

VERMONT INSTITUTE OF NATURAL SCIENCE

# Records of Vermont Birds

## SPRING MIGRATION 1976

1 MARCH - 31 MAY

FRANK OATMAN, EDITOR

The big news of this spring migration was how remarkably early much of it was. Both February and March were characterized by unseasonably warm weather and a spate of early arrivals. Many species which normally first appear during this reporting period (April 1 to May 31) arrived in the "winter" season, especially during March--some of them in numbers. The early thawing of lakes and ponds allowed many ducks, for instance, to move north considerably earlier than usual, some apparently overflying Vermont in their haste to reach the open water of Canadian breeding grounds. The early and rapid thaw saw Lake Champlain reach an all-time high of 101.7 feet on March 28 and a crest of over 102 feet before the waters began to recede in early April.

A total of 39 species was reported earlier than they have been in the three previous years of this publication; and a remarkable 23 species were earlier than ever before, using Bob Spear's "Birds of Vermont" as a guide. These totals include arrivals recorded in Don Clark's winter report; but in the following I repeat February and March records only when new information unavailable to Don changes the picture.

April opened with a continuation of the long mild period of late March. A generally dry cold system April 7-12 dropped temperatures to record lows in some areas (16°F April 12 at Burlington). Good pushes of Ruby-crowned Kinglets April 14 at Plainfield (MFM) and of several species April 15 at Winhall (WJN) were probably associated with the breakup of that cold system. The exceptionally warm third week of April (77°-91° daytime highs at Burlington) brought a number of early arrivals on prevailing southerly winds and continued the general acceleration. A good shorebird flight in the Brandon area began April 20 and continued through the month. Tree Swallows and other migrant species became hard to find when a second norther April 24-28 brought rain and snow. On the first day of the breakup of that system, April 28, Alan Pistorius found an estimated 5,000 to 7,000 swallows (99% Tree) over Lakes Bomoseen and Hortonia.

May weather was erratic but generally colder, cloudier (only six clear or partly cloudy days at Burlington) and wetter than normal. Good pushes of migrants on the 3rd and 7th at Winhall (WJN) and on the 11th at both Winhall and Craftsbury (RAR) were associated with heavier precipitation those dates. Until May 18 the migration was proceeding fairly well, the brief warm period May 14-17 no doubt giving a boost to the continued acceleration of the season. A good push of warblers and other species May 15 at Newport (FO,SA) was preceded by a night of rain and brisk south winds, classic ingredients of a spring migrant "fallout." The night of May 18 the temperature dropped and we had intermittent snow or rain and considerably colder than normal weather until the 27th. As much as a foot of snow fell on some higher elevations. I quote from notes submitted by Bill Norse: "I fear there were disastrous effects on the insectivorous birds. For a couple of days thereafter the woods were largely ominously silent. Such birds as

Catbirds, Towhees and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks (particularly the latter) came in numbers to the feeder. Many of the Grosbeaks seemed to be in a starved condition. A resumption of warm weather at the close of the month brought no large movement of the late May migrants and the singing birds seemed to be still fewer than before May 18." At least three species arrived later than normal, doubtless due to this storm: Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Eastern Wood Pewee and Cedar Waxwing. Good migrant waves May 23 at Island Pond (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE) and May 24 at South Woodstock (28 birds banded--VINS) during the cold period indicates that birds were moving. The push of the 23rd was again associated with rain the night before and into the morning. The cold system broke on the 27th and by the next day Burlington had a record high of 83°; above normal temperatures held through the end of the month.

Observer coverage was better than ever this spring, and more birders are submitting highly appreciated analyses of the season. A total of 214 species and two additional forms were reported, compared to 212 species last spring. Appearing for the first time ever in "Records of Vermont Birds" are Bobwhite, Caspian Tern and Dickcissel. White-winged Scoter, Black Scoter, Glaucous Gull, Orange-crowned Warbler were not reported in the three previous springs; and Burlington's Northern Phalaropes seem to be the first ever seen here in the spring. Also notable was a Ruddy Duck at North Montpelier, Blue-winged and "Brewster's" Warblers at Sudbury, nesting Blue-gray Gnatcatchers at Vernon and Lake Bomoseen, and big increases in the numbers of Mockingbirds, Yellow-throated Vireos and House Finches.

One of the more sporting aspects of birding is the "big day" or "century run," when a team of observers staying always within voice contact of each other sees how many species they can find in a single 24 hour day. On May 23 Frank Oatman, Rose Ann Rowlett, George and Walter Ellison, covering 275 miles by car and ca. 9 miles by foot, on a run between Island Pond and Dead Creek, 2:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m., logged 121 species, a new record for the state. I am convinced that with good weather a big day of 140 species is entirely possible.

### LOONS AND GREBES

A Common Loon at Button Bay on April 3 (WJN) was the first seen after the March bird previously reported. Danville had the next record, 1 on April 13 (KW), after which there were over 15 scattered reports, including a high of 14 at Shelburne and Burlington on April 28 (WGE,BSE,ORE). The scarce Red-necked Grebe, unreported last spring, was seen 3 times: individuals were sighted April 18 at Fairlee (GFE,WGE), April 20 at Wilder (WGE), and May 24 at Kettle Pond in Marshfield (SA). There were 5 reports of Horned Grebe: 1 on April 11, Tinmouth (FO,JW); 3 on April 16, Burlington (FO,CSP); 1 on April 18, West Fairlee (GFE,WGE); and 1 on April 20, Wilder (GFE). Pied-billed Grebes arrived considerably earlier than usual (see winter report). Still early were single birds April 1 at East Barre (LNM) and April 2 at Brattleboro (WN). There were scattered reports thereafter, including 1 on April 15 at Barnet, where they are uncommon (CW). Eleanor Ellis noted only 1 in the

North Springfield Dam area, where a few years ago they were common in spring.

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#### CORMORANT AND WADING BIRDS

A Double-crested Cormorant, scarce in Vermont, was seen April 20 at Burlington (WGE,BSE,ORE). The Great Blue Heron at Missisquoi on March 25 (GFO) was early, though even earlier arrivals were recorded (see winter report). Most observers considered numbers up, after last season's low, throughout April and May; a high of ca. 300 at Missisquoi (GFO) is notable indeed. Green Herons reached Vernon by April 17 (WN), Shelburne Pond by April 24 (BSE,ORE), Woodstock by April 29 (PMB), Missisquoi by May 5 (GFO), and Craftsbury by May 17 (FO). Burlington observers averaged 2 sightings per week, 2 birds per sighting (WGE,BSE,ORE). Cattle Egrets continue to increase, showing up this spring at a number of locations away from their Lake Champlain breeding area. The earliest were 2 at Burlington on April 20, where the seasonal high of 7 was set on April 23 (WGE,BSE,ORE). Notable were singles at Springfield on May 1 (DC), Plainfield on May 7 (MFM,LNM), and North Danville on May 12 (ECr). A group from High Peaks Audubon Society, Essex, New York found Cattle Egrets already breeding on the Four Brothers Islands on May 15. There were 2 reports of Great Egret, the first in spring since 1974: 1 at Roundy's Cove near Bellows Falls on April 18 (WK), and 1 present April 18 to ca. May 4 at West Swanton (GFO). A Black-crowned Night Heron April 4 at Herrick's Cove (FHM) seems early; and 3 at Hartland on April 17 is good for the Connecticut Valley (GFE,WGE,et al). Birds had reached West Barnet by April 18, 4 seen (CW); Dead Creek by April 30 (WJN); and Missisquoi by May 1, 3 seen (GFO). They were found nesting on the Four Brothers Islands on May 15 (HPAS) and seemed in normal numbers at scattered colonies over the state. The scarce and elusive Least Bittern was reported 3 times: May 15 and May 18, West Rutland Marsh (SBL, LHP,RWP,DD); and May 29, 1 at Herrick's Cove, Rockingham (DC,JC,PS), the first record for that area. The spring's first American Bittern was seen April 15, 1 at Grafton State Forest (DC). Individuals were seen at Missisquoi by April 17 (GFO) and at Island Pond by April 25 (CWJ), after which they appeared in normal numbers across the state. The high count of 11 on May 1 at West Rutland Marsh (GFE,WGE,et al) no doubt represents migratory as well as resident individuals.

#### GEESE AND DUCKS

Canada Geese reappeared early this spring, as reported in the winter seasonal summary. Honkers continued to arrive throughout late March and early April, but the flight apparently peaked April 14 to 29. George O'Shea recorded about 10,000 Canadas April 14 and 15 in Missisquoi Bay; John Peterson of Essex, New York wrote of "a near raft of 1,500 in New York waters with perhaps even larger numbers beyond them in Vermont waters" on April 22. Very late indeed was the group of 32 seen on the Passumpsic River near St. Johnsbury on June 13 (FO,RAR). George O'Shea reported the season's only Brant, a group of 3 in Missisquoi Bay on April 14. Again this spring, Snow Geese appeared in quite good numbers, with sightings from March 17 to May 27 and with a high count of 1,000 in Missisquoi Bay on April 14 (GFO). The blue form of the Snow Goose, rare in Vermont, was first seen April 3 (BBP,JP). The 10 Mallards seen feeding in manure at Mockton on March 19 (WS) were probably spring migrants, though Mallards occasionally overwinter in Vermont. They were first reported (all small flocks) March 24 at Wallingford (DD), March 27 at Springfield (DC), April 1 at East Montpelier (MFM,LNM), and April 17 at Missisquoi Refuge (MFM,LNM). There were no reports of large concentrations. A nest with 7 eggs was found in West Rutland Marsh on May 23 (RWP), and George O'Shea considered the nesting population at Missisquoi normal. 60 Black Ducks at Mockton (WS) represent the seasonal high count. Walter Ellison considered numbers average at Burlington with the

