

# SUMMER 1974

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Craftsbury in late April when 30 were seen (FO,JW), and 46 were in Hartford on April 19 (WE). The early date for the uncommon Grasshopper sparrow came from White River Jct. when 1 was seen on May 18 (WE,GE, et al), all other records come from White River and are as follows: 2 on May 26 (TW,WE,GE), and finally a high count of 4 on June 13 (WE). The early date for the Vesper sparrow was on April 10 in Wallingford (BW), the birds were found in force by the latter half of April when a high count of 20 was achieved at White River Jct. on April 28 (WE,GE). Dark-eyed junco peaked in early to mid-April with flocks ranging up to 50 birds, they continued to migrate until approximately mid-May they continued on to nest at higher elevations. Tree sparrows were common throughout early and mid-April, by late April they had become scarce, and 4 lingered into May, 1 at Manchester on May 2 (TW), 1 in East Craftsbury on May 4 (FO), 1 in Hartford on May 10 (WE), and finally 1 was seen in South Woodstock on May 12 (JMN). The Chipping sparrow was first reported on April 14 when 1 was seen in East Middlebury (DR,KSm), another was found on the same date in Springfield (DC), they were in normal numbers for the rest of the spring. The first date for Field sparrow was on April 4 when 1 was seen in Cabot (BC), and another was seen in East Craftsbury on the same date (FO), a

high count of 10 was received from Dead Creek area on April 20 (OCAS). White-crowned sparrow was first reported from Plainfield on April 22 when 2 were seen there (MFM), the birds continued through into May with the peak migrational weekend being the 10th when the maximum count of 5 was received (FM), the last date they were seen was May 24 when 1 was seen in Corinth (GDe). White-throated sparrows first appeared in early April and built up to a peak in the latter part of that month, after April the species continued in average numbers until nesting in late May. The first Fox sparrows were in March and the species continued through April with a maximum count of 10 on April 27 in Wallingford (BW), the late report was on May 13 when 4 were seen in East Craftsbury (FO). Lincoln's sparrows were seen in East Craftsbury on May 12 when 1 was seen there (FO), 3 were there on May 13 (FO), 1 was banded in Marshfield on May 15 (MFM), 1 was in Winhall on May 25 (WJN), and finally 1 was in East Craftsbury on May 27 (FO). 2 Swamp sparrows were seen in West Hartford on April 14 (TD), by late April they were in all their favorite haunts. Song sparrows were generally abundant as usual. The last Snow buntings were on April 11 when 7 were in Vergennes (TCG), and on April 11 when 2 were seen for the last sighting in Fairlee (DZ).

West Haven (RAB). Two BLACK CROWNED NIGHT HERONS were in Burlington (FO). An AMERICAN BITTEN was seen in Peru, Fire Pond, (TW) and reported to have bred in Winhall (WSN).

No report of IBIS or OSPREYS this year.

VULTURES: TURKEY VULTURES were seen soaring in Cuttingsville, 9 June (AM), Williston, 5 June (KSm), Ira, 9 June, Pawlet, 19 June (RAB) and in the Otter Creek Valley, 12 July (BW).

HAWKS: Buteos reported were a pair of RED SHOULDERED seen regularly in East Barnard (FM), one in Woodstock (JN). REDTAILS were seen in usual numbers and BROADWINGED HAWKS in normal numbers in Winhall (WJN).

GROUSE AND QUAIL: RUFFED GROUSE seem to have had an excellent breeding season and many broods were seen. An interesting letter and two excellent photos by Jeanne Johnstone told of a CHUKAR PARTRIDGE on top of Killington. She says "the bird was not a pet, but was tame and walked around feeding on the summit, until disturbed, when it flew away." It was not there a week later, 24 July. The photos, habit and description fit this bird, imported in from the PN Pacific.

RAILS, GALLINULES, COOTS: A pair of VIRGINIA RAILS were reported from Peru in the "swamp in center of town" (TW,RP); both also reported a SORA in the same vicinities. A COMMON GALLINULE was seen in Sandbar State Park (FO, BJ).

SANDPIPERS: KILLDEER were reported numerous as usual. An interesting description of the chicks came in from Shrewsbury, where the chicks, though within a small area, remained completely concealed (LE,PE,AS). The only report of WOODCOCK (WJN) said they were present in usual numbers. A common snipe was also seen doing aerial displays near Burlington (FO, FJ).

SPOTTED SANDPIPERS were reported in usual numbers from Winhall

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LOONS THROUGH CORMORANTS: No members of these families were reported.

