and Azor Vienneau saw at Lawrencetown on Sept. 12.

Raymond S. D'Entremont, fishing on Georges Bank, sends us our only SKUA sightings. He saw 3 there on August 11 and, "on Sept. 4 I saw 3 which is about as many as I've seen together. I saw my last on Oct. 18." On top of these, he saw 4 POMARINE JAEGERS there on June 22, a dark-phase PARASITIC on Sept. 5, and a LONG-TAILED on June 9. "Although the Parasitic and the Pomarine are fairly common on Georges, the Long-tailed Jaeger is a bird I seldom see." I agree: the Long-tailed IS rare at sea--and everywhere else in Nova Scotia for that matter, because we have no other sightings. However, Hubert Hall and Stuart Tingley saw a Pomarine Jaeger from Bluenose, 50 miles west of Yarmouth, on August 9. They are careful to insist that it was on OUR side of the Canada/US boundary! James W. Taylor saw 8 of them on a fishing trip off Eastern Passage on Aug. 20. JWW saw a dark-phase Parasitic off Grand Manan. Peter MacLeod saw an immature off Hartlen's Point on Sept. 30, and Don MacNeill saw another juvenile at Bruce Point on Sept. 19. It was a "lifer" for him, though I doubt if the jaeger also enjoyed the experience, because it was being dive-bombed by terns at the time. A jaeger's lot is never a happy one.

Our only LAUGHING GULLS were the couple that the Youngs saw in Port Medway Harbour on June 13, and Sylvia Fullerton's adult at Cherry Hill on June 20. The first BLACK-HEADED GULL sighting was an adult, at Pomquet, on Aug. 16 (DAM), but the others were much later: 5 at Grand Desert on Nov. 7 and 1 at Dartmouth Cove on Nov. 11; an immature at L. W. Pubnico, Nov. 12 (Jacqueline and Raymond S. d'Entremont); 3 birds at Eel Lake, Nov. 15 (Jerome K. D'Eon), and 1 at Digby on the 24th. (the Mills). Sara MacLean saw a bird in Glace Bay Harbour on Nov. 5, and later.

The d'Entremonts named their bird the "COMMON Black-headed Gull" but, for once, the BONAPARTE'S seem to have won out. The big flocks were on the northwestern side of the province, as usual--and some of them were BIG! There were 30 birds at Pictou Causeway on Sept. 13, and 50+ in the Harbour on Nov. 14, but 800+ ('mostly at Lyons Brook: no red bills') the next day (RBD,HO,AJV,DAM). There were also 41 at

Caribou Island on Sept. 14 (DAM,CDM). The Halls saw an adult at Pugwash and another at Heather Beach, Northumberland Strait, Aug. 4. ("Beautiful summer plumage: bright red legs and feet".) Here, on the Atlantic shore, we had 1 at Cherry Hill on Aug. 6 and an immature at Broad Cove on Nov. 16 (the Tufts, Sylvia Fullerton and Barbara Hinds); 7 immatures at Grand Desert on Nov. 2, and 10 birds on Nov. 7 (Cohrs, Purchases, FLL, Peter MacLeod, D. MacNeill); and a couple at Seaforth on Nov. 15 (RBD). James Wolford says that there were 2 adult RING-BILLED GULLS at Gaspereau on July 6, 10 adults on the sewage ponds at Wolfville on Aug. 11, and 30 adults in Canning on Sept. 13. He counted 177 Ring-bills on the open fields between Port Williams and Sheffield, on Oct. 18. They were common along the Atlantic coast as well: 160+ at East Chezzetcook/Martinique Beach on Sept. 13 (the Tufts), and 50-70+ at Eastern Passage/Three Fathom Harbour, Nov. 19-21.

HERRING and GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULLS spent the fall happily decorating my car in Dartmouth as usual--and I'll give them their usual short shrift. The adult LESSER BLACK-BACK was back at the Volvo Plant in Halifax on Nov. 11, and it was seen at Fairview Cove on Nov. 22 (FLL, Peter MacLeod, Don MacNeill). However, the Mills couldn't find the traditional Digby bird on Nov. 24, "despite intensive search. Has it gone to the great gull roost in the sky, after nearly 20 years?" Let's pause a moment, to mourn an old friend.

The last GLAUCOUS GULL of the spring was seen at Gaspereau on June 24-29. There's some controversy about it, to say the least: was it really an ICELAND GULL instead? James Wolford thinks not. "My distant view showed the bill to be as in a juvenile Glaucous Gull, and the wing-tips were beyond the tail, but not by much." A very tricky bird. He thinks it was "a smallish yearling Glaucous."

Meanwhile, undoubted Iceland Gulls have been reaching us on their usual fall migration from Baffin Bay. James W. Taylor, on a fishing trip out of Eastern Passage, saw one as early as Aug. 21. However, Sara MacLean says that the first birds reached Glace Bay on Oct. 28. There were 2 adults and an immature off Hartlen's Point on Nov. 14, and 6 birds there on Nov. 19, and the Mills saw a couple of birds in Digby Harbour on Nov. 24. We haven't yet had the main immigration.

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKES breed in Cape Breton nowadays, though you wouldn't guess it from our reports; the birds are as scanty as ever. Hubert Hall, on Bluenose, saw a single adult 10 miles west of Yarmouth, on Aug. 8. There was a bird off Brier Is. on Aug. 24 (the Tufts, and Richard Stern), and James W. Taylor saw another there on Oct. 14, along with a couple off Eastern Passage on Aug. 20. Our only other sightings are the three birds that Fulton Lavender and Peter MacLeod saw from Chebucto Head on Sept. 14, and Raymond S. d'Entremont's bird on Georges Bank, on Sept. 27. It's a curiously small total for one of the commonest seabirds in the North Atlantic.

Terns are something else. COMMON and ARCTIC TERNS were common enough. The first definite birds of the year were on Peter Is., in the Grand Passage between Brier and Long Islands, opposite the Slocum monument. Hubert Hall says that both species were there on May 23--and he saw a couple of Commons at Eel Lake on May 10. The latest date is the Arctic Tern that the Tufts saw off Brier on Aug. 24--though I suspect there were later birds than that. BLACK TERNS are freshwater birds, and most of ours breed in Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary, where the NSBS field trip saw them on May 30. However, there were also singletons off M. W. Pubnico on July (DAM et al.), and L.W. Pubnico on July 25 (Delisle J. d'Entremont). The cream of the crop was the pair of GULL-BILLED TERNS that James W. Taylor saw off Eastern Passage on Aug. 21, and the CASPIAN TERNS off Seal Is. on

Sept. 27. "Two beauties", says Ian McLaren; "An adult and an (accompanying?) juvenile coursing back and forth off East Village... my first in years". No ROSEATE TERNS were reported.

It's still too early in the winter for auks in Nova Scotia, though there are always a few strays. Hubert Hall and Stu Tingley saw a COMMON MURRE from Bluenose on Aug. 9, and Fulton Lavender saw a RAZORBILL, off Chebucto Head, on Sept. 14. David and Angela Nettleship had a DOVEKIE blown more or less onto their doorstep in Head of St. Margaret's Bay, Dec. 2--but you can read all about this, here in Nova Scotia Birds. The only other Dovekie sightings are the two birds that Fulton Lavender and Peter MacLeod saw from Chebucto Head on Nov. 30. Hubert Hall also saw two ATLANTIC PUFFINS near the Lurcher Shoal, WNW of Yarmouth, on July 23, and NSBS field parties saw stray birds off Brier Is. at least as late as Oct. 11. However, the BLACK GUILLEMOT is our only resident auk; it breeds on almost any stretch of rocky coast. Our sightings come from Brier Is., Chebogue, The Hawk, Mahone Bay, Chebucto Head and Glace Bay (DAM, CDM, J. Gates, FLL, Peter MacLeod). Hubert Hall thought there were about 100 of them on Green Island, off Chebogue, Yar. Co., on July 14; he found a burrow with two chicks in it, and another with two eggs.

.....Out of order, but received late:

I suppose the seabird sensation of the summer was the WHITE PELICAN that came to Canso and Antigonish Harbours, between August 30 and September 23. (IAM, DAM, CWM, TWT et al.) White Pelicans are seabirds only by courtesy; they spend most of their lives in fresh water lakes in Alberta. I hope this one enjoyed his taste of salt water.

RGBB, ed.



DOVES, CUCKOOS

MOURNING DOVES are clearly summering in numbers, but the only mention of them came from RDH at Marriott's Cove, where they nested and were daily feeder guests. They thronged at feeders and graneries in the usual places, but some observers found them commoner than ever, and Lillian Tufts saw them around Oxford in flocks for the first time. Only small numbers reached C.B. Island, but were flinging themselves well offshore, with at least 10 on Sable Is. and 30 on Seal Island in Oct.

There were no reports of breeding-season BLACK-BILLED CUCKOOS; one at L.W. Pubnico on July 22 (RSD'E) could have been a migrant. Ten reports of 17 birds between Sept. 5 and Oct. 14 were mostly for our islands. It was a bonanza fall for YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOOS, with 1 on Seal Is. on Sept. 4 and a minimum of 80 reported between Sept. 26 and Nov. 7 throughout the province, but again, mostly on our islands. Some simply reported them as "many". They were favoured by hawks on Seal Is., where on Oct. 12, IAM found 7 kills and 3 live birds on Oct. 12.

OWLS

A young GREAT HORNED OWLS were reported from Cheverie (KC), Overton (H&HH), Hants Co. (NSBS trip), and Sheffield Mills (GW & JCT). One presumed migrant was hooting on Brier Is. on Oct. 10 (JWW). A SNOWY OWL evidently summered on border marshlands near Ft. Lawrence (fide DAC), which is not unprecedented. They were staging in central Canada in October and more than a trickle reached us. Cyril Coldwell received injured birds from Brier Is. on Oct. 31, Starr's Pt., on Nov. 6, and another from Brier Is. on Nov. 9. All had "wrist" injuries, evidently from hitting obstacles. Another injured bird, found near Canso, Nov. 10, was repaired and cared for by Bob Bancroft. There were 6 others in November. Bernie Forsythe's boxes hosted 6 nesting BARRED OWLS this year; 1 was lost to raccoons, and the others produced 10 fledglings. A box put up by Ron Redden at Mahone Bay, produced a healthy youngster (DAM). A half-dozen other sightings came from C.B. Is. to Yar. Co. Our only reported LONG-EARED OWL responded to a tape on Brier Is., Oct. 16 (RBS). A SHORT-EARED OWL nest with eggs at Grand Pré on Apr. 27 was predated in early May (BLF); and adult was still there in late July (RGT). A migrant was at Little Harbour on Oct. 24 (DY). SAW-WHET OWLS were calling on Brier Is., Oct. 3-4 (JSC) and Oct. 16 (RBS). On Bon Portage Is., between Oct. 29 and Nov. 3, the Acadia University banding team caught 25 of them. One had been banded in 1982 and recaptured in 1984, at the same spot. Among these little transients was a BOREAL OWL, caught overnight on Nov. 1-2, for the first truly satisfactory record in years.

GOATSUCKERS, SWIFT, HUMMINGBIRD, KINGFISHER

"Booming" displays of COMMON NIGHTHAWKS were reported from Halifax City and Shel. and Yar. Counties. However, as usual, most were migrants. A group of 20-30 over Drain Lake, Hfx. Co., on June 7 (AJV) were certainly still in spring migration. However, a concentration near Gaspereau on June 28 (fide JWW) is puzzling; maybe they were failed breeders. Nine other reports of groups of 10 or more birds, totalling at least 310 individuals, were for the period Aug. 4 to Sept. 8 (none later) and included one flock of 100+ near East River on Aug. 30 (Barbara Robertson). We had no summer or fall reports of WHIP-POOR-WILLS.

CHIMNEY SWIFTS were at their usual places in Wolfville, with estimated of 100+ entering the Acadia University chimney in May and

250-550 using the Front Street chimney through early August (var. obs.). A "new" colony of ca 100 was using the Legion hall chimney at Annapolis Royal on Aug. 3-4 (ELM). There were scattered reports from elsewhere, including confirmation of breeding near Boisdale, C.B. Co. (B. Maybank). There were still 30 at Annapolis Royal on Sept. 3 (ELM) but no later reports, which is odd.

Three observers thought there were "many" RUBY-THROATED HUMMING-BIRDS this summer. Most had gone by early September, but a late female-plumaged one in Halifax on October 3 was closely scrutinized (IAM).

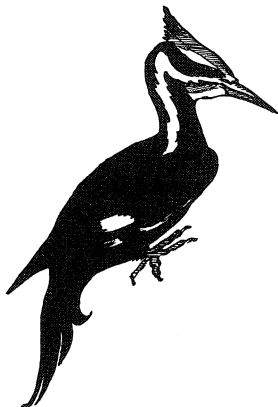
We must be bored with BELTED KINGFISHERS, since only 3 observers mentioned them. There were still 8 on the NSBS "autumn roundup" near Chezzetcook on Sept. 13, and no doubt some linger.

WOODPECKERS

An adult RED-HEADED WOODPECKER stayed for about 3 hours at Cook's Brook, Hfx. Co., Oct. 3 (JV&SMJ). Immatures visited feeders at L. W. and W. Pubnico, Nov. 5-11 (sev. obs.), and Head of St. Margaret's Bay Nov. 13-14 (ELM). Nesting YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKERS were reported in Shel., Col., and C.B. Counties. At least 4 were on Seal Is., Oct. 12-16, one spending 2 days hiding from hawks on the same mountain ash. Ten were on Bon Portage on Oct. 9 (FLL,PM), and one was banded there between Oct. 29 - Nov. 3 (fide JWW). Observers should be alert to the possibility of the western, highly migratory Red-naped Sapsucker among late fall migrants. Its immatures are adult-plumaged, and any such bird should be studied carefully (see recent field guides, Birds of Canada).

The Tufts note that their locally breeding DOWNY and HAIRY WOODPECKERS left the area in early July, with males returning to the feeder in early Sept. Others had them coming through summer, but there was an increase of reports for Nov. Nesting BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKERS were at Hardwoodlands, May 31 (JSC,J&DP), and there were 3 other summer reports. Migration of N. FLICKERS was in full swing on Seal Is. on Sept. 26-27, with some 200 being harassed by sharpies and Merlins. A distinct peak of 75 occurred there on Oct. 13. No other large numbers were detailed, although some found them "common". Young PILEATED WOODPECKERS were in a nest near Carleton on June 7 (H&HH, LP). Two later nests were found in Kings Co. (GW&JCT). On DAC's Tidnish breeding bird survey on July 3, there was one of these fine birds on each of 10 stops! There were 7 fall records of 1 or 2 birds.

IAM, ed.



FLYCATCHERS TO CORVIDS

Very few OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHERS were reported over the summer (5) and no migrations were noted. This reporter feels that they were very low indeed and have been decreasing in numbers over the last several years.

EASTERN WOOD PEEWEES were "as usual", with a bird still singing Aug 29 at Petite Piviere. Later sightings were of 3 on Brier, Sept. 22-23, and one each on Seal and Brier, Oct. 13 and 14 (IAM,SJF,JWT).

The EMPIDONAX GROUP were thinly reported during the summer. A YELLOW-BELLIED nest with three eggs was found by BLF near Brooklin on June 17. Latest seen was one at Pubnico Pt., Sept. 15 (RSd'E). Ruth Hebb thought that ALDERS were plentiful and reports of LEASTS were normal, with a late bird (calling) on Seal, Oct. 10 (IAM).

The reports of EASTERN PHOEBES were most encouraging after the poor showing last year. A few lingered into October--4 on Brier, Oct. 2-5, 4 on Bon Portage, Oct. 5-7, on still around on Brier, Oct. 10-12 and a last sighting on Seal, Oct. 14 (JSC,DAC,FLL,DAM,IAM).

The GREAT-CRESTED FLYCATCHER was back at Powder Mill Park, Waverley on May 27. One has been there now for several years but with no evidence of breeding (Payzants). In June, birds were seen near Blomidon, the South Mountain and Kentville. One was seen by Eric and Anne Mills on Brier on Sept. 4 and Raymond d'Entremont writes of one "on Georges Bank" Oct. 18 (!) (presumably on his boat?)

Alas, no WESTERN KINGBIRDS were seen this fall. Normally, a migration of EASTERN KINGBIRDS marks a definite fall migration of passerines, especially when seen along the wires on Digby Neck en route to Brier Is. This year there were no reports of any really large movements of kingbirds--just a single note of 9 at Cape Sable Island, Sept. 4. Other reports were of summer birds, widely spread. Two adults were feeding four young in Kentville, July 8.

Two SAY'S PHOEBES were reported, numbers seven and eight respectively for the province. First was Oct. 24 on Brier Is., seen and photographed by Richard Stern, and the other was a bird that stopped briefly at Broad Cove, Nov. 8, seen by Barbara Hinds. A late HORNED LARK was still around in Cape Breton on the NSBS Field Trip on May 30. The first fall larks were on Brier, Oct. 17 (RBS). No more were seen until Nov. 2, in the Gaspereau Valley. Five to six had arrived back at Grand Pré on Nov. 18. Since then they seem normal in their appropriate habitats.

Many thanks to those reporters who kept tabs on PURPLE MARTINS this summer. We now have a much better picture of the provincial situation. This is:

1. Amherst - about 60 pair in several colonies (July 5, Dave Currie)
2. Oxford - In eight houses on the Dept. of Lands and Forest property, with 26 units in each house, there were 20 active nests per house, each with three young per brood. The "scouts"--all males, arrived May 14, and the nest a week later. Departure was about August 23.
3. Collingwood - 2 houses were there in October but impossible to discover whether any birds had used them.
4. Debert - There were 2 houses on Lands and Forests property there, but again, in Oct., there was no information as to their use.

(2,3 and 4, all thanks to Bill Thexton)

A few "odd" martins were seen elsewhere. On July 4, one flew with 2 Chimney Swifts in the Great Pubnico Lake area, and on July 8, three martins flew over Chegoggin (H&HH et al.)

TREE SWALLOWS may have been lower in number this year. Several writers noted failure to nest in usually occupied boxes and a general scarcity. No migrations were noted.

BANK SWALLOWS were not well reported. JWT wrote that they did well at Port Howe, and Gordon and Judy Tufts noted a colony near Lumsden's Dam in July. Merritt Gibson found that a large colony near Canning suffered from depredation of the sand quarry by a landscaping company. There were two or more CLIFF SWALLOW nests on Marble Mountain (EC), but elsewhere in Cape Breton at Big Pond the colony had dropped off badly. Jack MacNeil writes that there were 48 nests there in 1985, 25 in 1986 and only 10 this year. He attributes this to two successive damp, cold breeding seasons. There were three occupied nests at South Branch on June 20 (DAM, CDM) and 100 birds in a colony at Meteghan on July 17, including "several nests with young" (RSD'E). A slightly different Cliff Swallow was seen by FLL&PM on Cape Sable, Sept. 14--it had a pale chestnut throat and nape and a peach-coloured rump. They feel that it was probably an immature of the S. western race.