bulk of migration occurring in March. At Springfield numbers seemed lower than usual (EE). A female with young was found May 29 at Herrick's Cove (DC,JC,PS), and at Missisquoi nesting populations were down (GFO). The Gadwall was down to its usual few reports after last spring's influx: April 28, a pair and May 5, 3 at Shelburne (WGE,BSE,ORE); May 13, 1 at Winhall (WJN); and May 15, 3 at Kent Pond in Killington (JMV). Pintails apparently moved through early (in March) and in lower than usual numbers. The few scattered April reports were all from the Champlain Valley but for 1 seen April 15 at Newbury (CW). Burlington's last record was 1 seen April 23 (WGE,BSE,ORE). 2 pair of Pintails may have bred at Missisquoi (GFO). Walter Ellison concluded from Burlington that most Green-winged Teal migration occurred in March, early for this species. The April high count was a low 20 at Herrick's Cove on the 9th (DC); by late in the month birds were in normal numbers at their few breeding areas. Blue-winged Teal migration was poorly reported, in part because the migration itself was poor. The earliest report on hand is March 26, a pair at Arlington (RK). The editor noted very small numbers at Craftsbury; Don Clark failed to see this species at Grafton, where it's normally a regular visitant; and Walter Ellison could report only 2-4 per day in the Burlington area. Yet breeding populations at Missisquoi seemed normal (GFO). American Wigeons moved through much earlier than usual, with the peak apparently occurring in March. April 4 was the final date at Herrick's Cove (FHM), though a high of 35 was recorded April 15 at Missisquoi (GFO). Final date for the season was April 25, 2 at Sandbar Reserve on Lake Champlain (WGE,BSE,ORE,CSP). The Northern Shoveler was also early this year; all Burlington records were in March (WGE). There were 7 additional sightings of this scarce duck, April 3 - May 4, with a high of 6 at Missisquoi on April 6 (GFO). Wood Ducks arrived about as expected, with a March 20 first bird at Weybridge (BBP), and with early pairs on March 25 at both Arlington (RK) and Missisquoi (GFO). High counts of migrants were: on April 7 at Londonderry (WJN). 14 on April 25 at Sandbar Reserve (WGE,BSE,ORE,CSP), and 7 on May 1 at Springfield (DC). On May 18 a female with 5 young was seen at South Wallingford (DD), and a breeding count of 27 (14 young) was made at Sandbar Reserve on May 23 (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE). The rare Redhead was seen twice: 1 on April 3 at Chimney Point, Lake Champlain (GFE,WGE,et al); and 1 on April 6 at Newbury (CW). In the Champlain Valley Ring-necked Ducks were first reported March 15 at Arlington, 2 seen (RK). See winter report for other March records. Ring-necks reached Londonderry by April 5, 2 seen (WJN); and Missisquoi Refuge by April 17, 12 seen (MFM, LNM); a high count of 13 was obtained April 29 at Swanton (WGE,BSE,ORE). In the Connecticut Valley, Herrick's Cove had the highest count of 40+ on April 3 (DC et al); Springfield had 11 the same date (EE); and Newbury had 1 on April 6 (CW). In addition to those listed in the winter report, there were 7 reports of Canvasback but no really high concentrations: 1-5 seen March 1-4 at Arlington (RK); 8 on April 3 at Chimney Point (GFE,WGE,et al); 38 on April 3 on the Connecticut River (WN); 40+ on April 3 at Herrick's Cove (DC et al); 12 on April 17 at Missisquoi (MFM,LNM); 2 on April 18 at Bellows Falls, where others were seen earlier (EE); and 1 on April 20 at Button Bay (WJN). Greater Scaup apparently wintered on Champlain (WGE), where a high count of 17 was made April 3 at Chimney Point (GFE,WGE,et al). There were only 2 other reports: 1 on April 18 at Lake Fairlee (GFE,WGE), and 15 on April 30 at Button Bay (WJN). There were a scant 2 records of Lesser Scaup, apparently because they simply overflew Vermont this mild spring: 12 on April 3 in Ferrisburg (GFE,WGE,et al), and 62 at Missisquoi on April 17 (MFM, LNM). There were scattered reports of Common Goldeneyes during the winter season, but migratory movement began early in April. Burlington observers averaged about 10 per day, with a maximum count of 40 on April 25 (WGE,

BSE,ORE,CSP); 1 at Newbury on April 6 was unusual there (CW); at least 1 pair bred at Sandbar Reserve (WGE). Buffleheads were "present in April in normal numbers" along Champlain (WGE), with high counts of 6 on April 15 and 18 (WGE,BSE,ORE). They were reported sporadically elsewhere in the state, including 1 at Weathersfield on April 23 where the species is unusual (EE). The final record was April 20, 5 seen at Button Bay (WJN). The 3 WHITE-WINGED SCOTERS present April 28 - May 6 at Burlington (WGE,BSE,ORE) represent the first spring record of this species in the four years of this report. Two pair of Surf Scoter, a species unrecorded last spring, were seen April 20 at Button Bay (WJN). George Ellison's adult male BLACK SCOTER at Wilder April 19 established the first spring record in four years. Also unusual was the RUDDY DUCK--rare any season in Vermont--seen by Marion Metcalf April 7 at North Montpelier Pond. The earliest Hooded Merganser record on hand is March 17, a pair at Arlington (RK), after which the migration was about average (ca. 35 seen) as small flocks moved to breeding areas in Vermont and farther north. Doris Dolt found 2 females with a total of 11 young on May 30 in the Wallingford area. Common Mergansers were seen throughout the season, with highs on April 3 of 24 at Burlington (WGE,BSE,ORE) and of 28 on the Connecticut River (WN), and ca. 40 on April 17 at North Springfield Dam (EE). Several observers recorded final migrants about May 1, though 3 were seen May 11 at Londonderry (WJN). There were 4 records of Red-breasted Mergansers, all but 1 from Lake Champlain: 2 on May 5 at Burlington (WGE,GFE,BSE,ORE), and 2 on April 4 on the White River at Bethel (EHa). Wayne Scott reported that Red-breasteds were sighted on Champlain in March.

#### VULTURES THROUGH HAWKS

Unfavorable weather again hampered the spring hawk watch, scheduled for the weekend of April 24 and 25. In fact, too few reports were submitted to justify a separately published summary, so data for the hawk watch are analyzed below.

There is ample evidence that unseasonably warm March and mid-April weather brought many hawks back early. It's likely that the weekend of April 24-25 would not have coincided with maximum Broad-wing movement, as hoped, even if conditions had been ideal those dates.

Conditions were far from ideal. After eight days of unseasonably warm weather with winds generally southerly or westerly, temperatures dropped with the entrance of a cold front on April 23. By April 24 winds had shifted from a northerly to a westerly direction in the north half of the state (with gusts up to 35 mph at Mt. Elmore). The south

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half of the state had also begun to feel the effects of the front, though winds were lighter (at Grafton, in the far south, still southerly) and temperatures not so unseasonably cool as farther north. Though none of the lookouts recorded precipitation on Saturday, cloud cover was everywhere increasing. In short, after many days of very favorable weather for hawk migration, April 24 was not auspicious.

A number of sites did record light movement of hawks, all in the southern half of the state. It is unfortunate that only one site in the north was manned; there (Mt. Elmore) observers saw no hawks in six hours of observation. It is possible that hawks continued to move north across the state until they reached the heart of the cold front, and then stopped. With so few reports, one can only speculate. It is interesting, though, that Alan Pistorius at Sudbury, Frank Oatman at Mt. Elmore, and Fred Merrill at Barnard saw hawks moving south. The one Goshawk Oatman saw doing this might have been a local resident. But there is no doubt that the 5 hawks (1 Red-tail, 2 Broad-wings, 1 unidentified buteo, and 1 unidentified hawk species) Pistorius saw "moving straight south" were birds in passage. At Luce's Lookout, Merrill also listed (without details) several hawks moving north to south between 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon. Several things might account for this reversal of normal direction; but it is difficult not to speculate that they turned back upon encountering the stronger effects of the cold front as they moved north into it. If this is the case, one wonders why a relatively small percentage of the hawks--5 out of 24 at Sudbury; number uncertain at Barnard, but less than 5 out of 16--were observed to have turned back. Obviously, we still have a lot of work to do on spring hawk migration!

I can say with certainty that by April 25 the weather was adverse enough that no hawk watchers attempted coverage. What the hawks were doing in the rain, snow and fog of April 25 we can only guess.

On April 24, 27 observers at five different sites saw a total of 105 hawks in 36 hours of observation (111½ observer hours; 1.06 hawks per observer-hour). There were no surprises. Broad-wings were, as expected, the most common; no great rarities were seen.

ALL FOLLOWING RECORDS EXCLUDE HAWK WATCH FIGURES: A Turkey Vulture was sighted near Addison on the very early date of March 13 (RMu). A total of 38 TV's were reported in April and May, further evidence of the gains this invading species has made in the last two years in Vermont. A high of 7 was reported at West Rutland and Bomoseen on May 1 (GFE,WGE,et al). Especially noteworthy are reports

#### MIGRANT HAWKS: SATURDAY, 24 APRIL 1976

	TV	G	SS	UA	RT	RS	BW	UB	MH	OS	AK	UF	UU	Total	Ob	Hr	ObHr
Mt. Elmore (Morrisville)														0	2	6	12
Sudbury	1		3		3	1	12	2			1		1	24	3	9	15
Luce's Lookout (Barnard)			4	1	4	1	1	4	1					16	6	6	24
White Rock Cliffs (Wallingford)					1		3	2		1	1		1	9	5	3½	17½
Grafton					5		6	9			1		4	25	3	5	13
Prospect Hill (Dummerston)	2	1	2	3	3		6	10		1	2	1		31	8	6	30
Totals	3	1	9	4	16	2	28	27	1	2	5	1	6	105	27	35½	111½

TV= Turkey Vulture, G= Goshawk, SS= Sharp-shinned Hawk, UA= unidentified accipiter, RT= Red-tailed Hawk, RS= Red-shouldered Hawk, BW= Broad-winged Hawk, UB= unidentified buteo, MH= Marsh Hawk, OS= Osprey, AK= American Kestrel, UF= unidentified falcon, UU= unidentified hawk of unknown type, Ob= observers, Hr= number of hours site was covered, ObHr= observer-hours

from Craftsbury--single birds on both April 20 and May 31 (RAR,AG,JW)--and from the Missisquoi Delta at Sheldon--2 on April 8, 1 on May 10-11, and 1 on May 15 (GFO); these apparently represent the northernmost records in the state. There were 7 reports of Goshawk in April and May, the same number as in the spring of 1975. About 20 Sharp-shinned Hawks were reported, doubling last season's total. The increased sightings of both the Sharpie and the Cooper's are no doubt due in part to better observer coverage; but both these accipiters seem genuinely on the rebound from the pesticide-produced lows of the 1950's and 1960's. Sharp-shinned overwintered in fair numbers, and returning birds began arriving in late March. A total of 12 Cooper's Hawks were reported; this represents a notable increase over the last three springs--1 in 1973, 2 in 1974, and 3 in 1975. Red-tailed Hawks were reported in average numbers throughout the season, with highs of 9 in western Vermont on April 3 (GFE,WGE,et al) and 9 sighted going over Vergennes on April 14 (BPG). A Red-tail was on a nest at Woodstock on May 4 (MCH). Approximately 17 Red-shouldered Hawks were reported in April and May, though first arrivals came mostly in February and March as revealed in the winter report. A pair were observed nest building on April 24 in West Brattleboro (J&JH). Broad-winged Hawks were seen in good numbers, though no notable concentrations of migrants were reported. The species had reached Craftsbury by April 14 (FO), Sudbury by April 17 (AP), Stratton by April 19, and Peacham by April 21 (CW). Six Rough-legged Hawks were reported, with the latest being 2 seen May 22 at Plainfield (RE). There were 4 reports of the scarce Bald Eagle: Mary Kopps and Jeanne Sherman observed an immature from I89 in Randolph on April 13; and Harold Rising had 3 sightings in Norwich--1 adult on April 21, 1 immature on April 29, and 1 adult on April 30. A total of 15 Marsh Hawks was reported, the earliest in Bridport on March 28 (PMB,EH). Earliest sightings were made April 3 at Salisbury (WS,AP) and Dead Creek (GFE,WGE,et al), April 13 at Craftsbury (FO), and April 17 at Missisquoi (MFM,LNM). The Osprey flight was good again this spring, with a total of 62 birds seen between March 30 (1 at Missisquoi--GFO) and May 18. Ospreys had reached Wallingford by April 17 (BCW, NWW), Weathersfield by April 20 (EE), Norwich by April 21 (HSR), and Craftsbury by May 5 (RAR); on the west side of the state, first reports were from Lincoln on April 22 (BPG et al) and Shelburne Pond on April 25 (WGE,BSE,ORE). There were 4 reports of Merlin, all of single birds: April 14 at Waterford (WCA), April 15 at Burlington (WGE), April 23 at Winhall (WJN), and April 28 at Norwich (HSR). The Waterford bird was seen taking a Starling at a feeding station (Yip, Yip!), and the Winhall and Norwich individuals were also visiting feeders. American Kestrels appeared in good numbers throughout the season, with early returning birds building to a high of 5 on February 26 in North Ferrisburg (WS et al). Other high counts were 18 on April 3 over a wide area in western Vermont (GFE,WGE,et al), 20+ on April 4 from along Routes I91 and I89 between Brattleboro and Montpelier (WN), and 10 in a single group heading north over Grafton on April 18 (DC).

#### GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

The BOBWHITE was reported for the first time in the four years of this publication. Frank Oatman, Rose Ann Rowlett, George and Walter Ellison spotted an adult May 23 near Burlington. Since the Bobwhite is apparently not a native of Vermont, all birds seen are either recent escapees or survivors of the numerous attempts to introduce the species. There were too few reports of Ruffed Grouse populations to draw conclusions. But observers at Burlington (WGE) considered numbers average, while reporters from Springfield (EE) and Craftsbury (FO) suspected birds were not as common as 2-3 years ago. A Ruffed Grouse nest with 10 eggs was found in Plainfield May 2 (fide MFM), and a brood of 12 observed May 30 in the Missisquoi

Delta (GFO). The RING-NECKED PHEASANT is another species introduced rather unsuccessfully and seldom seen in Vermont. Doris Dolt reported 1 seen on two different occasions by people on East Street in Wallingford (no dates available). The Wild Turkeys introduced in southern Vermont are doing well and spreading. There were reports from Sudbury, Shaftsbury, Clarendon, Rutland, Wallingford, Hartland, and Grafton. Roy Pilcher reported a nest with 14 eggs on May 21 at Whipple Hollow, Proctor area.

#### RAILS AND GALLINULES

Virginia Rails were reported in normal numbers from their few known breeding sites, the first on April 17 at West Rutland Marsh (LHP). By May 1 the Ellisons found a high of 8 at the same place. We need more work on the arrival dates, breeding dates and population densities of all the rallidae in Vermont. There were 7 reports of the Sora, the earliest 1 on April 24 at Shelburne Pond (WGE,BSE,ORE). The high of 6-8 was logged May 23 at Newport marshes (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE); the other reports were from Swanton, Burlington, Dead Creek and West Rutland Marsh. Common Gallinules were present in very small numbers at their few regular locations--5 at West Swanton by April 22 (GFO), 1 at Shelburne Pond by April 24 (WGE,BSE,ORE), and 3 at Dead Creek by April 30 (WJN). Gallinules were also reported from Sandbar Reserve, West Rutland Marsh, and Burlington's Intervale.

#### PLOVERS AND SANDPIPERS

The Semipalmated Plover was reported once, from Brattleboro on May 27 (DVW). The first 2 Killdeer on February 21 at Bennington (MV) were earlier than usual, as in fact was the 1 spotted February 26 at North Ferrisburg (WS et al). There were numerous reports in March, but peak movement seemed to come mid to late April, with a high of 25 in an East Calais meadow on April 13 (MFM). 2 downy young were found April 24 at Shelburne (WGE,BSE,ORE) and a nest with 3 eggs May 15 at Bridgewater (WGE). American Woodcocks began to move back into Vermont early in March and movement peaked in late March (see winter report). Numbers of both Woodcock and Snipe seemed average. Common Snipe also first appeared in February and movement continued through the season. The scarce Upland Sandpiper was reported only once, 1-2 seen April 29 and 30 at Orwell (AP). Spotted Sandpipers appeared early, with a first of 2 on April 9 at Norwich (HSR). They were at Otter Creek by April 29 (DD), at Barre by May 7 (MFM,LNM), and at Irasburg by May 8 (FO,JW). Numbers of migrants seemed average; and a nest with 4 eggs was located at West Rutland Marsh on May 27 (RWP). A Solitary Sandpiper was seen April 20 at Cornwall Swamp for the seasonal first (AP). A Solitary had reached Craftsbury by April 29 (RAR), though most observers reported initial sightings May 8 to 15. A report on May 22 at Randolph (EH) closed the migration. Greater Yellowlegs moved through the state April 20 to May 22, with the first count (of 17) at Cornwall Swamp (AP), where there was a high of 25 on April 25 (AP,WS). Only 10 additional birds were seen. The Lesser Yellowlegs was reported only twice: 1 near Salisbury on April 25 (AP,WS), and 2 at North Springfield Dam on May 1 (EE). There were only 2 reports of Pectoral Sandpiper: 10 at Cornwall Swamp on April 25 (AP,WS), and a notable flock of 35 on the Lamaille River near Cambridge May 23 (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE). Single birds believed to be Dowitcher species (the observer was uncertain) were seen March 30 and April 1, at Danby and Wallingford respectively (BCW). If the birds were actually Dowitchers they would doubtless represent the earliest ever seen here. A flock of 26 Dowitchers (species undetermined) May 23 is a good number for Vermont (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE); and a flock of 8 (species undetermined) on May 27 at Brattleboro (DVW) closed the migration. A flock of 7 NORTHERN PHALAROPES seen May 20 at Burlington by the Eastmans and Walter Ellison apparently established the first spring record for Vermont.

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#### GULLS AND TERNS

A second year GLAUCOUS GULL April 2 at Burlington was the last of a good flight in March and the first spring report in four years (WGE,BSE,ORE). The same observers in Burlington submitted the only reports of Great Black-backed Gull--1 on April 2 and 2 on April 21--though members of the High Peaks Audubon Society found 8+ on May 15 on the Four Brothers Islands where the species nested in 1975. Herring Gulls seemed in average numbers at Burlington (maximum 100 on April 2--WGE) and on Lake Memphremagog (FO). There were 5 reports from eastern Vermont, April 16 to 29, and a curious record of 1 bird which for about 10 days prior to May 25 fed in fields at Bethel during the day and roosted in a barn at night (EHa). Ring-billed Gulls appeared in average numbers along Lake Champlain, with a good migration in early April yielding a seasonal high of 1,000 April 3 (GFE,WGE,JAM). There were numerous sightings as usual elsewhere across the state in April and May, all of 1 or 2 birds but for 35 seen May 5 at Caspian Lake (RAR). There were only 3 spring season reports of Bonaparte's Gulls: 5 on May 6 at Burlington (WGE,BSE,ORE), 1 May 15th at Newport (FO,SA), and 1 May 27 at Caspian Lake (FO). Common Terns, uncommon Champlain nesters, reappeared early on April 25 when 2 were seen at the Sandbar Reserve (WGE,BSE,ORE). May 5 was the first record at the colony nesting offshore from St. Albans (GFO). The adult CASPIAN TERN seen by Frank Oatman, Rose Ann Rowlett, George and Walter Ellison May 23 at Newport is the first ever reported to "Records of Vermont Birds". Black Terns had returned to their Missisquoi breeding area by May 5, where a high count of 150-175 was made May 15 (GFO). They were also reported from Lake Memphremagog and Dead Creek, where they also breed; and they may have bred for the first time at Burlington's Intervale (FO,WGE,et al).

#### DOVES AND CUCKOOS

Rock Doves (or Pigeons) were present in normal numbers. Observers at Clarendon (LHP) and Grafton (DC) considered Mourning Dove numbers down during spring migration, though many overwintered. The earliest reported were 9 on February 26 at Middlebury (AW), and the seasonal high was 30 on April 30 at Dead Creek (WJN). A pair of Mourning Doves was nesting at Proctor by April 25 (RWP). A Yellow-billed Cuckoo seen by Walter Ellison and Barbara Eastman May 20 at Colchester represents the first spring report since 1973. There were 7 reports of the scarce Black-billed Cuckoo, the first on May 15 at Weathersfield (EE).

#### OWLS

The rare Screech Owl was reported only once--1 on April 27 at Burlington (WGE,BSE). There were 7 scattered reports of Great-horned Owl, a resident species in Vermont. A Snowy Owl was present at Hartland until April 12 (HM), the season's only report. Barred Owls were reported from Clarendon (LHP), Londonderry (WJN), Grafton (DC,PS) and Wallingford (DD). The season's only Saw-whet Owl was called up by Whit Nichols with a tape recorder on May 14 at Marlboro.

#### WHIP-POOR-WILL THROUGH KINGFISHER

The Whip-poor-will was reported only 4 times, compared to 11 reports last spring: April 27, 1 at Passumpsic (AC); May 10, 1 and May 23, 4 at Springfield (EE); and May 27, 1 at Plainfield (AJ). The first Common Nighthawk was reported on the early date of April 27 at Passumpsic (AC), though the only other reports of this May and June arrival were 1 on May 26 at White River Jct. (GFE,WGE) and 1 on May 27 at Rutland (LHP). Chimney Swifts arrived about as expected, with the first on May 12 at West Rutland (GFE,WGE,et al). They reached Addison by May 2 (AP). At Burlington a flock of 250 (the seasonal high) was seen May 6 and May 12 (WGE,BSE,ORE); also high was a count of "several hundred" over Swanton on May 20 (GFO). Away from Champlain swifts were a bit later; they reached Grafton by May 2, 5 seen (DC); Strafford by May 10

(HR); Plainfield by May 11, 3 seen (MFM); Crafts-bury by May 14, 6 seen (FO); and the St. Johnsbury area by May 17, 1 seen (WCh). Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were well reported, with a first on May 6 at Weathersfield (EE). Individuals were first seen May 8 at Sudbury (AP), May 10 at Norwich (HSR), May 13 at St. Johnsbury (PD,HaR), and May 17 at Crafts-bury (FO). The high count was 15 on May 22 at Bennington (WN). Small numbers of Belted Kingfishers, which overwinter locally, seem to have begun returning in late March. One was seen, quite early for this northern locale, on March 27 at Newport (FO,CSP). Birds had reached the following areas by the dates given: Lake Bomoseen, March 20 (FSA); Addison County area, March 28 (WS,DoB); Rochester and Wells River, March 31 (RAB); Missisquoi, April 2 (GFO); and St. Johnsbury Center, April 25 (WCh). The high count was 4 on April 30 at Dead Creek (WJN); by mid-May normal numbers of Kingfishers were at breeding areas across the state.

#### WOODPECKERS

A Common Flicker March 25 at Winhall (WJN) was the earliest reported; also in the vanguard were individuals March 28 at Bennington (MV) and March 30 at Missisquoi (GFO). Most areas reported first arrivals early to mid-April, with the first in northeast Vermont not until April 17 at Crafts-bury (FO,RAR) and April 19 at St. Johnsbury (MM). Numbers seemed normal, though we need more data on dates of peak movement. Pileated Woodpeckers were seen as usual in low numbers, though Don Clark observed that they seem on the increase in the Grafton area. There were 5 reports of the rare and local Red-headed Woodpecker: 1 on May 8 near Panton (MFM); 2 around May 23 at Grafton (DC); 1 May 23 at Townshend (LPM); 1 May 25 in Marlboro (LNM); and 1 May 27 at Barre (BJ). A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker March 25 at Winhall (WJN) was the earliest spring report in four years. The birds seemed in normally low numbers, first appearing at Bennington April 11 (FO,JW); Clarendon April 14 (LHP); Burlington April 16, 4 seen for the seasonal high (FO,CSP); and Crafts-bury April 17, 2 seen (FO,RAR). Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers are resident year-round across Vermont though movement does occur as some northern birds move into the state in winter and some of our summer populations move farther south. This movement is difficult to monitor, but at her Wallingford feeding station Betty Weeks made a special effort. Two individually identifiable Hairy males were present from Dec. 15 on, accompanied by 2 females--apparent evidence of winter pair bonding. "But on January 1, January 26 and March 13, 3 females were present at one time. The March 13 female," Mrs. Weeks wrote, "seems the only possible 'migratory' bird. She was unwelcome to the 2 'resident' females." Such careful observation is commendable; one could speculate that the January females were continuing a movement south, the March bird possibly returning northward. Mrs. Weeks also noted that by mid-May the 2 identifiable males and their 2 females were already dingy and dirty, presumably from feeding young. A Hairy nest was found May 24 in Grafton (DC); and an aberrant or dyed bird with yellow plumage in place of white was seen May 12 in Northfield (MCH). Most observers listed Downys as less common than Hairys. Despite a careful lookout for intrusive individuals which might be migrants, Betty Weeks saw none. Two females in apparent territorial dispute were seen April 17 at Weathersfield (EE); and by late May, Downys at Wallingford were apparently feeding young (BCW). The Island Pond nesting area of the Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker produced the only reports of this rare species: 1 on May 15 (FO,SA); and 1 on May 29 (AG).