WATERFOWL: During the nesting season, nine CANADA GEESE were in Weathersfield (EE) along with one SNOW GOOSE. Twelve Canada were also in Dead Creek in Addison (LE) pe, AFS). BLACK DUCKS and MALLARDS were the most commonly reported duck, sixteen and fifteen respectively, all in early June. A brood of WOOD DUCKS, eight plus, were reported in South Londonderry, 2 June (WJN), one in Weathersfield (EE), two in Colchester (FO), two in South Hero

(S&KSm). Two pintails were at Londonderry, 14 June (TW) and Blue Winged Teal at Middlebury (BP) and South Hero (S&KSm). Common Merganser were reported from North Springfield Dam, 2 June. William Norse reports that in Winhall broods of HOODED MERGANSERS, "were seen, they undoubtedly bred."

HERONS AND EGRETS: The GREAT BLUE HERON was reported at three locations in the state and is considered to probably have bred in Winhall (WSN). No reports of egrets. GREEN HERONS were seen in Londonderry (TW) and Weathersfield (BR,EE) and

(WJN), Weathersfield (EE, BR), Middlebury (BP). A GREATER YELLOW LEGS was also seen in Weathersfield (EE).

**GULLS:** A RINGBILLED GULL was seen in Middlebury (BP). Also from this group were two common Terns, one in Burlington (FO) (VINS birding class) and one in South Hero also on VINS trip (K&Sm).

**DOVES AND PIGEONS:** MOURNING DOVES were reported as common throughout the breeding season (28 reported individuals).

**CUCKOOS:** Report of a YELLOW BILLED CUCKOO came from Londonderry (TW) and Winhall where William Norse reported "both cuckoos up in numbers this year." The more common BLACK BILLED was reported from Wallingford (WBW) on 15 July, perhaps the same individual which has appeared there the last four years "calling more in July, but more evident in August." (B&WW). Nesting reports from Woodstock (JMN), East Barnard (FM) and sightings from Strafford (H&ER), Dorset (RAB) and as common along the White River in Hancock (EH).

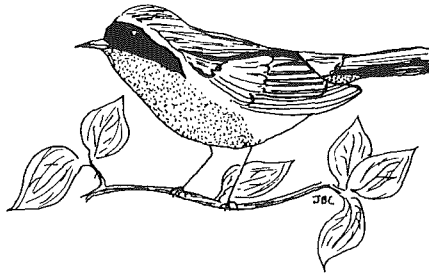
**OWLS:** No unusual sightings of owls occurred and only one report was issued for the resident Great Horned Owl, Wallingford (WW).

**WHIP-POOR-WILLS AND NIGHT-HAWKS:** Reports of the NIGHT-HAWK established it as locally common as usual. The WHIP-POOR-WILL which caused much interest and was the subject of a census, was reported from locations in East Craftsbury (FO, JW) and Hartland (ECS).

**SWIFTS:** The CHIMNEY SWIFT was a common resident as usual.

**HUMMINGBIRDS:** The RUBY THROATED HUMMINGBIRD seemed to have a good breeding year. Twenty-five were reported, one with young from South Strafford, 13 July (H&ER).

**KINGFISHERS:** BELTED KINGFISHERS were also common in their breeding habitat, though only eight were reported.



**WOODPECKERS:** Among the Woodpecker group, Picidae, the HAIRY was the most reported with 30 individuals reported during the nesting season and seven on the count day. The DOWNY was second reported 20 times with seven seen on June 1. The FLICKER was common as usual, and YELLOW BELLIED SAPSUCKERS were reported from Weathersfield, (BR), and South Strafford (H&ER). The only PILEATED report came from Hartland (ES).

**FLYCATCHERS:** In the Flycatcher group, the EASTERN KINGBIRD was present in its usual common numbers with thirteen pairs reported. Many PHOEBES as expected nested near buildings. GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHERS were reported from Hartland (ES), Strafford (H&ER), Woodstock (JN), Weathersfield (EE), and Quechee (EH). ALDER FLYCATCHERS were reported from Fire Pond, Peru (TW), Peru Center (RP), and Church Hill, Woodstock (JN), and Winhall. The more common LEAST FLYCATCHER was reported from seven sites. WOOD PEEWEES were seen in early June in Shrewsbury (PE, LF, AJS), Weathersfield (EE), Woodstock (JN), Strafford (H&ER), Winhall (WJN). OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER, a local breeder, was present in Weston (TW), and several sites were seen in Winhall (WJN). William Norse also reports that the YELLOW BELLIED FLYCATCHER was "intermittant and probably bred there."