BARN SWALLOWS were low too, in fact, Ruth Hebb nicely summed up the 1987 swallow picture when she wrote "all swallows were somewhat scarce this year"--many writers agreed. Two late swallows were about at Fairview Cemetary, Nov. 7 and Hartlen's Pt. Nov. 21 (DAC, JWT).

Several family groups of GRAY JAYS were around the Liscomb area in June and July and an adult with five black young were at South Branch, June 21 (Payzants, RGM, DAM). Almost all other reports were in October or later when the jays come out to the wood margins for the winter. At least fifteen were counted and Sandra Myers reports that they are plentiful at Mooseland.

"Very numerous", "a good year", "never miss a day", and "back in force" are the remarks about BLUEJAYS. A large migration took place on Brier Is., Oct. 3, when the Cohrs and Dave Currie estimated (conservatively) 500+. Next day only 40 or so remained.

CORVIDS TO THRUSHES

Sara MacLean writes of six AMERICAN CROWS near Glace Bay (probably a family), partly albino with white below the wings and some white feathers on the top of the wings.

COMMON RAVENS nested successfully at Crousetown and Gaspereau but were otherwise not noted.

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEES were said to be plentiful during the summer with many regulars well established at feeders by November. The less obvious BOREAL CHICKADEE was seen in small numbers here and there except in Marriotts Cove, where Ruth Hebb had a regular group which by July included immatures. A nest was seen at Hartlen's Pt. on July 1, but Ian McLaren was not able to see inside to count the young, even with the use of a mirror!

What happened to the great RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH migrations of past years? None were reported this year. The only Red-breasts were two or three here and there at feeders. Approximately twelve WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCHES were seen, mostly at feeders. Only five of these were fall birds, compared to 41 last year.

BROWN CREEPERS seem to be down, with only three reports of four birds after last fall's bonanza. These were: 1, Oct. 20, Wolfville Ridge, 2 on Nov. 6, Birch Cove, Dartmouth; 1 on Nov. 21, Myra Rd., Porter's Lake (Tufts, SAM,JWT). This writer has seen not a single creeper in 1987!

Five HOUSE WRENS is an improvement. They were all on the islands: 1 on Seal, Sept. 26 (IAM), two on Brier, Oct. 4&5 (Cohrs & DAC) and two on Bon Portage, Oct. 11-12 (FLL,PM). Eight to ten WINTER WRENS were reported from May to August, but I feel that correspondants did not do them justice. They seem to be heard more often these days than after their disastrous crash in the seventies, which resulted in several years of real scarcity. A confused bird was actually singing in Lawrencetown marsh on Sept. 26 (Cohrs & Purchases). A small migration was noted on Bon Portage and Seal Islands around Oct. 10 (IAM,FLL et al).

After several years of blanks, it is pleasant to report MARSH WRENS once again. A Marsh Wren was reported from Seal on Sept. 5, Sept. 26 and Oct. 10, and was most likely the same bird. Hartlen's Point had one Sept. 26, Bon Portage had 3 on Oct. 5, and the last one was at Conrad's Beach, Oct. 20. (var. obs.). This totals at least SIX.

The only time GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLETS seem approachable is in the fall when they tend to feed lower down in the evergreens and don't mind being seen, coming often to "swishing". Later they ascend to the tree-tops and do not deign to be lured down. Then, all that is heard is the faint bell-like calls. There are many reports of GCK's "flitting about the tree in 2's and 3's" from Sept. onwards. They do not all stay here, however, and a large migration was seen on Bon Portage, Oct. 6-10, when numbers were 90+ - 100+ - 150. (FLL,PM).

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLETS were here this summer, but very low in number. Very few reports were sent in and very few were heard singing in their usual haunts. JSC writes that she feels they are dropping off alarmingly in Lun. Hfx., Hants and Shel. Counties. She writes, "1985 was low, 1986 was lower, 1987 was lower still. On Aug. 6, I noted that I had not heard one sing for 2 weeks!" At least eight BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHERS is more encouraging. There were reports of one on Seal, Sept. 6, Sept. 27 and Oct. 11 (no sex given, possibly the same bird). A female was at Green Bay, Sept. 5, a male at Bon Portage, Sept. 8 and a female there Sept. 11. An immature appeared at Hartlen's Pt., Sept. 12. There were two gnatcatchers in the Canso area from Sept. 30 to Oct. 7 and one at Birch Cove, Dartmouth, from Nov. 4-24 (Tufts, IAM,Cohrs, FLL, Peters, CSII)

A NORTHERN WHEATEAR, possibly the Eastern Race by the colouration posed nicely for photographs at Cherry Hill, Aug. 29 (Cohrs). It was seen next day by mult. obs.

EASTERN BLUEBIRDS were seen at Chester on May 16, at Robert's Island (2), May 27 and at Kingston, Sept. 17. However, the big news is the successful nesting of a pair of Bluebirds at Lochaber, Antigonish Co. These birds took over a nesting box put up some years ago at the summer home of Rosemary Power, daughter of NSBS member Leo McKay, who was able to monitor their progress. Three new homes have been constructed in great hopes for 1988.



One of the Lochaber bluebirds

No opinions were ventured as to our VEERY population this year, so we must assume they were average in number. No late dates or migrations were mentioned.

An adult GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH was on Bon Portage, Oct. 11 (FLL, PM). The Tufts (Kings Co.) were the only writers who noted SWATNSON'S THRUSHES in summer!! I'm sure they were about, but perhaps thought not worth noting unless either very plentiful or particularly scarce. A late bird was seen by Sandra Myers at Mooseland on Oct. 11. There was quite a smattering of latish HERMIT THRUSHES which did well in the summer. They were seen Nov. 1 on Wolfville Ridge, Nov. 7 at Lockport, Nov. 11 at Sullivan's Pond and Nov. 14 (2) at St. Mary's University campus, Halifax (JKd'E, FLL, IAM, DAC, JSC).

The only news of WOOD THRUSHES comes from the Tufts. They saw and heard a male from May 27 to June 3 in the same location on the South Mountain, Kings Co. They also heard one, possibly two, singing, south of the Blomidon look off on the North Mountain, Kings Co., June 17.

Thanks to good reporting, the migration of the AMERICAN ROBIN is easy to plot. It began Sept. 7, when a small movement went through Green Bay. On Sept. 9, a large group passed through Kentville (JSC, RBS). After this beginning, larger concentrations began to move with "hundreds" in Wolfville and Wolfville Ridge, Oct. 4-6 (JWW, Tufts). On the 3rd, there were 700+ on Brier and on the 8th 500+ were at L. W. Pubnico (Cohrs, DAC, JKd'E). The third "wave" was in early November with 100+ in a single woodlot at Broad Cove on Nov. 6, and 500-600 at L. W. Pubnico on the 7th. The largest number was of 2000++ near Peggy's Cove on Nov. 15, when J and Shirley Cohrs sat in the car for half an hour watching wave upon wave of Robins flying low over the scrub and rocks, perching by the hundreds on stunted bushes, the ground, the rocks and the shore.

CATBIRD TO STARLING

GRAY CATBIRDS had a normal season with several lingerers--October 11 at Paradise and Seal Island and the 14th on Brier (J&BM, IAM, JWT). Twenty-nine NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRDS were recorded, all but four after Sept. 1. This is three above last year's total and about average.

Captain Hurbert Hall of the Bluenose, had a BROWN THRASHER as a passenger, 35 miles out from Yarmouth on Oct. 6. One was on Brier, Oct. 12 and on Nov. 7 a thrasher arrived at Gilbert and Sadie Goodwin's in Lower Argyle, for the fourth year in succession. The fourth thrasher reported was one at St. Mary's University campus, Nov. 14-15 (IAM, num. obs.).

Brier had the first WATER PIPITS this fall, as last--26 on Sept. 9 (last year's early date was Aug. 29). In October they moved through in their usual haunts--100+ on Bon Portage, Oct. 6, 6 at Hartlen's Pt., Oct. 7, and 12 there, Nov. 19. Brier had six still on Oct. 10 and there were 35 on Cap Sable, Oct. 17.

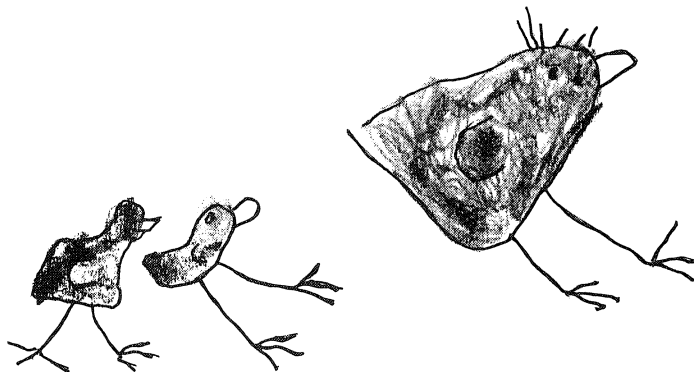
A single BOHEMIAN WAXWING was seen at Annapolis Royal, Sept. 10. (fide JWW). Seven more appeared on Sable Is., Nov. 17 (Zoe Lucas). There were none of the sometimes enormous flocks of migrating CEDAR WAXWINGS this year. They left in small concentrations, beginning in mid-September, when flocks of 20 to 50 were "everywhere" in Antigonish and Guysborough Counties. 40+ were in the E. Chezzetcook area on the 14th. In October, a small movement of 100+ went through Brier, Oct. 3, leaving only 25 or so next day. In November 100+ were at Chebucto Head and four were still about in Halifax on the 24th.

Will 1987-88 be a "shrike winter"? Too early to tell, although reports are encouraging.

viz. Oct. 18 - Wallace
 Nov. 7 - Sable Island
 Nov. 10 - Chebucto Head
 Nov. 11 - Hartlen's Pt.
 Nov. 12 - Wolfville
 Nov. 15 - Middleton
 Nov. 22 - Annapolis Royal
 Nov. 22 - Canso

Predictably, most of the EUROPEAN STARLING reports come from the Valley, although there were 3000 at Hartlen's Pt., Nov. 19. Nesting seems to have been far too successful (as usual), much to the detriment of many of our songbirds.

JSC, ed.



The Robin Family

by Jennifer Currie

VIREOS AND WARBLERS

The agonizingly late spring of '87 eventually brought these small woodland birds into the province in good numbers. The summer's warm dry weather was no doubt welcomed with many successful nestings noted for almost all of our resident vireos and warblers. The fall migrants began passing through in respectable numbers during the first and second weeks of August and continued into late September. Five species of vireos and thirty-one(!) species of warblers were noted during this period. Bon Portage Island was the place to be for WHITE-EYED VIREOS. Three were found there, one each day from Oct. 10-12. All were immatures, two of which were banded by the Acadia Biology Team and one, more fortunate, unbanded, was found by Fulton Lavender and Peter MacLeod. There were varying impressions of the abundance of the SOLITARY VIREO with it being less common in some locales and quite numerous in others. Late dates were Nov. 3, Bon Portage and Nov. 7, Creighton Park, Dartmouth (JWT). One lone report of WARBLING VIREO came from Eric Mills who, with Bruce MacTavish, encountered a bird on Brier Island on Sept. 6.

A conservative estimate of nine PHILADELPHIA VIREOS were sighted. All but two were fall migrants. The spring birds were from Brier Is. on May 2 (H&HH) and one singing near Boisdale, C. B. (no date) by Blake Maybank. The fall reports were all during Sept. and Oct. in Pubnico (JAK), Bon Portage (PM), Hartlen's Point (FLL) and lastly, one with an understandable case of "hawk paranoia" at Brier Is., Oct. 5 (COHRS, DAC). RED-EYED VIREOS were reportedly less common than usual throughout spring and summer. Stragglers occurred on Bon Portage from Oct. 12-Nov. 3, with the last seen in Dartmouth on Nov. 7 (DAC).

The regular fall migrant, BLUE-WINGED WARBLER was seen just once, a single bird foraging near Seaforth, Hfx. Co on Sept. 13 (RF). TENNESSEE WARBLERS were literally everywhere, the song, if previously unfamiliar to some, will no doubt now be etched in our minds forever. JSC reports six singing on a very short wood road with hundreds "yelling their heads off" along the south shore. ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLERS tend to show up during Oct. and frequently stay into December. There were single birds found on Bon Portage and Eastern Passage in October, at least three in Halifax during Nov., with the latest, of one at Portuguese Cove, Hfx. Co., Nov. 20 (FLL, PM). Unfortunately, NASHVILLE WARBLERS tend to go unnoticed during the summer as was the case this year with just two reports. The fall migration brought sightings of several in early Sept., near Marriott's Cove (RDH) and several near Williamswood, Hfx. Co, during the first week of Sept. (DAC). NORTHERN PARULA was found in concentration with over 100 pairs near Boisdale, C.B. (Blake Maybank). Many were found with migrating mixed flocks with Oct. 10 being the last--on Bon Portage Is. (FLL, PM). YELLOW, CHESTNUT-SIDED AND MAGNOLIA WARBLERS were all well represented during the summer months. Late departures were a Yellow, seen Oct. 6 on Bon Portage (FLL, PM), a Chestnut-sided, Oct. 1, Williamswood (DAC) and Magnolia, Oct. 5 on Brier Is. (JLC, DAC).

CAPE MAY WARBLERS were commonly found in Cumb. Co. during June and July, and often found in mixed flocks of migrants during Aug. elsewhere. Late dates were Oct. 6, two on Bon Portage (FLL, PM) and a very late adult male spotted at Fairview Cemetery, Halifax, Nov. 22 (PM). BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLERS were found from Yarmouth to Cape Breton in good numbers. A tie for the all time late date was of a single bird found Nov. 11, lingering at Birch Cove Park, Dartmouth by Clarence Stevens. YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLERS were exceptionally common during the migration, especially so in Yar. Co., where JKD had over 100 on Oct. 9 at L.W. Pubnico. Smaller pockets of 15-30 were found during Nov. at Wolfville Ridge (BJF) and Ln. Co. (JSC).

STOP THE PRESS!!!--Fulton Lavender and Peter MacLeod uncovered the second ever Nova Scotia record of TOWNSEND'S WARBLER on Dec. 2 in Halifax. This bird was an apparent adult male in winter plumage. More unusual was the sighting of a second bird and possibly a third in Halifax's south end! Photographs of these birds have been taken and will be scrutinized to determine whether there were two or three. BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLERS have recovered considerably since their "virtually absent" status in 1986, but still not to the numbers many can remember prior to 1985. The last record this season was one on Bon Portage, Oct. 12 (FLL,PM). BLACKBURNIAN WARBLERS were quite conspicuous this year on most areas from Brier Is. to Big Bras d'Or, C.B., but as usual, quickly disappeared by mid-Aug. The Nova Scotia Bird Society's field trip to Seal Is. on Sept. 5, encountered, among many other good birds, the rare YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER. All fourteen of the trip's participants eventually were able to view this exceptional bird. No less than eighteen PINE WARBLERS were counted with just one during spring, that on May 2, on Brier Is. (HH,IP). The latest individuals were three, Nov. 2, Fairview Cemetery, Halifax (DAC), three more, Nov. 24, (IAM). Just as popular were PRAIRIE WARBLERS also with 18 sightings. These birds were spotted on Seal Is. (2); Brier Is. (2); L. W. Pubnico (2); Bon Portage Is. (2); Little Harbour, Allendale Yar. Co. (); Hartlen's Point (4); and single birds in the Halifax area. The last date was Nov. 14 (IAM), in Halifax.

PALM WARBLERS were quite evident this year, especially so on Bon Portage, where FLL and PM had 50 during Oct. 4-12, noting that 5 of these were of the western race. That small numbers of these warblers tend to try over-wintering was evidenced by a few seen in the Halifax area up to Nov. 24. BAY-BREASTED WARBLERS were well accounted for, breeding Hfx, Hants and Cumb. Cos., then seen during migration in many locations among flocks of mixed warblers. The latest date was a single bird on Seal Is., Oct. 4 (IAM). BLACKPOLL WARBLERS seemed almost non-existent in many parts of the province during summer but by Oct. 7, large flocks were observed in Halifax (IAM) and between Oct. 8-12, 77 were banded by the Acadia Biology Team on Bon Portage. Although it appeared that BLACK AND WHITE WARBLERS were somewhat less numerous this year, AMERICAN REDSTARTS were quite abundant in most counties. Late dates for Black and Whites were Nov. 17, Halifax (PM) and Nov. 19 (FLL). [ERRATUM--Nova Scotia Birds, July 1987 issue, Pg. 20, should have read "earliest date, May II for Black and White Warbler.] Another of the rarities this season was the PROTHONOTARY WARBLER. This bird was encountered twice and by the same person! Jim Taylor and Jerome D'Eon discovered one near Carleton, Yar. Co. on June 28, and Jim sent a fall report of one which landed in the cabin of a fishing boat off Eastern Passage on Aug. 21. OVENBIRD. If you use its vocalization to scale its abundance, it seemed lower than in recent years. An extremely late date was a single bird sighted Nov. 12 in Halifax (AJV). NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH all but disappeared by the first week of Sept. However, there was one on Bon Portage on Oct. 9 (PM), and one on Seal Is. from Oct. 1-15 (IAM,SJF et al.). Of the dozen observers who submitted reports of MOURNING WARBLERS, nine recorded successful breeding pairs. BJB remarks that after an absence of several years, these birds have returned to his property at Wolfville Ridge. COMMON YELLOWTHROATS were just that, common, found in suitable habitat over the entire province with the last stragglers found at Hartlen's point, where two were seen on Nov. 14 (FLL,MM, AJV). Two HOODED WARBLERS were chanced upon during the fall. One, a female, was found Oct. 3 on Cape Sable Is. (FLL,PM), and a male on Seal Is., Oct. 11-1 (IAM). WILSON'S WARBLERS were reported heavily this period with records from Yarmouth to Cape Breton. Most fall reports were during Sept. However, a late record of a single male was seen by JSC on Nov. 16, in her Halifax garden. CANADA WARBLERS became quite evident during migration with several birds seen in mixed

flocks in early Aug. However, as is typical, by the third week of Aug., they had all but disappeared. Later individuals were noted Sept. 5 and Oct. 11 on Seal Is. (GWT,JCT,IAM). There were 14 reports of YELLOW-BREASTED CHATS showing themselves briefly in various locations from Seal Is. to Cheticamp, C.B. The first was on Aug. 18 on Cheticamp Is., C.B. (Don and Lois Codling). Two were recorded in September, 5 in Oct. and 6 in Nov.