#### FLYCATCHERS

Remarkably early was an Eastern Kingbird April 15 in the Missisquoi Delta (GFO); Bob Spear's "Birds of Vermont" shows no record for the species in April. Other first arrivals (singles unless noted)

were: Clarendon April 21 (LHP), Wallingford May 7 (DD), West Woodstock May 8 (3 seen--EH), Otter Creek May 10 (AP), Albany May 12 (RAR), and St. Johnsbury May 14 (fide RC). Several observers commented on the scarcity of Kingbirds, doubtless due to fatalities produced by the May cold snap. The high was 5 seen May 14 at West Rutland (WJN). Great Crested Flycatchers were first seen May 5 at Sudbury (AP), May 9 at Shelburne Pond (WGE,BSE), May 10 at Weathersfield (EE), May 14 at Plainfield (MFM), May 16 at Swanton (GFO), and May 17 at West Waterford (DWI). Bill Norse considered the species scarce in the Manchester area, though at Burlington Walter Ellison found "average numbers" (2-4 per day) throughout the season. Good numbers of Eastern Phoebe arrived in March (see winter report) in the southern part of the state. They reached Sudbury (AP) and Weathersfield (EE) by April 2, Plainfield by April 3 (MFM), and Swanton by April 15 (GFO). Numbers seemed average (4-5 per day at Burlington--WGE). The Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was far better reported this spring, though the May cold front seems to have delayed arrival. The earliest was 1 on May 22 in Bennington (WN et al); 1 was found in the Island Pond breeding area on May 23, (FO,RAR,WGE); 1 was banded May 24 at South Woodstock (VINS); and highs were obtained May 29 at both Mt. Killington, 3 seen (GFE,WGE,et al) and Island Pond, 4 seen (FO,RAR). A final migrating bird was seen on Oatman's Craftsbury property June 8. The earliest "Trail's" species flycatcher (now separated into Alder and Willow) were non-singing birds May 23 at Island Pond (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE) and May 24 at Bennington (MV). Alder Flycatchers were sporadically reported: 1 on May 22 at Bennington (WN et al); 2 on May 29 at Shelburne (GFE,WGE,et al); 1 on May 29 at Winhall (WJN); 2 on May 29 at Island Pond (FO,RAR); and 1 on May 31 at Tinmouth (DD). 1 to 2 migrant Alders were seen daily in East Craftsbury June 1-9 (FO,RAR). There was only 1 report of the scarce and late-arriving Willow Flycatcher--1 on May 29 at Brattleboro (WN)--though 6 were seen May 28 in Lebanon, New Hampshire, just across the river from Vermont (fide WGE). Least Flycatchers burst upon the scene May 3 when 12+ arrived in Grafton (DC, PS) and 2 at Winhall (WJN). Several other locations recorded first arrivals about May 6, but firsts were not seen at Burlington until May 8, 2 seen (WGE) nor at Craftsbury until May 10, 6 seen (FO,RAR). Generally the migration seemed to peak May 10-15; on the latter date the Ellisons had the seasonal high of 30 in Plymouth. 8 were banded at South Woodstock May 8-28, many more than in 1974 or 1975 (VINS). The first Eastern Wood Pewee showed up about when expected, though several observers considered the species scarce and late. The seasonal first, 1 on May 20 in the Missisquoi Delta (GFO), indicates (as does the early Kingbird there) that the milder climate along Champlain encourages especially early arrival. There were only 4 other reports, suggesting that the bulk of Pewee migration was held up by the cold and wet of late May: 1 on May 21 banded at South Woodstock (VINS), 1 on May 24 and thereafter at Winhall (WJN), 1 on May 28 at Craftsbury (RAR), and 1 May 29 at Fair Haven (FSA). An Olive-sided Flycatcher was seen May 11 at Wallingford for the seasonal first (BCW). At Winhall the first arrived May 16 and numbers were seen throughout the season, with a high of 4 on May 25 (WJN). Additional reports were: 1 on May 24, Marlboro (WN); 1 on May 25, Clarendon (LHP); 1 on May 25-26, Wallingford (DD); 1 on May 28, Brantbury State Park (CWJ); 2 on May 29, Mt. Killington (GFE,WGE,et al); and 3 on May 29, Island Pond (FO,RAR). (None could be found at Island Pond breeding locations on May 23--FO et al.)

#### LARK AND SWALLOWS

Horned Larks, which overwinter, continued to increase in March, with highs of 200 in one field on March 4 (WS,DOB) and 175 at Mockton on March 19 (WS). Numbers decreased in April in the Champlain Valley, with 12 at Dead Creek on April 3 (GFE,WGE, JAM) and 2 in Weybridge on April 19 (MMA). The

only report away from Champlain was of a flock of 35 on April 30 in Plainfield (FO). A pair was nesting in Burlington by the end of May (WGE). The unseasonably warm weather brought Tree Swallows back in March, as detailed in the winter report. ("Birds of Vermont" shows no previous spring record before April.) Those early reports were from southern locales and from the Addison area near Champlain, where Wayne Scott said they "remained in low numbers generally until after April 8." Other areas reported early to mid-April first arrivals--6 on April 3, Vernon (WN); 3 on April 10, Plainfield (MFM); 8 on April 15, Weathersfield (EE). The migration seemed to peak late April to early May, with such highs as: April 28, 5,000-7,000 at Lake Bomoseen, first day of rain storm system break (AP); 400 on April 30 at Shelburne (WGE); 200 on May 7 at Barre Reservoir (MFM); and 250 on May 23 at Lake Memphremagog (FO,RAR,GFE, WGE). An April 14 Bank Swallow at Norwich (HSR) was the earliest ever reported to this publication; individuals had reached Herrick's Cove by April 17 (GFE,WGE,et al) and Craftsbury by April 25 (FO,JW). Numbers built through late April, and by mid-May birds were at colonies over the state. Rough-winged Swallows arrived about as expected, with 3 the earliest on April 16 at Burlington (WGE,BSE,ORE). Other early arrivals: April 17 at Tinmouth (LHP); 2 on April 17 at Herrick's Cove (GFE,WGE,et al); and 6 on April 22 at Woodstock (SBL). As usual only small numbers were seen, with a high of 15 on May 5 at Shelburne (WGE,BSE,ORE). The 2 on May 23 at Newport (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE) were the latest apparent migrants. The traditional pair nesting on a wall in downtown Brattleboro were there by May 15 (LPM). Clarendon recorded the first Barn Swallow on April 17 (LHP); 1 was at Lake Morey on April 18 (GFE,WGE); and Newport had 2 by April 18 (FO). Other areas recorded first arrivals late April to early May; seasonal highs were 100+ at Caspian Lake May 6 (FO) and 150 at Lake Memphremagog May 23 (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE). Betty Weeks commented that numbers of nesting Barn Swallows have definitely declined in the Wallingford area, perhaps with the decline in numbers of barns. It would be interesting to know if others have noticed a reduction. Two Cliff Swallows April 20 at Wilmington (WN) were the earliest reported, followed by 2 on May 1 in White River Jct. (GFE,WGE), 2 on May 3 at Londonderry (WJN), a flock of 16 on May 6 at Wallingford (BCW), and 2 on May 6 at Caspian Lake (FO). Highs of 25-30 were recorded May 14-24 at Goshen, Winhall and Newport. Nests were under construction by May 11 at Grafton (DC). Purple Martins had returned to Dead Creek by April 16 (BPG); 3 were at South Hero by April 25 (WGE,BSE, ORE,CSP), and 3 reached Newport by May 15 (FO,SA). Highs were 13 on May 4 at South Hero (WGE,BSE,ORE) and 10 on May 23 at Newport (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE).

#### CROW THROUGH CREEPER

Blue Jays appeared in about average numbers to most observers; and Common Ravens continued to show up all over the state, with a high of 8 at Island Pond on May 23 (FO,RAR,WGE,GFE). A pair was observed carrying nesting material to a Mt. Elmore cliff on April 24 (FO,JW). See the winter report for early movement of Common Crow. Most observers considered numbers average (10-20 per day at Burlington--WGE), though Bill Norse commented that "numbers seem greatly decreased" in the Winhall area. Black-capped Chickadees seemed as abundant as usual; birds were carrying nesting materials by April 21 at Sudbury (AP), and 1 egg was in a nest box on May 26 in Duxbury (HBD). Unfortunately we have little information on return (if they did return) of Boreal Chickadees after their winter invasion south. Boreals were present throughout the season (though apparently down from 4-5 to 2-3) at East Craftsbury, where a bird was carrying nesting material May 9 (FO,RAR). There were only 2 reports away from the Northeast Kingdom nesting areas: 1 on April 7 at Winhall (WJN) and 1 on April 24 atop Snake Mt. (WS,NF). The scarce Tufted Titmouse was reported twice: April 10 at Waltham (M&SMA); and



April 11, 2 at Arlington (FO,JW). White-breasted Nuthatches were reported in normal numbers by most observers, though at South Strafford where normally common, none were seen (HR). Two appeared at Oatman's property in East Craftsbury on April 2 after being absent all winter; and at Clarendon Henry Potter noted numbers passing through by May 11. There were no other reports of definitely migrating White or Red-breasted Nuthatches, which were also reported in daily numbers of 3-10 throughout the season; both nuthatches are diurnal migrants, and observers (especially when on ridges or mountain peaks) are urged to watch for and report any movement. A pair of Red-breasts was on a nest in Grafton State Forest by May 23 (DC). Brown Creepers are year-round residents in many areas, but migratory buildup occurs as birds return in March and April to more northern breeding areas. Observers are urged to record and submit daily numbers, as they did not this spring, so we can trace that movement. Individual Creepers March 15 at Fair Haven (FSA), March 16 at Bennington (MV), March 17 at Weathersfield (EE), April 7 at Grafton (PS), and April 8 at Cabot (fide MFM) were probably of returning migrants.

#### WRENS

The first reported House Wren was 1 April 21 at Sudbury (AP); 1 had reached Burlington by April 22 (WGE). Inland from Champlain first reports were later--April 29 at Clarendon (LHP), May 1 at Vernon (WN), May 2 at Woodstock (EH), May 11 at Craftsbury (RAR). The seasonal high was 7 on May 1 in West Rutland (GFE,WGE, et al); and in the Swanton area migrants were numerous around May 18 (GFO). House Wrens were nesting at Grafton by May 18 (DC). Winter Wrens do winter in small numbers in Vermont, but the following firsts (of singles unless indicated) doubtless represent returning birds: April 4, Winhall (WJN) and Grafton (DC); April 7, West Woodstock (EH), April 18, 2 at Craftsbury (RAR); April 16, Burlington (WGE). Both Winhall (WJN) and Grafton (DC) logged highs of 5-6 on April 15, while 6 (perhaps on territory) were found at Island Pond on May 23 (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE). A pair of rare Carolina Wrens was nest-building by March 31 at Middlebury and had completed three nests by May; however, there was no indication of incubation by the end of the season (fide WS). Long-billed Marsh Wrens had returned to Dead Creek by April 30, when 10 singing males were heard (WJN)--a large number for that early date. The Ellisons found 6 at West Rutland Marsh on May 1 and observed that by mid-May numbers were normal at several breeding sites. However, only 1 could be found in the far northern Newport marshes on May 15 (FO,SA). On May 29 Don Clark found at least 12 nests in one marsh at Herrick's Cove along with numerous dummy nests. The scarce Short-billed Marsh Wren was not reported; is it a later arrival than we have thought or were we just not looking (correction--listening)?