**SWALLOWS:** The two common breeding swallows in the area, the BARN SWALLOW and the TREE SWALLOW, were numerous throughout the area and the TREE outnumbered the BARN 71 reports to 47. The BANK SWALLOW colonies were reported from Weathersfield (BR, EE), 20 birds, Peru (RP) and Hartland (FM). ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOWS were reported by (RVB) compiler, Julie Nicholson as a "visitor" on June 3, and by Wm. Norse as "a few around" and "has bred in the past" The CLIFF SWALLOWS were reported by Winhall and West Woodstock (FM), and Pomfret (SBL).

**JAYS, RAVENS, CROWS:** Interest in the Corvidae group centers around the report of a CANADA JAY from Sherburne "near the Appalachian Trail near Kent Pond". The record is from June 14 and sent in by Eliz. Ohly. A RAVEN was also seen near Londonderry on June 19 (TW). BLUE-JAYS and CROWS were abundant and racious as usual.

**CHICADEES and TITMICE:** No TITMICE were reported during the nesting season of 1974, but the BLACK-CAPPED CHICADEE was common as expected.

**NUTHATCHES:** WHITE BREASTED NUTHATCH, a common breeder, was reported from eight localities. The only reports of the RED BREASTED NUTHATCH came from South Strafford (H&ER) and Woodstock (JN).

**CREEPERS:** BROWN CREEPERS listed as breeders were reported only from Woodstock (JN).

**WRENS:** In the WREN world, the HOUSE WREN, "a common breeder" was well reported-apparently about 20 individuals being seen in early June throughout the state which Wm. Norse feels is a "spectacular increase"-many more in Winhall than in 1973. Francesca Thomas' comments agree with this, "first one I've seen in years". Highest count was from Bennington, where Marion Vince saw 8 on June 8. Two WINTER WRENS were seen in Peru (RP).

**MOCKERS and THRASHERS:** MOCKINGBIRD sightings have been

making news and one made his by: South Strafford, June 14 (H&ER). CATBIRDS apparently had a good nesting year, and were reported in abundant numbers, (24 individuals), as did BROWN THRASHERS, (13 reports) from all over the state, many for a bird much less common.

**THRUSH:** In the THRUSH group, the ROBIN is often a good indicator species of the health of our immediate surroundings which makes interest in keeping records of the number of species per observer. In the nesting season for 1974, an even 100 ROBINS were reported in seven locations on 17 observer trips throughout the nesting season, an average of 5.8 birds per trip. WOOD THRUSH is apparently the next most common breeding thrush, with 29 individuals reported, apparently "increasing each year, now the commonest thrush", (WJN). The SWAINSON'S THRUSH was not reported at all, but is an uncommon breeder anyway. The GRAY CHEEKED THRUSH restricted in habitat to mountaintops, was reported in South Pomfret, probably late migrant (JM). VEERYS were reported from Weathersfield (EE, BR), So. Strafford (H&ER), Shrewsbury (PE, LE, AFS), and Woodstock (JN), and Peru (RD), maintaining its status as a common breeding bird. The BLUEBIRD remains uncertain in status, but 2 pairs were reported from Winhall (WJN), 2 from Woodstock (JN), 3 from So. Strafford (H&ER), 3 from Hartland, (both seen in June and again in July and probably nesting birds), one from Mt. Holly (June 6 RAB), and nests seen in Poultney, Manchester, and Brandon (RAB). Woodstock (JN) and West Rutland (FM).

**KINGLETS:** Two reports of RUBY-CROWNED KINGLETS: from Weston Tom Will reports many singing (June 6), and Wm. Norse reports the GOLDEN CROWNED as a local breeder here, few pairs".

**WAXWINGS:** CEDAR WAXWINGS were reported from Ira (RAB), Londonderry (TW, LA), Woodstock (JN), and South Pomfret (EH), in small numbers with nest building activities beginning in the last incidence. After the first of June, the flocks grew in size, 10 in South Strafford (H&ER),

30 in Shrewsbury (PE, LE, AJS), "abundant" in Londonderry (TW), also reported from Peru (RP), and Hartland (ES).

**SHRIKES:** No reports.

**STARLINGS:** Data not recorded for STARLINGS as they are abundant breeders and thus little reported.

**VIREOS:** The YELLOW THROATED VIREO which usually an uncommon summer resident in Vermont was seen at South Strafford (H&ER), on both June 8 and 20, Woodstock (JN) and at Burlington (FO, BJ), perhaps breeding after the spring influx. The SOLITARY VIREO was listed as common in Winhall (WJN), and also reported in Woodstock in late July (FM). The RED EYED VIREO, a common breeder, was reported in good numbers, 53 for 14 observer trips. The PHILADELPHIS VIREO was not reported, and all WARBLING VIREO sightings came from Woodstock. (JN).