TANAGERS TO DICKCISSEL

Two very well described SUMMER TANAGERS were encountered this fall. One, Sept. 4 at The Hawk, Cape Sable Is. (PM), and another at Bon Portage Is. on Oct. 5 (PM). SCARLET TANAGERS were seen and heard singing on the south mountain, Kings Co. and at Wolfville Ridge, June 17 and July 28, respectively (GWT,Jct). All other sightings were for the fall, 4 in Sept., 2 in Oct. and one cavorting on Dalhousie University campus on Nov. 19 (SJF). A flurry of NORTHERN CARDINALS arrived in the southern part of the province during the first week of Nov., all frequenting feeders though typically unpredictable. ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAKS were noted in various Annapolis Valley, Hfx. and Cumb. Co. areas during late spring and summer. Fall encounters were 5, seen on Bon Portage, Oct. 5 (FLL,PM) and one on Seal Is., Oct. 13-14 (IAM). The latest ever spring date for BLUE-GROSBEAK was of a young male seen on Seal Is. on June 7 (IAM). Other reports were for fall; 2 at Hartlen's Point, Sept. 12, (ATV,FLL,PM); Oct. 4 at Shag Harbour (FLL,PM); Oct. 9, Pubnico Point (RSD) and Oct. 12 (2), in Halifax (Karen Casselman). Over 7 individual INDIGO BUNTINGS were observed during the fall. This substantial number would be expected in the spring rather than the fall. The earliest was Sept. 1 at Seaforth, Hfx. Co (LAC,JSC); another in the Canso area on Sept. 28 (NWP,WJP), then from Oct. 2 until Oct. 24, the bulk of these birds passed through. Bon Portage had an estimate of 19 from Oct. 4-12, with a few being banded and released at that time (FLL,PM). One of the most extravagant birds to mistakenly arrive in Nova Scotia during the reporting period was the bright male PAINTED BUNTING which graced Ethel and Ray Helpard's back garden from Nov. 18 until Nov. 22. A quick confirmation of this visitor's identity brought excitement and pleasure to many who were fortunate enough to see this bird before it moved on. Coincidentally a not-quite-so bright male Painted Bunting was frequenting a Moncton, N.B. feeder three days prior to the discovery of the Halifax bird. RF and DAC managed to see both birds within a week of each other and can confirm that they were two different individuals. This was the second occurrence this year in Halifax and the fourth record for the province. It was, however, the first confirmed record for Nova Scotia, being well documented by numerous photographs. Prior records were sight records only. A total of 11 DICKCISSELS were noted, the first on Sept. 4 at Crescent Beach, Lu. Co. (FLL,PM), and Sept. 5 on Brier Is. (JFK,LL,PC). Other reports came from Annapolis Valley feeders, the Halifax area and a notable 4 birds seen on Bon Portage Is. on Oct. 6 (FLL,PM).

TOWHEES TO SNOW BUNTING

To start this section is a real rarity, the fourth record for the province and the first since 1974--a GREEN-TAILED TOWHEE. On Oct. 12, Jan Dexter and George Montgomery, visiting Seal Is. from Montreal, discovered this bird foraging about lobster traps on the west side of the island. The bright immature male stayed, graciously until Oct. 14, allowing close observation and photography by visitors (IAM,SJF). RUFOUS-SIDED TOWHEE was seen in four different locations, on Bon Portage Is., Oct. 8-12; 1 in Wolfville on Nov. 4 (JSB); 1 at Birch Cove Park, Dartmouth, Nov. 4-5 (CSII) and 1 at the Fairview Cemetery, Halifax, Nov. 7 (DAM,FLL).

AMERICAN TREE SPARROWS arrived almost a month later than their average date. Nov. 5, the first reports of these birds came from Conrad's Beach, Hfx. Co. (DAC) and Green Bay (Cohrs). Small groups of 2-12 were seen from Yar. to Hfx. Co., from Nov. 10-15, with the largest number of 20 seen at Hartlen's Point on Nov. 14 (FLL,MA,AJV). It appears CHIPPING SPARROWS have had a good breeding season throughout the province and there were at least two sizable migrating flocks seen. One was at Argyle, Yar. Co. of at least 5 on Oct. 10 (JKD) and over 30 were seen on Bon Portage Is. during that time (FLL,PM). A few have decided to stay on at feeders in Greenwich (BJF) and L. W. Pubnico (JKD) up to Nov. 17. CLAY COLOURED SPARROW was first reported on Seal Is., Sept. 6-7, during the NSBS field trip, again, one there on Sept. 26 and once more from Oct. 10-14 (GWT,JCT,IAM). Apart from the Seal Is. bird(s), an immature was noted on Bon Portage, Oct. 6-7, and an adult there Oct. 9-12 (FLL,PM).

Eight FIELD SPARROWS were tallied, the first seen was at Pubnico Pt., Sept. 16, (RSD,DD), 2 on Seal Is. from Oct. 9-14 (IAM); 1 on Bon Portage, Oct. 11 (CB); 2 on Brier Is., Oct. 14 (JWT,BCT), 1 in south end Halifax, Oct. 24 (RF); a single bird at Hartlen's Point (JWT) and 1 at the Fairview Cemetery, Nov. 6-7 (DAC).

There was just one summer record of VESPER SPARROW, that of a singing male at Kingston on June 17 (DAM). Fall migrants included 1, Sept. 3, at Grand Pré dykes and 1, Oct. 2 at Black River, seen by Bernard Forsythe. Others were 1, Oct. 7 at Pubnico Point (DD,RSD) and 1 on Seal Is., Oct. 1 (SJF et al.). Three LARK SPARROWS were noted. After days of westerly winds, the first one was observed at Bisset Rd., Hfx. Co., Aug. 25 (IAM,JM), then Jack MacNeill in Big Pond, C.B., had one visiting his feeder from Aug. 1 to Sept. 3, feeding on cracked corn. The last was a single adult bird in L. W. Pubnico on Oct. 15 (DJD). There were sizable pockets of SAVANNAH SPARROWS congregating along shore lines from late Aug. until mid-Oct., from Yarmouth to Cape Breton. There were over 60 around the East Chezzetcook and Martinique Beach areas on Sept. 1 (GWT,JCT) and a notable 100 or more on Bon Portage on Oct. 7 (FLL,PM). W. MacCormack encountered an alarmed "IPSWICH" SPARROW during the summer at Three Fathom Harbour Beach--presumably it was breeding there. The first of the migrants arrived on the mainland, Oct. 7. IAM saw that date at Hartlen's Point; there were 10 on Bon Portage, Oct. 11 (FLL,PM), 9 at Hemeon's Head, Oct. 2 (DY); 7 at Cherry Hill Beach, Nov. 1 (SJF) and an incredible 50+, feeding in one flock on marram grass at Three Fathom Harbour, Nov. 17. A rare vagrant, the GRASSHOPPER SPARROW was seen Oct. 5 on Bon Portage by FLL and PM and if that wasn't enough, they discovered 4 of these birds there on Oct. 9. Along with the many other reports given by these two observers came a very detailed description of an immature LE CONTES SPARROW. They were able to view this bird well three times and picked out all the characteristic field marks, including the buffy coloured face with grayish cheek patch and the black "arrow-head" mark leading away from the back of the eye. This record dated Oct. 5, is only the second for the province; the first was Oct. 6, 1974 on Seal Is. (Bruce MacTavish).

SHARP-TAILED SPARROWS were first reported on June 7, on Seal Is. (IAM), followed closely by several at Fort Lawrence, Cumb. Co., June 8-9 (DAC). Generally, reports documented a successful year for them with many at Crescent and Cherry Hill Beaches throughout July. By Oct. 6, there were still several at Grand Pré (RBS) and one at Hartlen's Point on Nov. 1 (JK). With the huge numbers of FOX SPARROWS that passed through during the spring, there were a number of reports of singing birds, presumably on territory and possibly breeding on the mainland. Records until mid-July came from Liscomb

(LAP,PP), Halifax (DAC) and LaHave Islands (JSC). Other widely separated records were during October.

SONG SPARROWS were reported "as usual", commonly breeding throughout the province. There were over 100 passing through Bon Portage on Oct. 7, and many have decided to overwinter in the shelter given by thickets and shrubbery, especially in populated areas. To the credit of the many atlasers, LINCOLN'S SPARROW appears to be more common than was previously realized. Linda and Peter Payzant report that they are fairly common in the Liscomb area during June and July. Reports came from Cumb., Col., and Hfx. Cos., along with two counties in C. B. Late reports are of 2 on Bon Portage, Oct. 6 and 3 on Seal Is., Oct. 12-1 (IAM). Surprisingly few records of SWAMP SPARROW were submitted. It is unlikely that there is a serious decline in numbers but more probable that observations and abundance levels were channelled through the Atlas Project. There were, however, over 30 migrating through Bon Portage on Oct. 1 (FLL,PM) and single birds located at Cunard, Canning and Starr's Point as late as Oct. 18 (GWT,JCT,JWW).

WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS are still in low numbers compared with their abundance as recently as three or four years ago. Recollections of hundreds migrating through the mainland during past autumns have been reduced to a large single movement of 100 on Bon Portage, Oct. 11. The southern parts of the province, especially Yar. Co., were invaded with a good number of ~~WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS~~ during mid-October. The first recorded was 1 on Seal Is., Sept. 20 (IAM). Reports came from L.W. Pubnico, Brier Is., Broad Cove, Bon Portage and Seal, the latter having up to 20 there daily from Oct. 11-14 (SJF,IAM). DARK-EYED JUNCOS were quite numerous during summer with large flocks rummaging about in thickets and near feeders during Nov. A few LAPLAND LONGSPURS were seen during Sept. on Brier Is., Cherry Hill Beach and Hartlen's Point. By late October there were 75 at Cherry Hill, 17 at Cape Sable Is., and a flock at Pembroke Beach, Yar. Co (SJF,JFK,HH), but the largest number were 120+!! in two flocks at Cherry Hill on Nov. 7 (Cohrs). The first SNOW BUNTINGS began to arrive Oct. 2 at Matthew's Lake (Y), then by Nov. 1, large numbers (150+) swirled about the beach at Cherry Hill. Although most sightings were of flocks 25-200 from the coastal areas, Grand Pré, Middleton and Economy have reported increasing numbers from Nov.1.

BOBOLINK TO ORIOLES

BOBOLINKS gathered in numbers at L. W. Pubnico from Aug. 30 (50-60) to Sept. 15 (25-30) (DJD) and by mid to late Oct., were seen in small numbers (6-10). An extremely late record of a bright winter male was seen at Broad Cove on Nov. 22. Large numbers of RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS were sighted migrating in Brooklyn, Windsor Forks and Canning areas during mid to late October. Early Nov. brought fairly large flocks to Jim Taylor's feeder in Dartmouth, and 4-6 at Peters' feeder in Pubnico. Two EASTERN MEADOWLARKS occurred on Seal Is., Oct. 10-16 (IAM) and a MEADOWLARK SP. was at Cherry Hill Beach, Oct 24 (SJF). This bird did not utter a call note to denote eastern or western race.

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRDS were three in number, the first being the 8th spring record. This was observed in Glace Bay during May and June (A. Spencer fide SM). An immature male was watched on Seal Is., Oct. 14 (JG,JY,DY,SJF) and 1 was at W. Pubnico on Nov. 18 (JKD). RUSTY BLACKBIRDS were widespread from Yar. to Cape Breton. The latest was one seen at a feeder in W. Pubnico, Nov. 10-11 (Lisette d'Entremont). The regular but very rare BREWER'S BLACKBIRD occurred twice, being carefully observed on Sept. 21 at Sable River (Bud Lisk, Wilbur Harding and David Young) and on Sept. 26-27 Sylvia Fullerton's feeder in Broad Cove (an immature male). COMMON

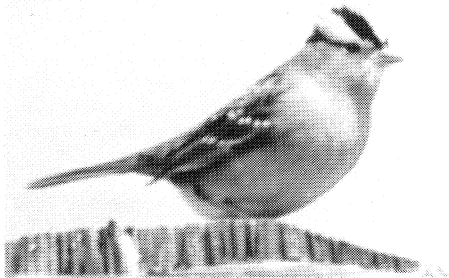
GRACKLES began departing in large groups by mid- Sept. Massive flocks poured through most areas by mid-October (2500+ in Halifax Oct. 11 -JSC), leaving only isolated flocks of a dozen or less by the first of Nov. BROWN-HEADED COWBIRDS on the other hand, went virtually unnoticed during the summer but flocked in large numbers in agricultural areas during late Sept. Cowbirds have since been building in numbers both in urban and rural areas.

NORTHERN ORIOLES were found nesting in at least two areas of the Annapolis Valley, also nests were found at Wilmot and Pictou. The fall brought many reports, primarily from southern locations and specifically Seal Is., Brier Is. and Bon Portage. Numerous single birds were reported from late Oct. to mid-Nov. from Yar. to Guys. Cos.

FINCHES TO HOUSE SPARROW

PINE GROSBEAKS have certainly not as yet been reported in any numbers. Pairs or family groups of 4 or less are all that have been sighted thus far, although they are widely distributed from Yar.-Cumb. Co - Cape Breton Is. PURPLE FINCHES likewise are slow moving into our area. Scattered sightings of 2-6 individuals from Pubnico to Glace Bay were uncommon sights.

In any other year it could have been said that RED CROSSBILLS had a terrific season if it hadn't been for the fabulous abundance of WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILLS. Reds were seen during June, July, Aug. and Sept., in flocks of up to 80 (Carleton, June 28, JKD). July had numerous reports of paired birds or adults feeding young in Shel. and Lun. Cos. White-wings were reported in very large numbers, especially from Yar. and Lun. Cos., where they were seen in the thousands by late July. The infestation along with the sometimes deafening noise of these grouped birds extended well into Sept. By Oct., the masses began to dissipate leaving much smaller flocks, lingering on into Nov. The last comparable invasion of these birds was during Feb. 1963.



This spanking "Gambel's" White-crowned Sparrow, about our 4th spring record of this central North American subspecies, was on Seal Island, May 25-29. Photo-Ian McLaren

COMMON REDPOLLS were first sighted in late Oct. in Oxford (JCT); a few were noted at Wolfville Ridge, Nov. 17 and two were found in Dartmouth, Nov. 2. Although there were good numbers of PINE SISKINS through the summer in many locations, the first week of Oct. brought large flocks to the coastal area. Flocks of 50-250 were encountered often during this time and over 3700 were seen on Bon Portage, Oct. 5-1 (FLL,PM). Very few AMERICAN GOLDFINCHES were noted during the summer as was the case during fall. Small flocks of 6-12 were all that were to be found. Exceptions were 800 seen on Bon Portage, Oct 4-12 (FLL,PM), and 150 or more in L. W. Pubnico on Oct. 14 (JKD).

EVENING GROSBEAKS were seen frequently through the summer months, particularly in Yar., Lu., Guys. and Cumb Cos. From Nov. 1 to 15, small flocks of up to 20 were frequenting feeders irregularly and by Nov. 2, much larger flocks of 50 to 100 were occurring regularly in most areas. Although Pubnico and L. W. Pubnico have virtually no HOUSE SPARROWS, reports from all other areas concluded a good year, prolifically breeding and already utilizing feeders. Ian McLaren writes of migrant birds landing on Seal Island on Oct. 12, another one on the 13th and then 15 of these birds on the 14th. "So much for the fear of flying over water".

An interesting report came from Jim Wolford. He had to take a second look at a SPOTTED MUNIA or Ricebird, a tiny, mainly brown finch which he saw perched on a wire in Wolfville on Sept. 16. An obvious escapee, a picture illustrates this bird in the new Peterson Field Guide.

DAC, ed.

Unfortunately some reports found themselves in the hands of the wrong editors. These may be out of order but are none-the-less interesting.

AMERICAN AVOCET - not one, but three sightings were reported. Of course, if one considers the dates, these may have been one, two or three birds (if one, it DID dash back and forth). First sighting was on Aug. 22 at Cherry Hill. The bird stayed only an hour but was well identified by Sylvia Fullerton and Barbara Hinds. The, on Sept. 4, Alan MacLeod (one of our members from Victoria, B.C.) and Ron Prentiss found one at West Lawrencetown. This extremely well documented bird hung about the area for over a week and was seen by many local birders. The last report came from Cape Sable Is., where R.S. d'Entremont saw an Avocet on Sept. 19. Many lucky birders saw it on the 20th.

JSC, ed.

FIELD TRIP REPORTSJune 27 - Iona, Cape Breton

The weather report for June 27 was pretty daunting, but fourteen Cape Bretoners refused to be daunted and assembled at East Bay Church for a day in the Iona area.

When we set out it was calm, overcast and 12°C. Later, the temperature rose a bit and by noon the sky was partly clear. Altogether a pleasant day with very good visibility--no sun glare. Strangely, there were no flies. At least not at ground level, although a large flight of mixed swallows--Tree, Barn and Bank species hawking together--seemed to be enjoying good hunting high over a pond. They were flying very high aloft, perhaps because it was so calm the flies were higher up.

We saw three of the Cape Breton eagles in different places; all seemed to me to be very large mature females-- a lovely sight, soaring and sailing at leisure above the green, green hills.

We explored one beautiful swamp, richly clothed in iris and with the yellow lilies beginning in the ponds. This place was alive with Lincoln's Sparrows, each declaring his ownership of his own shrub.

The birds are scattered now, not at present in flocks, except for about thirty bachelor Ring-necked Ducks at Iona and three loons together at East Bay. Three loons together is an odd number at this season, unless one is a baby. In this case, the three seemed to be fishing on a passing shoal of some small fish, perhaps smelts, and I think the spouse of each of the three was probably on a nest somewhere, not necessarily very near.

All this is most interesting--to see what the birds are doing, as well as merely to note the species. Incidentally, we counted 42 species, which is not bad for June, when the birds are at home and not moving around, showing themselves in the open.

We were grateful to Nancy More, our leader, for guiding us to all the best spots--there are always some exceptionally good places within each region.

Sara MacLean

May 23 - Carleton, Yarmouth County - Warbler Walk

The weather was cold, dismal and drizzly, as it has been for this trip the past couple of years. There were however, 15 determined, cheerful watchers at the meeting place in Carleton, and as usual we went in the Perry Road, stopping at intervals to get out of the cars, to stop, listen and look.

By lunch time our total was a modest one--40 species, including Starlings, House Sparrows, the four species of Swallows, and a Rock Dove. The others were all routine except for several Blackburnian and Black-throated Blue Warblers heard and glimpsed by a few, and a Rose-breasted Grosbeak in song (also seen).

Lunches were eaten in our cars--not the usual sociability; but weather improved about then, and in the afternoon a trip on foot from Raynardton Bridge to Carleton Dam gave participants a better look at some of the warblers they had only heard in the morning, plus just one: a Catbird.

--C.R.K. Allen

No report was received of the April 25th Field Trip to Brickyard Road, Cape Breton--but here is a picture of the happy participants.