#### MIMICS

The phenomenal colonization of Vermont by the Mockingbird is clear enough in the following summary of spring season reports, even keeping in mind that our reporting system has also improved yearly. In the spring of 1973, 6 birds were reported, including a pair which established the state's first nesting record (their 4 nestlings not counted in the total); in 1974, 5 were seen; in 1975, 10 were seen; and this spring, 24 were reported. Mockers are becoming regular, though scattered, south of I89, or a line between White River Jct. and Burlington; 1 was seen May 20 at Craftsbury, the northernmost report to date (RAR, AG,SA). The species overwinters in the south and along Champlain, but birds were moving north from at least April 15 until May 22. A Gray Catbird was found in Weybridge April 24 (WS), the earliest report in four years. One was at North Danville by May 3 (RR), and 2 at Wallingford by May 5 (DD). Most areas reported first Catbirds May 7-10, after which the record essentially ends. Observers at Burlington (WGE et al) considered numbers average

(4-6 per day); but at Winhall, Norse thought the species scarce, and at South Woodstock only 6 birds were banded--down from 32 in 1975 (VINS). We need more data (daily numbers, not just firsts) on the migration of both Catbird and Brown Thrasher. The Thrasher first appeared April 17, 1 at Norwich (HSR); Sudbury's first was April 18 (AP); Vernon's first, April 20 (PMB); Craftsbury's, April 21 (RAR). Numbers were apparently average as birds moved to breeding areas across the state thereafter.

#### THRUSHES

American Robins returned in good numbers in March (see winter report). They were numerous by April 1 in the Rutland area (RWP); 3 on April 1 in Plainfield had increased to 22 on April 5 (MFM). Numbers seemed average everywhere (20-30 per day at Burlington--WGE), but no large concentrations were reported. Robins were sitting on eggs by April 30 at both Sudbury (AP) and Grafton (DC). Single Wood Thrushes were found at Grafton April 24 (PS), and at Proctor April 25 (RWP); "Birds of Vermont" shows no previous record for April. Other earliest reports were May 3 at Winhall (2--WJN), May 3 at Sudbury (AP), May 5 at Weathersfield (EE), May 7 at Burlington (1--WGE), and May 11 at Craftsbury (5--RAR). Numbers seemed average (6 per day at Burlington--WGE), with a seasonal high of 10 on May 11 at Winhall (WJN). Remarkably early was a Burlington Hermit Thrush March 18, believed to have moved north during the warm weather (WGE), and another seen March 23 at Bennington (MV); these may constitute the first March records ever. After this vanguard, birds arrived more as expected: April 17 saw single firsts at Marlboro (WN), Dead Creek (B&JP), and Weathersfield (GFE,WGE,et al); and 3 reached Craftsbury by April 18 (RAR). Numbers seemed normal at Grafton and South Woodstock, but were considered low at Craftsbury. Only 8 reports of Swainson's Thrush were submitted, and several observers listed the species as scarce: 1 on May 11 at South Woodstock (VINS), 1 on May 18 at Winhall (WJN), 1 on May 20 at Norwich (HSR), 2 on May 21 at Craftsbury (RAR), 1 on May 22 at Bennington (WN), 1 on May 24 at Winhall (WJN), 1 on May 26 at Hartford (GFE,WGE), and 1 on May 29 at Mt. Killington (GFE,WGE). The Gray-cheeked Thrush was reported only once--2 on May 29 on Mt. Killington (GFE,WGE,et al) where the species breeds. A bird identified as a Veery was seen on the early date of April 22 at Concord by Eleanor Peters (fide RC). Birds had reached Grafton by May 4 (PS), Elmore by May 6 (HBD), Burlington by May 8 (2 each seen by both WGE and FO), and Craftsbury by May 11 (RAR). The mixed character of woodland thrush migration is exemplified by observer comments on Veery: Don Clark found them more numerous than usual at Grafton; Walter Ellison reported average numbers (of ca. 4 per day) at Burlington; while Oatman and Rowlett saw unusually few at Craftsbury. Eastern Bluebirds had returned to many locations by the end of March (see winter report). 44 birds were reported in April and May arriving in the usual sporadic fashion, apparently as late as May 29. They were nesting by April 13 at Wallingford (DD) but still nest-building as late as May 31 at Castleton (FSA).

#### GNATCATCHER AND KINGLETS

One of the highlights of the season was the discovery of 2 nests of the scarce and local Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 1 in Vernon May 2 (WN) and 1 at Lake Bomoseen May 15 (RWP,DD,et al). The Bomoseen pair was actively nest-building on the 15th, gathering spider webs for a gray nest located on a horizontal limb ca. 35 feet above the ground (RWP). There was only 1 additional report, 1 seen May 2 in Guilford (LPM). Golden-crowned Kinglets were so scarce through the winter that first area reports may genuinely reveal the northward movement of returning birds. First reports came on March 25 in Norwich (2--PMB) and Winhall (WJN), with individuals at Clarendon (LHP), Woodstock (EH), and Waltham (M&SMa) on March 26. Birds were present as far north as Peacham by March (CW). By

April 2 the early warmth brought 5 to Proctor (RWP), and on April 3 groups of 4-5 were seen at Lake Bomoseen and Weathersfield (GFE,WGE,EE). By April 15 highs were reported from Grafton (DC), Marlboro (15--WN), and Sudbury (20--AP), with a high of 5 at Plainfield on April 16 (FO). At Burlington (where they don't breed) a final bird was seen May 7 (WGE). There were 2 March reports of Ruby-crowned Kinglet--2 at Sherburne on March 27 (J&EO), and "present" in Peacham in March (CW). April 15 brought the next wave of first sightings --from Marlboro (5--WN), Clarendon (LHP), Winhall (1--WJN), and Burlington (2--WGE). By April 17 singles had reached West Woodstock (EH) and Craftsbury (RAR). The migration peaked between April 18 (when Winhall had 30--WJN, and even northern Craftsbury had 8--RAR) and April 21 (when ca. 20 were seen at West Woodstock--EH). All observers commenting considered numbers above average; Woodstock banded 3 as late as May 8. Final individuals were found at Goshen May 14 (LHP), Winhall May 18 (WJN), Wilmington May 24 (WN), and Sherburne May 29 (GFE,WGE). At Island Pond, where the species breeds, 40 were found on May 23 (FO, RAR,GFE,WGE).

#### PIPIT THROUGH STARLING

There were 4 reports of Water Pipit: 100 on April 25 in Salisbury (WS,AP); 1 in South Londonderry (WJN) and 50 in Albany (RAR) on May 3; 2 at Bridgewater (GFE,WGE,et al) and 2 at Killington (JMV) on May 15. Lingered from the great winter invasion of Bohemian Waxwings were birds (no numbers submitted) February 29 in Cornwall (BBP) and March 6 in Middlebury (AW). The latest report was of 16-20 in Thetford April 4 (JAM). Cedar Waxwings apparently did not overwinter, and the migration seems to have been poor and perhaps late. 10 birds May 3 at Burlington were the first reported (WGE); Waxwings reached Duxbury (HBD) and Danby (EH) by May 23, Island Pond by May 29 (2--FO,RAR), and Plainfield by May 30 (MFM). There was 1 report of Northern Shrike, an immature seen April 1 and April 11 at Hartford (HSR). The Loggerhead Shrike does not seem to be recovering from its long decline in the East, with only 3 reported: 1 adult at Burlington March 27 (WGE,BSE,CS), 1 in Arlington April 3 (RK), and 1 at Chimney Point May 8 (AP). Starling numbers seemed normal to most observers (average 50 per day at Burlington--WGE); they seem on the increase in rural areas around Weathersfield-Springfield (EE).

#### VIREOS

Yellow-throated Vireo reports continue to increase, up from 8 last spring to 14 this year. It is too soon to say whether this is due to better observation and reporting or to an actual increase. 1 on May 1 at Vernon was the earliest (WN); 3 at Clarendon on May 9 established the high (BCW,NWW); and 1 at Greensboro on May 18 (RAR) was rather far north for this southern breeder. There were additional records May 3-24 from South Strafford (HR); Clarendon (BCW,NWW,LHP); West Woodstock (EH); Sandbar Reserve in Milton (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE); and Plymouth and Hartford (GFE,WGE). Single Solitary Vireos first appeared at both Marlboro (WN) and Winhall (WJN) on the slightly early date of April 17, and reached Albany by April 19 (RAR) and Peacham by April 21 (CW). Woodstock and Grafton both had firsts on April 20 (EH,DC,PS), while curiously birds were not reported along Champlain until April 22 at Burlington (WGE) and April 24 in Addison (fide WS). Thereafter numbers were average (maxima of 5-6 several days at Winhall--WJN) for about two weeks before tapering off. The seasonal high of 20 on May 23 at Island Pond (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE) may represent the good breeding population in that area rather than migration. Single Red-eyed Vireos were seen first May 9 at Clarendon (BCW, NWW), May 10 at Marlboro (WN) and Swanton (GFO), May 12 at Plainfield (FO), and May 18 at Peacham (CW) and Craftsbury (RAR). Highs were 20 on May 15 at Plymouth and Hartford (GFE,WGE,et al) and 12-15 on several days at Winhall (WJN). Birds became

difficult to find during the cold, rainy weather of early May. The Philadelphia Vireo is apparently scarce in Vermont, but would surely be reported more often if more observers would study field marks and vocalizations of this rather difficult-to-identify species. There were 6 reports, all of single birds: May 11, Craftsbury (RAR); May 15, Plymouth (GFE,WGE,et al); May 18, Winhall (WJN); May 23, Island Pond (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE); May 25, Wal-lingford (BCW); and May 29, Island Pond (FO,RAR). The first Warbling Vireo was found at Burlington on May 7 (WGE); individuals reached Vernon by May 8 (WN), Woodstock by May 10 (2 banded--VINS), and Craftsbury by May 13 (RAR). The migration was too poorly reported to establish good parameters, but highs were: 3 at Craftsbury May 16 (FO), 15 at Bennington May 22 (WN), and 9 in the White River area (most in New Hampshire) on May 28 (WGE).