**WARBLERS:** Among Parulidae, the BLACK and WHITE, a common summer resident was reported from Woodstock (JN), Weathersfield (BR, EE), Peru (RP), Winhall (EJN), and Hartland (ES). Three interesting sightings of a BLUEWINGED WARBLER occurred in South Strafford on June 8; July 13 and 18 (H&ER). A TENNESSEE WARBLER was seen in Woodstock on June 8 (JN). NASHVILLE WARBLERS were reported from Woodstock (JN), So. Strafford, Shrewsbury, (PE, LE, AFS), 2 males, Weathersfield (BR, LE), and Winhall. In Winhall, the "species had increased greatly as a breeder," (WJN). YELLOW WARBLERS were from Shrewsbury, (LE, AFS), Woodstock (JN), Peru (RP), (5 birds), and Hartland (ES). MAGNOLIA WARBLERS, 3 in Peru (RP), 1 in So. Strafford (H&ER), and 1 in Woodstock (JN). The only record of CAPE MAYS was from So. Strafford on June 1 (H&ER) and BLACK THROATED BLUES came from Woodstock (JN) and Peru on the same date. The YELLOW RUMPED WARBLER was present in expected numbers and the also common BLACK THROATED GREEN showed up in Woodstock (JN), Peru, So. Strafford, Weathersfield and Shrewsbury-all the places with other warblers. BLACK-

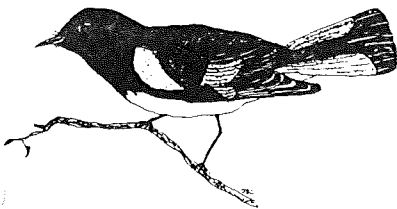
BURNIAN-3 reports from Weathersfield (BR) and Peru (RP), and Woodstock (JN). CHESTNUT SIDED was reported from Shrewsbury (2), Weathersfield (2), So. Strafford (2), Bennington - 6 birds (MV), and Peru 5 (RP). Three BAY-BREASTED WARBLERS were also seen June 1 in Woodstock (JN). BLACK POLL WARBLERS were present in South Pomfret June 1, (JM) and Peru where Ricky Prun saw 5 on the same date. Wm. Norse also reports them at Winhall, June 1, PRAIRIE WARBLER was seen June 2 near Springfield by Eleanor Ellis. OVENBIRDS were common as expected, 29 individuals being reported. A NORTHERN WATER THRUSH was reported from Winhall, and one bird seen in So. Barnard in mid-July (FM), and a LOUISIANA WATER THRUSH was banded in the Marshfield Pond area in Plainfield on Aug. 1. The CANADA WARBLER was found in only two reports, Woodstock and Winhall, and the AMERICAN REDSTART, normally one of the most abundant of resident warblers, was reported only from Woodstock, Weathersfield, Winhall and So. Strafford - only 8 individuals.

**ENGLISH SPARROWS:** No data kept.

**BLACKBIRDS and ORIOLES:** BOBOLINKS, a local breeder, were seen in several localities - E. Barnard and Quechee - 3 pair, Hartland (ES), and Shrewsbury (PE, LE, AFS). EASTERN MEADOWLARK, also an uncommon breeder, was reported in Weathersfield (EE, BR), Peru 10 individuals (RP), and Hartland (ES). REDWINGS were abundant breeders as usual. The NORTHERN ORIOLE had numerous reports; from the Woodstock area - 5 pairs, Bennington, 2 pairs (MV), So. Strafford, a single bird (H&ER), and Shrewsbury, 2 pairs.

The only reports of RUSTY BLACKBIRDS during the nesting period was from Winhall where it is a "rare breeder" - one or two pairs. The COMMON GRACKLE, a familiar nesting species, had 74 individuals reported. The COW BIRD is also an abundant resident, although only 16 were reported in 19 observer trips.