These were the bird watchers on the Mira outing, led by Edie MacLeod, beginning on the Brickyard Road, and extending through the Brickyard Provincial Park and the Oyster Cove area. Left to right, down in front are: Betty Gentile, Penny MacDonald, Edie MacLeod, and Graham Fraser. Standing are: Cleo Cossit, Bob More, Eldon Meikle, Otis Cossit, June Macginlay, Andrew Gingall, Averill Shepherd, Mabel Ann Singh-Virick, Nancy More, Bertha and Hedley Hopkins. Joy Gates and Rhoda Yates were also with the party.

SOME CHOICE PHOTOGRAPHS FROM 1987

Although other photographs scattered in this issue might well have qualified, we reserve the centre pages as usual for some that are unusual in the province or particularly revealing as portraits.

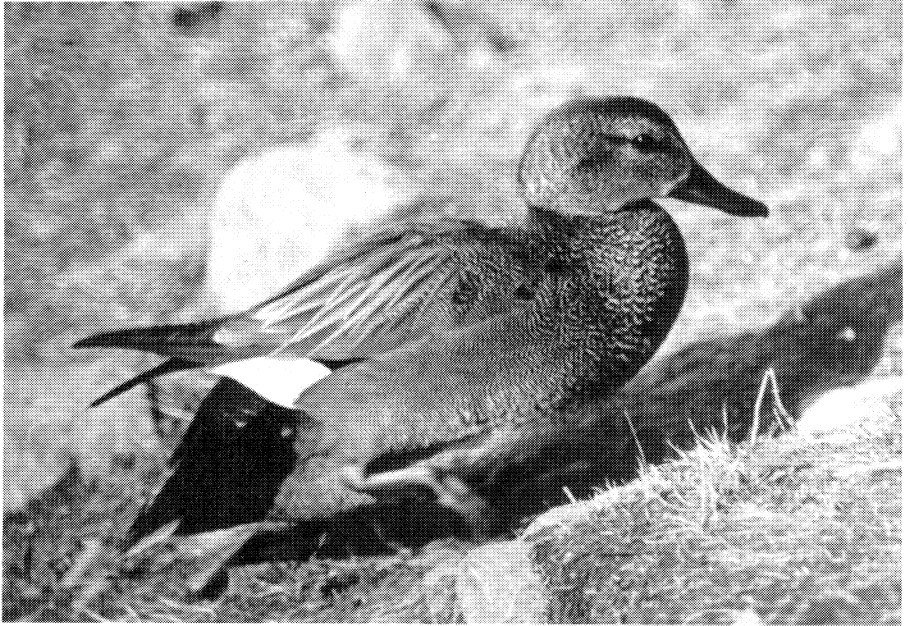
The first page offers two ducks that became familiar to many birders visiting Sullivan's Pond, Dartmouth, last winter. The first-year male Gadwall was photographed there by John Cohrs on March 19. The bird hung around, fat and happy, until carried away by the usual springtime urges in early April. The female Lesser Scaup, photographed on January 1, gave observers a good opportunity to tussle with such field marks as its peaked crown and smaller "nail" on the bill at very close ranges. It too remained until spring.

The two Laridae on the next page have a very different status in the province. Shirley Cohrs' extreme closeup of a Ring-Billed Gull was taken in February at Sullivan's Pond, where they are increasingly common during winter. This first-winter bird will have to wait for more than a year before breeding, and by that time we may have discovered them doing so in the province: a mixed blessing, as any Torontonians will tell you. The Caspian Tern is more prized in Toronto, where they have begun to nest in numbers on new waterfront fill-sites. In Nova Scotia, I rate them as positively precious, as the twosome on Seal Island on September 27 were only my second sighting of the species here. Why they remain scarce with us is a mystery, as they do nest in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and are increasing in some other parts of their wide range.

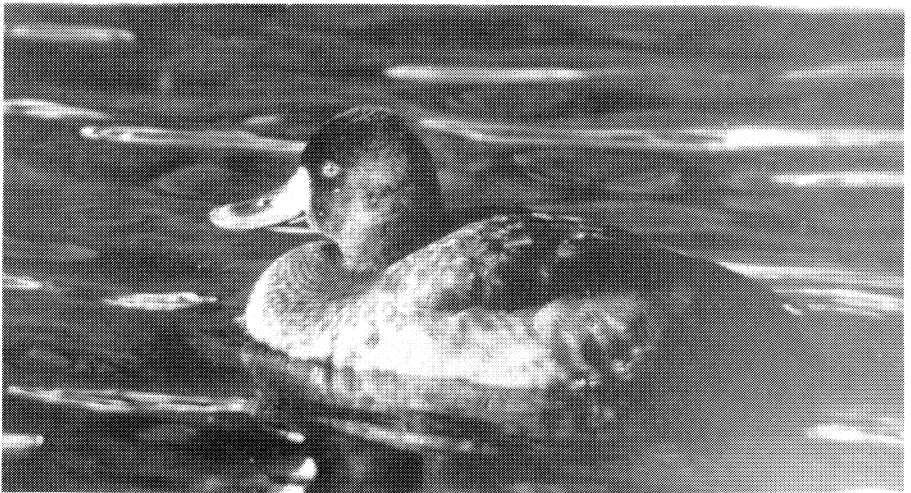
During three drizzly days on Brier Island, September 20-23, I photographed several rather tame young Broad-winged Hawks. This slide was not the sharpest or most revealing of field-marks, but was certainly the most droll. The bird was down on the gravel road, hard at work on an earthworm that had gone roaming in the rain. The worm was consumed in pieces, as though it were a more substantial item, not gulped down in an undignified, robin-like manner.

The Green-tailed Towhee, Nova Scotia's fourth, was a Seal Island super-special between September 12 and 14. It stayed around the west side wharf, allowing close views to a party of birders from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Quebec. Even the fishermen were amused, because it wandered in and out of their lobster traps while they were repairing them. Interestingly, the second Nova Scotian record was from exactly the same spot on May 18, 1974.

Richard Stern's closeup of a Short-billed Dowitcher was made under most unusual circumstances, when three of them came aboard a boat off Brier Island in early July. The birds refused to stand broadside on the thwarts, but persisted in facing away, so that all parts could not be simultaneously in focus at such close ranges. Dr. Stern's series of slides supports his conclusion that they were of the western race hendersoni, the first to be so confirmed in the province. They were rufous from throat to undertail coverts, had narrow tail bands, brightly margined upperparts, and little spotting on forenecks. Much the easiest



GADWALL - JOHN COHRS



LESSER SCAUP - IAN McLAREN



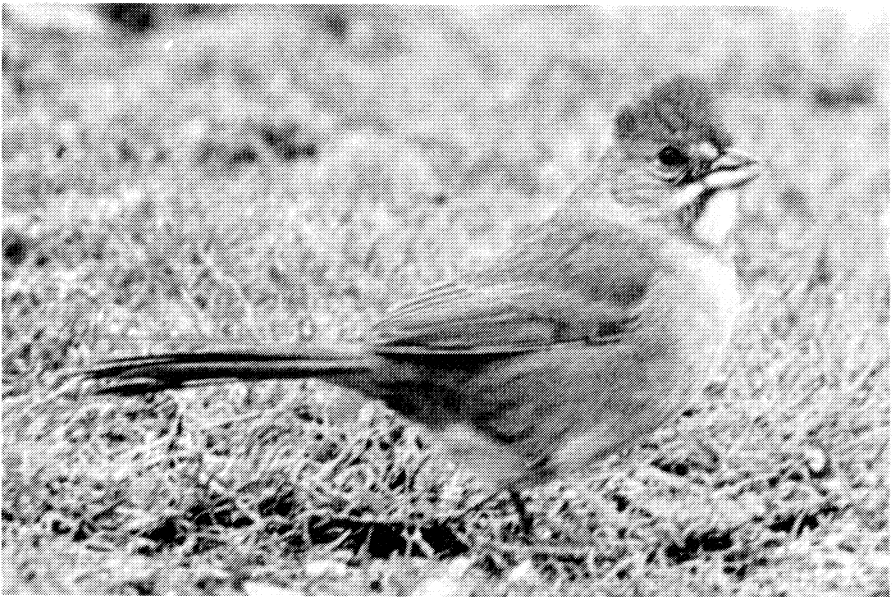
RING-BILLED GULL - SHIRLEY COHRS



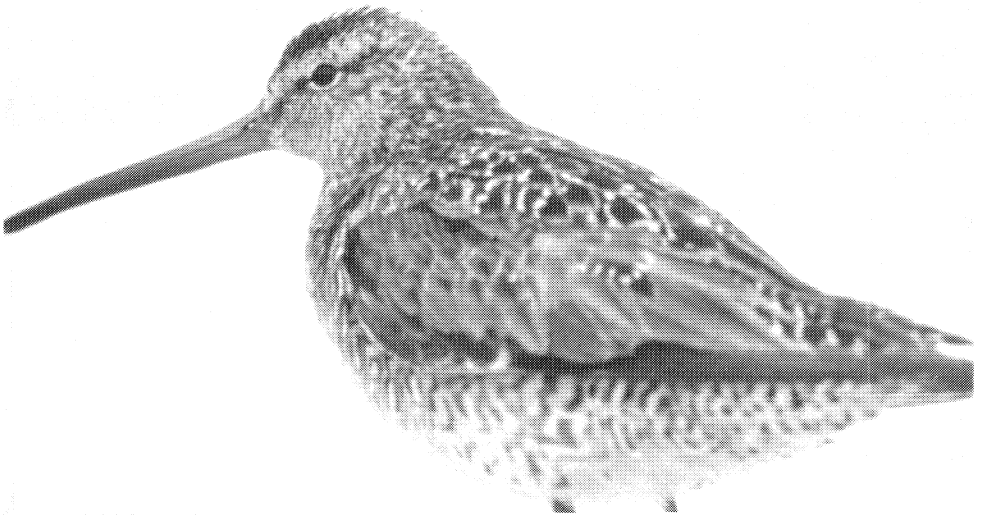
CASPIAN TERN - IAN MCLAREN



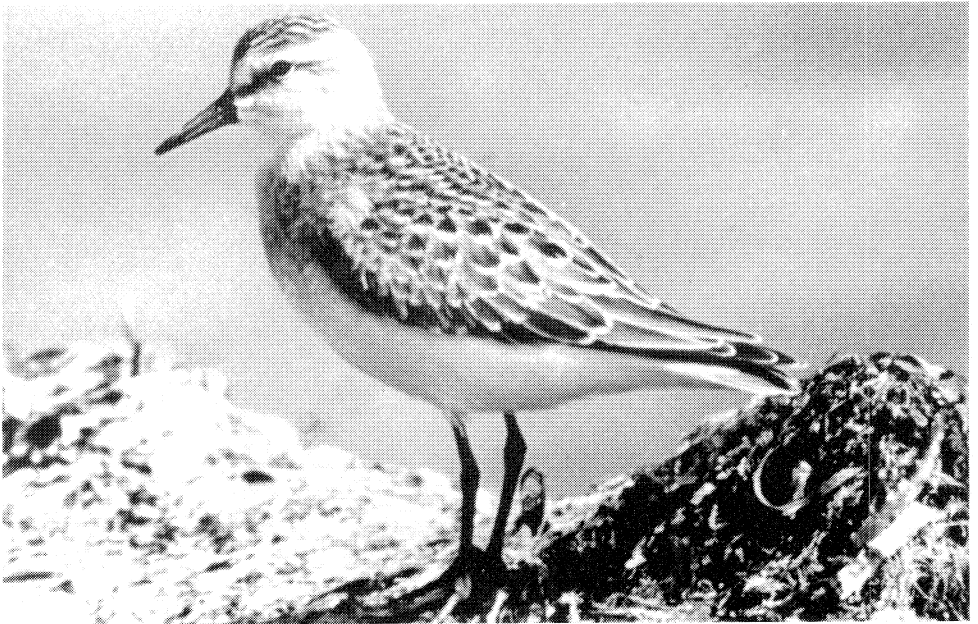
BROAD-WINGED HAWK - IAN MCLAREN



GREEN-TAILED TOWHEE - IAN MCLAREN



SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER - RICHARD STERN



SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER - IAN MCLAREN

reference for such dowitcher details is the second edition of the National Geographic Field Guide, with its greatly improved plates of this and some other species. In this individual, the plainly colored wing feathers are in basic ("winter") condition, either because they were retained as such from the previous pre-molting period, or were recently produced in post-breeding molt. The well-marked adults of the subspecies hendersoni should be looked for during the first wave of fall-migrant dowitchers. The much more abundant subspecies griseus comes to us from the Quebec-Labrador Peninsula and tends to peak somewhat later.

The Semipalmated Sandpiper is of course one of our most abundant migrants in its season. Roger Foxall brought this very brightly marked juvenile to my attention at Hartlen Point on September 13. It was about as rufous as this species can get, and might have been mistaken for some more exciting peep (or stint) by the overenthusiastic. There is no doubt, however, that it was a mere semi; among other things, we noted its calls and toe webbing. However, my real reason for including this black and white version is to offer an unsolicited advertisement for the new Kodachrome 200. It is rated as a professional film and can only be obtained at some camera stores. However, I think it has much the best colour faithfulness and certainly has the finest grain of any of the higher speed films currently available. To appreciate its sharpness, note that the bird on the original slide is about 8 mm from tip of bill to end of tail. Its only drawback is that it is rather expensive and must be processed by Kodak (through the store).

While on the subject of films and photo subjects I will make a few comments on what we would like receive from members to help reduce the dominance of a few photographers on our pages. First, slides or negatives are far better than colour prints for our purposes. Generally the colour prints submitted to us have birds that are too small to reproduce well. If you do have a good bird picture on a colour print, please submit the negative along with it. We'll return both after we've made a black-and-white print from the negative. As for subjects, anything goes, but readers probably prefer to see only really good portraits of common birds. Of course extreme rarities (those with, say, fewer than 10 records in the province) will always be welcome for documentary purposes, even if the picture quality is poor. In addition, less rare species that have only rarely been photographed or taken as specimens (like the Caspian Tern shown here) are clearly worth documenting. The same applies to photographs that support unusual nestings. Finally, birds doing unexpected things or in unusual condition or plumage, are also of interest to us. It is the middling-uncommon species that are most troublesome. There is probably little need for much further photographic documentation of such "regular rarities" as some of the southern herons and passerines unless they are particularly attractive as photographs.

You will note that there is no "Mystery Bird" in this issue. Only a very few readers seemed interested in our identification puzzles. Indeed, only two responded to the last one, both correctly identifying it as an Arctic Tern. If you do want the feature reinstated, let us know.

July 18 - Wallace

About a dozen dedicated birders from Halifax, the Annapolis Valley, Truro and Northern Nova Scotia braved the blazing heat and wind of one of the hottest days of this hot summer to meet on the wharf at Wallace and explore the countryside for birds.

We first drove to Fox Point, a long arm of farmland and woods that juts into the Northumberland Strait, ending in a long spit of grassy dunes flanked with sandbars and mud flats running out to the small islands offshore. There we saw a number of shore birds, including numerous Willets, Dowitchers and Lesser Yellowlegs, as well as the expected complement of sea ducks, gulls and terns. Besides birds, we were entertained by seals playing in the surf.

The party then drove to a large swamp in Wallace Bay resulting from the damming of an old salt marsh by an abbateau (pronounced bight), an arrangement that permits the marsh to drain into the sea but prevents saltwater from getting back in at high tide. Ducks Unlimited has built a fine causeway through the marsh as part of its system for maintaining water levels, which provides splendid access into the middle of the marsh. There, assisted by tapes and the astonishing vocalizations of some of the birders (who sounded more like birds than the birds themselves) we managed to "talk in" some Soras, and had a good view of numerous marsh birds and sandpipers. The wind was rather a nuisance, masking the calls and songs of the birds we saw. This made it quite difficult to identify the young sparrows and warblers we saw in the bushes along the path.

We had lunch in the orchard at Rivendell, on the bank of the Wallace River near Middleboro. The party was entertained by the Rivendell Bald Eagles, who are successfully raising a chick (if that is the right word for such a large, scraggly and uncoordinated bird), and a couple of pairs of Ospreys that are busy teaching their young how to fish. After lunch the group walked through woods and pastures looking for warblers and the raptors that are always about (except when a group of bird watchers comes to see them!). It was here that the wind caused the greatest difficulties; warblers were very hard to see and almost impossible to hear. We did see a female Red-tailed Hawk fly into the woods ahead of us and shortly after, a juvenile flew out, suggesting a nest site. We could not find it, but in spite of the wind, got a reasonably good list of warblers and vireos and other small woodland birds. A late afternoon expedition by some die-hards produced the expected Kestrels and Northern Harriers, although the thrushes remained silent and invisible (except for a Swainson's seen earlier), perhaps cowed by the heat and wind.

The total count for the day was 71 species (plus one unidentified small flycatcher). None of the birds were strikingly unusual, and there were no additions to anyone's life list, but we all agreed that it had been a most successful and enjoyable day of birding.

Tony Bidwell

July 25 - St. Peters and Pt. Michaud, C. B.

When the Cape Breton birders assembled at East Bay Church on July 25, we found that there were sixteen of us, all well-known to each other. Our leader, Graham Fraser, told us that we were invited to have our lunch break at Catherine Robertson's at St. Peters before going on to Point Michaud for the afternoon.

We made several side trips along the way, and believe me, the birds weren't very anxious to come and be counted. The elderberry bushes were loaded with fruit, dead ripe and ready to fall at a touch, but where were the waxwings and robins that usually swarm around this fruit? We couldn't understand it--a lovely hot day--we called a loon here, a kingfisher there, someone heard chickadees--and there goes an osprey! The goldfinches were looping overhead, swallows flitting, though the young ones are not yet perching on the wires. The birds are just too busy, it seems, to be counted.

To wait for a shower to pass, we turned into the picnic park at St. Peter's canal. The tide was just on the turn. One, only one, mind you, Double-crested Cormorant sailed over and dropped down in the riffle of the tide. It was the best thing we saw all day. He was chasing fish, smelts, I think, and catching plenty. From where we were we could see the bird ploughing his way along, just below the surface, while the fish were leaping a foot into the air in front of him. He fielded them as they dropped back, very neatly, and swallowed them before the herring gull nearby could rob him.

At Catherine Robertson's we enjoyed her lovely garden, and those of her friends. There was such an abundance of bloom, but where could the hummingbirds be? Murdock Digout came and took a couple of us old timers to see his garden, his ducks, both wild and not-wild, his tiny bantam chicks, the Songsparrow and her nest beside his broccoli--all that charm!

Point Michaud beach looked inviting, but the courageous ones who went in swimming didn't stay long. A very cold current sets in along that coast. Later there will be shore birds, but not yet.