#### WARBLERS

A male Black-and-white Warbler April 21 on Mt. Elmore (RAR) was the earliest in four years. 1 on May 1 at Vernon was the next reported (WN), while May 2 brought firsts at Winhall (WJN), Hartford (6 seen--WGE) and Sudbury (AP), and May 4 firsts to the Weathersfield (EE) and the Woodstock area (EH,MCH). Thereafter numbers seemed average, with highs of 15-20 several days at Winhall (WJN) and of 8 in migrant flocks at Island Pond May 23 (FO, RAR,GFE,WGE); Woodstock banded the same number as in 1975 (VINS). Golden-winged Warblers are showing up more frequently each spring, with 11 birds reported this year. Alan Pistorius found the first 1 on May 9 in the Sudbury area where they bred last year; by May 12 he had 3 singing males there, though only 1 could be located May 14. Additional reports were: May 11, 1 at Clarendon and May 15, 1 at West Rutland (LHP et al); May 22, a pair at Bennington and May 24, 1 at Marlboro (WN); May 26, a male at Winhall (WJN); and May 31, 1 male at Proctor (RWP). Strangely only 1 BLUE-WINGED WARBLER was reported--a singing male found May 22 at Bennington by Whit Nichols et al--even though hybrid Golden-wings x Blue-wings were found in Sudbury last spring and again this: "Brewster's Warblers" were "back by June," Alan Pistorius reported. May 14 saw first Tennessee Warblers at Bennington (MV), West Woodstock (EH), and Craftsbury (FO). By May 15 there were 3 at Island Pond (FO,SA) and 2 at Plymouth (GFE,WGE,et al), after which numbers were above average (e.g. 6 in Burlington May 18--WGE; 20 at Bennington May 22--WN) through at least May 23, when 11 were found at Island Pond (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE). Latest reports establish a nice progressive departure northward: 1 on May 25 at Clarendon (LHP), 3 on May 25 at Hartford (GFE,WGE), 1 on May 26 at Winhall (WJN), 1 on May 27 at Grafton (PS), an unknown number on May 28 at Weathersfield (EE), and 1 on May 29 at Island Pond (FO) where the species is suspected of breeding. The first ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER ever reported to this publication in spring was netted, banded and photographed at South Woodstock on May 24 by Sally Laughlin and June Vydra. Individual Nashville Warblers were seen April 24 at both Guilford (LPM) and Abbey Pond (near Middlebury--BBP,JP), the earliest reports in four years. Firsts reached Weathersfield by May 1 (EE), Winhall by May 2 (2--WJN), West Woodstock by May 5 (EH), Sudbury by May 6 (AP), and Craftsbury (FO), Burlington (2--WGE) and Peacham (CH) by May 7. Numbers seemed average, with highs of 15-20 many days at Winhall (WJN) and 12 on May 23 at Island Pond (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE). Only 16 reports were submitted of Northern Parula, though more of this rather uncommon species were probably seen. The first was 1 at Hartford May 2 (WGE), the earliest, by a few days, in four years. Individuals had reached Bennington (MV) and Plainfield (AJ) by May 7; highs were 3 at Shelburne (WGE) and 5 at Island Pond (FO,SA) on May 15, and 8 at Island Pond on May 23 (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE). Winhall's final migrant was May 31 (WJN), but Parulas were breeding at Plainfield (fide MFM) and Island Pond (FO) by the end of May. The first Yellow Warblers were seen May 1 at Vernon (WN), Grafton (DC)



and West Rutland (3 seen--GFE,WGE,JAM), and 1 was at Sudbury on May 2 (AP). Several areas reported firsts on May 10, including West Woodstock where 5 were seen (EH), announcing the start of the major movement, even though none were reported in the Northeast Kingdom until the May 15 individuals at St. Johnsbury (RC) and Island Pond (FO,SA). Yellows seemed abundant, as usual, with highs of 25 on May 14 at West Rutland (WJN) and 18 on May 20 in Colchester (WGE,BSE,ORE). A nesting pair at Proctor had a single egg by May 31 (RWP). Quite early were reports of single Magnolia Warblers (perhaps of the same bird) April 19, 22 and 29 at South Strafford (EH). The Magnolia made its next appearance May 3 at Winhall (2--WJN), reached Vernon (WN) and Grafton (DC) by May 5, Burlington by May 7 (WGE), and Peacham (CW) and Craftsbury (3--RAR) by May 13. The migration built through the rest of May, with highs of 4 in Burlington on May 18 (WGE), 3 banded at South Woodstock May 24 (VINS) and 30 at Island Pond on May 23 (FO,RAR, GFE,WGE). Again it was a good spring for Cape May Warbler, with 55 reported and certainly more seen. Winhall had 2 on May 6 (WJN), the earliest report in four years; Burlington had 1 on May 9 (WGE,BSE); and Craftsbury also had 2 on May 9 (RAR). The migration seemed to peak between May 15 (high of 7 in one warbler flock at Lake Memphremagog--FO,SA) and May 25, when 10 were found at Proctor (RWP). Notable was the seasonal high of 12 seen May 23 at Island Pond (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE). The latest certain non-breeders were 3 seen May 26 at Wallingford (DD). It is known that an infestation of the spruce budworm across parts of Canada has boosted numbers of both Cape May and Bay-breasted Warblers; it is hard to know how much the 1975-1976 increase in Cape May numbers here reflects increased populations and how much improved observer coverage. Single Black-throated Blue Warblers appeared May 3 at Marlboro (WN) and Winhall (WJN), reached Grafton by May 4 (2--DC), Ferrisburg (AP) and South Woodstock (VINS) by May 6, Burlington by May 8 (WGE,GFE,BSE,ORE), Craftsbury by May 10 (RAR), and St. Johnsbury by May 11 (fide RC). Highs were 8 on May 15 at Plymouth (GFE,WGE,et al) and 8 on May 23 at Island Pond (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE). Yellow-rumped Warblers took advantage of the early warm weather to move into the state considerably earlier than ever before. The first was feeding on suet at an East Montpelier feeder on March 29 (JC) where it remained until April 11. Other firsts were: 1 April 15 at Marlboro (WN), 1 April 16 at Burlington (WGE), 5 April 17 at Winhall (WJN), 3 April 18 at Grafton (PS), 3 April 19 at Weathersfield (EE), 1 April 21 at Craftsbury (RAR), and 1 April 21 at Peacham (CW). Numbers built steadily as 10 were seen April 22 at Bristol Pond (WS), ca. 50 April 18 at Wallingford (DD), 100 May 3 at Winhall (WJN), 20-30 in one flock May 4 at Norwich (HSR), 50+ in one locale at Grafton May 10 (PS), and 100-125 in one flock at Lake Memphremagog May 15 (FO,SA). Perhaps late were 3 at Bennington May 22 (WN). A Black-throated Green Warbler April 20 at Marlboro (WN) is the earliest reported (by about a week) in four years--followed by firsts of: May 1 at Stockbridge (EH), 1 May 2 at Winhall (WJN), May 6 at Plainfield (AJ), 2 May 7 at Greensboro (RAR), and 1 May 8 at Burlington (WGE). Highs were 8 May 1 at Plymouth (GFE,WGE,et al), and 8 May 23 at Island Pond (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE). The Blackburnian Warbler was first seen May 5, 2 at Grafton (DC); individuals had reached Winhall (WJN) and Burlington (WGE) by May 7, West Woodstock by May 9, and Craftsbury by May 14 (FO). The principal movement seemed to occur May 15-30, with highs of 10 May 16 at Hartford (WGE), 15 May 23 at Island Pond (FO, RAR,GFE,WGE), and 10 May 29 at Shelburne (GFE,WGE, et al). About a week earlier than the last three springs was a Chestnut-sided Warbler May 1 at Vernon (WN), followed by 1 May 3 at Winhall (WJN), 2 May 5 in Woodstock (EH, SBL), singles May 6 at Elmore (HBD) and Burlington (WGE,BSE,ORE), and 1 May 11 at Craftsbury (RAR). Migration peaked May 6-24, with highs of 10-15 several days at Winhall (WJN) and with good numbers reported from Grafton and

Burlington (DC,WGE). A pair was carrying nesting materials at West Rutland Marsh by May 15 (RWP). The Bay-breasted Warbler arrived about as expected: 1 seen May 13 at Grafton (PS). Individuals had reached West Rutland by May 14 (WJN), Island Pond by May 15 (FO,SA). Burlington (WGE) and Swanton (GFO) by May 18. Numbers seemed low to Norse at Winhall (maximum 3 on May 16) and to Oatman at Craftsbury; the seasonal highs were 10 May 22 at Bennington (WN) and 8 May 23 at Island Pond (FO, RAR,GFE,WGE). May 27 was Winhall's latest record (WJN), and Hartford had 1 on May 29 (GFE,WGE). The Blackpoll Warbler, latest migrant of the family, arrived a few days early on May 15 when 4 were found in Plymouth (GFE,WGE). Individuals were seen May 18 at Clarendon (LHP), and May 20 at both Winhall (WJN) and Wallingford (DD), though the main push was apparently delayed by the late May cold front. On May 22 Bennington had 10+ (WN et al), but on an Island Pond to Dead Creek run in cold rain May 23 none could be found (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE). Black-polls were considered definitely scarce at Winhall (WJN); no concentrations were found in Craftsbury (FO,RAR); but a high of 30 was found on Mt. Killington (where they breed) on May 29 (GFE, WGE,et al). A bird May 29 at Clarendon (LHP) was the last certain migrant. The Pine Warbler remains scarce, with a total of 7 reported: 2 April 17 at Lake Morey (GFE,WGE); 3 April 18 at Lake Morey and Lake Fairlee (GFE,WGE); 1 April 18 at Winhall (WJN); 2 May 20 at Burlington and Colchester (WGE, BSE); 4 May 21 at Burlington (WGE,BSE); 1 May 23 at Milton (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE); and 1 May 8 at Bennington (MV). Barry Levaas reported 1 or more Prairie Warblers singing (on territory he thinks) by late May on a Springfield hillside where he has found them every summer since 1972. Others (no number given) were singing on a hillside behind Windham Ponds, Grafton on May 31 (Doug Wilson). Again this year there were 8 reports of Palm Warbler: 2 on April 17, Vernon (WN); 1 on April 16, Tinmouth (LHP); an unknown number on April 18, Guilford (LPM); 1 on April 21, West Woodstock (EH); 1 on April 26, Winhall (WJN); 1 on May 8 and 2 on May 10, Colchester (GFE,WGE,BSE); and 1 on May 22, Plainfield (MFM). Ovenbirds arrived as early as May 2 when 1 was seen at Hartford (GFE,WGE). Individuals had reached Winhall (WJN) and Grafton (DC) by May 3, Woodstock (VINS) and Plainfield (AJ) by May 6, Craftsbury by May 9 (RAR), and St. Johnsbury by May 11 (fide RC). Highs were 6 on May 9 at West Woodstock (EH), 12 on May 15 at Plymouth (GFE,WGE,et al), and 15 on May 23 at Island Pond (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE). A singing Northern Waterthrush May 4 at Grafton State Forest was the first reported (PS), and there were 3 at the same location on May 5 (DC). Individuals were at Winhall by May 5 (WJN), Colchester by May 10 (WGE,BSE), and Island Pond by May 15 (FO). Highs were 10 on May 16 at Winhall (WJN), 6 on May 20 at Colchester (WGE, BSE,ORE), and 6 on May 23 at Island Pond (FO,RAR, GFE,WGE). The last probable migrant was 1 on May 29 at Shelburne (GFE,WGE,et al). Five Louisiana Waterthrushes were reported, all from the southern part of the state as expected: 1 April 16 at Marlboro (WN), a singing male April 21-24 at Winhall (WJN), 2 males May 9 at Marlboro (WN), and another singing male May 15-26 at Winhall (WJN). A Mourning Warbler banded May 13 at South Woodstock was the earliest in four years. There were 4 other reports: 3 on May 29 on Mt. Killington (GFE,WGE,et al), an unknown number on May 31 at Clarendon (LHP), a singing male May 31 at Proctor. (RWP), and a singing male June 1 at East Craftsbury (FO,RAR). A Common Yellowthroat April 29 at Swanton (WGE, BSE,ORE) was the earliest in four years and especially interesting that far north. Other first reports: May 6 at Bethel (EHA); May 7 at Fair Haven (FSA); and May 10 at Sudbury (AP), Plainfield (FO) and Craftsbury (RAR). Numbers seemed average, with 10-20 per day at Burlington (WGE), though South Woodstock banded only 7 compared to last spring's 32 (VINS). Weathersfield's high was 8 on May 15 (EE), Craftsbury's 6 on May 21 (RAR), and the seasonal high was 40 between Island Pond and Dead

Creek May 23 (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE). The singing male YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT seen by William J. Norse May 14 at West Rutland Marsh was the first since 1974 reported to us in the spring and a rare bird in Vermont anytime. A total of 18 Wilson's Warblers were reported, an increase over the past three springs. Firsts were 1 on May 11 at Craftsbury (RAR), 1 on May 15 in Vernon (WN), 1 on May 18 at East Peacham (CW), and 3 on May 20 in Colchester (also the seasonal high--WGE,BSE). Other firsts from farther south after May 20 indicate that this uncommon migrant easily slips past unnoticed. Individuals May 26 at Winhall (WJN) and Hartford (WGE) and May 28 at Craftsbury (RAR) closed the migration. The Canada Warbler appeared first May 7 at Grafton (PS), followed by 2 on May 11 at Winhall (WJN), 1 on May 15 at Wallingford (DD), 6 on May 15 at Plymouth (GFE,WGE,et al), and 2 on May 16 at Craftsbury (FO). Highs were 12 on May 23 at Island Pond (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE), 10 on May 25 at Winhall (WJN), and 12 on May 29 at Mt. Killington (GFE,WGE,et al). An American Redstart May 6 at Wolcott (HBD) was the earliest in four years by nearly a week. In fact, most area firsts were ahead of the previous May 11 first: singles May 7 at Marlboro (WJN), and way up at St. Johnsbury (fide RC) and 2 at Greensboro (RAR) the same date. Many other areas over the state recorded firsts May 9-11, and the migration seemed to peak between May 15 (high of 50 at Plymouth--GFE,WGE,et al) and May 26 (high of 20 at Winhall--WJN).