**TANAGERS:** The populations of the **SCARLET Tanager** was of great interest after the disaster of late May and early June. Birds died in droves apparently from lack of food since they arrived after an extended rainy period. The question was were these birds from the Vermont breeding population, or were they intending to go elsewhere? It is a question that can't be answered without knowing the "normal" breeding population. Notwithstanding, tanagers were reported from So. Strafford on the 18th of July, 3 on the 1st of June, 1 in Woodstock (JN), and 2 in Woodstock, June 8.



and was listed as increasingly in Winhall. The **EVENING GROSBEAK** a winter visitant, occasionally stays around for the summer. In 1974, reports came from Granville 1, (EH), Winhall, Peru 1, (TW,RP), and Chittenden where a pair appeared on and off and on July 12, a young appeared with a male adult at a feeder, (ED). Wm. Norse reports, the grosbeak "increased tremendously this year as a breeder." The **PURPLE FINCH**, is a resident in the state and pairs were spotted in So. Strafford 2, (H&ER), Shrewsbury 2, and Bennington 2 (MV) and N. Bridgewater. **AHOUSE FINCH** normally a western bird, was also seen at Bennington (MV). **PINE SISKIN** another bird usually listed as a winter visitant, turned up in Bennington (MV) and nested in Wallingford. Dr. Peter Upton writes that on July 12, "a young siskin being fed by adults, was near his feeder and the nest was "definitely nearby." The bird apparently has also nested in Peru (WJN). **AMERICAN GOLDFINCHES** apparently had a good breeding year, after the previous one where they must have suffered damage, and 80 were reported on 17 cards. The **REDCROSBILL** was present as a summer visitant in Winhall and may well have bred, (WJN). This is the only record.

**RUFOUS TOWHEE:** a regular breeder throughout Vermont was reported from Bennington 4, Weathersfield 3, and Hartland 2 (ES). There were two reports of **SAVANNAH SPARROWS**, 1 from Weathersfield (EE), the other from E. Barnard where probably transient nonbreeding bird was singing in early June (FM). The bird near Peru is a "rare and local breeder," (WJN). **VESPER SPARROW:** a record of two birds in So. Strafford on July 18 (H &ER) and several in unmowed grasslands in So. Woodstock and near Burlington (FO&BJ). **DARK-EYED JUNCO** were reported from So. Strafford and a pair in Hartland in July.

The **CHIPPING SPARROWS** recorded indicate that the bird is common - almost as abundant as expected 28 individuals were seen. The **FIELD SPARROW** records are concentrated in Weathersfield 6, with one report also from So. Strafford. The reports are all from June when the birds are singing and easier to find.

**WHITE THROATED SPARROWS:** were also common during the nesting period. Records are from Shrewsbury (PE,LE,AFS). So. Strafford, Woodstock (JN), and Hartland 1-4 birds each with a total of 22 individuals. The **SWAMP SPARROW** was not recorded as a "local breeder" (WJN). The **SONG SPARROW** was, as expected, the most abundant sparrow with 37 sightings.

**GROSBEAKS, SPARROWS, FINCHES, BUNTINGS:** Although the group formerly called Fringillidae has been reclassified it will be dealt with here as in the old way, to include Grosbeaks, Finches, Sparrows and Longspurs.

The first member, the **CARDINAL**, seems to be still increasing, although its status is still probably local, more in the South and near town. Six individuals were reported from Bennington on two occasions. The **ROSE BREASTED GROSBEAK** had numerous sightings - individuals from So. Pomfret (FM), Ira (RAB), Shrewsbury (PE,LE,AFS), Woodstock (JN), Weathersfield (EE), Peru (RP), So. Strafford (H&ER) and pairs from So. Strafford and Woodstock.

reports on the **INDIGO BUNTING** are from Ira, Bennington 2, Hartland 1, Weathersfield 1, So. Strafford 1, all of these on more than one occasion

SUMMER 1974

- PDU Peter D. Upton
- ED E. Dingman
- JM Jim Martin
- LA Anna b&n Lee
- MV Marion Vince
- FKT Francisca K. Thomas
- FO Frank Oatman
- JW Jon Wood
- EH Ed Hack
- BR Bill Ragette
- BJ Bob Jervis
- JJ Jeanne Johnstone
- BW Betty Weeks
- WW Wendell Weeks
- AM Anne MacFarlane
- BP Bruce Peterson
- JP Judith Peterson
- TW Tom Will
- KSM Ken Smith
- SSM Sue Smith
- RAB Richard A. Bartlett
- EE Eleanor Ellis
- PE Peter Erb
- LE Lynn Eaton
- AFS Anne F. Spencer
- WJN William J. Norse
- H&ER Herman & E. Redden

CONTRIBUTORS

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One **PELICAN** seen Birders on Dead from 20 August (B&P,TW, and ulation exists as to same Pelican seen e summer and in a's Vineyard.

One **DOUBLE DRANT** on Tildy's September (FO).

WJN - Julie Nicholson

observed 5 October at Marshfield Pond (MFM).