As we came home, another eagle flew over. This one had his landing gear down and was carrying something, probably a fish, back to his nest. It was a nice day for sixteen birders, but not great in numbers or species, but after all, we're not competing with anybody, just seeing it like it is.

In case you are a perfectionist--we started out as sixteen in number, but Catherine Robertson finished out the day with us, which makes seventeen.

--Sara MacLean

August 6 - Crescent Beach Field Trip

Seventeen members from far and wide arrived at Crescent Beach for this annual shorebird viewing. They came from Sydney Forks, Yarmouth, Baltimore, Wolfville, Hants County, Riverport, Halifax and Dartmouth; such is the lure of wide clean beaches and the elusive wind birds.

The weather, as usual, cooperated. We walked Crescent in the morning in a cool overcast which cleared to bright sunshine for the Cherry Hill effort in the afternoon. As the tide fell at Crescent, the Willets and Dowitchers flew onto the flats, together with Semi-palmated Sandpipers, Least, and hundreds of Semi-palmated Plover. Greater Yellowleg numbers were up and several Great Blue Heron arrived to feed in the shallows. The misdirected Horned Grebe which has been at the Pollies since June (in full breeding plumage) was not in evidence, its place being taken by a summer plumage Oldsquaw. Among the trees at the top of the beach were many White-winged Crossbills, not surprising in this year of their incursion, at least in Lunenburg County.

After a leisurely lunch at Risser's Beach Park, we proceeded to Cherry Hill, stopping enroute to admire the spectacular display of waterlilies at Broad Cove. At Cherry Hill, there were more of the same shorebirds, plus Piping Plover and a number of Ruddy Turnstone. An immature Bonaparte's Gull put on a show near the island as did a family of Arctic Tern.

After seven and a half hours, the party decided to call it quits and headed for home with visions of shorebirds dancing in their heads.

--Shirley Cohrs.

August 8 -- Yarmouth and area - Shorebird Trip

About 20 people were at the meeting place (C.P.R. Station in Yarmouth) by 9:00 a.m., and we went directly to Cook's Beach near Pinkney's Point, as tide was high at 10:00 a.m., and the "peep" should be assembled at their usual roosts.

They were there in full force, about 2/3 Semipalmated Sandpipers and 1/3 Semipalmated Plover. The flock was enormous; I estimated 30 to 40 thousand. They were densely packed on the shingle ridge and in flight--no White-rumped nor Dunlins were certainly identified.

The gravel ridges on the marsh were a disappointment; where we expected Knot, Lesser Golden Plover, perhaps a Whimbrel or two, there were only a few Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, a scattering of Least Sandpipers and half-a-dozen Turnstones.

Back to lunch in Peggy MacIntyre's garden and then expeditions to the flats at Sand Beach, west side of the harbour and to Sunday Point which had always been a sure bet for Sharp-tailed Sparrows, but this year let us down completely.

Not one of our better trips, though the banking and swirling flocks of "peep" at Cook's Beach were a thrilling sight.

Land birds were of course sparse, although there were several Harriers, a Kestrel or two and a smattering of Savannah Sparrows.

--C.R.K. Allen

August 9 - Evangeline Beach

Grand Pré skies were overcast but later cleared for us. Ten cars drove to a field just off the dykelands at Hortonville, where there was an impressive flock of roosting "peeps" at high tide: Semipalmated Sandpipers, Least Sandpipers, and Semipalmated Plovers, perhaps 2500 in total?

Then we caravanned back across the dykelands and blundered into a field with a roost of 100 Short-billed Dowitchers, 15 Black-bellied Plovers, 2 Ruddy Turnstones, and 2 Hudsonian Godwits. We also saw Ring-billed Gulls, oodles of Ravens and Crows (good comparisons), and a Red-tailed Hawk.

Next, as usual on these trips, we went to the cottages to the east of Evangeline Beach. Soon after we arrived there, several large flocks of peeps flew in from several directions to make one very large gray carpet-flock, covering most of the visible beach. Then some people strolling on the beach made most of them fly a bit, and it was quite a spectacle to the eyes and ears.

Finally, after a lengthy view of this immense flock of perhaps 10 or 15 thousand peeps, we walked east along the beach. As we approached the Boot Island end of the sand, and as the ebbing tide exposed the rich mud flats, we viewed a few hundreds of dowitchers, about 75 Black-bellied Plovers, 4 Hudsonian Godwits, 3 turnstones, and only a single White-rumped Sandpiper.

--Jim Wolford

Alas, no report was received of the June 21st trip in the Antigonish area, although it must have taken place as this picture proves!



*D. J. Kennedy, Bob Bancroft, Carin Somers
Bob & Nancy More*

November 1 - President's Field Trip

It was billed as the "President's Field Trip", but since I'm no longer the president, it ended up being the Past President's Field Trip.

Sunday, November 1, was bright and sunny and fifteen of us met at the Porter's Lake shopping centre at nine o'clock. I really wanted to be a good leader so I decided we should go directly to Martinique Beach but then Don MacNeill said, "There's a GREAT EGRET at Grand Desert", and of course, everyone wanted to go to Grand Desert and there sure enough, was a spectacular Great Egret.

So, then we went to Martinique Beach, on to Chezzetcook Beach and Three Fathom Harbour. I still really wanted to be a good leader so I decided we should go directly to Conrad's Beach but Don MacNeill butted in again and said, "There's a CATTLE EGRET at Grand Desert." and, of course, everyone wanted to go back to Grand Desert and there, sure enough, was a spectacular Cattle Egret.

I did manage to show the group twenty-eight other great species (but nobody remembers).

I know one thing, for sure; if I ever get to lead another Past President's Field Trip, I'm going to leave Don MacNeill at home. We'll just meet at Grand Desert and stay there.

Bob Dickie (Past President).



August 15 - Fuller's Bridge, Cape Breton

The Cape Breton branch of the Nova Scotia Bird Society always looks forward to the day we spend at Fuller's Bridge. Eldon Meikle has always been our leader, and he is a competent guide.

August 15 was a perfectly calm morning when we assembled at Marion Bridge. The Mira River was an absolute sheet of glass, so that everything was double, even a row of dahlias, planted near the water, were perfectly duplicated in reverse.

Mostly we do a bit of birding along here, but nothing seemed to be moving or speaking except one very young Bluejay having what sounded like a screaming tantrum to begin his day.

We decided to keep straight on for Fuller's Bridge without lingering along the way as we sometimes do, in order to be there at low tide when the birds are out on the flats. However, along the way we did see a fine Rough-legged Hawk, a couple of loons, a Sharp-shinned Hawk, Kingfisher, Cedar Waxwing and swallows, on the fly, so to speak.

When we reached Fuller's Bridge, the whole company behaved with extreme rudeness--we parked in a neat row, everybody jumped out, pointed our fingers, and exclaimed, "Oh, look at the eagles!" The eagles, hunched up, half-asleep and obviously full to the teeth with whatever they had had for breakfast, treated us with the contempt we deserved. They were in a couple of rather low trees very near the road and had no intention of allowing eighteen people to disturb them.

We turned our backs on the eagles and looked in the opposite direction--lo, two Short-billed Dowitchers, stitching along in the mud. Sandpipers and plovers were there, all happily feeding and willing to be watched--they kept us interested for a long time. Ruddy Turnstones, Willets, terns and herons conducted their affairs in our view. The large numbers do not seem to have arrived. They are probably waiting for a north wind; it always seems to bring them in. We didn't see any Black-bellied Plover nor godwit. I always look forward to seeing godwits at Fuller's Bridge, but not on that day.

From Fuller's Bridge we went to Gabarus to eat our lunch perched on the rocks watching a few Great Cormorant and the aquatic-minded members of the group disporting themselves in Gabarus Harbour.

It was a lovely hot summer day with plenty of interesting birds and congenial companions. What more could one ask?

--Sara MacLean

September 5-7 - Seal Island

At 0900 hours 15 eager NSBS field trippers clambered aboard Carleton Greenwood's new boat and set off for the two-hour crossing to Seal Island. We stopped off briefly at Bon Portage to pick up Peter Smith and two Acadia students who supplied all our kitchen equipment and we were off. En route, several White-sided Dolphins and one Minke Whale were sighted but the pelagic birds kept outside of binocular range.

We were to stay in the Coast Guard quarters near the lighthouse, and with the assistance of Senior Keeper, Clayton Penney, we were installed by 1300 hours, had a quick lunch and groups dispersed to explore the island. Many of us had brought along Eric Mills' timely article in the July 1987 issue of Nova Scotia Birds, "Seal Island, Nova Scotia - A birder's Guide", and a very useful guide it was --and the birds were there. Near the lighthouse there were Cedar Waxwings, Eastern Kingbirds, Northern Oriole, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Bobolink, Catbird, Yellow-breasted Chat, Great-crested Flycatcher, several Prairie Warblers and one Yellow-throated Warbler. It is worth noting here that there was very little passerine movement over the weekend, since this warbler was seen each day within 50 m of its original location. The woods near Salt Water Pond produced a Clay-coloured Sparrow, a lifer for many of us.

Farther along, a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher associated with Boreal Chickadees, Golden-crowned Kinglets and Red-breasted Nuthatch. Close by, a Winter Wren sang and eventually became visible. Scrambling over the cobbles, we disturbed a Marsh Wren, remarkably elusive in this habitat. Between here and Ship Pond, most of the group were able to obtain good views of both of our regular Cuckoos, the Yellow-billed with its rufous primaries being a new bird for many of us.

Several hikes to the West Village yielded White-winged Crossbill and Solitary and Spotted Sandpipers. Near the small ponds there were Northern Harrier and Merlin, the latter catching dragonflies! Shorebirds along the sandy beaches included Black-bellied, Lesser Golden and Semipalmated Plover, Turnstone, Sanderling and Semipalmated Sandpiper. Big Pond held several species of ducks and Pied-billed Grebe. Someone scared up a Sora. At least 4 hummingbirds frequented the flowers near the lobster traps at the Village.

To round out the list most of the common warblers and all the regular Empidonax flycatchers were also sighted. Our weekend group total was 116 species; several of the group had 100+, individually. It was a terrific weekend trip--good weather, great companionship and superb birding. Our sincere thanks go to skipper Carleton Greenwood, Lightkeeper Clayton Penney and Peter Smith, who made most of the travel and accommodation arrangements for us.

--Bob McDonald

September 12 - North Sydney area

Our Cape Breton society enjoyed seven field trips this season with a good attendance. Our last one was on September 12, and was one of the most beautiful days of our summer.

First we visited Dr. Richardson and saw 2 Barred Owls, 2 Short-eared Owls and a Kestrel. With various stops we drove through Westmount, Pt. Edward, North Sydney and on to Pt. Aconi, where we had lunch. We drove through to Hank's family farm at Big Bras d'Or, then on to Groves Point Provincial Park, where we planned our trips for 1988. We had an attendance of twelve, as some of our regulars had other engagements. We saw 30 species. Our leader was Hedley Hopkins.

--B. Hopkins

September 20 - Evangeline Beach

Overcast skies and occasional light drizzle dampened our spirits a bit, but eight vehicles began our caravan across the Grand Pré dykelands. Bernard Forsythe led us first to a Merlin feeding upon some prey item (2 more Merlins were seen today). Then he showed us a field that held roosting shorebirds, but the windy drizzle and distance frustrated our viewing attempts at Dunlins, a Red Knot, Black-bellied Plovers, and Semipalmated Sandpipers. Elsewhere the dykelands produced several Northern Harriers and 2 very approachable Pectoral Sandpipers. As we gawked at the Pectorals, a small flock of Lesser Golden Plovers flew in and landed in front of us.

Preliminary scouting on the fields and beach suggested that a beach walk would be unproductive, so we caravanned all day, first to Gaspereau. At the river there were a dozen Greater Yellowlegs and sitting on a fence post, an adult Bald Eagle. Some open fields that yesterday held almost 100 Killdeer only had 8 today. Also, several clouds of Starlings were seen flying about.

Lunch was finished at White Rock (junction of Black and Gaspereau Rivers), where there were 60 Common Mergansers, a Great Blue Heron, a Double-crested Cormorant, and a kingfisher--what a convention of fish-eating birds! (Kimberly Thorpe found a pretty diversion--a yellow and black woollybear caterpillar of a spotted tussock moth).

Then we drove to Sheffield Mills, where the smelly manure-mud flats of one farm have been a bonanza for shorebirds and ducks in recent falls. There were eight kinds of shorebirds today, with the best being 2 juvenile Stilt Sandpipers very close to us, and it was nice to have Lesser Yellowlegs with them for comparison.

Still at Sheffield Mills, "Hennigar's marsh" produced 5 Wood Ducks, but only a few of us saw them. Another pond had 13 American Wigeon and a flock of Red-winged Blackbirds.

Our last stop was at Harris' Pond in the centre of Canning. There we saw a few Greater Yellowlegs swimming like huge phalaropes. Also there were lots of ducks (much like Sullivan's Pond in Dartmouth), Ring-billed Gulls, a Red-tailed Hawk, lots of Song and White-throated and Swamp Sparrows, a Common Yellowthroat, etc.

It was interesting to have a very enthusiastic pair of birders from Alabama on this trip. They invited us to view their yard and feeders with 200 hummingbirds at a time! (unbelievable, yes, but they said they've shown many flabbergasted people).

My species list for the day totalled 46.

--Jim Wolford

October 10-13 - Brier Island

This Thanksgiving weekend, Brier Island lived up to its reputation of being one of Nova Scotia's hot spots for birds and bird watchers. Eighteen people showed up for the trip, with Brier House as the headquarters. A few individuals stayed at cottages, in vans and elsewhere.

The first good birds of the weekend were a Whippoor-will and a Yellow-billed Cuckoo, seen early Saturday morning. Our first group outing was to North Light. Migration was very much in evidence there, as large flocks of passerines periodically crossed from Freeport to Brier. From the lighthouse, we saw gannets and Black Guillemots and later in the day, a Manx Shearwater was seen there by Roger Foxall. Sparrows and warblers were seen at the forest edges, including one Pine Warbler. Later, a drive through town turned up a couple of Eastern Phoebes and some more warblers. On Gull Rock Road, the main attraction was a Peregrine Falcon, and at Pond Cove Beach there was a smattering of shore birds: Lesser Golden Plover, Black-billed Plovers, Yellow Legs (Gr.), Ruddy Turnstone and Pectoral Sandpipers.

Afternoon at Lighthouse Hill produced an immature Bald Eagle, a good number of Kestrels, Merlins and many sharpies--easily the most common hawk of the weekend. Also in abundance were Yellow-shafted Flickers. Earlier in the day Roger had seen a Cooper's Hawk and so, every Sharp-shinned was checked twice for a possible Cooper's.

Bridge games at Brier House were the focal point of the evenings.



*Don MacNeill and friend
on Brier Island trip*

A pelagic birds and whale watching trip was scheduled for Sunday morning and the weather was favourable, allowing us to see Guillemots, Gannets at close range, Kittiwakes, one Sooty Shearwater and good views of Greater Shearwaters, one Puffin and two Red Phalaropes. Excellent views of Hump Backed and Fin whales were also enjoyed. The show stealer of this open ocean excursion, however, was not of the marine variety. A tired American Goldfinch in winter plumage circled the boat searching for a landing spot and it finally chose Don MacNeill's shoulder for touch down. Almost immediately it made itself at home and fell asleep much to the delight of all who had cameras. Upon awakening, it became startled and flew off again. Five minutes later we saw it at the stern end flying at top speed to catch up. This time, after landing, it was captured by Carol and given a warm nest--Bob MacDonald's wool hat, where it immediately fell asleep again. When it finally awakened, it headed straight for Brier Island. As we arrived back on land it began to rain. In mid afternoon, a very strong movement of Robins was seen from Pea Jack Road.

Monday morning, our last chance at the birds, produced one Turkey Vulture, a flock of Water Pipits, one Broad Winged Hawk, one Red-tailed Hawk and one Eastern Bluebird, seen in the last half hour by Roger and son Andrew. We departed Brier at noon, at which time we logged 101 different species. A few, not mentioned above were: Osprey, N. Goshawk, Great Horned Owl (voice only), Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Great Crested Flycatcher, N. Mockingbird, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Brown Thrasher, Wilson's Warbler and Yellow-billed cuckoos. In all, twelve birds of prey were seen.

Azor Vienneau



Up-Coming Field Trips

- Saturday
February 13 ANNAPOLIS CO./DIGBY AREA
-wintering waterfowl and gulls. Leader: Sharon Hawboldt (1-638-3387). Meet in the parking lot of the church on the old Highway #1 in the town of Annapolis Royal at 1000 hours. We will tour the ice-free areas at the Causeway, in Digby and Bear River to view the abundant waterfowl at this time of year. (possible Barrow's Goldeneye and Lesser Black-backed gull).
- Sunday
February 28 SEWER STROLL II - Leader: Bill Caudle (465-3977). This trip will begin in the sunshine at 0830 hours at Hartlen's Point and work in a counter-clockwise direction through Eastern Passage, Dartmouth (including Sullivan's Pond), Bedford (Mill Cove), and Halifax (Volvo Plant), then out towards Herring Cove.
- Saturday
March 26 GLACE BAY SANCTUARY - Lingerin winter birds. Leader: Sara MacLean. Meet at Dearn's Corner at 0800 hours.
- Saturday
April 2 EASTERN SHORE - MARTINIQUE BEACH - Leader: Bob Dickie (443-0993). Late winter birds (waterfowl) and early arrivals (Piping Plover). Meet at the Scotia Bank on the Dartmouth side of the MacDonald Bridge at 0830 hours. The trip should finish by mid afternoon.
- Saturday
April 30 BRICKYARD ROAD & OYSTER COVE (Cape Breton). Early arrivals. Leader: Edie MacLeod. Meet at Mira Gut Bridge at 0800 hours.
- Sunday
May 1 AMHERST POINT BIRD SANCTUARY - waterfowl, shorebirds & early migrants. Leader: Allan Smith, CWS, Sackville (1-506-536-3025). Meet at the APBS parking lot at 0930 hours (take exit 3 from the TCH at the Wandlyn Inn and proceed a few km. towards Nappan; the entrance is on the left). Bring a lunch.
- Wednesday
May 18 HALIFAX COUNTY WARBLER WALK - Leader: Fred Dobson (852-3042). Meet at 0630 hours in the parking lot at the junction of the Prospect Road (Rte. 333) and the St. Margaret's Bay Road.
- Saturday
May 21 PARADISE/BRIDGETOWN (Anna. Co.) - Ducks, warblers and marsh birds. 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), their house is the first within the stone wall on the right (about 1.5 km east of the golf course. Fly repellent is recommended.
- Wednesday
May 25 YORK REDOUBT (Halifax) - warblers and other songbirds. Leader: Fulton Lavender (477-8984). Meet at 0630 hours at the York Redoubt entrance on Ferguson's Cove Rd., for two hours of 'pre-work' birding.