#### HOUSE SPARROW AND ICTERIDS

House Sparrows are probably with us to stay; they seemed as abundant this spring as ever. Information on beginning of breeding activity would, however, be appreciated. Bobolinks returned earlier this spring than the last three, with 2 on May 2 at Orwell (AP), followed by 2 males May 5 at Craftsbury (RAR). Most areas reported firsts May 5-11. By May 6 Worcester had a "whole field full" (HBD); by May 8 Barre Reservoir produced two flocks of ca. 15 each (MFM); and on May 20 Craftsbury had the seasonal high of 43 (40 males and 3 females) along 4-5 miles of country road (RAR,AG). At Missisquoi no females were observed until ca. May 20 (GF0). Numbers seemed average to better than average. Eastern Meadowlarks returned in March (see winter report). Few data on migratory buildup were submitted; Henry Potter considered Meadowlarks very scarce in West Rutland, Clarendon and Tinmouth, though Walter Ellison reported numbers normal at Burlington (2-4 per day). Seasonal highs were 18 on April 17 on the Champlain Islands (MFM) and 10 on April 30 at Dead Creek (WJN). See winter report for February records of returning Red-winged Blackbirds--which did not include an area high of over 1300 seen February 26 in North Ferrisburg (BPG et al). The migration seemed average thereafter, continuing until at least May 5 when Craftsbury had its high of 100+ (RAR). This editor noticed again the tendency of Red-wings previously scattered and on territory to re-flock with the onset of inclement weather, such as we experienced in May. Clarendon had the first Northern Oriole on May 1 (LHP), followed by: 1 at Bennington May 2 (MV), Bethel May 4 (EHa), Norwich May 4 (HSR), Wolcott May 6 (HBD), 1 at Colchester May 6 (WGE,BSE), Plainfield May 9 (MFM), and 1 at Craftsbury May 11 (RAR). The migration seemed to peak May 6 (high of 6 at Wallingford--DD) to May 22 (high of 15 at Bennington--WN); the seasonal high was 16 on May 20 in Colchester and Burlington (WGE,BSE,ORE). A female was building a nest at Fair Haven on May 18 (FSA). Rusty Blackbirds were back by March (see winter report); 10 reports were submitted for April and May, with highs of 20-30 (including 1 female) April 25 at Cornwall Swamp (AP) and 120 on April 29 in Swanton (WGE,BSE,ORE). A bird May 18 at Winhall was doubtless a late migrant (WJN). On May 15 a pair was observed carrying food at Island Pond (FO,SA). The Common Grackle movement apparently peaked late March to early April (high of 100 on April 7 at Winhall--WJN), though substantiating reports are lacking, Craftsbury's high of

60+ did not come until May 5 (RAR). A partial albino with a white tail was seen May 5 (IOR); and nesting had begun at Clarendon by April 1 (LHP). Brown-headed Cowbirds, which overwinter, began returning in numbers in March, though firsts were not reported from Plainfield until April 1 (MFM) nor at St. Johnsbury until April 5 (flock--fide RC). By April 8 there were 125 at Wilmington (WN) and by April 11, 100 at Fair Haven (FSA). Numbers seemed average. A cowbird egg was found in a Phoebe nest May 9 at Shelburne Pond (WGE).

#### TANAGER

Earliest in four years was a Scarlet Tanager reported April 18 at Bennington (MV). 1 was at Brattleboro by May 8 (WN), at Grafton by May 10 (PS), 2 at St. Johnsbury by May 10 (fide RC), 1 at Burlington (WGE) and 1 at Craftsbury (RAR) by May 11. Birds were uncommon, as usual, with highs of 6 on May 15 at Plymouth and May 16 at Hartford (GFE,WGE,et al).

#### FINCHES

The Cardinal is holding up well; Fair Haven had a high of 9 on March 19 (FSA), West Rutland a high of 8 on May 14 (WJN), Burlington reported average numbers of 4-6 per day (WGE,BSE), and a pair at Plainfield, near the species' northern limit, all season (MFM). A Rose-breasted Grosbeak May 1 at Hartford was the earliest in four years, by a few days (GFE,WGE), followed by firsts (all singles) May 2 at Weathersfield (EE), May 3 at Winhall (WJN) and Tinmouth (LHP), May 12 at Sudbury (AP), and May 13 at Craftsbury (SA). The long delay in central and northern sightings was almost certainly due to the migration-stalling effects of the wet May cold system. There was a fair buildup in southern locales May 6-10, with highs of 4 at Bennington on May 7 (MV) and Vernon on May 8 (WN). By May 16 Winhall had 10 (WJN); more northerly locations recorded a high of 10 May 15 at Plymouth (GFE,WGE,et al). The Indigo Bunting also showed up early, as follows: 3 males singing May 11 at Bennington (MV), 2 on May 12 at Wilder (FC), 1 on May 15 at Plymouth (GFE,WGE,et al), an unknown number May 28 in Rutland County (LHP et al), and 1 male May 23 at Burlington (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE). To Walter Ellison numbers seemed low until the last of May, when normal numbers appeared. The singing male DICKCISSEL found by Larry Metcalf April 17 at North Hero is the first ever reported to this publication and a decidedly scarce bird in Vermont. Evening Grosbeaks, absent from the Northeast Kingdom all winter, reappeared at Craftsbury April 30 (1 seen) and built sporadically to a high of 8 on May 12; they disappeared again May 21 (FO,RAR). At Plainfield, ca. 25 miles south, "very few" were present until April 18, when the number increased to 30 (98% males); by May 18, 25 were coming to feeders, and on May 27 all left (MFM). The farther south one went in April, the larger the numbers of Evenings one was likely to find, with returning birds swelling counts in April and even early May. Birds reappeared at Sudbury April 12 (AP). Numbers were small in western Vermont until early May, when the species appeared in invasion force in Burlington--maximum of 100 on May 4 (WGE). Woodstock had 125 (the seasonal high) as early as April 1 (MCH) and Winhall 50+ all April (WJN). Some sample departure dates: May 3, Wallingford (DD); May 5, Missisquoi (GF0); May 14, most departed Bennington (MV); May 23, Winhall (WJN); and May 27, Hartford (GFE,WGE). Birds remained to breed in a few spots, such as Grafton (DC). It was such a poor winter for Purple Finches that the female March 8 at Bennington (MV) was almost surely a returning bird. Hartford's first was April 5 (WGE); Strafford's (HR), Wallingford's (BCW) and Woodstock's (FO,JW) April 10; Plainfield's April 15 (MFM); and Craftsbury's April 18 (FO). Thereafter numbers built normally, with highs of 10 on April 20 at Winhall (WJN), 35 in the editor's yard on May 1 (FO), and 12 at the Island Pond breeding area on May 23 (FO,RAR,GFE,WGE). No Pine Grosbeaks were reported. The veritable explosion of House

\*What Nichols & Reed's Spiz'78  
Previous records Nov. 21 1968 in Marlboro & Ap. 1972 Marlboro (WJN)

Finches in Vermont continues apace. Apparently the first state record was a bird May 13, 1972 at Wallingford; the next report was 1 at Bennington April 11, 1973. 1974 saw 2-3 at Bennington April to May 4; and in the spring of 1975 2 were at Middlebury April 17-22 and 1 at Randolph April 27 to May 1. This spring House Finches were reported from 10 separate localities; I cannot give a total number seen since Louise Mullen only reported them "spotted" in Marlboro, Westminster West and Brattleboro. A male was at a Shaftsbury feeder March 17 and 25 (R&GK); 2 or more (?) at a Middlebury feeder March 28, April 8 and 12 (fide WS); a male March 31, a pair April 3-13, and a male May 2 at a Bennington feeder (MV); a female at a Wallingford feeder April 2 (KU); a female or immature male at Burlington April 16 (FO); a singing male at Vernon April 17 (GFE, WGE, JAM, et al); and a female at South Strafford April 20-22 (HR). Observers are urged to carefully record all House Finch sightings, including numbers, and submit them so we can monitor this remarkable invasion. A good Common Redpoll winter saw small lingering flocks appearing sporadically until mid-April. The high was 40 at Craftsbury April 18 (FO); last sightings April 9 at Stratton (10--WN), April 18 at Craftsbury (1--FO), and April 15 at Plainfield (1--MFM). After virtually deserting Vermont in the winter, Pine Siskins began moving slowly back, with 2 seen at Bennington February 23 (MV); birds had reached Fair Haven by March 2 (FSA), were "quite numerous at various feeders in Middlebury" by March 22 (fide WS), but did not reach Plainfield until April 2 when 4 were seen. Plainfield's feeder population increased to 20 by May 5, and the last bird was seen there May 18 (MFM). 35 were seen in Middlebury April 25 (WS), and they remained abundant in many areas until the seasonal high of 60 on May 23 between Island Pond and Milton (FO, RAR, GFE, WGE), after which numbers dwindled into early June. Small numbers of American Goldfinches overwintered in more southerly areas, but did not appear to return until mid to late April, with 1 reaching Winhall April 18 (WJN), 1 at Marlboro April 29 (WN), and 2 males at Craftsbury May 2 (FO, RAR). The high was 50 in Bridgewater, Sherburne and Plymouth May 15 (GFE, WGE, et al). Single Rufous-sided Towhees appeared at Woodstock April 13 (FHM), Bennington (MV) and Proctor (RWP) April 18, Chittenden Dam April 22 (ALG), Grafton (PS) and Burlington (WGE, BSE) April 22, and Weathersfield April 24 (EE). Numbers seemed average (2-4 per day at Burlington--WGE), with a high of 10 on May 3 at Winhall (WJN). Early Savannah Sparrows (12+) were seen March 28 at Herrick's Cove (DC, PMB), followed by 1 at Orwell on April 3 (AP), 1 at White River Jct. April 10 (WGE), 30 in one field at North Hero April 17 (LNM), and 1 at Albany April 17 (FO, RAR). Orwell was the site of a good wave of Savannahs on April 17, with 20 singing along one half mile of road (AP); also high were 20 seen April 30 at Dead Creek (WJN). Numbers seemed average. The scarce Grasshopper Sparrow was reported twice: a colony (3 singing males) found at White River Jct. May 15 was present into June (WGE, GFE, JAM); and 1 was seen at Maple Corner in Calais May 25 (RE et al). Only 9 reports of Vesper Sparrow were submitted, the firsts (see winter report for March records) not until April 17 at East Dorset (EH), Albany (1--FO, RAR) and Vernon (2--GFE, WGE, JAM). Orwell had its first April 19 (AP), and the high was 6 April 24 at Weathersfield (EE). Two pair and 1 nest were found at White River Jct. May 22 (GFE, WGE). A Dark-eyed Junco March 10 at Wallingford (DD) was the first reported after an almost complete absence of the species over the winter. Winhall had 2 (WJN), Clarendon 1 (LHP) and Middlebury 1 (fide WS) on March 21; Grafton recorded its peak migration around March 25 (DC) and Bennington had the seasonal high of 100+ on March 28 (MV). Plainfield's first Juncos (10) were seen April 5 (MFM). The migration apparently peaked March 25-April 21, with an especially good push in central and southern areas April 15-19. Late birds in non-breeding areas were 2 May 3 at Wallingford