- Saturday
May 28 HANTS COUNTY DAY - many habitats and abundant birds.
Leader: Margaret Clark. Meet at the railroad crossing
in Mount Uniacke at 0800 hours. Be sure to pack a lunch
as this trip extends well into the afternoon.
- Saturday
May 28 WARBLER DAY AT BROWN'S LAKE (Cape Breton) - Leader:
Headley Hopkins. Meet at the Radar Base gate at 0800
hours.
- Sunday
May 29 SHUBENACADIE AREA (Hants County) - Leader: Roslyn
MacPhee (1-758-3265). Meet at 0600 hours in front of
the Scott's Restaurant in Shubenacadie.

Any questions and/or suggestions regarding field trips can be directed to Dave Currie, Greenwood Hgts., Box 369, R. R. #1 Armdale, N.S. B3L 4J1 or phone 1-876-8745.



Downy Woodpeckers have no unredeeming features. Photo Richard Stern, Kentville, Feb. 1987.

TROPICAL FORESTS: THEIR FUTURE AND OURS

Erick Greene
Department of Biology
Princeton University

My senses were overwhelmed. Giant trunks, festooned with clinging philodendrons and orchids, rise through many tiers of foliage to the unbroken canopy 60 metres overhead. Pencil-shafts of light pierce down into the cool dust of the forest floor. Recurring explosions of turquoise signal the approach of a large blue morpho butterfly. The humid air smells of the dank richness of the forest floor. A rustle alerts me to a group of javelinias, or wild pigs, foraging among the leaf litter. I remain still and they snort past, seemingly interested only in the grubs they are rooting up. The quiet is suddenly shattered by a squadron of macaws screaming overhead. They fly in perfect formation, with their metre-long tails trailing behind like scarlet contrails. From overhead to my left a low rumbling builds into a chorus of roaring howler monkeys. This is answered by another troop of howler monkeys to my right, quick to assert their territorial rights. A troop of capuchin monkeys erupts into frantic alarm calling as an Ornate Hawk-eagle glides through the forest on the lookout for a vulnerable baby monkey.

Although this was a scene I witnessed recently in Costa Rica, such biological profusion and pandemonium is typical of tropical forests in many parts of the world. Tropical rainforests stradle the equator in a belt roughly 2500 km wide. Standard Mercator projection maps give us an inflated perspective of the amount of existing tropical forests: only about 6% of the earth's surface is covered by tropical forests. The largest remaining tracts of rainforests are located in the Amazon basin (primarily in Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru), in equatorial Africa (Gabon and neighboring countries), and southeast Asia (Maylasia, Borneo, Sumatra, Papua New Guinea).

One of the most remarkable features of tropical forests is their phenomenal biological diversity. Biologists estimate that there are at least 10 million extant species of organisms, most of which are found in the tropics. This is a conservative estimate, and this figure may be as high as 50 million. Only about 1.7 million of these species have been described since Linnaeus began classifying organisms. Hence, most species on earth have never been classified. In fact, at the current rate of cataloguing new species it would take over 4000 years to give scientific names to all species now living, let alone study them in any detail! These figures emphasize the importance of the tropics as the storehouse of the earth's biological diversity: over 90% of all species are packed into 6% of the earth's surface!

The high biological diversity of the tropics can be put in perspective by a comparison with more familiar temperate ecosystems. An hectare (100 by 100 metres) of rich Acadian forest in Kejamakujik Park will contain about 10 tree species. In contrast, one hectare of prime rain forest could contain 200 tree species. Any bird watcher who has been fortunate enough to spend some time in the tropics can attest to the high biological diversity. Whereas in Nova Scotia we have just the Ruby-throated Hummingbird to contend with, a good flower patch in South America may feed 20 species of hummingbirds in a day. Dr. John Terborgh of Princeton University has recorded more species of birds on a small plot of rainforest in Peru than occur in

all of Canada!

TROPICAL FORESTS ARE DISAPPEARING

Tropical forests are succumbing to human encroachment at an alarming rate. These forests are disappearing at a rate of about 70,000 km square per year, which is equivalent to about 4000 hockey rinks of forest per hour. At this rate, virtually all of the earth's rainforests will be stripped bare in twenty years.

The ultimate cause of the destruction of tropical forests is undoubtedly the exponential increase in the number of humans on earth. Figure 1 shows the growth of human numbers during the last 12,000 years. During most of the time that Homo sapiens has existed, there have been no more than 5 million people on earth. By the time of Christ, the human population had grown to about 200 million. With few setbacks (notably the recurring Bubonic Plagues of the 14th and the 17th centuries), human numbers had increased to about 500 million by 1700. Then, in this century human population size has undergone unprecedented growth, surpassing the 5 billion mark in June of this year. It is this population crisis that ultimately underlies all of the "causes" of tropical deforestation.

In Central and South America, "slash and burn" land clearing is responsible for about 70% of the initial destruction of tropical forests. Families move into an area, usually after a road is put in, and cut down the trees to make room for their garden plots. The main problem with this system of agriculture is that tropical soils are very thin. They become quickly depleted of nutrients and wash away with the torrential rains. The soil becomes so seriously degraded within a couple of years that the farms are abandoned. The family moves on, and the cycle of destruction is repeated anew. About 15% of tropical forest destruction is attributable to lumbering, and the remaining 15% is initially cleared for cattle ranching.

SO WHAT?

The most immediate biological consequence of the loss of large areas of tropical forests is the extinction of many species of living organisms. Recall that most of the world's species occur only in the tropics: the earth's biological richness will be seriously depleted with the continued destruction of tropical forests. The National Academy of Sciences, which is the scientific advisory body to the US Congress, has recently issued a sobering report on global biological diversity. Current extinction rates are higher now than they have been during recent geological history, and are approaching those of the catastrophic mass extinctions that occurred about 65 million years ago. It is estimated that about 5 species go extinct every day, and this figure is expected to increase rapidly to about 50 species a day.

Although naturalists decry these high extinction rates, most people are not concerned by this (after all, most species to go extinct are "only" beetles). Thus, we need to also put forward more utilitarian arguments about why the fate of tropical forests concern all people.

Wholesale destruction of tropical forests may increase atmosphere CO_2 levels, leading to a general warming and drying trend. It is thought that such a drying trend would render agriculture impossible in many parts of the Canadian Prairies. It is somewhat ironic, but perhaps the global climate changes resulting from tropical deforestation will be first noticed here in Canada, far from the tropics.

To paraphrase Ralph Waldo Emerson, weeds are plants whose virtues have not been recognized. Biologists are becoming aware that tropical forests are an undiscovered cornucopia of useful plants and animals. Recently, it was discovered that an extract from a periwinkle plant from Madagascar is extremely effective in the treatment of childhood leukemia and Hodgkin's disease. This rare plant is found in some of the areas most threatened by deforestation, and might have easily gone extinct before its anti-cancer properties were discovered. Over 70% of anti-cancer drugs now in use are derived from tropical plants and animals. Three species of plants (wheat, corn, and rice) now provide over 50% of the food needs of humans. Tropical forests contain hundreds of plants that could be superior food sources for the people of the tropics.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

There are no easy solution to the problem of tropical deforestation. The causes are too complex: they involve a human population growing out of control, and the social and political instabilities of many of the desperately poor countries where rainforests are found. With the recent establishment of South Moresby Park in the Queen Charlotte Islands, we have seen how hard it can be to set aside even very small preserves in a developed country such as Canada. It is clear that much of the world's tropical forests will be destroyed--the question really is how much can be saved.

In spite of the gloomy statistics, there are many positive things that individuals can do. First of all, there are many highly-respected, international organizations which are actively involved in tropical conservation. In my recent talk to the NSBS, I highlighted two of these exciting projects: the Monteverde Cloud Forest Preserve, and the Guanacaste Park (both in Costa Rica). Although both of these projects were started within the last couple years, they have both been wildly successful. I have attached a list of organizations devoted to tropical conservation, and I urge anyone interested to join one or more of these groups. The cost of setting aside undisturbed tropical forest is surprisingly cheap: with a donation of \$30 you could set aside an acre of Quetzal habitat forever!

There are also things that local nature groups, such as the Nova Scotia Bird Society, can do. Many Canadian nature organizations are sponsoring the purchase of land in these growing tropical parks. Some Canadian naturalist groups then have field trips to visit the very plot of tropical forest they helped preserve! This is the biological equivalent of the Foster Child Program.

On a broader political level, our government should be encouraged with letters to tie its foreign aid programs to ecologically-sound projects. For example, CIDA is now engaging in tropical reforestation projects, and this is a welcome change from many of the more destructive activities supported in the past. Some novel ways of setting aside rainforest are now being considered by governments and international conservation groups. Many Third World Countries are staggering under enormous foreign debts, and it is now clear that many of these debts will not be repaid. However, some imaginative conservation groups are paying off some of these debts in return for the protection of forests. Conservation activities are surprisingly cheap compared to other forms of foreign aid: a CANDU reactor, which costs taxpayers about \$180,000.000 in subsidies, could set aside an entire park system.

The fact that the scene I described in the first paragraph took place in a fairly small preserve contains an encouraging message: every little bit helps!

ORGANIZATIONS DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION
OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

WORLD WILDLIFE FUND (Monteverde Cloud Forest Preserve)
60 St. Clair Avenue, E.
Suite 201, Toronto
Ontario, M4T 1N5

NATIVE CONSERVANCY INTERNATIONAL (Guanacaste National Park)
1785 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
4th Floor
Washington, D.C., U.S.A. 20036

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL
New York Zoological Society
Bronx, New York, U.S.A. 10460

INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION
OF NATURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES
Avenue du Mont-Blanc
CH-1196
Gland, Switzerland

NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL
122 E. 42nd Street
New York, New York, U.S.A. 10168

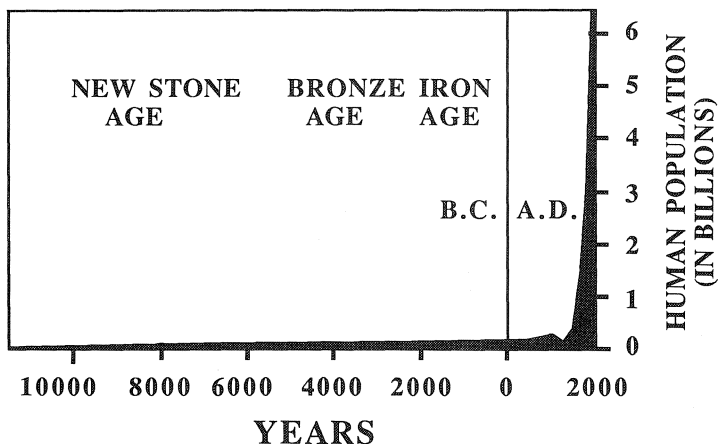


Figure 1: Estimated human population size for the last 12,000 years. (Adapted from the book *Ecoscience: Population, Resources, Environment* by P. R. Ehrlich, A. H. Ehrlich, and J. P. Holdren, Published in 1977 by Freeman & Co.)

BOOK REVIEW

Title: A Naturalist's Notebook: Yarmouth County

Author: C.R.K. Allen

Publisher: Nimbus Publishing Ltd.

Pages: 120

Price: \$9.95

ISBN: 0-920852-76-9

This small volume is the type of book that any amateur naturalist will want to own, to pick up time and again, to savour the poetic and evocative descriptions, to learn from the author's keen observations and to dream of the joys of other seasons when weather and temperature depress the soul.

A Naturalist's Notebook consists of essays on the seasons of the year, including the Meander River series. Three habitats are singled out in separate chapters: the forest floor, the pond and the salt marsh. The introduction outlines some special features of Yarmouth County including human history and references to plants and animals unique to that County and/or the southwestern part of Nova Scotia.

While the author's observations center on a specific area, I do not consider this geographic association a limitation to a wider readership. On the contrary, anyone who has consciously experienced the phenomena of the seasons in this province will thoroughly enjoy C.R.K. Allen's masterful descriptions of bird and insect behaviour and delight in the word pictures of plants, grasses, trees and shrubs. I would like to mention here that Kathy Kaulbach's drawings enhance and complement the author's skillful use of words.

Those who know the author will be particularly pleased that his essays on the Meander River, Hants County, are included in this publication. Prior to his retirement, Charlie Allen was, for many years, very active in the Halifax area bird-watching fraternity. He led many field trips, including some along the Meander, always teaching the fine art of observation and the skill of careful listening, while at the same time awakening an awareness of plants, trees and habitats in general.

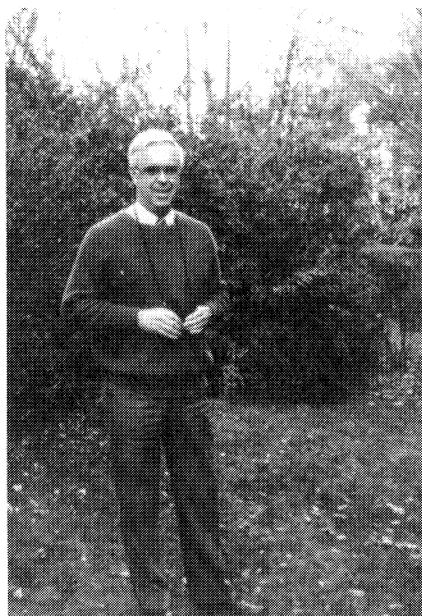
Nimbus Publishing deserves credit for making available this rich collection of regional nature observation.

This book is a personal guide which will deepen the reader's interests and widen his/her horizons. While the author's reflections are anything but dry, scientific recitations of fact, they will nevertheless increase and enrich the reader's knowledge profoundly. C.R.K. Allen manages to render even winter appealing, enticing exploration of our great outdoors.

--Carin Somers

THE SIXTH OF A SERIES ABOUT MEMBERS...

PROFILES.....



Meet Bob Dickie,

Many of our members know Bob very well by mail, as he is our hard working Records Editor. Some reporters enter into correspondence with Bob in connection with their bird sightings, although they have never met him. Thus it was with great relief that Sara MacLean, meeting him face to face for the first time on a Bird Islands field trip, exclaimed, "You're real!" Bob is indeed real, and very active in our society, having in the last few years served as Secretary, Vice-President and President, as well as Records Editor and Chairman of the Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund.

When not birding or thinking about birds, Bob can be found at Duc d'Anville School, where he is the Principal. He has spent most of his life in Halifax, attending LeMarchant and Queen Elizabeth Schools and St. Mary's University.

His love of the outdoors came early, as his father was a keen sportsman. A trip to the prairies and several to Florida fueled a budding interest in birds. However, it was not until he was in his early forties that he became a "real birdwatcher". Seeing the 25th Anniversary display of our Society at the Museum triggered an impulse to join and, as he says, he was lucky that his first field trip was led by Don and Joyce Purchase. They took him in tow and showed him and his wife Helen so much enthusiasm and so many new birds that they were hooked at once.

Bob became an observer for the Atlantic and Gulf Coast Beached Bird Project, and for several years surveyed Martinique Beach in search of seabird cadavers. This naturally led to much facetiousness among his fellow birders who were heard to refer to "Bob's battered birds" or Dickie's dead dickies".

Bob does most of his birding in the Halifax Co. area, but each spring a trip to Florida widens his experience and enables him to add some new species to his life list. He is always ready to help a new birder and has led many field trips for the Museum. Countless times he has taken visiting birders out to show them some of our local specialities, and help them find their most wanted species.

Should you wish to meet a true gentleman, a generous person and an asset to our society--meet Bob Dickie.

--Shirley Cohrs

SOME PROBLEMS AROSE AT ONE OF THE RECENT RARE BIRD VIEWINGS. THIS PROMPTED THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH FROM ONE OF OUR MEMBERS:

BIRDING ETIQUETTE

Although birding is often a solitary activity, there are circumstances where this activity infringes upon the rights and enjoyment of others. I would like to comment on two aspects of birding behaviour that deserve special mention.

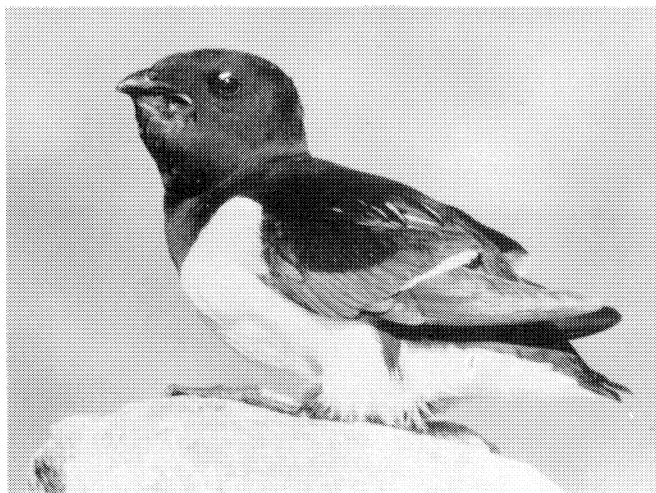
The first relates to private property. There are many instances where it is necessary to go upon private lands in order to search for a bird. Birders should keep in mind that many people will probably resent this intrusion so ask permission of the owners beforehand. This, of course, only applies where there is habitation close by. A lot of private lands are unmarked and presumably may be entered without problem. While on others' property, take care not to cause any damage to gardens, etc. Ensure the owners are not inconvenienced in any way (e.g., by blocking driveways) and remember to close gates behind you.

The second relates to behaviour around rare birds. A number of our members (and others from outside our province) invest a lot of effort to see these rarities. Observers should thus take great pains not to disturb the bird. Otherwise, the bird may flee from the place where it has been reported and be missed by birders arriving later. It should also be kept in mind that any rare bird is probably under additional stress since it is in a strange environment. Don't add to its stress. So, when viewing these rarities, stay well back from them, keep noise levels down, and refrain from jumping up and down and shouting "another lifer", while popping a champagne cork to celebrate.

DEATH OF A DOVEKIE: WINTER STORM AND PREDATION

D. N. Nettleship & M. A. Haynes

At 0828h, 2 December 1987, following a 24-h rain storm with gale force winds from the southeast, a single Dovekie Alle alle, in adult summer plumage was sighted 300 m offshore in Head Harbour, Head St. Margaret's Bay, Nova Scotia. The bird, sitting high on the water, paddled rapidly across the width of the bay from west to east, towards Whynaught's Point, halting three times en route. It appeared exhausted and/or ill, lacking the usual locomotory movements associated with a healthy auk. At 0837, after successfully crossing the bay to 30-40 m from the west shore of Whynaught's Island, it raised itself halfway out of the water, shook its wings and dove, remaining underwater for roughly 25 seconds. Soon after reemerging at the seasurface, a Common Loon, Gavia immer, surfaced close by and swam towards the Dovekie. The Dovekie's response was to turn and attempt to swim away. The loon lunged at the Dovekie, using its beak as a lance; after a few quick jabs it then took hold of the Dovekie's wing and proceeded to force it underwater. The Dovekie managed to break loose, but the activity attracted the attention of an adult Great Black-backed Gull, Larus marinus, that was flying overhead. The gull abruptly altered its flight direction and dove into the water between the loon and Dovekie at 0844h. The loon retreated, and the gull caught hold of the Dovekie, turned it on its back, made a few rapid jabs with its beak towards the lower rib/abdominal region, and then held the Dovekie under water. The Dovekie struggled to escape, but by 0849h it was motionless and the gull began to eviscerate and eat its prey. Doubtless the Dovekie was part of a "wreck", blown in to nearshore waters of St. Margaret's Bay as a consequence of the severe storm the previous day, and may not have recovered even in the absence of gulls and other predators. The observation, however, underlines the fact that large Larus gulls are not only scavengers, but important predators. The irony of a Dovekie dying in coastal waters of southern Nova Scotia after successfully completing a 3600 km migration from northwest Greenland, where it probably spent the 1987 summer at its breeding colony, remains.



46 HOURS ON THE RUTH MARIE

James W. Taylor

This vacation I had a little free time in Dartmouth, so I thought it might be nice to get in a pelagic trip. Knowing some fishermen in Eastern Passage, just south of Dartmouth, I called Wayne Eddy. Sure enough, they were going out that night for two days--had to think about that one, but decided that here was the chance to do it right, so away I went.

August 19 at 8:00 p.m., we started to load 35 tubs of trawl line, ice and food for our 60 mile trip out of Eastern Passage, ending up some 40 miles off Tangier. Captain Wayne Eddy and crew members Paul and Scott, had things ready at 10:00 p.m. and we were on our way, six hours of steaming towards our fishing grounds and my bird watching seas and skies. By 11:00 p.m., with Wayne at the helm, the rest of us were in bed--the crew each took two hour turns at the helm. I recall feeling the change in the pitch of the engine and seeing two bodies go above to help lay out the 35 tubs (16 miles of hook on line --seven separate sets with floater markers each end).

At 6:00 a.m. I'm called above, "Jim! Jim! Get up here quick", and sitting on the foreward bow area of the swordfish spear ramp are two immature Yellow-crowned Night Herons. Nice to be so close to these--a couple of hopeful photos, and at 8:00 a.m., when Paul went foreward to look for swordfish, they took flight to the east. I hope they made it, they had a good rest.

It's a fine, sunny day and the sea is very calm. The ocean is swarming with Greater Shearwater, Greater Black-backed and Herring Gulls. Wilson's Storm Petrels skitter about and things stay much that way to 10:00 a.m. Breakfast was at 9:00 a.m. and I lost mine by 9:30. Two full days ahead living on pop, yogurt and granola bars--a real diet, but it stays down.

Second year Gannets, seven in all, over the next hour and a half are seen, then four Northern Phalaropes and two Black-legged Kittiwakes. At 10:30, at last Sooty Shearwaters are seen, perhaps over the next two days some 80-100 are viewed. A couple of photos of this fellow and then to change film--no new reel, I left it at home. I'll regret this later, but this far out nothing can be done.

One Double-crested Cormorant flies in and lands near the boat; the crew doesn't recall ever seeing one out here before. Four more Northern Phalaropes, then things slow down until 1:37 p.m., when a "lifer" appears--a light phase Pomarine Jaeger, which flies around the Ruth Marie for some 10 minutes, just casually moving around and picking up some fish innards as it pleases. Two Common Terns show up and during the afternoon several more are seen. 2:13 p.m.--another lifer stays in view, at times within 100 feet of the ship--a Manx Shearwater--he can really get around, a beautiful thing in motion. After looking at hundreds of Greater (I estimate 1500 over the two days) and the Sootys and Gulls, he really stood out when seen moving through the crowd. He stayed only a minute, but already the trip was worth it.

At 2:30 p.m., Paul notes a small bird landing foreward and over the next two hours he's all over the boat. He's only sparrow size, but Peterson and books after I return home leave me with a Bobolink. Very buff in colour and finch-like bill, he meets every field mark that I have sketched in my notebook--he was only three feet away from me and at one stage, on Paul's fingers in the cabin. The small size took me back a bit.

A little after 3:00 p.m., two more Pomarine Jaegers show up. These fellows are also light phased but have bars on the breast, rump and under body before tail and their cry is much like that of the Osprey, but not as loud.

To the stern, pecking away and very buoyantly floating around, is an immature Fulmar; he stays for over a half an hour. His bill is tubed like the Shearwater, but only the first half inch is yellow as yet, his wings are very small and are just tail length when folded.

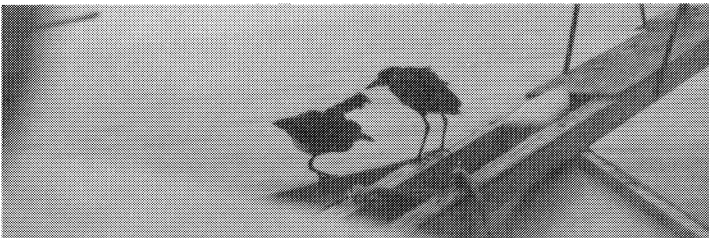
At 7:30 p.m., to close out the evening, there are five more Pomarine Jaegers, making eight for the day. The saying that when you see a lifer then you see lots of them, holds true for this one.

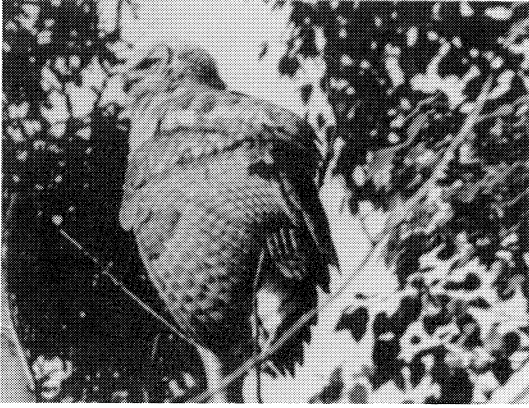
We now had 15 tubs of the trawl line hauled in, counting the break in the line on both ends of a set, that left over three tubs on the bottom to try to snag on the next trip with lines set over the lost one, in hopes of catching onto it. We drop anchor and sit for the night, get some sleep and get ready for the remaining 20 tubs of trawl tomorrow. The next day has one ready for breakfast at 5:00 a.m. to start at 6:00 a.m. First, a Greater Shearwater that slept on the boat during the night has to be removed. We toss him overboard and away he skips over the water and away. It's still calm and even lightning all around in the distance looks beautiful.

It's not long clearing out and a nice, sunny day begins. The same general list of birds that were here early yesterday are in evidence except that Sootys are here too. Around 9:00 an immature Iceland Gull joins the crowd. Shortly, as I look aft, Wayne and Scott exclaim that one of those yellow-red fellows has gone into the cabin--all warblers are yellow or red to them. I assume it may have been a Blackburnian and continue to look at the Iceland. Ten minutes later he is gone so I feel I should look at the warbler. Jumping down from my aft perch, I enter the cabin. There, sitting on the window sill is the most beautiful Prothonotary Warbler one could ever hope to see. He stays for almost three hours; one can almost get to within hand's reach of him while he takes a nap. Every so often he hops about pecking here and there, then away he goes to the east. I can only hope he made it for others to see ashore.

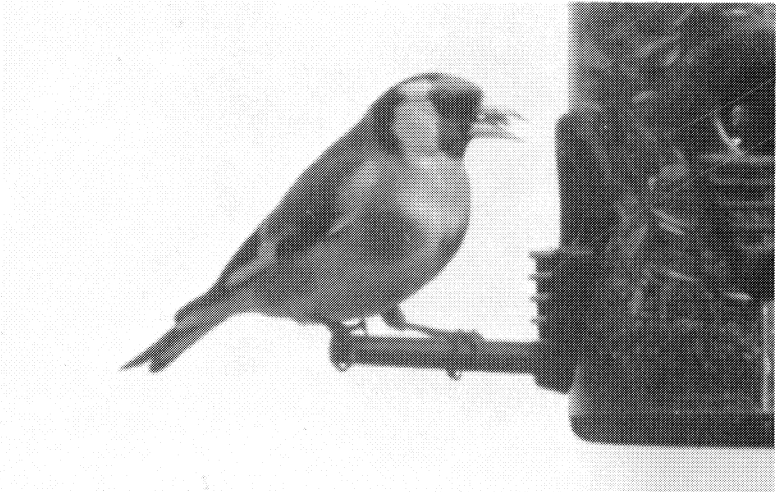
Then it begins to blow a bit and the number of birds drops off. By 2:00 p.m., the trawl and three tons of fish are all in and cleaned and stored and we are on our six hour trip in. It is three and a half hours before I even see land. I go below for a nap but am fortunately up at 5:15 to see land appear. Then at 6:00 p.m., two Gull-billed Terns approach from behind, veer off and head towards the Hartlen's Point-Chebucto Head area--what a way to end a great trip.

It's getting dark when we pass Lawlor's Island and one can just see the Osprey in the trees around their nests, we dock and a tired boy heads for home and a good meal and a bath. It was a great trip but the next one might only be for a day--perhaps three or four would be better--who knows.





This young Great Horned Owl fledged very late about the second week in July--according to Karen Casselman, who photographed it. It seems to be drooping in the summer heat.



The European Goldfinch at Port Mouton was a beautiful sight, even if not properly "tickable". Photo Ian McLaren, Apr. 21, 1987.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

EDITOR, Nova Scotia Birds:

The reason I'm writing is to tell you about an interesting phenomenon we witnessed here on the 28th, 29th and 30th of July. I read of something similar in Tuft's book (the old one), and was naturally excited.

We had noticed the day before that there were three sapsuckers drilling holes in an English oak we have here. This in itself was unusual, because they usually only go for our big Scots pines. There were two immatures and a female adult bird. On the 28th, however, they were joined by the second adult and a pair of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, who spent the next three days gorging themselves on the sap that dripped from the new holes, as the sapsuckers drilled them.

We watched, somewhat spellbound, for hours. Both my visiting children were vastly intrigued and managed to get quite close without disturbing them. The whole menagerie came and went all day long, giving us a marvellous chance to observe them carefully. Between feedings, the hummingbirds would perch on a branch of the oak long enough for us to get a really good look.

This oak tree must be about forty odd years old, since it was planted by Katharine MacLennan from an acorn that came from Windsor Great Park. It is not large, having to fight for nourishment among the other trees, and it leafs out very late in the spring. There are some old holes in it that were made by sapsuckers years ago, but in the thirty years I have been coming (and then summer-living) here, I have not before seen them myself on this tree. Interestingly, the pines were entirely neglected this year, and until the 28th, we thought we were to be without sapsuckers in 1987.

Nancy More
Ben Eoin, C.B.

EDITOR, Nova Scotia Birds:

Owl pellets are needed by Nova Scotia teachers.

This fall, teachers will start using a program called Project WILD in which they use wildlife to teach such skills as math, language arts, science, physical education and music. The core of the program is a manual with 81 lesson plans teachers can follow. One of these involves examining owl pellets to extract the bones of prey animals, identify the prey and thus discover and draw a typical food chain. It is an excellent lesson; one that kids find fascinating.

The Department of Lands and Forests and the Nova Scotia Wildlife Federation are coordinating Project WILD but we need help to provide owl pellets for this exercise. Would you please run a notice in your next Bird Society Newsletter asking members to collect any pellets they find and send them to me for teachers who will be doing this lesson? Please point out that they should be air dried pellets and mailed in a small box--NOT IN A PLASTIC BAG!

Thank you for your help with this.

Address: P.O. Box 68
Truro, N.S. B2N 5B8

Anthony P. Duke
Wildlife Biologist

PEREGRINE FALCON

First in a series of Remarkable Raptors

by Bob Dickie

"Many Chimney Swifts were coursing above the fields, when the falcon made several dashes at them but missed. At last, as one turned to evade the rush, the (falcon) swung over on its back and, reaching up one foot as it shot by, caught the swift in its powerful grasp".

There are about sixty species of falcon in the world of which five (American Kestrel, Merlin, Peregrine, Prairie and Gyr) breed in North America. Of these, the Peregrine has two distinctions; it is the fastest and the rarest.

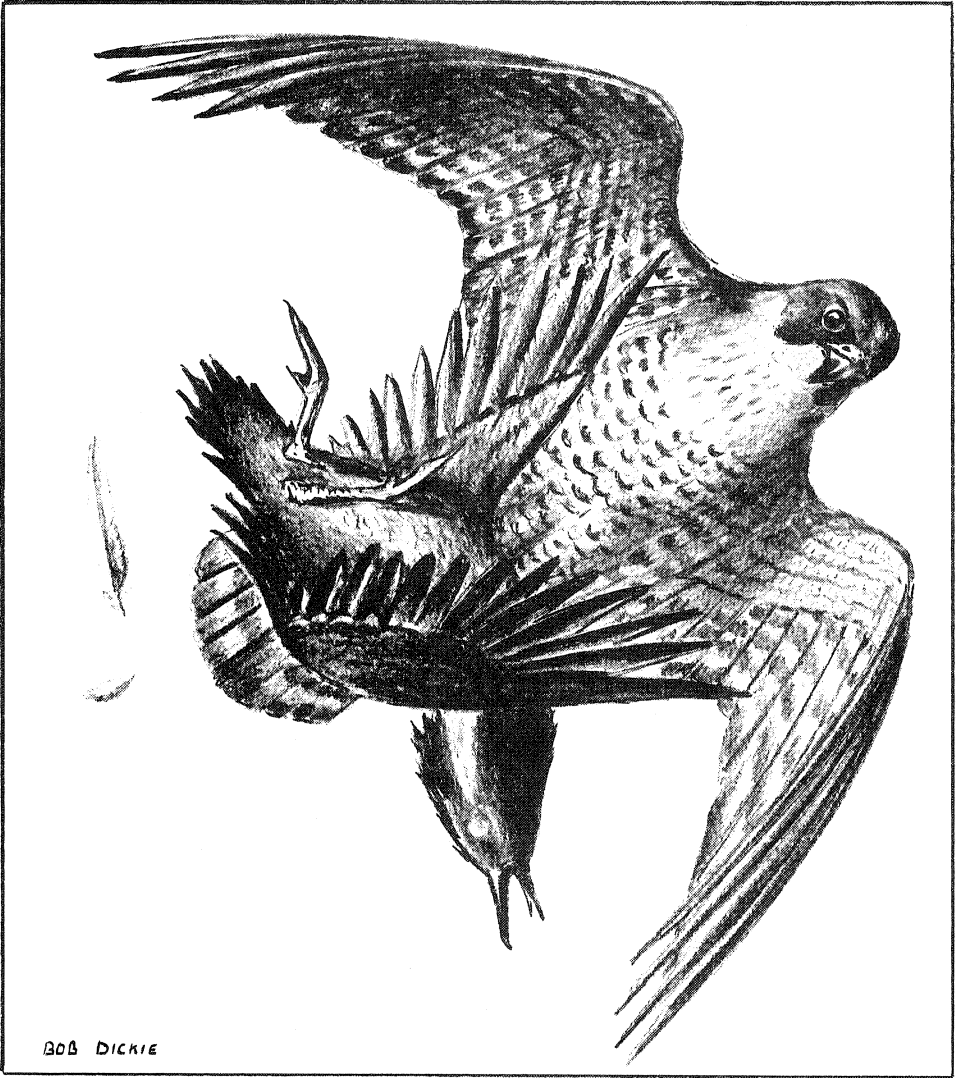
The word "Peregrine" is derived from a Latin word meaning wanderer. There are three races of this bird in Canada, the "peale" of the Queen Charlotte Islands, the "Tundrius" of the Arctic and the "Anatum" which once populated most of our continent but is now found only in the west. (Some authorities do not consider Tundrius and Anatum as separate).

"Endangered refers to any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. Both Anatum and Tundrius are endangered with the much rarer Anatum believed to be reduced to as few as two hundred breeding pairs on the entire continent. The cause of their decline is a disastrous drop in reproduction brought on by a high level of D. D. T. in the flesh of their prey.

Considered one of the fastest birds in the world, the Peregrine lives on a diet almost exclusively of birds which it prefers to catch on the wing. Contrary to popular opinion, Peregrines rarely dive directly on their prey but more often attack on the level or from slightly below. This attack is usually preceded by a "Stoop", a steep dive in which the bird's wings are pulled back against its body to reduce wind drag, thus enabling it to attain spectacular speed. When it reaches the altitude of its victim, the Peregrine pulls out of the dive, overtakes the other bird, passing directly over its back or with a corkscrew roll, directly underneath, lunging at it with its talons. The force of the attack is such that the victim usually dies instantly in mid air. The legendary speed of the Peregrine has been estimated at over two hundred miles per hour, but such speeds have not been proven.

The ability to fly at such speeds comes naturally but the ability to hunt at these same speeds must be learned. I saw an immature Peregrine chasing Rock Doves that had a substantial head start but, shifting into overdrive, the falcon soon closed the gap. At the last second, however, the slower doves turned abruptly in front of a large building, while the Peregrine's great speed forced him to circle around behind the building and when he emerged from the other side, his dinner was nowhere to be seen.

Bird lovers cringe at the knowledge that the Peregrine enjoys a menu of over one hundred bird species, including virtually every species known in our region, with the possible exception of the largest, and some raptors. In defending its brood it has attacked and killed such outsized adversaries as Snowy Owls and Red-shouldered Hawks.



BOB DICKIE

Peregrines seem to have a sense of humour, too. They have been observed chasing other birds, then, in a burst of speed, overtake the now terrified victim only to tap it gently on the back or head while passing on its way to other sport, like diving at full speed through large flocks of shore birds, causing the Sandpipers to scatter like feathers from an exploding pillow, but not even trying to catch one of them. They have also been observed participating with six or seven of their own kind in splendid aerobatics that seem to have little purpose other than sheer pleasure.

D.D.T. is no longer a threat in Canada or the United States (though still a problem in the Tropics). In 1975, the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell University, started a program of releasing the young of captive Peregrines into the wild in an attempt to restock the species in Eastern North America. In 1980, wild Peregrines from the program successfully raised young in New Jersey, the first in thirty years, east of the Mississippi River.

A similar program in Eastern Canada is now underway through the cooperation of the Government of Canada, the Province of Nova Scotia and the World Wildlife Fund. Young Peregrines are being released from sites around the Bay of Fundy over a period of five years and, with any luck, will result in a self-sustaining population of this Remarkable Raptor.



Bill Caudle receives a token of appreciation of his many years on the Executive. (Secretary, Vice-President, President and Past President).