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(DD), 1 May 17 at South Strafford (HR), and 2 May 18 at Craftsbury (RAR). A pair had young by May 28 in Proctor (RWP). Some areas reported Tree Sparrow numbers building in March (fide DC, winter report), and numbers were declining by late March in the Addison area (fide WS), though at Winhall the high of 5 (compared to a normal high of 100+) came April 5 (WJN). Plainfield's high was 20 on April 20 (MFM) and Craftsbury's 10 on April 17-18 (FO, RAR). Last reports establish a slow retreat north: 1 April 8, Marlboro (WN); April 12, Wallingford (DD); April 14, Sudbury (AP); April 20, Plainfield (MFM); 4 April 21, Craftsbury (RAR); April 25, Proctor (RWP); and 1 April 29, Swanton (WGE, BSE). Chipping Sparrows reached the Grafton area in March (see winter report), earliest in four years by a full month. The next seen were: 1 April 15 at Proctor (RWP), April 16 at Sudbury (AP) and Burlington (WGE), and 1 April 17 at Craftsbury (FO). Many areas recorded firsts April 21-23. Numbers seemed average (6-8 per day at Burlington--WGE), with a high of 30 at Plainfield April 23 (MFM). A few Field Sparrows also set new early records in March, though several areas recorded firsts April 5-11. They appeared in small numbers (average 2 per day in habitat at Burlington--WGE; maximum 15 April 30 at Dead Creek--WJN) thereafter, with a final certain migrant May 16 at Craftsbury (SA). Earliest (by a few days) in four years was a White-crowned Sparrow April 19 at Norwich (HSR), followed by firsts of 2 April 19 at Wallingford (DD), 2 males April 21 at Duxbury (HBD), 1 May 4 at St. Johnsbury (RC), and 3 May 4 at Burlington (WGE, BSE, ORE). It seemed a good flight, with higher than usual numbers at Burlington (maximum 20 on May 8--fide WGE), and with a remarkable concentration at Betty Weeks' feeding station in Wallingford. She had birds May 6-23, building to 15 on May 7, 21 on May 8, and 24 on May 9; thereafter numbers diminished rapidly, with 2 on May 14 and then 1 until the 23rd. Also high were two flocks of ca. 20 each May 8 at Addison (MFM). Final reports were 1 May 23 at Island Pond (FO, RAR, GFE, WGE), and 1 May 25 at Hartford (WGE). Single White-throated Sparrows were early March 10 at Fair Haven (FSA), March 30 at Bennington (MV), April 11 at Arlington (FO, JW), April 15 at Marlboro (WN), April 16 at Sudbury (AP), and April 18 at Craftsbury (RAR). The movement seemed to peak April 17 to mid-May, with highs of 40 April 19 in Sudbury and Orwell (AP), ca. 50 April 27 at Weathersfield (EE), 50+ at a feeder late April to early May at Winhall (WJN), and a maximum of 380 on May 7 in Burlington (WGE). Fox Sparrows appeared in better numbers, with over 25 reports between March 16 and April 21. One March 16 at Bennington was joined by 2 more March 22 (MV); also early was 1 March 19 in Rockingham (PMB), 1 March 22 at Wallingford which became 5 by March 25 (DD), and 1 April 1 at Craftsbury (FO). There were 5 reports of the scarce Lincoln's Sparrow: 1 May 8 at Vernon (WN); 2 May 15 at Island Pond (FO, SA); present and breeding again late May on at the editor's Craftsbury property (FO, RAR); 4 singing males May 23 at Island Pond (doubtless on territory--FO, RAR, GFE, WGE); and an undated report of 1 brought in by a cat at Wallingford (DD). Swamp Sparrows first appeared April 17 at West Rutland (LHP) and Winhall (1--WJN), and were in Thetford by April 18 (1--GFE, WGE, JAM) and Grafton by April 20 (1--DC, PS). High counts were 15 on April 30 at Dead Creek (WJN) and 24 on May 1 at West Rutland (GFE, WGE, JAM). Song Sparrows, which began to return en masse in March, seemed in average numbers at several locations, though only 2 were banded at South Woodstock compared to 20 last spring. The high of the poorly documented movement was 25 on April 16 at Winhall (WJN). A nest with 4 eggs was found May 1 at Sudbury (AP). There was but 1 report of Snow Bunting--1 on April 6 at Pomfret (PB).

# CORRECTIONS TO THE SPRING 1975 REPORT

In two places, the typist inadvertently left out lines from the original report. On page 3, left-hand column, an ellipsis occurs in the Whip-poor-will report; and on page 4, left-hand column, several lines were omitted referring to House Finch and Purple Finch. Since it is difficult to make sense of those sections without the missing lines, corrected versions are printed below.

Whip-poor-will reports this spring seem to explode the theory propounded in an earlier issue that the birds move silently into the state in late May and begin to sing in June. Individuals were calling at least briefly on May 10 at both Sudbury (AP) and Hartford (WGE). There were 8 additional reports in May--from Sudbury, Hartford, Randolph and Ferrisburg--for a total of 11 heard (EWC,BPG,WGE,AP).

Good reports of Purple Finch movements establish a fairly clear pattern. A few birds overwinter, such as the 1 present February 17 until April at a feeder in Randolph (EWC,MCC). A report from Clarendon March 15 may represent such a winter lingerer. But by April 1 good-sized flocks were reappearing at a number of southern sites: 25-30 at Springfield (MVB); 35 at Wallingford (BCW); 150+ between Addison and Middlebury (TCW). At the Clapps' feeder in Randolph a flock of 30-40 appeared during the snowstorm of April 3 and stayed into the month. Birds were reported in good numbers through late April, after which the movement dwindled to the normal numbers of nesting birds. The House Finch continues its sporadic invasion, with 1 seen April 27 to May 1 at the Clapps' Randolph Feeder--farther north, I think, than previously reported in the state.

Also note that in the first sentence referring to American Robins, on page 3, both dates should be changed from May to March.

Readers will have noted, I trust, that the columns on page 4 are reversed.

## ADDENDUM

In the spring 1975 report I mentioned a yellow-dyed Snow Goose seen April 6-10, 1975 at Florence. Two similarly marked birds were later reported from Burlington--seen April 8, 1975 in a flock of 1500 other Snows. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has subsequently informed me that these birds were apparently among the 277 Greater Snow Geese captured and color-marked on December 18, 1974 and January 7, 1975 at Mackay Island National Wildlife Refuge, Knotts Island, North Carolina.

Observers are urged to report all color-marked or banded birds to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or to VINS and we will report for you to the Fish and Wildlife Service.

## CONTRIBUTORS

SDA	Stanton D. Allaben	FCH	Fran C. Howe
FSA	Mrs. Frederick S. Allen	RJ	Robert Jervis
SA	Susan Antenen	AJ	Alice Johnson
RAB	Richard A. Bartlett	CWJ	Charles W. Johnson
PB	Mrs. Philip Brooks	DPK	Douglas P. Kibbe
PMB	Paul M. Brown	WK	Walter Kidder
DoB	Donald Burke	MKO	Mary Kopps
WCA	Winona Calderwood	R&GK	Ruth & Gene Kosche
JCA	Joan Canton	MK	Mimi Krakoff
ICA	Irving Canton	JDL	J. David Laughlin
CSC	Mrs. Charles Chapin	SBL	Sarah B. Laughlin
WCH	William Christiansen	BLE	Barry Levaas
EWC	Elizabeth W. Clapp	JAM	Joseph A. Massey
MCC	Mary C. Clapp	M&SMA	Michael & Sandy Maurer
DC	Donald Clark	FHM	Fred H. Merrill
JC	Jane Clark	HM	Henry Merritt
IC	Ian Clark	MFM	Marion F. Metcalf
FC	Mrs. Floyd Cook	LNM	Larry N. Metcalf
AC	Ann Coulter	LPM	Louise P. Mullen
RC	Ruth Crane	R&MMU	Robert & M. Mundstock
ECR	Elizabeth Crowe	MM	Mildred Murphy
TC	Timothy Cunningham	TM	Tom Myers
PD	Peggy Daniels	WN	Whit Nichols
HBD	Helen B. Davis	JMN	Julia M. Nicholson
DD	Doris H. Dolt	PaN	Patricia Noll
BSE	Barbara S. Eastman	WJN	William J. Norse
ORE	Oliver R. Eastman	FO	Frank Oatman
RE	Robert Edgar	J&EO	John & Elizabeth Ohly
EE	Eleanor Ellis	GFO	George F. O'Shea
GFE	George F. Ellison	E&MP	Ed & Mildred Perkins
WGE	Walter G. Ellison	EP	Eleanor Peters
NF	Norman Fisher	BPP	Bruce B. Peterson
DF	Donald Fletcher	JP	Judith Peterson
WF	Wesley Fletcher	RWP	Roy W. Pilcher
ALG	Annette L. Gosnell	AP	Alan Pistorius
AG	Allan Griffith	DP	Dotty Pistorius
BPG	Beatrice P. Guyette	LHP	L. Henry Potter
TCG	T.C. Guyette	CSP	Craig S. Provost
EH	Edward Hack	RPR	Richard Prum
EHA	Mrs. Eino Haikara	HR	Herman Redden
	(Josephine)	HaR	Harold Reed
CMH	C.M. Harris	HSR	Harold S. Rising
VH	Verna Harvey	RR	Robin Rothman
J&JH	John & Jeanne Helft	IOR	Ila Rouleau
HPAS	High Peaks Audubon Society, Essex N.Y.	RAR	Rose Ann Rowlett
CH	Cecil Hoisington	WS	Wayne Scott
MCH	Mary C. Holland	CS	Charles Seidchrist
		JS	Jeanne Sherman
		KSM	Ken Smith
		PS	Patrick Sousa
		JDS	Jim Stewart
		ECS	Eleanor Swaim
		BT	Bruce Talbot
		FKT	Francisca K. Thomas
		VINS	Vermont Institute of Natural Science Banding Station, So. Woodstock
		MV	Marion Vince
		JV	Jim Vogelmann
		JMV	June M. Vydra
		AW	Andy Ward
		KW	Mrs. Kenneth Ward
		BCW	Betty C. Weeks
		NWW	N. Wendell Weeks
		CW	Mrs. Charles White
		DWi	Dianne Wilson
		DVW	Douglas V. Wilson
		JW	Jon Wood
		DMW	Don M. Woodbury
		JLW	Julia Lloyd Wright

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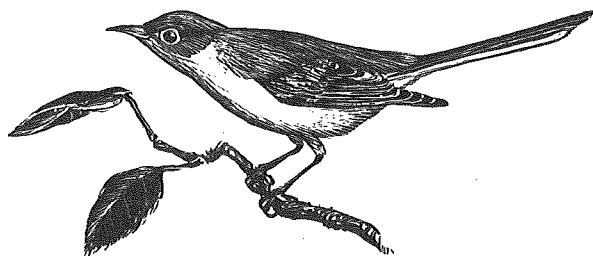
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Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

Ms. Julie Nicholson  
Church Hill  
Woodstock, Vermont  
05091

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