BIRD STRIKE HAZARDS--AIRCRAFT AND AIRPORT STATISTICS

In Canada aircraft and birds share the same airspace and every year there are hundreds of cases of birds striking aircraft. In most cases the birds don't survive and the aircraft do, but there is often aircraft damage and, on rare occasions, a serious crash and loss of life. During migratory seasons the hazards presented by flocks of birds are greatly increased

The sixth meeting of the Bird Strike Committee Canada was held in May of 1987, and a variety of interesting statistics were revealed about bird hazards by region and airport. In 1985 there were 863 bird strikes reported, of which 48 resulted in some airframe damage, and 3 resulted in engine damage. Of the grand total, 767 strikes took place in Canada while the balance of 96 took place at foreign locations or enroute at overseas locations.

The civil aerodrome with the highest reported number of bird strikes is Halifax International (74 in 1985). With total aircraft movements in 1985 of 66,88, this results in a rate of 11.15 bird strikes per 10,000 movements. The next closest airport for reported strike is Toronto's Lester Pearson International, with 50 in 1985 and 44 in 1984. However, Pearson's rate is much lower than Halifax International's being 1.77 bird strikes per 10,000 movements in 1985.

In the top 15 aerodromes for birds hazards, Sydney, N.S., reported 12 bird strikes, and 9,703 aircraft movements, for a bird strike rate of 12.37 per 10,000 movements in 1985. Charlottetown, P.E.I. reported 13 strikes and 20,892 movements in 1985 or a rate of 6.22. Vancouver International Airport had a rate of 2.04 but 48 reported bird strikes in 1985.

It is helpful to know what kind of bird impacted on the aircraft and in 1985, of the 767 Canadian-based reports, 453 or 59% were identified by type. Although there were more than 40 types of birds that hit aircraft, there were four species that make up the majority of reports. They are gulls, swallows, sparrows, and snow buntings.

The two peak periods for bird strikes are May and August. The late summer group include many young birds learning how to fly, and eagerly feeding prior to fall migration. The statistics show that the August and September period has the highest number of reported bird strikes.

Of the total bird strike reports in Canada in 1985, 438 were to large jet aircraft used by commercial carriers. The most frequently struck aircraft was the Boeing 737, followed by the McDonnell Douglas DC-9, and the Boeing 727. The Canadian Forces reported 276 bird strikes to their military aircraft in 1985, about half to fighter and jet trainer aircraft. The number of strikes to the aircraft types is directly related to the relative number of movements for each aircraft type.

There has been a gradual increase in the past few years in the percentage of bird strikes causing damage to engines. This may be due to an increased susceptibility of newer jet engines, with high bypass ratios, larger engine intakes, and composite structures.

From a flight safety point of view, bird strikes result in operational problems in a great many cases. For example, in 1985 bird strikes resulted in 20 aborted takeoffs and 119 precautionary landings. In four cases vision was obscured. In 1985 there were

seven cases where engines had to be shut down or a forced landing resulted. Bird strikes to airframes or engines can result in costly repair bills. As an example, in 1984, a Boeing 727 struck by six geese had a repair bill estimated at about \$400,000, and a Boeing 737 struck by numerous Herring Gulls cost about \$500,000 to repair. In 1985, a Boeing 77 struck a Marsh Hawk, resulting in approximately one million dollars damage.

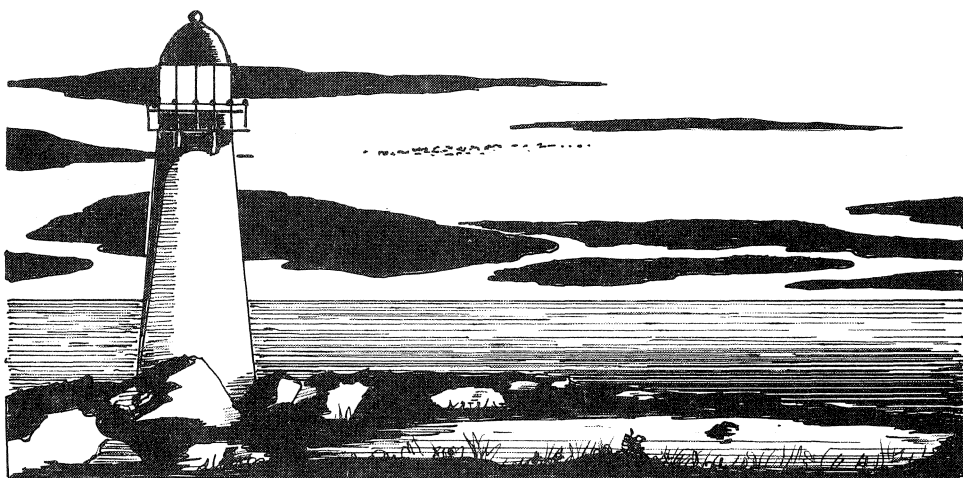
Airports are often located in areas of bird habitat that contribute to the overall bird hazard. Airport staff are faced with a variety of problems in discouraging birds from hanging around airports. Obvious actions include clearing away sources of food for birds, mowing grassed areas, and removing nesting and wooded areas. Experiments to scare birds off include the firing of explosive shells and taperecorded bird distress cries. However, birds have been remarkable adaptable to artificial "fright" tactics and frequently ignore the efforts of airport staff to keep them away.

As a result, pilots will continue to be faced in the future with bird hazard problems at many Canadian airports, and must adapt their flying procedures as much as feasible to avoid birds during migratory periods in spring, late summer and early fall.

Some commercial carriers recommend the use of strobe and/or land lights below 10,000 feet, since there is some evidence that a more visible aircraft gives birds more time to fly clear of a collision.

It is important that all bird strikes be reported, since only through ongoing information and research can the hazard be reduced and the number of serious collisions be decreased.

(reprinted here with permission from the Aviation Safety Letter,
Transport Canada, issue 4/87)



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas has just completed two very successful years of this five year project. Over 400 volunteers are participating, having contributed more than 30,000 records to date.

As of September 1988, we will require a new Coordinator. This is a full-time, paid position, based in Halifax.

Duties include supporting and managing the activities of a large group of volunteers and assuming responsibility for the Atlas data.

If this position interests you, please write to:

The Selection Committee
Maritimes Bird Atlas Trust
c/o Nova Scotia Museum
1747 Summer Street
Halifax, N.S.
B3H 3A6

BIRD SOCIETY SLIDE COLLECTION

Bill Caudle is now the custodian and would welcome any good slides of birds in Nova Scotia.

Please send to:

W. G. Caudle
1854 Shore Road
Eastern Passage, N.S.
B0J 1L0

Phone: 465-3977

BINOCULARS

LEITZ 7X42BA in "like new" condition. Original packing. SUPERB QUALITY!

List price: \$ 1980.00 plus tax
Asking price: \$ 750.00

If interested, contact: Chris Neilson at 429-7179 most evenings

WINNERS

Cover Contest Prizes

The judges, Phyl Bryson, Joyce Purchase and Shirley Cohrs are pleased to announce the winners in the Cover Contest. The selection was made from twenty-nine entries, many of which will be appearing in future issues of Nova Scotia Birds.

FIRST PRIZE: (GODFREY'S BIRDS OF CANADA, 2ND ED.)

LAURA WALSH, LOWER SACKVILLE, N.S.
for her "Saw-whet Owl"

SECOND PRIZE: (A YEAR'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY)

BOB DICKIE, HALIFAX, N.S.
for his "Blue-winged Teal"

TWO HONOURABLE MENTION: (a year's membership in the Nova Scotia Bird Society)

TOM WALDRON, West Tisbury, Mass.,
for his "Canada Goose"

CHRIS NAUGLER, Bridgewater, N.S.
for his "Black and White Warbler"

SPECIAL MENTION (NSBS Crest) goes to Jennifer Currie, aged 4½, Timberlea, N.S., for her "Robin family"



Laura receives her prize from Ken Gregoire

1987 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Nova Scotia Bird Society

The 1987 A.G.M. of the Nova Scotia Bird Society was held on October 21, 1987, at 8:05 p.m., in the auditorium of the Nova Scotia Museum, Halifax, N. S. The President, Mr. Bob Dickie chaired the meeting and 64 members attended.

Copies of the 1986 minutes, published in the January, 1987 issue of Nova Scotia Birds, were distributed at the meeting. Bob Dickie moved and Karl Tay seconded that the minutes be accepted as distributed Carried.

Business Arising from the Minutes: None

Financial Report

Sandra Myers tabled the financial report for the eleven months ending September 30, 1987. Receipts totalled \$13,433.38 and disbursements totalled \$11,648.18 increasing the bank balance from \$3,713.86 at the beginning of the period to \$5,499.06 at the end. Sandra explained that membership dues were up due to the recent increase in rates. Twelve memberships were purchased for Life Members from the interest on G.I.C.'s (\$144.00). Membership cards and checklists were reprinted as stocks were low. New brochures were designed and a second printing was required due to an ad taken out in the Mayflower to inform the general public of the Society. This ad was very successful with 482 requests being received for our brochure. Thirty-two new members are known to have resulted from the ad and probably more have joined subsequently. The costs of the ad, brochures, postage and stationery were recouped through membership fees and sales of material.

It was moved by Sandra Myers and seconded by Jim Morrow that the report be accepted as tabled. Carried.

Membership Report

Joyce Purchase presented the membership report indicating the following statistics at September 30, 1987:

	<u>1987</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>
Single	452	60	11	3	1	1	1
Family	221	25	4	2	1		
Institutional	13						
Life	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
	<u>698</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>

Total individuals represented in the 1987 memberships is 1070.

It was moved by Joyce Purchase and seconded by Shirley Cohrs that the report be accepted as presented. Carried.

Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund - see Report following.

President's Report

The report of the President and the presentation of the Puffin of the Year Award to Elaine and Mike Kew appear elsewhere in Nova Scotia Birds. On behalf of the members, Bob Dickie presented Bill Caudle with a painting for his long and valuable service on the executive committee of the Society.

Nominating Committee

Chris Field reported that James Morrow, Honourary Auditor and Leonard Kitz, Honorary Solicitor had agreed to serve for another year. The following slate of officers was presented on behalf of the committee for the 1987 year:

President	Richard Stern
Vice President	Sandra Myers
Secretary	Phyllis Bryson
Treasurer	Don MacNeill
Membership Secretary	Joyce Purchase
Editor	Shirley Cohrs

No further nominations being received, the above were declared elected.

Nominations for Directors were called for and the following nominations were received:

<u>Nominee</u>	<u>Mover</u>	<u>Seconder</u>
Carin Somers	Bill Caudle	Don MacNeill
Dave Currie	Don Purchase	Ian McLaren
Ken Gregoire	John Cohrs	Wendy Tay

After no further nominations were received the above were declared elected.

Richard Stern took over the chair and thanked Bob Dickie for his capable efforts on behalf of the Society during the past year.

New Business

There being no new business, the meeting was adjourned.

Don MacNeill
Secretary

REPORT OF THE SANCTUARY AND SCHOLARSHIP TRUST FUND

According to the document incorporating the Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund, the President must reorganize the slate of directors every five years. In February of 1987, Bob Dickie found that such reorganization was overdue. Members who had served for many years gratefully retired, having achieved much success, including the purchase of two most valuable properties, Indian Island and Peter Island as well as supporting the Raptor Rehabilitation Programme.

We then started afresh with three directors: Bob as Chairman, David Currie as Treasurer and myself as Secretary. Our idea was to draw on the experience of our members, and with this in mind, we invited one or two to each of our monthly meetings. We wanted their ideas as to what the SSTF should be doing and how we should set about it.

We organized the property owned by the SSTF. Some deeds were missing and paperwork was in disarray. A great deal of work went into tracking down information and tidying up the files. We now know exactly what we own and have all our deeds in tact.

Various members were asked to visit each one of our properties and report on what was found. These reports will form part of a special report on the SSTF in the April 1988 edition of Nova Scotia Birds. There, we hope to "bring home" to our members all the varying aspects of SSTF work.

We spent money. A sum was given to our Dartmouth vets, Ian McKay and Jack Cameron to help them convert a part of their building into a quiet recovery room for injured raptors. Money went to the Kews at the Mason's Point Rehabilitation Center to enable them to erect a new, small-mesh flight cage for smaller birds.

We helped Stephen Flemming to continue his survey of Piping Plover--Stephen's report will be in our April issue. A sum was donated to the Atlas Programme.

We have now embarked on a signage project for some of our property. In order to attract donations, which we need to keep going, we must not only be active but BE SEEN to be active and we felt that signs informing the public of our sanctuaries would be helpful. We are starting with our most visible properties, Indian Island near Green Bay, land at Port Joli, near Cadden Beach, and Peter Island, off Brier.

To help with this and all-over work, we added three members to the slate--Milton Gregg, Peter Payzant and Don Purchase.

We feel that we have made a good start--certainly we have worked hard and we hope for ideas and support from all NSBS members.

J. Shirley Cohrs
Secretary, SSTF.

NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY SANCTUARY AND SCHOLARSHIP TRUST FUND

Directors: Robert Dickie, J. Shirley Cohrs, David Currie, Milton Gregg, Don Purchase, Peter Payzant

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FROM NOVEMBER 1, 1986, TO OCTOBER 31, 1987, WITH
COMPARITIVE FIGURES FROM NOVEMBER 1, 1985, TO OCTOBER 31, 1986.

	to Oct. 31, '87	to Oct. 31, '86
Balance Forward	70, 607.68	69,593.04
RECEIPTS		
Debenture Int.	1,924.51	1,467.50
Bank Interest	159.85	407.40
Contributions	145.00	179.00
Port Joli D.O.H.	25.00	-
	<hr/> 2,254.36	<hr/> 2,053.90
DISBURSEMENTS		
Bank Charges	77.90	88.05
Taxes	403.02	407.40
Raptor Rehab.	1,423.50	430.24
Piping Plover Proj.	1,000.00	-
Bird Atlas Proj.	1,000.00	-
Rent, Spencer's Is.	-	100.00
Miscellaneous	28.15	7.32
	<hr/> 3,932.47	<hr/> 1,039.26
NET WORTH	68,929.47	70,607.68

ASSETS

	Oct. 15, 1987	Oct. 15, 1986
BANK ACCOUNTS		
Current account	2,262.46	543.65
Savings Account	-	2,241.80
Savings Acc.(M. Henry)	-	4,262.23
	<hr/> 2,262.46	<hr/> 7,047.68
DEBENTURES	19,007.01	15,900.00
SANCTUARIES		
Outer, Middle, Little Half, & 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 Prop.	1,500.00	1,500.00
Peter's Island	20,000.00	20,000.00
Kelsey Prop., Port Joli	13,000.00	13,000.00
	<hr/> 47,660.00	<hr/> 47,660.00
TOTAL ASSETS	68,929.47	70,607.68

NOVA SCOTIA BIRD SOCIETY
(Incorporated 1957)

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

For the period November 1, 1986 to September 30, 1987 (with comparative figures for the year ending October 31, 1986.)

	<u>1987</u>	<u>1986</u>
Balance from previous year	\$3,713.86	\$4,150.42

RECEIPTS

Membership dues	9,496.89	5,215.91
Life Membership	--	240.00
Savings Interest	128.64	176.47
GIC Interest (\$245.21)	101.21	166.22
N.S. Museum Grant	2,000.00	2,000.00
Sale of Publications, etc.	1,567.62	1,703.49
Bird Atlas Grant	--	200.00
Sale of R. Tufts <u>Birds of N.S.</u>	--	904.05
Mailing List Cost Recovery	40.00	--
Donations	79.00	129.00
Miscellaneous	20.02	25.12
	\$17,147.24	\$14,910.68

DISBURSEMENTS

Three Issues of N.S. Birds & Fall Flyer	7,390.52	7,083.23
Editor's Expenses	102.77	194.67
Postage, Stationery, etc.	1,036.97	1,479.05
Subscriptions	42.80	194.67
Monthly Meeting Expenses	51.94	100.00
A.G.M.	250.01	250.00
Printing of Membership Cards	294.45	--
Printing of Checklists	444.75	--
Printing of N.S.B.S. Brochures	1,078.00	--
Printing of Labels	129.75	--
Guaranteed Investment Certificate	240.00	628.07
Field Trips (Coordinator's Expenses)	105.02	115.43
Computer Program	--	99.84
Decals	--	621.37
Breeding Bird Atlas Grant	--	200.00
"Save South Moresby" Fund	--	100.00
Bank Charges	55.89	64.91
Miscellaneous	50.56	108.40
Advertisement in "Mayflower"	231.84	--
	11,648.18	11,196.82
Balance in Royal Bank of Canada	5,499.06	3,713.86
	\$17,147.24	\$14,910.68

BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS

Electric Typewriter (cost 296.45)	1.00	1.00
Steel Filing Cabinet (cost 99.96)	1.00	1.00
Steel Filing Cabinet (cost 98.99)	23.00	30.50
Computer and Printer (cost 1,572.77)	770.00	1,100.94
Guaranteed Investment Certificate	2,964.65	2,724.65
Balance in Royal Bank of Canada	5,499.06	3,713.86
	\$9,258.71	\$7,571.95

LIABILITIES

Surplus	\$9,258.71	\$7,571.95
AUDITED AND FOUND CORRECT		
According to the books		

NOTICE

The Canadian Wildlife Service, Atlantic Region, is continuing an attempt to assess the potential of the Sharp-shinned Hawk as a biomonitor of toxic chemical contamination of the terrestrial environment. Sharpies occasionally collide with window panes near winter bird-feeding operations. As a result of a request for specimens last winter, ten carcasses were received - not a bad start. More specimens are needed. Specimens should be labelled, placed in plastic bags, and frozen as soon after death as possible. CWS should then be called collect at (506) 542-3086 for shipment instructions. Potential contributors are thanked in advance for their support of this investigation. When requested, every attempt will be made to return specimens to contributors after removal of tissues for analysis.

Peter Pearce
Canadian Wildlife Service



Lisette d'Entremont photographed this Solitary Vireo on its nest, discovered by Robert D'Eon on June 17. Alas, a young cowbird crushed its more tender nestmates and presumably burdened its foster parents for some time after.

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

1987-1988

President - Richard Stern
Vice President - Sandra Myers
Past President - Bob Dickie
Treasurer - Don MacNeill
Membership Secretary - Joyce Purchase
Secretary - Phyllis Bryson
Editor - Shirley Cohrs
Executive Member - Carin Somers
Executive Member - Ken Gregoire
Executive Member - David Currie
Solicitor - Leonard Kitz
Auditor - Jim Morrow

Membership Fees

Life Membership	\$360.00
Single Membership	12.00
Family Membership	15.00
Institutional Membership	20.00

Note: Outside Canada please add \$1.00

NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS
A Publication of the Nova Scotia Bird Society

Volume 30 Number 1

January 1988

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Cover: *Saw-whet Owl*
by *Laura Walsh*

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